

Doing a War Memorial Condition Survey with your class

Guidance for teachers

Following the centenary of the First World War the public are being called upon to help record the condition of our war memorials. There are thought to be around 100,000 war memorials in the UK.

Information about their condition is being recorded on the [War Memorials Online](#) website, where anyone can upload information and photographs about any war memorial. If a 'Condition Survey' has already been submitted your class can always re-submit a survey and add new information and photos.

An accompanying [PowerPoint](#) is designed to help teachers plan and carry out a Condition Survey of their local war memorial with their class.

It is divided into the following parts, as a suggestion of how it could be taught.

INTRODUCTION:

- Use some of War Memorials Trust's resources to help pupils understand more about Remembrance - <http://www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org/primary>. (Topics include: [What is Remembrance?](#), [What are war memorials?](#), [History of Remembrance](#), [History of war memorials](#))
- Having looked at the resources above ask the question - Why care about war memorials?
- What is a Condition Survey? Use the PowerPoint to explain what it is and how we define 'condition' (<https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/education/explorer/war-memorials-condition-survey-guidance-for-teachers-ppt/>)

THE 4 STEPS:

STEP 1: Find your nearest war memorial

- If you don't already know where your nearest memorial is try using War Memorials Online (<https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/>), Imperial War Museum (<http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/search>) or just a general search engine.

STEP 2: Plan your visit to ensure that pupils know what they are expected to do

- To help pupils get the most out of the visit split the class into 4 groups – each of which will have a special task and their own recording sheet to complete (below). Each of the groups is named after a specific job title used by heritage professionals, allowing pupils to take on real-life roles. Some roles have additional 'Expert Sheets', to enable pupils to feel like they're the expert. The groups are:
 - **Building Surveyors** – Look at the condition of the writing (inscriptions) on the memorial.
 - **Conservators** – Look at the condition of whatever materials (stone/brick/wood etc.) the memorial is built of.
 - **Landscape Surveyors** – Look at the condition of the area immediately around the memorial.
 - **Photographers** – Work with the other teams to decide what photographs to take to use as evidence about the condition of the memorial.

- Ensure you follow your own school's procedures for creating a Risk Assessment and taking pupils out of the classroom. Ideally each group should have one adult supervisor dedicated to helping them, who has been made familiar with the tasks and recording sheets for that group.

STEP 3: Go on your visit and carry out the survey

- Ensure that you have all the equipment mentioned on the recording sheets (cameras, pencils, clipboards etc.).
- Allow each of the groups to fill in the information required on their recording sheets.

STEP 4: Upload your results to the War Memorials Online website

- Back in the classroom, allow each group to report back to the whole class on their survey and give their part of the memorial (materials, inscriptions or surrounding area) a 'condition level' – Good, Fair, Poor or Very Bad.
- The 'Photographers' provide photos as 'evidence' to support the condition reports.
- The whole class discuss the results of the surveys and reach a conclusion as to its overall condition, along with selecting the photos (max. 10) that provide the best evidence to support it.
- The information can then be uploaded on to War Memorials Online - <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/>. Instructions for how to do this are available on the War Memorials Online website at www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/faqs. Don't worry if a record for your memorial already exists, you can still add your up-to-date information.

Summary: Definitions of 'condition' for use by pupils:

Good: It is well looked after, the writing is easily readable.

Fair: It is quite well looked after, the writing is generally readable, but there are a few things to be fixed.

Poor: There is a lot of damage or 'wear and tear', the writing is not easy to read. It definitely needs someone to come and fix parts of it.

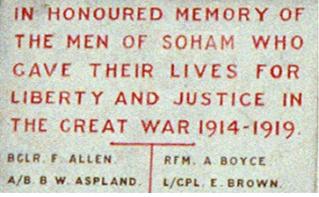
Very bad: It is unsafe and in a dangerous condition. The writing is unreadable. It urgently needs someone to come and fix it.

N.B: These resources are designed to be used with KS2 & [KS3](#) pupils. However a simplified version of this activity can be done with KS1 pupils, using a single recording sheet - the Details Checklist (below), which could be used to guide pupils around the memorial, but actually filled in by the teacher. The Details Checklist is also useful if in STEP 1 you discover that your memorial isn't already on War Memorials Online.

Building Surveyors

Lettering - Which of these does the writing on your memorial most look like?

Tip! Use your fingers – rub them over the letters to see what they feel like. This may help you work out which they are, especially to find the difference between ‘Leaded’ & ‘Painted’.

			
<p>Incised <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>On a plaque <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Leaded <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Painted <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>The letters are carved out of the stone, making a v-shaped dip.</p>	<p>The letters are written on to a plaque that is fixed onto the memorial.</p>	<p>The letters are made by carving a hole (incised), then filling it with metal.</p>	<p>The letters are just painted on.</p>
		<p>Draw what they look like in this box</p>	
<p>Raised - Stone <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Raised - Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>None <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>The letters ‘stand up’ from where the stone around them has been carved away.</p>	<p>The letters ‘stand up’ from the surface on to which they are fixed.</p>	<p>There is no lettering</p>	

What is the condition of the main type of lettering on the memorial?

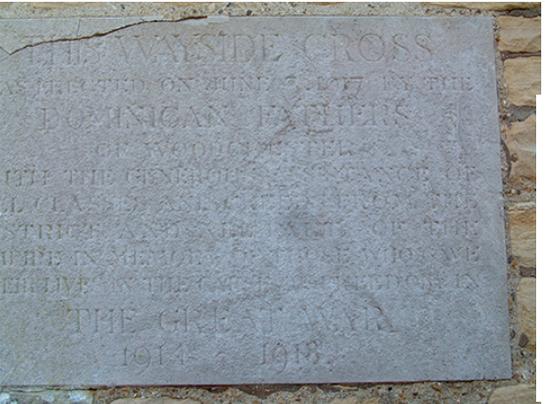
Description of issues	Yes	No
Loose or missing bits of the inscription, names or letters		
Cracked or peeling bits of the inscription, names or letters		
Flaky or crumbly bits of the inscription, names or letters		
Weathering or erosion of the inscription, names or letters		
Graffiti on the inscription, names or letters		
Rust on inscription, names or letters		
Bird droppings on inscription, names or letters		
Dirt or moss on inscription, names or letters		

Any other observations?

.....

.....

Examples:

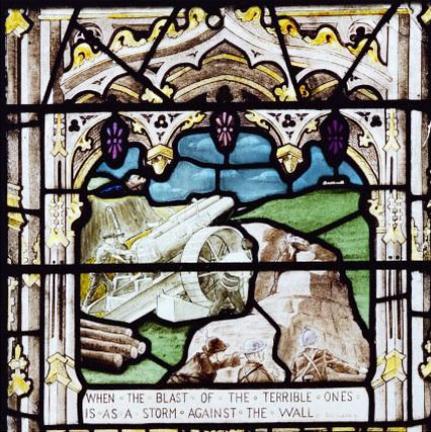
Good	Fair
 <p>© Ferryhill Town Council</p>	 <p>© Chris Moreton</p>
Poor	Very bad
 <p>© Paul Goodwin</p>	 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>

Tick which you feel describes the overall condition of the lettering:

Good	It is well looked after and we found very little or nothing wrong with the lettering.	
Fair	It is quite well looked after and can still be read, but we found a few issues that need to be fixed.	
Poor	A lot of the lettering is covered by plants/moss growing over it, or it has faded so that it is difficult to read. It needs someone to come and fix it.	
Very bad	Almost all of the lettering is either covered by plants/moss growing over it, has faded or is missing so that it can't be read. It urgently needs someone to come and fix it.	

Conservators

Types - Which of these is your memorial most like?

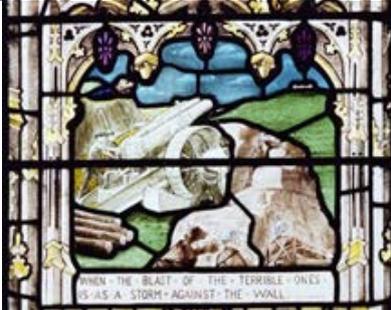
		
<p>Cross <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Plaque <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Statue <input type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>Draw what it looks like in this box</p>
<p>Building/structure <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Window/item in church <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>None of these <input type="checkbox"/></p>

You can use the 'Expert Sheets' below to find out more about your memorial:

Expert Sheet - Types of building

Expert Sheet - Types of cross

Materials - Which of these is it made from?

					
Brick	<input type="checkbox"/>	Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stone	<input type="checkbox"/>
			If you know the name of the material, write it here:		
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

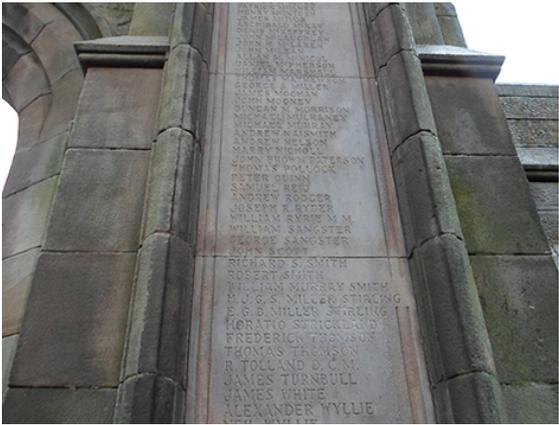
What is the condition of stone or metal on the the memorial?

Description of issues	Stone - Yes	Stone - No	Metal - Yes	Metal - No
Flaky or crumbly				
Cracked				
Fallen or collapsed				
Loose or missing				
Weathering or erosion				
Graffiti				
Rust on the fixings				
Bird droppings				
Dirt or moss				

Any other observations?

.....

Examples:

<p>Good</p>	<p>Fair</p>
 <p>© Philip Amphelett</p>	 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>
<p>Poor</p>	<p>Very bad</p>
 <p>© Nick Tucker</p>	 <p>© Kings Regt. Assoc. Knowsley</p>

Tick which you feel describes the overall condition of the materials:

<p>Good</p>	<p>It is well looked after and we found very little or nothing wrong with the materials.</p>	
<p>Fair</p>	<p>It is quite well looked after, but we found a few issues that need to be fixed.</p>	
<p>Poor</p>	<p>There is a lot of damage or 'wear and tear'. We found many issues with the materials. It definitely needs someone to come and fix parts of it.</p>	
<p>Very bad</p>	<p>It is unsafe and in a dangerous condition. From a safe distance we were able to see many issues with the materials. It urgently needs someone to come and fix it.</p>	

Landscape Surveyors

Type:

Is your memorial....

Standing on its own? (freestanding)

Part of something else? (non-freestanding)



Freestanding



Non-freestanding

Is your memorial.....

Inside?

Outside?

Setting

Is your memorial.....

By the roadside?

In a garden/park/churchyard/market place/other outside space?

Attached to the outside of a building/structure?

Inside a building/structure?

Examples:

Good	Fair
 <p>© Ferryhill Town Council</p>	 <p>© Colonel M E Bennett</p>
Poor	Very bad
 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>	 <p>© Glasgow City Council</p>

Possible issues in the area around the memorial

Description	Yes	No
Weeds, plants or trees causing damage to the memorial		
Damaged paving stones or steps		
Uneven or 'wobbly' paving stones or steps		
Damaged fences or other site boundaries		
Graffiti		
Litter		
Bird droppings		
Dirty looking		
Other issues – if 'Yes' add details in 'Any other observations?' section		

Any other observations?

.....

.....

What is the condition of the area around the memorial? (Please tick)

	Description	
Good	Well maintained. There is nothing around the memorial that shouldn't be there and any fences or paving slabs are undamaged in any way.	
Fair	Generally well maintained. There are some things that shouldn't be there or there is slight damage to fences and paving slabs. However, these are not bad enough to affect the overall setting of the memorial.	
Poor	The area is overgrown with weeds, and other plants. Trees or their branches are in danger of damaging the memorial. It is covered with either: graffiti, litter, bird droppings or dirt. The fences and paving slabs around it are damaged and uneven. The site needs someone to come and deal with the weeds/trees.	
Very bad	The area around the memorial is so overgrown it is dangerous. You can't make out what is on the memorial because of the amount of either: graffiti, litter, bird droppings or dirt. The fences and paving slabs around it are so damaged and uneven it would be dangerous to go near it. It needs urgent and major work to fix these issues. STAY AWAY!	

Photographers

You will be assigned to one or more of the specialist recording teams – Building Surveyors, Conservators or Landscape Surveyors

Your role:

Each of the teams is only allowed a maximum of 10 photographs to be taken for them.

You must fill in the Photographic Record Sheet to keep a track of their photos.

You must use a compass to work out what direction the photograph was taken from.

Your specialism is photography – so you must offer advice to your team(s) on what you think are the best ‘shots’ to take. You may wish to brief them with a set of criteria, such as:

- Will the photo clearly show what you want – could it be used as evidence?
- Can you add something to the photo for ‘scale’ such as a coin, pencil – or even bring a ruler.
- What angle should the photo be taken from – is it too sunny or too dark to get a good shot?
- Is the photo essential or could you re-frame the photo to include several aspects of the memorial?
- Tell them there must be no people in the photograph.

Examples:

Good photos	Bad photos
 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>	 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>
 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>	 <p>© War Memorials Trust</p>

Photographic Record Sheet

Team name:

Location of memorial:

Date:

Description of weather conditions (circle all that apply):

Sunny cloudy rainy bright dark hot cold

other:

Photo number	Description of what was photographed and why	Direction I was facing (N,S,E,W)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Check list for Photographers:

Camera

Compass

Photographic Record Sheet (digital or paper)

Clipboard or Tablet and pencil or stylus (to fill in the form)

Top tip: Paper and pencil still works in the rain!



Expert Sheet – Types of memorial building/structure

		
<p>Lychgate <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Cenotaph <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Clock Tower <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>This is a roofed entrance to a churchyard. Usually, but not always, made of wood.</p>	<p>This is usually a chunky rectangular or ‘blocky’ shape. The name means ‘empty tomb’.</p>	<p>This is usually a tower with a clock on at least one side of it. It may also have a plaque.</p>
		
<p>Memorial Wall <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Memorial Arch/Gateway <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Obelisk <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>This is a wall that has either been specially built or adapted to form a memorial.</p>	<p>This is an arch or a gateway that has been specially built or adapted to be a memorial.</p>	<p>This is a tall, pointed column that gets thinner towards the top.</p>

Expert Sheet – Types of cross



Latin Cross



This cross just looks like a cross you might see in most Christian churches.



Wheel/Celtic Cross



This cross looks like a cross within a circle. It is often decorated with Celtic patterns.



Commonwealth War Graves Cross



This is a cross with a sword on it. The shape of the sword fits within the shape of the cross.



Calvary Cross



This cross has a figure of Jesus Christ on it.



Market 'Cross'



A tall thin memorial, found in the centre of a town/village. It is often not actually a cross at all, but on the same spot as a medieval market cross.

Other Cross



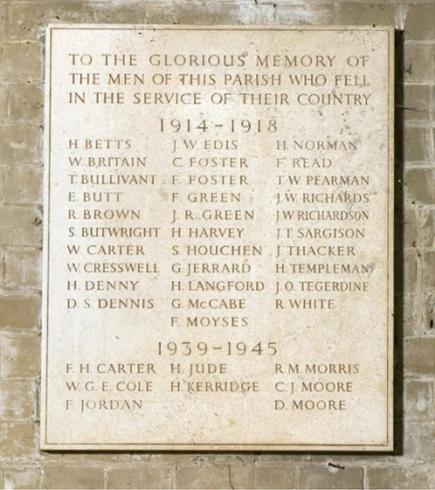
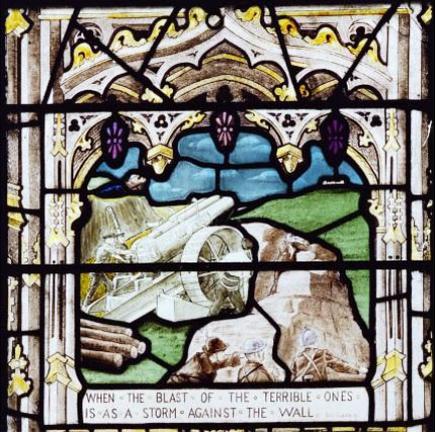
If you have a different type of cross draw it in the box above.

War Memorial Recording Sheet – Details Checklist

Is your memorial.....

Standing on its own? (freestanding) Part of something else? (non-freestanding)

Description: Which of these does it most look like?

		
<p>Cross <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Plaque <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Statue <input type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>Draw what it looks like in this box</p>
<p>Building/structure <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Window/object in church <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>None of these <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Use our 'Expert Sheets' to find out more about the type of memorial you are looking at.

Is your memorial.....

Inside ?

Outside?

Is your memorial.....

By the roadside?

In a garden/park/churchyard/market place/other outside space?

Attached to the outside of a building/structure?

Inside a building/structure?

Lettering: Which of these does the lettering most look like?

Tip! Use your fingers – rub them over the letters to see what they feel like. This may help you work out which they are, especially to find the difference between ‘Leaded’ & ‘Painted’.

Incised <input type="checkbox"/>	On a plaque <input type="checkbox"/>	Leaded <input type="checkbox"/>	Painted <input type="checkbox"/>
The letters are carved out of the stone, making a v-shaped dip.	The letters are written on to a plaque that is fixed onto the memorial.	The letters are made by carving a hole (incised), then filling it with metal.	The letters are not cut into anything, just painted on.
		Draw what they look like in this box	
Raised - Stone <input type="checkbox"/>	Raised - Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
The letters ‘stand up’ from where the stone around them has been carved away.	The letters ‘stand up’ from the surface on to which they are fixed.		There is no lettering

Materials: Which of these is it made from?

		
<p>Brick <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Glass <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Stone <input type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>Draw what it looks like in this box</p>
<p>Metal <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Wood <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Other <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you know the name of the material, write it here:</p>