

Leek Town Council War Memorials Committee
Meeting to be held Tuesday 10 October 2023 at 18:15
Leek Town Council Office, 15 Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6DH

Agenda

REPORT OF LAST MEETING

- 1 **To receive** the report of the meeting held 6 September 2023 (attached).
- 2 **To consider** any matters arising from the report not otherwise on the agenda.

3 Leekbrook War Memorial

To report that

- the lengthsman has removed bushes and vegetation from the memorial to improved visibility (as well as weeding the rear enclosure);
- two sources are being investigated for provision of a harness arrangement (to hang wreaths) of wood or of metal, to enhance the appearance of the memorial;
- an appeal has been issued to the History and Heritage of Leek facebook page: “has anyone got a photograph of the Leekbrook War Memorial from earlier days? The Town Council War Memorial Committee would like to include images of it in publicity material, along with those of the Nicholson memorial and that at Ball Haye Green etc. We are working to brighten the memorial and make it a more visible asset for Leekbrook, better able to focus remembrance on the sacrifice of local people”;
- the Cheddleton RBL has been contacted to better coordinate our activities with regard to Leekbrook remembrance.

4 Ball Haye Green War Memorial:

To report that, after the last meeting, notice was received from English Heritage that the memorial is now listed at Grade II. EH has advised that “listing helps (them) to mark a building’s significance and celebrate its special architectural and historic interest. It brings specific protection so that its special interest can be properly considered in managing its future. Listing does not mean, however, that no alterations can be made - in fact in the vast majority of cases applications to make changes to a listed building are approved”.

5 Nicholson War Memorial

5.1 Advent project

To consider the NWM element of the 24 Doors Live Advent Calendar initiative organised by Outside. It will take place on 20 December between 4 and 7 pm, at the rear door and in the lobby of the NWM: current thinking includes:

- a screen presentation of about 5 to 7 minutes comprising clips from the 1925 MWM dedication plus Imperial War Museum newsreel of the Somme, accompanied by a carol (with WWI connotations) and popular song of WWI loss/separation, with sound and smoke effects;
- at least two stewards in attendance, one provided by Outside plus Cllr Hilyer in First War uniform;
- a gazebo to be erected at the rear to regulate entry and to provide a simple brochure about remembrance in Leek;
- appropriate lighting will be provided, with flags at front and rear.

5.2 Maintenance of NWM

To report that the following safety critical actions are being undertaken to prepare the Monument for the commemoration of the battle of El Alamein (24 October), Remembrance/Armistice on 11/12 November, and the Advent initiative:

- extinguishers have been located on the ground and first floors (only the lengthsman and the clock winder normally ascend to the higher floors and they will take an extinguisher with them);

- fire notices have been installed;
- an electrical inspection is scheduled for the week commencing 2 October to recommend emergency lighting (in the event of a fire) and any other safety critical work, together with increased power point provision on the ground/first floor;
- a local contractor is being commissioned as a matter of urgency to repair paving and step problems.

The works outlined above will be completed imminently and will be followed by:

- thorough cleaning and de-cluttering of the lobby and the painting of railings and pavement cleaning - note that the flowers will be removed on 2 October;
- reconsideration of insurance provision for the monument (we are advised that it needs increasing above £750,000);
- the lights on the tree at the rear of the monument will be checked, with possible incorporation of (perhaps temporary) illumination of the advent door;
- estimates for more significant cleaning and maintenance of the structure will lead to bids for funding for such work, all to take place in 2024.

6 Long-term plan

To give initial consideration to arrangements for marking the centenary (August 2025) of the dedication of the Nicholson War Memorial, and to establishing a steering group.

7 Any Other Relevant Business

8 Date of next meeting