



Leek Town Council War Memorials Committee
Meeting to be held on Tuesday 7 July 2026 at 6:00 pm
at the Leek Town Council Office, 15 Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6DH

AGENDA

ROUTINE MATTERS

1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

To note that

3 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2026 (attached).

To consider any matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda.

4 FINANCE

To receive an update on the current financial situation,

MEMORIALS

5 MEMORIAL WORKS

To receive reports on

- Nicholson War Memorial
- Ball Haye Green Memorial
- Leekbrook Memorial

6 EXHIBITION IN NWM

To receive a report on developments in changing the exhibition within the NWM.

7 LAND AT THE NICHOLSON WAR MEMORIAL

To report on the latest situation with regard to Leek Town Lands.

8 INTERPRETATION PANELS AT THE SENSORY GARDENS

To report that, further to discussions, two images might be helpful:



The first is the Sensory Gardens taken from the Monument, the second is Cllr Ford's speculative image of what the display could look like: we need to secure architectural, planning and artistic advice on the project, followed by an exercise to determine the theme(s) and content: in the meantime sources of funding should be identified. Note that the design used in the mock-up is from the current display panel (currently with its back to the Monument).

9 DEVELOPMENTS AT BALL HAYE GREEN

To receive reports on

- Nature in Your Neighbourhood
- A memorial copse
- Repairs and maintenance at the playground

10 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT THE MONUMENT

To report that

- a letter quoting from minute 7 of the last meeting had been sent to SMDC Cllr Cawley, cabinet member for Communities, who has forwarded it to an officer, Helen Clark (the SMDC Chief Executive was copied into the correspondence).
- (it should also be noted that) there has been some graffiti on the Leekbrook memorial but it was in chalk, easily removed.

EVENTS

11 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION AFFAIRS

To receive a report on

- Ceremonies at the NWM (Falklands War commemoration on 14 June)
- Developments with regard to the RBL in Leek and around: the following has been sent to the Chair of RBL in Staffordshire

Leek is fortunate that

- Leek RBL organizes seven such events each year commemorating the Falklands, Somme, Passchendaele, Victory in Japan, Battle of Britain, El Alamein, Victory in Europe (the Council is responsible for Remembrance and Armistice Days although, of course, the RBL plays a central role, as it does in Armed Forces Day organized by SMDC);
- The Nicholson War Memorial is a dramatic and fitting site for these events: it was dedicated in 1925 to Lt Nicholson "and all others from the town of Leek and surrounding neighbourhoods who fell in the Great War", which is to say that it is the memorial for the whole area whereas the earlier 1922 memorial at St Edwards Church is more specifically dedicated to the fallen of Leek.

I think that you are aware that the Leek RBL is struggling to organise the events, particularly following the sad death of its Chairman Mick Brough. Leek Town Council recognizes that the ceremonies at the Nicholson War Memorial play an important part in the town's life: in defining who we are, how we cherish what is known as the Monument, and how committed we are to remembrance and peace. These themes were prominent in last year's celebration of the centenary of the NWM, in the parade, the rededication, and the exhibition. If there is any role that I and the Town Council can play in supporting RBL to regain its effectiveness in the district please do not hesitate to ask. My colleagues and I would be happy to discuss the situation further and to join in any meeting that you think might be helpful.

12 TOURS OF THE NWM

To report that a tour of the NWM was scheduled for 5 July and to note guide numbers.

13 ILLUMINATION AND DECORATION OF THE NWM

To report that

- the Monument was illuminated (blue) for Armed Forces Week and the three poppy panels were in place: social media response was favourable
- the controls for the illumination were being passed from Protech to the Town Council

PUBLICITY

14 CELEBRATING THE CELEBRATION

To report on progress with making a permanent record of the events of the Centenary Year including the parade, ceremony and exhibition, the echoes of that day at the Civic Service, and the Remembrance Day ceremony.

15 WEBSITE

To report developments with regard to the NWM website.

16 COMMUNICATION

To identify what, arising from the meeting, needs to be publicised, and how.

AOB/DNM

17 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 1 September 2026.

Leek Town Council War Memorials Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2026

ROUTINE MATTERS

1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Present: Cllrs Hilyer (Chair), Ford, Hoptroff, Nicholls, M Swindlehurst, Webster and Young, and Richard Benefer

Apologies: Cllrs Powner and L Swindlehurst

In attendance: Denise Wheat (Town Clerk), Victoria Johnson (Administrative Assistant)

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2026 were approved (with the correction of the spelling of the late Michael Brough's name)

15 FINANCE

It was reported that

- expenditure on war memorials broke even in 2025-26 (the apparent deficit of approximately £6,000 being offset by the reserves transferred from the Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial);
- the budget (precept) for 2026-27 was £9,000 with little expenditure to date.

MEMORIALS

16 MEMORIAL WORKS

It was reported that

- **the Nicholson War Memorial:** the area is currently being transformed by the flower display, the return of the six banners, the new Welcome to Leek banner, and the programmable Monument illumination; some paving stones need attention;
- **the Leekbrook Memorial:** the memorial was looking much better than it had three years ago, particularly when the trees are in blossom, but the paving stones now urgently need grouting
- **Ball Haye Green:** Nature in Your Neighbourhood was making good use of the field, repairs to the playground equipment were in hand and the potential for tree planting was being explored; an application has been made to 'Repair Shop on the Road' for help with BHG ground painting.

It was agreed that

- the NWM flood lighting urgently needs to be programmable by council staff
- the Town Clerk should make enquiries of the insurers about the issue of slippery paving at NWM
- the idea of a commemorative copse of 15 trees at BHG should be pursued, within the Woodland Trust programme of 'Free Trees for Schools and Communities' ("any educational establishment and all kinds of local authorities and not-for-profit community groups based in England, Scotland and Wales, including ...local councils ... and many more"), using volunteers for the planting in the autumn, taking advice from local experts and in liaison as appropriate.
- The two priorities for maintenance are the paving stones at NWM and the grouting of paving at Leekbrook.

It should be noted that the NWM illumination schedule is currently

COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS from June 2026-to May 2027, with dates	COLOUR
*Falklands Day (14 June)	Dark Blue
King's official birthday (20 June)	Gold
Armed Forces Week (22 to 26 June)	Dark Blue
Pride (27-29 June)	Pink
*Battle of the Somme (1 July)	Dark Blue
Leek Town Mayor's Civic Service (11 to 13 July)	Gold
*Battle of Passchendaele (31 July)	Dark Blue
*Victory in Japan (VJ) Day (15 August)	Dark Blue
*Battle of Britain Day (15 September)	Dark Blue
Mental Health Awareness (10 October)	Green
*Battle of El Alamein (23 October)	Dark Blue
*Remembrance Sunday/Armistice Day (8 to 12 November)	Red
Christmas Lights Switch On (20 November)	Ice blue
The Longest Night – Samaritans (21 December)	Green
Twelve Days of Christmas (25 Dec – 6 Jan)	Ice blue
National Holocaust Memorial (27 January 2027)	Purple
Commonwealth Day (8 March 2027)	Gold
St George's Day (23 April 2027)	Gold

Staffordshire Day (1 May 2027)	Yellow
*Victory in Europe (VE) Day (8 May 2027)	Dark Blue
<i>*indicates Royal British Legion events at the Nicholson War Memorial</i>	

17 EXHIBITION WITHIN THE NWM

It was reported that discussions were continuing with SMDC about using their war exhibition material to refresh and make more appropriate the interior of the NWM.

18 INTERPRETATION PANELS AT THE SENSORY GARDENS

("Interpretation panels are designed to provide information and education to visitors in various settings, made from durable materials and featuring illustrations and text")

It was reported that

- The secluded sensory gardens behind the NWM had long been ill-maintained and a site of anti-social behaviour
- The idea of using the area to provide visitor information about the Monument and the town was being explored
- Trees at the back of the garden should be retained but the 'island' in front provided cover for unacceptable behaviour
- a high-quality set of interpretation panels would be a valuable addition to the town's tourism offer
- whether or not the area was to be developed effective CCTV coverage and perhaps warning notices were needed.

It was agreed that possibilities for installing interpretation panels should be explored as should potential sources of grant and sponsorship; neighbours (including the Premier Inn, Cattle Market Cottage and the Cattle Market public house) should be consulted as should the SMDC Tourism department,

7 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT THE MONUMENT

It was reported that anti-social behaviour at the Sensory Garden/Monument had included drug taking, aggressive and offensive behaviour, graffiti and, more recently, indecent exposure. This was a concern for residents going about their normal business and for visitors to the town (including guests at the adjacent Premier Inn); the effect was exacerbated as such behaviour at a war memorial could be described as sacrilegious. The effectiveness or otherwise of CCTV in the Monument/Sparrow Park/bus station area was raised.

It was agreed that SMDC (the appropriate portfolio holder, copied to Chief Executive) should be invited to comment on CCTV provision and liaison with the police.

***It should be noted** that subsequent discussions indicate that whether or not there is CCTV coverage of the bus station/Sparrow Park area (probably not behind the Monument) it was not being monitored or used by the local police. Council in June 2025 was informed that "a new CCTV contract is being negotiated by the District Council, and a system will be operational later in 2025. Public convenience vandalism and general neglect was discussed. The Council agreed that coverage of main Leek Town Centre locations needs to be addressed. The Council asked for formal report to be requested from the District Council for the September meeting". General Purposes Committee in was informed in September 2025 that "a report was received from SMDC that a new company had been contracted to complete the installation of a CCTV system in the town centre (which) should be operative by October 2025".*

8 LAND AT THE NICHOLSON WAR MEMORIAL

It was reported that the Council was waiting for advice from solicitors on issues with regard to the NWM.

EVENTS

9 REMEMBRANCE DAY AND OTHER MEMORIAL EVENTS

It was reported that

- The national RBL may insist that Leek RBL involvement in ceremonies at the NWM be restricted (especially in the use of standards) until a chairman has been appointed to replace the late Michael Brough.
- Town Council assistance has been requested for the booking of the NWM bugler.
- the NWM will be illuminated dark blue for RBL events and red for Leek Town Council events - Remembrance and Armistice Days (see schedule in minute 4)
- the three large poppy panels will be on the Monument for Armed Forces Week and afterwards to include commemoration of the Battle of the Somme on 1 July; the NWM will be illuminated dark blue

It was agreed that

- discussions should be held with Leek RBL about future arrangements on the understanding that the RBL is responsible for arranging and funding NWM events other than for Remembrance and Armistice Days;
- a formal memorandum of understanding should be drawn up to cover liaison between the Leek RBL and the Council
- confirmation is needed as to whether or not the next event, commemorating the Falklands War, will take place.
- There should be a clear understanding of the situation before the next meeting of the Committee.

10 TOURS OF THE NWM

It was agreed that tours of the NWM should restart on Sunday 5 July 2026, from 11:00 to 1:30, that NWM guides should be told of

the situation, and that efforts should be made to recruit additional support.

PUBLICITY

11 CELEBRATING THE CELEBRATION

It was reported that progress would be made with making a permanent record of the events of the Centenary year including the parade, ceremony and exhibition, the echoes of that day at the Civic Service, and the Remembrance Day ceremony.

12 WEBSITE

It was reported that Rob Povey should be contacted with regard to updating the NWM website and its integration with that of the Town Council.

DNM

13 It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on 7 July 2026.