



Leek Town Council War Memorials Committee
Meeting to be held on Tuesday 1 September 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**
- 3 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 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 THE SENSORY GARDENS AT SPARROW PARK**

To report that this small garden area is often overlooked, it is not properly maintained, and it could be a valuable asset to the town, enhancing the experience for visitors; it could provide an attractive and interesting starting point to a perambulation via the Nicholson War Memorial, up Derby Street to the Butter Cross and the Market, across Market Square to the remarkable string of listed buildings that stretch from the Maude Institute,



through the former Grammar School, St Edwards Church, its Vicarage and the row of buildings up to the Foxlowe, and then Greystones, and on to the Nicholson Institute. There is increasing awareness of anti-social behaviour around the Sparrow Park and bus station area, particularly within the Sensory Garden: examples include drug taking, aggressive and offensive behaviour, graffiti and indecent exposure. It appears that cctv in the area is either not operational or not being monitored or used by the local police. Attempts by the Town Council to prompt SMDC to resolve this situation have not been successful. The creation of interpretation panels at the site would help to resolve the asb issue.

- 8 INTERPRETATION PANELS AT SPARROW PARK**

To report that the War Memorials Committee, in its report to Town Council in June, suggested 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. It was noted that

- trees at the back of the garden should be retained but the 'island' in front provided cover for unacceptable behaviour
- high-quality 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.

To consider

- establishing whether or not planning permission would be required for removing the island and creating the interpretation display.
- identifying local and national funding sources which are concerned with one of more of the following: public safety, tourism, celebrating heritage, town centre heritage, war memorials
- identifying a small steering group to included interests in: heritage/tourism, community, industry, fund-raising (inviting social media contributions/feedback)

A scheme might include (but could be completely different)

- Replacing the island with heritage level paving
- Seeking construction advice on an installation which could
 - sit on top of the arcing part of the current stone wall (that is, not to act as seating)
 - comprise panels which are (say) one metre high – with the wall they would be about 1.75 metres above the ground – this would allow the shrubbery to be seen
 - seal off access to the shrubbery, with a lockable gate to permit maintenance work
 - consist of panels made of stone/slate/metal/plastic – or a mixture – depending on advice
- Panels rather than a continuous display as that would allow for replacement (or even rotation) which might include
 - Art-work panels inspired by Leek and its surroundings
 - Illumination of Leek's history
 - Illustration (with brief commentary) of heritage buildings or items and famous people

9 BARRY BIRCH MEMORIAL COPSE AT BALL HAYE GREEN

To report that a bid has been made to the Woodland Trust containing the following

The planting will be on the Ball Haye Memorial Grounds (Ball Haye Road, Leek ST13 6PP) which is, with a war memorial arch, the site of remembrance for the fallen in the Ball Haye area of Leek, Staffordshire. It is roughly 1km x 1km and is largely grassland, with a circular pathway, used by the neighbourhood for walking and non-league children's football games (with temporary goals).

Ball Haye Green is an area within the town's major housing (formerly council-) estate. There is a project to substantially enhance the green spaces within Haregate/Ball Haye Green (the Leek North Ward) which includes a site for Nature in Your Neighbourhood (at Ball Haye Green), improved community planting and developing a piece of wasteland for allotment use by a mental health charity. The project is bought together as Leek North Naturally. The planting of approximately 30 trees will be divided between 3 sites on the Ball Haye Green field, collectively in memory of a former Mayor Cllr Barry Birch.

The field is part of the Town Council's estate and is maintained by the Lengthsman who will monitor tree growth and ensure appropriate watering and care. The field has wide community support and hosts the Leek North youth football initiative which was initiated by the late Cllr Barry Birch, well-loved mayor and landlord of a local public house - the copse will be his fitting memorial.

To note that Woodland Trust replied the next day: "Dear Victoria, Thanks for applying for a community tree pack. We're really pleased to tell you that your application has been successful! Your trees will arrive in November and we'll be in touch closer to the time with more information about your delivery. In the meantime, we recommend checking out our planting and tree care tips to help you plan for the big planting day. Good luck and happy planting!"

To consider preparing for planting and caring for the trees.

EVENTS

10 REMEMBRANCE DAY AND OTHER MEMORIAL EVENTS

To receive a report on Remembrance and Armistice Days and on scheduled events at the Memorials in 2026 (noting the drafting of a poster advertising these events)

11 TOURS OF THE NWM

To report that a tour of the Monument took place on 2 August and the next was planned for 6 September: two guides and an apprentice coped in August but it is hoped that there will be three experienced guides in September: the interior needs a thorough cleaning before that date.

12 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

To receive a report on relations with the Royal British Legion in Leek and district.

PUBLICITY

13 WEBSITE

To report that Rob Povey has written to the Council about the Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial website (nicholsonmemorial.org.uk) which he has very kindly been hosting (and bearing the cost) for some years.

To consider taking over full responsibility for the site, bearing its expense (about £120 per year), and integrating it with the Council's site (which itself badly needs rebuilding). Mr Povey is happy to help with migrating the site to our own paid-for site.

14 COMMUNICATION

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

AOB/DNM

15 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 6 OCTOBER 2026

17 Exclusion of the Public

The Chairman to move: "That in accordance with section 19 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business next to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting".

18 Confidential Item

TO REPORT ON NEGOTIATION OVER THE TITLE TO LAND AT THE NICHOLSON WAR MEMORIAL