Types of war memorial



On this sheet you will learn:

- The different types of war memorial that exist in the UK.
- Some typical features of war memorials
- Why war memorials vary so much.

Photographs of different memorials can be found in War Memorials Trust's Gallery at www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org/youth-groups/gallery.

Church fittings

Church fittings include items such as **bells**, church **organs** or seating. These have often been chosen by communities as a way of remembering war casualties and may have a plaque or **inscription** identifying the object as a war memorial.

Crosses

Some war memorial crosses are plain and simple with few additional features, while others might be more elaborate, have a Celtic wheel cross design or additional carvings. Crosses are often made of a type of stone and may have a sword on it to show that it commemorates war.



oodham war memorial cross, Sur Ibert, 2011

Landscape features

Landscape features include parks, gardens, fields and outdoor spaces that

make use of the **natural** environment that have been dedicated as war memorials. Often there will be information identifying the space as a war memorial, such as a plaque or gates at the entrance.

Lychgates



lewton Regis memorial lychgate Varwickshire © War Memorial

A lychgate is a gate with a **roof** covering it, which stands at the entrance to a **church**. Lychgates that are war memorials will often have the **names** of those commemorated carved into the wooden **frame** or **roof**, or be on plaques fixed to the gate. Not all lychgates are war memorials but they were a popular choice after the First World War.

Monuments

The term 'monuments' covers **cenotaphs**, **obelisks**, **pillars** and **columns**. These are large war memorials usually located in outdoor spaces, often in prominent places where they can be seen by lots of people. Some monuments have particular **meanings**. For example, memorial pillars are often constructed to look broken off halfway down, symbolising **life cut short**. The word 'cenotaph' means '**empty grave**' and is used to commemorate those whose remains are elsewhere.

Plaques

Plaques can form the whole memorial or be a part of a larger monument. In the latter case they are often the part that bears the inscription and list of names. If a plaque is types of memorial? the only part of the memorial then it might also include another feature such as a carving or painting of an image **symbol**. Plaques can be made of different materials such as wood or stone and be that have been dedicated as war memorials placed inside or outside a building.

Sculptures



War memorial sculptures are often large and situated in a prominent position within Some community. war memorial sculptures are of men or women in the Armed Forces shown either ready to fight or after a battle so that the effect of war As well as the types listed above, there are can be seen. Many are shown with 'arms' their hands on it. This is a traditional sign of remembrance and mourning. Other sculptures show figures that mean victory or conquering enemies, or peace.

Structures and buildings

Buildings or other types of structure may not be immediately obvious as a war memorial - you might have to look carefully to find something like a plaque or Roll of Honour that shows that the building is a A thankful village is a place where all those memorial. The UK has examples of war hospitals, memorial schools, bus shelters. chapels and village halls. obviously These memorials are more functional than more the designs such as crosses or monuments.

Windows

Stained glass and other types of window might feature images similar to those mentioned above, such as soldiers or figures of **peace** or **victory**. They may also include some form of written dedication, either as part of the window pane itself or as an accompanying plaque.

Others



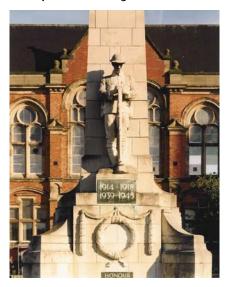
many other war memorials that do not fit reversed,' meaning that their weapon is into any of these categories. These include turned inwards and the person is resting books where the names of the fallen are written in a memorial book (which may then be put on display), pictures such as a collection of photographs of those affected by war or paintings of a war-related nature that have been dedicated as a memorial, shrines and even vehicles that were involved in wartime events and that have been turned into memorials.

Thankful villages

who went to fight in the First World War also returned home again. There are thought to be around fifty communities in the UK. A handful of these traditional are also described as 'doubly thankful' because no one from the community was Why do you think some communities chose killed in the Second World War either. While to remember their fallen with one of these these communities obviously did not erect the type of war memorial that so many have a huge range of war memorial types in others did, commemorating lives lost, lots the UK and each memorial is unique, of them did want to mark their luck and reflecting somewhat **unusual** status. This was usually emotions of that particular community at a done with a **plaque** carrying an inscription naming those who had served expressing **gratitude** for their survival.

Design features and imagery

We can see that, while war memorials are all unique, there are many similarities between them and some design features and imagery that were commonly used by designers and architects. A wreath is often • There are many different types of war carved or painted onto a memorial plague or monument. This is a traditional symbol of commemoration, symbolising ongoing life. Laurel wreaths are also a traditional symbol • Each memorial was created by the local of victory. Another commonly used image on many larger monuments is a carved soldier with arms reversed. This is a • Some traditional symbol of mourning or respect. Many memorials also feature an 'eternal light' or patriotic symbols such as flags.



Memorials

Diversity of war memorial design

Every war memorial was created by a community, different who each had different views and ideas on what form theirs should take. There were not, and still are not, any rules or government directive over what form war memorials should take and each individual community created a committee to decide what their local memorial should be like. Today, alterations or additions to war memorials are still seen as a **local decision**. Consequently,

thoughts, the beliefs critical point in history. War memorials are and therefore valuable not only as an extremely poignant reminder of enormous sacrifices made but also as a link to a past that is almost beyond living memory and as a source of information on the people and events of that time.

Summary

- UK, including memorial in the sculptures monuments, crosses, buildings.
- community according to their beliefs and wishes.
- also war memorials feature particular images such as a wreath or symbol that is closely linked to the group it commemorates.