



Report on the Burma Star War Memorial

Background

The Burma Star War Memorial was dedicated in Blenheim Gardens on 31st October 1999 by the West Somerset branch of the Burma Star Association and the asset transferred to the then district council. Over the years, membership of the local branch has declined and little proactive maintenance has been undertaken since the memorial's installation.

In May this year, the Town Council took ownership and management responsibility for Blenheim Gardens, where the memorial is located.

The year 2025 marks the 80th anniversaries of both VE Day and VJ Day, with VJ Day being of particular significance to the war in the East and Burma. Ahead of the VJ Day 80 Commemoration Service on 15th August, hosted in partnership between the Royal British Legion and the Town Council, the in-house Amenities Team carried out significant but tasteful clearance of the soft landscaping around the memorial. While this improved the overall appearance of the area, it also highlighted the deteriorating condition of the memorial itself.

Identified Needs

The memorial is now approximately 25 years old and requires restorative work. Even when receiving ongoing preventative maintenance, memorials of this type periodically require refurbishment. The general condition of the memorial is as follows:

- The main structure is generally sound and would benefit from a professional clean.
- The inscription, badge and detailing have faded and require repainting.

Quotations were requested from several stonemasons and war memorial restoration specialists, both local and national. Although a brief specification was provided, each contractor offered a slightly amended approach. The quotations received are as follows and are inclusive of VAT:

- **Company A** – £1,806.00
- **Company B** – No quotation received
- **Company C** – £952.80
- **Company D** – No quotation received
- **Company E** – £900.00
- **Company F** – £2,760.00

Financial and Legal Considerations

The Town Council established a Monument Earmarked Reserve last financial year to proactively fund future maintenance. There are sufficient funds in the ear marked reserve to consider all quotations.

The Council has the legal authority to maintain, repair, protect and adapt war memorials under The War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, Section 1, as extended by Local Government Act 1948, Section 133.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Town Council:

1. Approve the refurbishment of the Burma Star War Monument funding the works through the Monuments Earmarked Reserve.
2. Select one of the quoting contractors to carry out the works.
3. Authorise the Clerk to engage the chosen contractor and oversee the works.

Memorials Current Condition

