



CENTENARY FIELDS

Commemorating World War I 2014-2018

CENTENARY FIELDS

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the initiative all about?

The Centenary Fields programme aims to protect at least one green space in every local authority area across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to commemorate the centenary of World War I (WW1). These protected sites could be war memorial parks or recreation grounds, memorial gardens, parks and recreation grounds that contain war memorials or other valued green spaces. Safeguarding these sites will create a living UK-wide legacy in commemoration of the sacrifice made by those who lost their lives in WWI. Fields in Trust is working in partnership with the Royal British Legion to deliver the programme.

2. Are you creating any new fields or are they all existing fields?

It is anticipated that the majority of fields protected through the Centenary Fields programme will already be in existence and will have a significant link to WWI. In some instances, where a suitable site is not already in existence, then local authorities may choose to mark the centenary of WWI by dedicating one of their flagship sites as a Centenary Field or by creating a completely new site.

3. Is this just an exercise to rename existing fields?

No absolutely not! Fields in Trust exists to safeguard fields in perpetuity via a legal document called a deed of dedication. Decades of urban development have seen the stock of playing fields reduce substantially and once outdoor recreational spaces are lost to development they are lost for good. Safeguarding sites through the Centenary Fields programme and other Fields in Trust initiatives ensures that more parks, playing fields and other spaces will be available for future generations to enjoy.

4. Who are you targeting with this initiative?

Fields in Trust and The Royal British Legion hope that the whole of the UK will support this initiative. Phase One of the campaign started in April 2014 when all first tier local authorities were asked to protect at least one suitable field in their area. Phase Two, which began in November 2014, was to approach Town and Parish Councils with the same request. Phase Three, which will be launched in June 2014, will be to approach sports clubs that either own their own land, or have a lease of 99 years or more, to protect their ground. Sports clubs eligible to apply are those that have been in existence for more than 100 years, and that had some members who fought in WWI. We hope that all landowners will see the great benefits that protecting these spaces will have in terms of addressing some topical agendas around increasing physical activity, promoting social cohesion and improving the environment, alongside commemorating the Centenary of WW1 in a long-lasting way for their communities.

5. Why should landowners get involved with this initiative?

Dedicating a Centenary Field is a fitting way for landowners to mark the centenary of WWI by commemorating the sacrifice of those who lost their lives in the conflict and ensuring that their communities benefit now and in the future from protected green spaces. The Centenary Fields programme is also a way of local authorities fulfilling the Armed Forces Community Covenant that the vast majority have signed up to.

6. Is there a deadline for applications to the programme?

We want the network of protected fields to be established by November 2018, with all deeds of dedication signed by this time. Any sites where the deed is not signed by this time will not become Centenary Fields.

7. How is a site defined for this programme and what criteria need to be met?

A site could be a war memorial park or recreation ground, memorial garden, park or recreation ground that contains a war memorial or other valued green spaces. If there isn't a war memorial on the site then it must have some significance to WW1, for example it could be playing a key role in the local WW1 commemorations. As time goes on there will undoubtedly be some good examples of how sites are connected with WW1, and these will be promoted as applicable.

Each application will be assessed through a site visit but as a minimum, the following criteria must be met:

- The Landowner of the site must complete the application form
- Evidence of ownership, and where relevant freehold interest must be produced
- The principal use should be outdoor recreation, sport or play. However, sites can also include facilities such as pavilions, village halls, indoor leisure or heritage facilities that are established for community recreational purposes
- Sites must have public access
- Sites should be accessible in terms of location and affordability for the local community
- Sites should have local managers who are responsible for the quality of the facilities, maintenance and development, improving participation and financial and operational sustainability
- The Landowner must be able to sign the agreed Deed of Dedication within six months of submitting an application

8. What form does the WWI memorial have to take? For example is a park containing a bandstand with a WWI dedication a suitable memorial?

The WWI memorial can take various forms, for example a monument, remembrance garden, memorial gates, village hall. A bandstand with a WW1 dedication would be a suitable memorial.

9. How does the programme link with other WW1 initiatives?

Fields in Trust are working with the War Memorials Trust and will be able to give more details in the next couple of months. In August 2013, the Government announced a campaign to honour Victoria Cross recipients from WW1, with a paving stone being sent to the local council in which the recipient was born. We think that it would be fitting to lay the paving stone in a Centenary Field.

10. What is the process for protecting these sites?

The first stage in the process is for the landowner to complete an application form and this will be followed by a site visit, after which the landowner will be told whether the site is accepted as a Centenary Field or not. If the site is accepted the legal process then starts and sites will be protected in England via a deed of dedication. Fields in Trust will draw up the draft deed and then the landowner has a chance to make amendments. When all parties are satisfied with the deed it will be signed and then registered with the Land Registry. The site is then able to order a Centenary Fields commemorative plaque and can organise an unveiling event.

11. How flexible is the legal part of the process?

If landowners have any specific requirements Fields in Trust will be happy to discuss these on a case by case basis. We are willing to be flexible over the wording of a particular deed to deal with local need.

12. What are the costs associated with the process of protection of a Centenary Field?

The costs are as follows:

- Any legal costs associated with agreeing the deed.
- The cost of installing the commemorative plaque – which will be provided free of charge.
- The cost of registering the resulting restrictions with the Land Registry – currently £80 for up to three titles.

13. Will Fields in Trust take over the management of a field?

No, all the sites protected by Fields in Trust are locally managed. Local communities, landowners and users are in a far better position to know how local facilities can best be provided, used and enhanced. All aspects of management and maintenance are determined locally. Fields in Trust's role is custodial and advisory. We see protection by these means as having a light touch but being absolutely effective. We ensure that the fact of protection of these sites is in the public domain and that any change of use or any buildings which fall outside the terms of protection needs our specific advance consent.

14. Can a site retain its current name or does it have to be renamed the Centenary Field?

It is not necessary for the sites involved in the programme to change their names. We are very aware that so many sites already have names that are instantly recognisable within the community through their long usage. The site would acquire Centenary Fields *status*, and receive and display signage associated with this which would ensure there was no requirement for any actual name change. The King George V Fields are a good template for this. Many local authorities will be familiar with the King George V Fields in their area still being known by other names, whilst also having the King George V plaques at their entrances.

15. Will protected sites be provided with any signage to show they are a Centenary Field?

Every site will receive a commemorative plaque to display on the site. The plaques will have provision for the name of the site and/or the name of the landowner or the geographical location.

16. Will the specific site always be protected?

Fields in Trust does accept that on rare occasions communities change and land use changes accordingly. Parts of sites, or very rarely, whole sites can therefore be disposed of provided the disposal is of clear advantage to, and in the best interests of, the community from a recreational perspective. The criteria which Fields in Trust applies to replacement facilities are that they should be of:

- at least equal size
- better quality
- serving the same community in terms of catchment area.

Additionally, and very importantly, the entire proceeds of any disposal should normally be re-applied to new sport, recreation and/or play facilities, with priority given to outdoor before indoor facilities

17. Is there a limit to the number of applications/successful applicants from a region/area?

There is no quota per area, and the programme is not competitive between landowners. Each application will be judged against the criteria on its own merits.

18. Is there any funding available for Centenary Fields?

There is no funding at present, but Fields in Trust is currently fundraising for the programme and will promote any funding programme when possible.

19. Are sites which have a WWI memorial that are already protected as QEII Fields eligible to be put forward for the Centenary Fields programme?

No these sites are already protected and therefore would not be eligible to become Centenary Fields. The programme aims to increase the amount of playing fields, recreation grounds and parks protected by Fields in Trust. We are looking for a way to acknowledge the fact that these sites have a link with WW1 and will provide more information in due course.

20. We have a Memorial park with a WWI memorial and would like to get it put on the official register of memorials, how can we do this?

This is something that involvement with the Centenary Fields will facilitate through Fields in Trust's partnership with the War Memorials Trust. At the site visit the correct information will be collected to ensure that this valuable resource is enhanced.

21. How can the public support the initiative?

The public can support Centenary Fields by encouraging their local authority to safeguard a green space as part of the campaign, could get involved with a 'Friends of' group linked with a protected site and, if they wish, by making donations to the programme.

For more information on Centenary Fields please go to www.fieldsintrust.org/centenaryfields