



# Surrey Scouts

## Initial Information for Leaders

[surrey-scouts.org.uk/events/operation-last-post](https://surrey-scouts.org.uk/events/operation-last-post)  
[#SkillsForLife](https://twitter.com/SkillsForLife)



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# Foreword

In 1928, Baden Powell summarised why it is important for us, as Scouts, to observe Remembrance Day with a shared moment of silence.

‘When we observe the silence, what shall we ask of ourselves in those solemn moments of thought? Could it not be to think out and resolve that in our turn we shall see with a new outlook and henceforth do, each of us, our bit to bring about peace and goodwill in world affairs? In the Scout Movement we are trying to do our little bit in this direction, by bringing together in friendship and under common ideals the future generation of every country in the world.’

Baden Powell was talking about what people could think about during the two-minute silence and said that people could reflect on how they could play their part in bringing about peace. In Scouts, people do their bit to get this started by building a worldwide movement that shares the same values.



# Initial information for Leaders

## Introduction

## Hello!

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome and thank you for joining us for Operation Last Post. Woking Scouts have held several expeditions to Ypres, we know the area well and are delighted to share the memorable experience with Surrey Scouts.

This pack contains the first of three tranches of information, the second will be in the '2022 Spring Communication' and the third 'Final Details for Leaders', a month before our departure. If you have any unanswered questions, please get in touch via the OLP email address or come to one of the briefing days.

Yours in Scouting

Andy Dolan  
OLP Leader

## Pre-expedition contact details

If you need to post something to us, then please use: Operation Last Post Administration, County Office, Bentley Copse Scout Campsite, Hound House Road, Shere, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 9JH. If you need to contact us before our departure date you can email us at: [bookings@operationlastpost.org.uk](mailto:bookings@operationlastpost.org.uk), which will be **monitored up to 17:00 on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2022**. After 17:00, any contact with OLP should be made through the In-Touch System.

## Briefing day

We will hold briefing days, to give every Scout, Leader, and parent / guardian an insight into why the First World War started, and why we are making this expedition to Ypres. We will also be joined by the Chairperson of the Brookwood Last Post Association who will give background on the deep link between Ypres and Surrey and how we are still to this day remember the fallen. Plus, the core team will be on hand to recap on transport, accommodation, activities, and kit required as well as answer any of your questions. The briefing day locations, with direction, dates and times will be communicated in the '2022 Spring communication'.

## What is Operation Last Post?

OLP is open to two hundred **Scouts, aged between 10 and 14.5 on the first day of the expedition**, and Leaders from all over Surrey, participating in 3 days of exploration, visiting, learning and to pay respect to the fallen. The Scout / Leader / Service Team Participant fee is £185, which includes:

- Transportation: return travel to Belgium from Guildford and between activities.
- Accommodation: We will be camping at the Flemish Scout Campsite Merkenveld, situated 20 minutes from Brugge. Each unit will need to bring their own lightweight tentage.
- Food: Meals will be provided covering:
  - Sunday: dinner,
  - Monday: breakfast, lunch, dinner,
  - Tuesday: breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack
  - Eating utensils will be provided, however each participant is expected to pack a reusable water bottle.
- Activities: Passchendaele Museum, Tyne Cot Cemetery, Brugge city visit, Ferme-Olivier Cemetery act of remembrance, Essex Farm, In Flanders Field Museum, Last Post under the Menin Gate, Commonwealth War Graves Commission Visitor Centre, Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery and Vimy Ridge
- Apparel: 'Operation: Last Post' branded hat, T-shirt, UK Scout Scarf and UK badge.

Not included, is the cost of any extra activities (those not provided by the Core Team), food during the journeys and participant's own individual spending money.

There are three phases to OLP, the first you have already completed, by registering and transferring a deposit:

- Phase 1 – Register Troop by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 **[COMPLETED]**
- Phase 2 – Register participants' full details and transfer **participants' deposit (£85) by 31st January 2022**
- Phase 3 – Transfer remaining **participant balance (£100) by 30th April 2022**

## So, what happens on OLP?

On Sunday, leaving incredibly early, we travel by coach and Euro Tunnel to Belgium, visiting the Passchendaele Museum, stretching our legs with a hike between points of interest (7 km), and a visit to Tyne Cot Cemetery, before retiring to Merkenveld to pitch tents and have an evening meal.

On the Monday, we have a later start, units will have a morning of free time in Brugge, then return to the campsite for a hot lunch, and then prepare a cold packed dinner. In the afternoon, we head straight out to visit Ferme-Olivier Cemetery for an act of remembrance, a visit to Essex Farm to learn more of what happened on the front lines, and a visit to the Flanders Field Museum. Then in the evening tuck into our prepared dinner, then witness the Last Post under the Menin Gate, before being coached back to Merkenveld for the night.

On Tuesday we have an early start, to strike camp, load vans and coaches. On our return travel back to the UK we make a detour to Arras, France. In Arras, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) interns will give us a personal guided tour of their newly opened Visitor Centre and their local Cemetery, Faubourg d'Amiens. Plus, we will have the opportunity to stop off at Vimy Ridge Visitor Education Centre before we need to catch our Euro Tunnel crossing back to the UK.

## Finance

Now that you have secured your unit registration and paid the £85 deposit, the next step is to transfer the per participant deposit (£85) which is due by 31st January 2022. The Operation Last Post Administration Team would prefer all payments via BACS. To pay via this method, you will need the information below:

- CAF Bank
- Sort Code: 40-52-40
- Account No: 00013107

Please use payment reference: OLP22 followed by your booking reference. For example, if the 99th Bentley Copse had the booking reference 12345, the reference would be: OLP2212345. If your unit is unable to pay via BACS, please make out a cheque payable to 'Surrey County Scout Council' and send it along with your booking receipt, which will be sent to you via email automatically once you have registered.

Once your payment has been received, you will receive an email confirming your payment. These payments are also viewable from the View Payments and Balance page on the online booking system.

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**Visit [bookings.operationlastpost.org.uk/ypres2022](https://bookings.operationlastpost.org.uk/ypres2022) to access your OLP account**

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## The Core Team



**Andy Dolan**

Operation Last Post  
Leader

District Scout Leader  
(Woking)



**Katy Cozens**

Katy deals with all  
Operation Last Post  
admin



**Kevin Yeo**

Kevin deals with the  
booking site



**Ian MacQueen**

Deputy County  
Commissioner  
(Events)



**Paul Iverson**

Assistant County  
Commissioner  
(Scouts)



**Kath Brown**

Catering

Group Scout Leader  
Sheerwater,



**Ian Cartwright**

Transport Co-  
ordinator

District Scout Leader  
(Woking)



**John Pain**

Activities

ADC (Scouts)  
Woking



**Roy Thompson**

Accommodation

District Explorer  
Scout Commissioner  
(Woking)



**Nigel Longley**

First Aid

Cub Scout Leader  
1st Horsell, District  
Cub Scout Leader



**Lucy Longley**

Media Team

Assistant Cub Scout  
Leader 1st Horsell



**Jess Wright**

Clothing

Group Scout Leader  
7th Woking



**Kevin Davis**

Brookwood Last  
Post Liaison

Explorer Scout  
Leader, Mavericks

## Service Team(s)

The Core Expedition team is supported by a small army of adult Leaders from across Surrey, to fill the roles listed below:

- First Aiders: All adult Leaders are First Aid trained, but we will have a team to support us throughout the expedition
- Media: A picture is worth a thousand words, so we have members from the Surrey Media Team, who will be capturing the experience throughout the expedition
- Catering: it is not easy to prepare food for two hundred people, but we have a team to do just that

## The Last Post

The Last Post ceremony takes place every evening at 20:00h under the Menin Gate, one of the four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders. The ceremony is a homage, for the eleven million military personnel that lost their lives. This tradition started on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1928 and has continued uninterrupted until during the Second World War, when Ypres fell into German hands, on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1940. At this point, the ceremony was transferred to Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey until December 1941 when Polish forces liberated Ypres.

To this day, The Brookwood Last Post Association continue the ceremony on the first Sunday of each month at 15:00h.

## Unit dates

We would like to invite all units attending OLP to attend at least one of the monthly 15:00h Last Post before we depart. We recommend forming at the RAF monument at 14:45, to be ready for the ceremony that starts at 15:00.

There are also two pre-bookable activities that units can take advantage of. The first is a guided tour of Brookwood Military Cemetery and the second is the use of the Trench Experience campsite that is located immediately behind the RAF memorial within the Cemetery itself.

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**For details and booking for the guided tour or the use of the campsite, please contact [John.pain@OperationLastPost.org.uk](mailto:John.pain@OperationLastPost.org.uk)**

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## County dates

Next year is the 81<sup>st</sup> anniversary of The Brookwood Last Post. To commemorate this, we would like to invite all OLP Participants, to join Surrey Scouts in attending the 15:00h Last Post Ceremony at Brookwood Military Cemetery on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

All Scouts are required to wear their uniform and OLP scarf, Scout or smart trousers, and poppy (no trainers).

Participants are to form into their units on the Cemetery side of Brookwood Station for 14:30, where they will be briefed how to parade / walk, and the flag-bearers will be coached by members of the Royal British Legion. The Scouts will parade down to the RAF monument at 14:45 and the ceremony will start at 15:00.

## Useful Information

Free Parking is available in several small car parks within the cemetery and on the wider road, please do not drive off the roads onto adjoining areas and keep to the 10mph speed limit. There is also ample (chargeable) parking at Brookwood railway station.

After you park up, walk into the main entrance of the station, down the steps to the underpass and up the other side, through the exit and then you will be in the cemetery. On the conclusion of the ceremonies (around 15:30) everyone is invited to join us for refreshments at the Trench Experience situated behind the RAF monument.



## OLP Actions

### Transport

We have secured Bakers Dolphin [www.bakersdolphin.com](http://www.bakersdolphin.com) as our coach firm, all their drivers are required to hold a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check so that they are considered suitable to work with young participants. All coaches have seatbelts which participants are always required to wear whilst travelling. In addition, it is their policy that food and drink (except for water) must not be consumed on the coach, unless the coach driver has confirmed otherwise. Although each coach will have a WC available to use whilst we are travelling it would be preferable for you to use the toilet facilities at one of our stops.

We will be using the Channel Tunnel for our crossing from the UK into France. As such some arrival and departure times are subject to change as we cannot confirm the crossing time until early 2022.

We intend to use the car park at Surrey University for the Sunday morning drop off and for the Tuesday evening pick up. Although we will be departing and returning to the same location, we will not be able to make provisions for you to leave vehicles in the car park for the duration of the expedition.

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**Transport timings and rest stop facilities will be confirmed in the 'Final details for Leaders' pack.**

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### Accommodation

We will be staying at the Flemish Scout campsite 'Merkenveld' which is situated in West Flanders and part of the rural municipality of Loppem on the outskirts of Bruges. Set in twenty-two hectares of pristine forest and bordering a 70-hectare nature reserve. Merkenveld has ten hectares of pitches, and we will be camping on them using lightweight tents. As space is limited on the coaches, please bring the minimum amount of equipment you need.

As well as a wheelchair accessible path connecting the key points of the site, there is both indoor and toilet / shower blocks along with taps for drinking water, however, there is no electricity on the camping grounds. The campsite is very pro recycling, which means any waste brought onto the site needs to be correctly disposed of in the correct bins.

We have exclusive access to the main catering kitchen and hall 'The Fourage' which will serve as the base of our expedition and will be used for the central catering.

### Food

Breakfasts will be a 'continental style' buffet in the Fourage, which will also be used to serve a hot meal for Sunday dinner and Monday lunch. Participants will also make their own sandwiches here for Monday's dinner and for Tuesday's lunch. Whilst at Merkenveld, facilities will be made available for hot and cold drinks.

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**Please complete the Permission and Health Form when asked accurately and promptly to help us prepare for any dietary requirements.**

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## Activities

The core team have been busy planning a programme of activities for you all based around exploration, visiting, learning and to pay respect to the fallen. The complete expedition, including all the activities, will be risk assessed, documented, and shared to ensure Operation Last Post is conducted in a way to reduce risk to participants.

## Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917

The Memorial Museum Passchendaele tells the story of the First World War, focussing unsurprisingly on the Battle of Passchendaele (also known as Third Battle of Ypres).

This battle is still renowned as one of the most horrific battles from the First War. Passchendaele' became a symbol of the great futility of the violence of war when a frontline advance of only eight kilometres cost almost 600.000 casualties.

The museum provides an overview of the five battles of Ypres, which includes the Battle of Passchendaele. Authentic letters, posters and other documents, uniforms of the various armies and video clips will bring us to within feet of real history. The weapons room always seems to capture imagination.

From the main museum building, visitors are directed to walk through reconstructed dugouts and trenches and so gain a small insight into how life must have been on and around the battlefields – disconcerting, miserable and claustrophobic.



## Tyne Cot Cemetery

Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world (in terms of burials) with 11,961 Commonwealth servicemembers of the First World War buried or commemorated there.

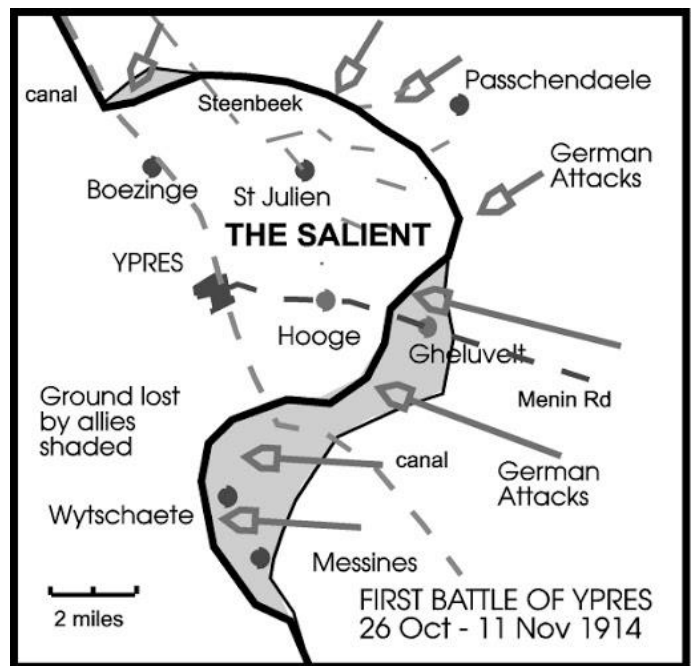
Presently, 8,373 of those burials are for unknown soldiers.

The name 'Tyne Cot' or 'Tyne Cottage' was given by the Northumberland Fusiliers to a barn that stood near the level crossing on the Passchendaele-Broodseinde road. The barn, around which the Germans had constructed five or six pill-boxes, was captured by the 3rd Australian Division on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1917, in the advance on Passchendaele. One of the boxes was unusually large and so used as an Advanced Dressing Station (ADS) when captured.

From 6<sup>th</sup> October to the end of March 1918, 343 casualties from the 33rd and 50th (Northumbrian) Divisions and two Canadian units were buried next to the ADS, but the cemetery was back in German hands again from 13 April to 28 September. It was re-captured with the village of Passchendaele by the Belgian Army.

The cemetery was greatly enlarged between 1919 and 1921 following the Armistice, when the remains of 11,961 casualties were brought from the battlefields of Passchendaele and Langemarck by British 'Exhumation Companies' to be re-interred. Only 3,800 of those bodies could be identified.

King George V visited the cemetery in 1922 and at his suggestion the Cross of Sacrifice was placed on the largest pillbox within the perimeter of the cemetery.



The Tyne Cot Memorial forms the north-eastern boundary of the cemetery and commemorates 35,000 servicemembers from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient after 16<sup>th</sup> August 1917 and who have no known grave.

NOTE: A salient in military terms is a battlefield feature that project into an opponent's territory and is surrounded on three sides, making the occupying troops vulnerable (see above, right).





## Canadian Road

'The Canadian Road to Passchendaele' is a 6.5 km long track linking key historic sites where the Canadians fought during the Battle of Passchendaele between October and November 1917.

On 30<sup>th</sup> October 1917, with the assistance of two British divisions, 20,000 Canadian troops began the assault on Passchendaele. In a landscape destroyed by shelling and intense rains, and with roads, trees and most buildings obliterated, they inched their way from shell-crater to shell-crater, under heavy fire and often waist-deep in mud. The battle ended on November 10<sup>th</sup>, when Canadian troops occupied the Passchendaele village centre. 12,000 Canadians were wounded and over 4,000 lost their lives during the battle. The awarding of nine Victoria Crosses confirms the heroic determination and skill of Canadian soldiers in the bitter struggle for Passchendaele.

Depending on the individual coach programme, the walk will start at either The Memorial Museum Passchendaele or Tyne Cot Cemetery. The walk will retrace the route between Ravebeek valley and the church in Passchendaele where the Battle ended. During this offensive, Canadian troops moved only 8km from Ypres in one hundred days.

## Brugge city visit

Units will be able to organise their own programme for the morning whilst they are in the centre of Brugge. If you need any help sorting what you want your patrol to do in Brugge, please contact us. Any extra activities, you will need to pay for the activity yourselves at the point of purchase, in Euros.

## Ferne-Olivier Cemetery act of remembrance

In 1907, at the age of ten, Marc Nobel attended a camp run by Baden Powell on Brownsea Island. This camp later helped to form the foundations of the Scout Association. The camp had twenty boys divided into four Patrols; Marc was in the 'Bulls' Patrol.

Marc went on to become a 2nd Lieutenant in the British Army, Royal Field Artillery, but died of his wounds received near the village of Boeshinghe on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1917 - 'Whilst showing great bravery in trying to get help for his wounded comrades'. He was just 20 years of age and is buried at Ferne-Olivier Cemetery, Plot 3. Row G. Grave 22. We will conduct an act of remembrance, for Marc and all those that died when we visit.

To help you with the geography of the Ypres area the present-day village of Boeshinghe (now Boezinge) is just over 1 km Northwest of the Yorkshire Trench site. Marc is buried in the Ferne-Olivier Cemetery, Elverdinghe, 4 km West from where he received his wounds. The cemetery contains 408 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, six of which are unidentified, and three German war graves.

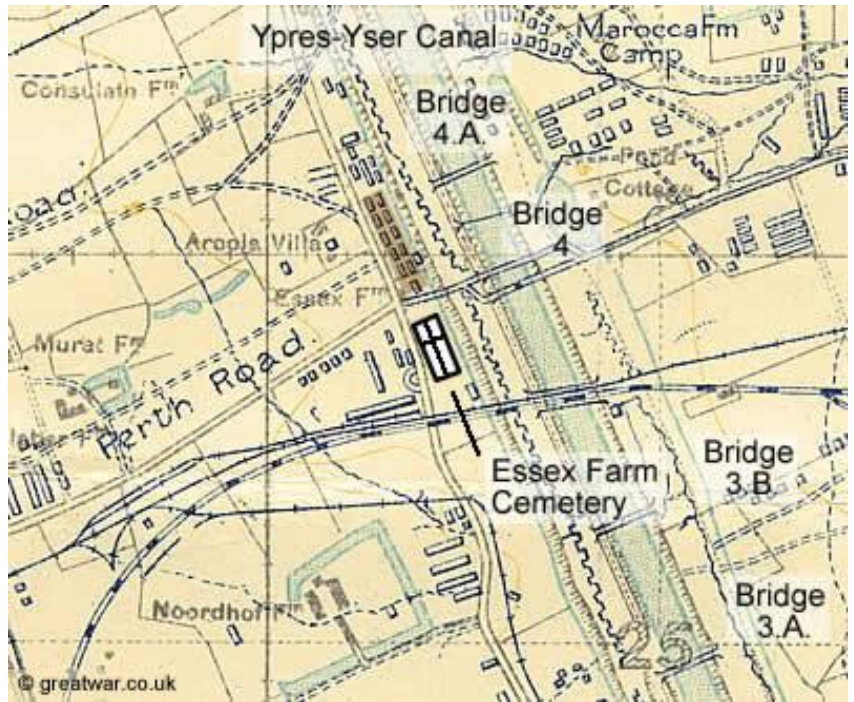


## Essex Farm

Essex was the name the British army gave to the farm in the area next to Brielen bridge on the western bank of the Ypres-Yser canal.

As the war continued the original crude dugouts in the canal bank were extended and reinforced with concrete so the original medical dugouts formed in April 1915 were developed into an Advanced Dressing Station (ADS).

In early April 1915, the British Army took control of the north-eastern sector of the Salient from the French. The battle to defend the ground began on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1915, following the launch of a deadly new weapon by the German Army, poisonous gas. The battle became known as the Second Battle of Ypres.



It was in the early morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> April, a few hours after the surprise German gas cloud attack, that the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Field Artillery Brigade assumed position on the west bank of the Yser Canal just north of Brielen Bridge (bridge 4).

Their second in command, Major John McCrae had practised as a doctor in Canada and England before the war. The Royal British Legion credit the writing of "In Flanders Field" to McCrae, whilst stationed at Essex Farm in May 1915.

Buried in Plot 1, Row U Grave 8 is Valentine Joe Strudwick from Dorking. He died in action on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1916, aged just 15 years and 11 months. He had lied about his age to enlist when he was just fourteen. The haphazard and irregular layout of the graves in this cemetery is unusual in CWGC cemeteries and shows that it was a wartime cemetery, rather than a more regular (typical) post-war layout.

There are 1,205 burials, of which 103 are unidentified.





## In Flanders Field Museum

For the 600,000 who fell in Belgium, and for the 425,000 graves and names on memorials the Flanders Field museum seeks to conserve a link with the past by presenting a message of peace.

The exhibition in the rebuilt Cloth Hall tells the story of the invasion of Belgium, the four years of trench war in the region, the end of the war, and the permanent remembrance ever since. The focus is on human war experience. The table maps in the museum provide aerial photographs of the area now, and at the peak of the war, which are a must see.



## Last Post under the Menin Gate

The Ypres Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge. The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres. This was the first-time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence.

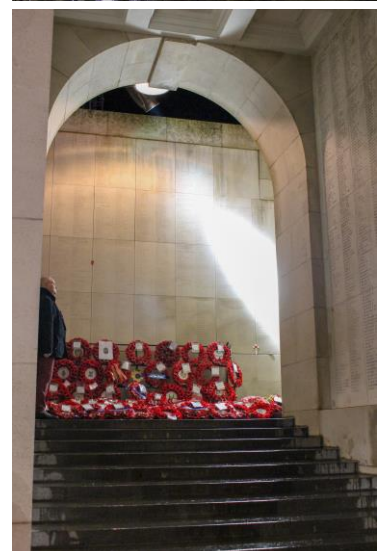
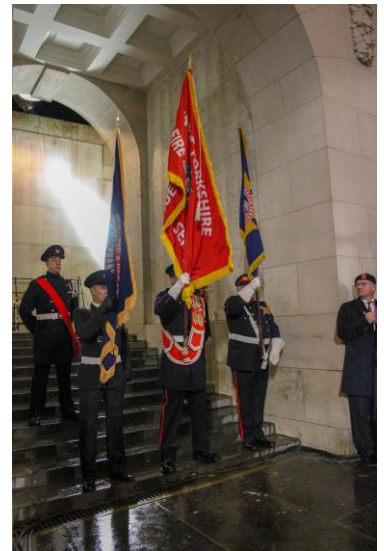
There was little more significant activity on this front until 1917, when an offensive mounted by Commonwealth forces diverted German attention from a weakened French front further south. This became known as the Third Battle of Ypres. The initial attempt to dislodge the Germans from the Messines Ridge in June was a complete success, but the main assault north-eastward, which began at the end of July, became a dogged struggle against determined opposition and rapidly deteriorating weather. The campaign finally ended in November with the capture of Passchendaele.

The German offensive of March 1918 met with some initial success but was eventually checked and repulsed in a combined effort by the Allies in September. The battles of the Ypres Salient claimed lives on both sides and it quickly became clear that the commemoration of members of the Commonwealth forces with no known grave would need to be considered. The Menin Gate memorial bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known.

The site of the Menin Gate was chosen because of the hundreds of thousands of men who passed through it on their way to the battlefields. It commemorates casualties from the forces of Australia, Canada, India, South Africa, and the United Kingdom who died in the Salient prior to 16<sup>th</sup> August 1917. United Kingdom and New Zealand servicemembers who died after that date are named on the memorial wall at Tyne Cot whilst New Zealand casualties that died prior to that date are commemorated on memorials at Buttes New British Cemetery and Messines Ridge British Cemetery.

From 11<sup>th</sup> November 1929 the Last Post has been sounded at the Menin Gate Memorial every night and in all weathers.

The only exception to this was during the four years of the German occupation of Ypres from 20<sup>th</sup> May 1940 to 6<sup>th</sup> September 1944 when the daily ceremony was continued at Brookwood Military Cemetery. On the evening that Polish forces liberated Ypres, the ceremony resumed at Menin Gate, despite the heavy fighting still going on in other parts of the town. Bullet marks can still be seen on the memorial from that time.

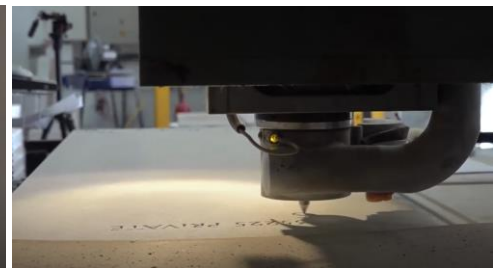


## Commonwealth War Graves Commission Visitor Centre

The CWGC is committed to commemorating the people of the Commonwealth who died during the world wars. Their work began in 1917 in the battlefields of Europe, and now, more than a century later that work continues in over 150 countries.

There are, on average, forty new discoveries of World War remains' each year. This is a vital area of the commission's work. To ensure each casualty is treated with dignity and respect is essential. If it is possible to identify the remains, what could be more fitting. CWGC staff in France play an integral role in the recovery process, and we will be able to see how that happens.

Managing 23,000 sites worldwide requires a large and resolute maintenance team. We have the unique opportunity to have a personally guided tour by CWGC interns. Where we will be able see some of the work those teams do daily and learn about some of the challenges, they face day-to-day. Between headstones, monuments, and memorials, the CWGC relies on a highly skilled team to produce the iconic sights we will see at each, and every CWGC cemetery we visit.



## Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery

The French handed over Arras to Commonwealth forces in the spring of 1916. The system of tunnels and mines upon which the town is built were used and developed in preparation for the major offensive planned for April 1917.

The Commonwealth section of the cemetery was begun in March 1916, behind an established French military cemetery and was used until November 1918. Following the Armistice, this cemetery was also enlarged when remains were brought from other battlefields in the area. The French cemetery was removed after the war and replaced by the Arras Memorial and Arras Flying Services Memorial.



The cemetery contains over 2,650 Commonwealth burials. Ten of these are unidentified. The Arras memorial commemorates 35,000 servicemembers from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7<sup>th</sup> August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory and who have no known grave.

The most conspicuous events of this period were the Arras offensive of April-May 1917, and the German attack in the spring of 1918. Canadian and Australian servicemembers killed in these operations are commemorated by memorials at Vimy and Villers-Bretonneux.

The adjacent Arras Flying Services Memorial commemorates more than 1,000 flight crew of the Royal Naval Air Service, the Royal Flying Corps, and the Royal Air Force who were killed on the whole Western Front and who have no known grave.



## Vimey Ridge

At the time, from a population of eight million, 619,000 Canadians enlisted in the Expeditionary Force for service overseas. Sadly, more than 66,000 did not return home.

The Canadian National Vimy Memorial stands on the highest point of Vimy Ridge and is one of eight memorials in France and Belgium that were commissioned to honour those that served, particularly to those that lost their lives.

The memorial took eleven years to build and used 11,000 tonnes of concrete, with hundreds of tonnes of steel and 6,000 tonnes of limestone. Carved on the walls of the monument are the names of 11,285 Canadian soldiers that lost their lives in France and whose final resting place was then unknown.



## What to bring

### Kit

Participant's luggage is restricted to:

- one main bag, such as a holdall which will be loaded into the coach hold for the duration of the journey
- one piece of hand luggage, such as a day sack, to hold items for the journey and for the daily excursions

Due to limited space on the coach, if your luggage exceeds this allowance you may have to leave it behind. A supplied wristband label must be attached to each the main and hand luggage.

A full list of suggested kit items will be included in our '2022 Spring Communication'. When you select your equipment and personal luggage, please bear in mind that space on coaches is limited, so light weight is key. You will need to bring good basic camping and suitable walking equipment (there is a 90-minute hike between Tyne Cot Cemetery and Passchendaele Museum).

### OLP branded apparel

The OLP fee includes several items of OLP branded apparel that will make up the OLP uniform – each participant will receive one of each: hat, T-Shirt, UK Scout Scarf, and UK badge. We will be using Infinity Print & Embroidery to provide the OLP branded apparel that will make up the OLP uniform, in our '2022 Spring Communication', we will provide further information on how to make an order.

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**Scout uniform should be worn on our outbound and return journeys as well as the Last Post Ceremony under the Menin Gate on the Monday night.**

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### Preparing for hot weather

- Sun safe – Remember the rules of sun safety: *slip* on a top, *slop* on some sun cream and *slap* on a hat.
- Hydrate, to prevent against dehydration, make sure you bring a water bottle and drink water regularly.
- Insects - Use insect repellent to stop bites from mosquitos and midges.

### Tips and tricks

- Surrey Scouts and The Scout Association cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to any personal effects and the Scout Association does not provide automatic insurance for such items.
- Therefore, we advise, all clothing and personal belongings must be clearly marked with the participant's name, before packing
- Do not attach anything on to the outside of your holdall/rucksack or day pack, as it will get snagged on something and fall off.

### Medication

If the participant has a requirement to take any medicines, the bottle(s), tube(s), or other items should be clearly labelled with their name and the exact dosages / instructions in a named sealed bag. The Core Team should be informed beforehand via the Participant Information, Permission & Health Form.

### Pocket money

There will be opportunities to use spending money at the Channel Tunnel passenger terminal, in the centre of Brugge and Ypres, we suggest €10 - €20 spending money will be sufficient. It will be the responsibility of the Scout to look after this money, the Scout Association take no responsibility if it is lost. We will not be able to provide a camp bank, so you will need to obtain your currency before you leave the UK. The monetary unit for both Belgium and France, is the Euro and the current exchange rate is in the region of €1.15 to GBP. Credit / debit cards are accepted, but it is suggested to take a mixture of Euros and GBP with you.

## Mobile phones

Participants may bring mobile phones, so that they can be used to record the expedition activities through photos or video. However, they must not be a distraction around monuments, places of interest and during ceremonies.

Although charge points will be available in the Fourage at Merkenveld, they will be limited in number so we will not be able to charge everyone's phone and camera batteries simultaneously. Equipment being charged at the Fourage are left entirely at the owner's risk,

There will not be any available Wi-Fi in the areas we are visiting or at Merkenveld. However, if the mobile will have a data connection, if these apps are downloaded in advance, you might find these useful over the weekend:

- Last Post Association
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- I-leper

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**Please note, we will be following the Scout Associations In-Touch system through which communication has been defined between the expedition and those in the UK.**

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## Alcohol and Smoking

The Scout Association has a key policy which requires Scouting to be provided in a safe manner without risk to health, as far as is reasonably practicable. As such this a dry expedition, however some refreshment and nibbles will be provided.

While it is understood that adult participants have the right to smoke, Scouting is about developing young people, including their health and welfare, therefore smoking, or vaping in front of Scouts of any age should be avoided whenever possible. Smoking on board coaches is not permitted, nor is within the buildings or forest at Merkenveld.

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**Any items required during the coach journey must be in your hand luggage, which includes Passport, snacks, drinks. The main luggage compartments will remain closed until we arrive in Merkenveld.**

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## Covid

Under the readiness level as set out by The Scout Association, visitors aboard may resume, but must follow Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) travel advice and manage the transmission of COVID and ensuring that the trips are safe and accessible.

As part of entering both France and Belgium, and returning, participants will need to comply with entry requirements, along with the requirements of any of the activities on our itinerary and the requirements to stay at Merkenveld campsite.

We will share regular updates on what participants need to comply and undertake to attend Operation Last Post in the '2022 Spring Communication' and the 'Final Details for Leaders'.

## Paperwork

# Permission and Health Forms

Health forms will be distributed after the final payment has been received – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

## Passports

Everyone participating in the expedition will need to have a Passport (and visa's if required) which is valid for six months from the day of travelling. The passport can be a UK child's 5-year passport (a 'child' is under 16), an adult 10-year passport (from age 16) or for non-EU nationals the equivalent documentation. We will be collecting the details of everyone's passport before the expedition. If you have any concerns about the documentation you are intending to use, please consult the OLP team for advice.

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**All passports can be held securely within the safe at Merkenveld.**

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## Wristbands

Each participant will be provided three wristbands, one to be fixed to their wrist, the second to their main luggage, and the third to their hand luggage. Leaders from each unit will be able to collect the wrist bands from the August Brookwood Last Post ceremony. Leaders will need to check the wrist bands for accuracy and advise the Core Team of any inaccuracies. Then distribute correct wristbands to their Scouts shortly before the departure date.

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**Wristbands must be attached to the participant's wrist, main luggage, and hand luggage to check-in and throughout the weekend until check-out.**

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## In touch

We will be appointing a County Home Contact(s) for OLP, who will act at the bridge for communications whilst we are abroad between OLP and those in the UK. The Home Contact will only be utilised in the event of the team needing to contact home or home needing to contact the core team

In our '2022 Spring Communication', we ask each unit to appoint a primary and secondary In-Touch contact, who will form part of the bridge between OLP and participants – who must not be related or emotionally involved with any member of the unit on OLP, and available for the duration of OLP.

## DBS

We will be validating that all adult participants DBS status – please ensure that your DBS is valid for the duration of the event.

## Insurance

Travel Insurance for the expedition will be arranged through Scout Insurance Services (Unity). A policy summary is available online at <https://www.unityinsuranceservices.co.uk/scout-insurance/travel>. If you need to understand specific policy details, then please contact Unity on 0345 040 7702 or [info@unityins.co.uk](mailto:info@unityins.co.uk).

## Follow us

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