



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

TOWER OF LONDON

# THE TOWER REMEMBERS

A Guide for School and  
Community Group Visits

**SPACE TO STIR AND BE STIRRED**

TOWER OF LONDON • HAMPTON COURT PALACE • BANQUETING HOUSE  
KENSINGTON PALACE • KEW PALACE • HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE AND GARDENS

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## INTRODUCTION

The Tower Remembers is a commemorative display of ceramic poppies installed at the heart of the Tower of London to mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The display uses nearly 30,000 of the original poppies, made for the 2014 installation, 'Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red' marking the sacrifices made by so many during the Second World War.

The specially commissioned installation is intended to resemble a 'wound' at the heart of the Tower, which was itself bombed during the Blitz. Poppies pour across the lawn overlooked by the ancient White Tower, where the blood-red flowers form a crater, with ripples flowing outwards.

It creates a shared space for visitors to remember and reflect on the collective sacrifice of so many in this important anniversary year.

The poppies are on loan from Imperial War Museums and were designed and made by the artist, Paul Cummins. The new display has been created by the designer, Tom Piper.

## CONTACT US

Historic Royal Palaces' Schools & Communities team is happy to offer additional support and advice to prepare for visits to all of our palaces.

For school visits, please contact: [towerlearning@hrp.org.uk](mailto:towerlearning@hrp.org.uk)

For community visits, please contact: [communities@hrp.org.uk](mailto:communities@hrp.org.uk)



## PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR VISITING THE TOWER REMEMBERS

Planning and preparing is essential to making your group visit as enjoyable as possible.

### BOOKING TICKETS

Prebooking is essential for all visits to Tower of London.

School Bookings: We anticipate opening bookings for the 2025-2026 academic year in June. School bookings can be made [online](#).

Community Groups: Community Access Scheme group visits can be booked using the online [CAS Group Visit Request Form](#).

### GETTING TO THE TOWER OF LONDON

This resource should be used in conjunction with the [Tower of London CAS](#) resource which includes detailed information, help and advice to help you plan your visit to the Tower of London. For those with mobility requirements and wheelchair users, there is a colour map detailing routes and other useful information.

For more information on visiting the Tower of London with your school this resource should be used in conjunction with the [Teacher Information Pack](#).

### ARRIVAL

Community Groups: On arrival please head to the Ticket Office on Tower Hill and present your confirmation email to the member of staff who will hand you the tickets that you have pre-booked.

School Bookings: On arrival please head to the Schools Desk on Tower Hill to collect wristbands for your group and start your visit.

### BAG SEARCHES

When entering the palace, everyone must go through the bag search. This is necessary to ensure all our visitors are protected whilst they are on site. All searches are carried out by professionals trained to identify offending articles. Please encourage your students and group members to ‘pack light’, only bringing what is necessary.

We ask that group leaders follow this guidance to make the process as smooth and quick as possible:

- Arrive in plenty of time for your entry time slot.
- Be patient – the process can take time.
- Ask students and group members to take the process seriously.
- Follow all instructions given by staff.
- Do not bring things such as scissors, compasses, metal cutlery or sharp implements.
- Be aware that prohibited items are weapons, fireworks, smoke bombs, pepper spray, any article that is illegal to possess under UK law.

Additional guidance for School Visits is available [here](#).

More [security information](#) can be found on our website.

## IDEAS TO EXPLORE BEFORE VISITING THE TOWER REMEMBERS

Alongside the practical planning, it is a good idea to introduce the themes and concepts of The Tower Remembers to students and group members before visiting. This will support everyone to get the most out of the visitor experience.

*The Tower Remembers:*

- 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.
- The display will run from 6th May just ahead of VE Day, through 15th August for VJ day culminating in a moment of remembrance for Armistice Day on 11th November.
- The Tower was home to the Yeoman Warders, high profile prisoners and soldiers during the Second World War.
- The Tower suffered heavy aerial bombardment during the Second World War in the Blitz, alongside the rest of the East End of London.
- The display will see nearly 30,000 of the original poppies, made for the 2014 installation, ‘Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red’, return to the Tower.
- The poppies were designed and made by the artist, Paul Cummins. The new display has been created by the designer, Tom Piper.

### WHAT IS VE DAY?

The display will open on the 6th May just ahead of VE Day. On 8 May 1945, allied forces declared ‘Victory in Europe’; the celebrations that followed became known as VE day. To mark the occasion, the Tower was illuminated with floodlights, and London celebrated with street parties, although the shadow of all the lives lost hung over the festivities.

The war against Japan continued until 15th August 1945 which meant many soldiers were still serving overseas. The effects of the war would be felt for many years.

- Why do you think it’s important that we celebrate the end of the war?
- What is significant about the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War?
- Are there significant moments in your community’s history that you celebrate?



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- What were some of the impacts of the Second World War on your local area?

### HOW DID THE SECOND WORLD WAR IMPACT THE TOWER?

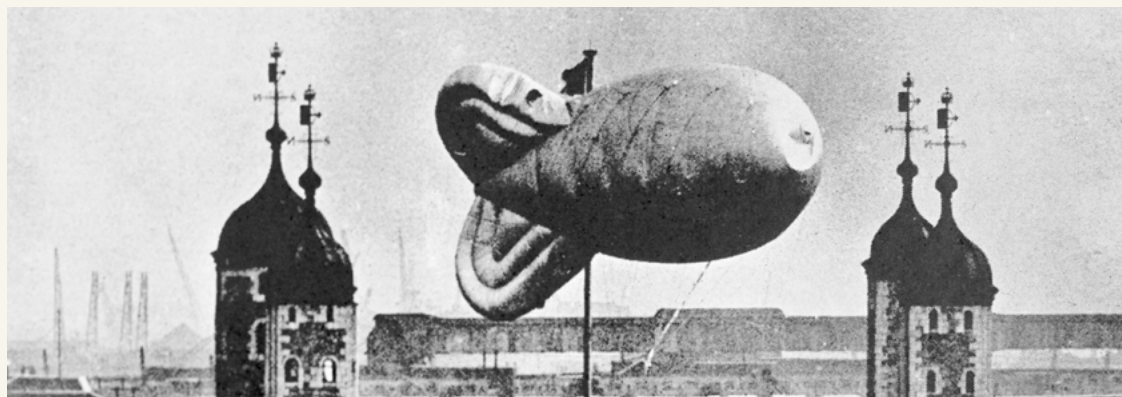
At the outbreak of the war, the Tower Armouries removed objects from the collection – including Henry VIII’s armour. The Crown Jewels were also moved to a secret location which was later revealed as Windsor Castle. Tower residents were issued with gas masks and steel helmets and prepared themselves for regular blackout drills.

By autumn, the vacated galleries in the White Tower were re-purposed for the military. Chambers were used as a sports room and concert hall for troops, with a canteen and library on the ground floor and an air raid shelter in the basement.

The government introduced a campaign calling for the public to turn green spaces into allotments – Dig for Victory. The Tower Moat became an allotment where residents, including Yeoman Warders, planted crops. The Moat had been used to grow vegetables and graze livestock before, as early as the 1890s.

The Blitz caused significant damage across the fortress, including to the Moat, the Main Guard and Tower Wharf. Many direct hits also disrupted gas, water, and electricity supplies for the Tower’s residents.





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## WHAT IS THE SYMBOLISM OF THE POPPY?

Poppies became a symbol of remembrance after the First World War. The idea came from a poem called “In Flanders Fields” written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian doctor. He wrote about how red poppies grew among the graves of soldiers in Flanders, Belgium. In 1921, the Royal British Legion started selling poppies to raise money for war veterans, and it soon became a symbol of remembering those who died in the war.

The ceramic poppies used in this display were first shown as part of the major art installation ‘Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red’ at the Tower of London in 2014 which marked one hundred years since the first full day of Britain’s involvement in the First World War. Created by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper, 888,246 ceramic poppies filled the Tower’s moat. Each poppy represented a British military fatality during the war. Made by hand each poppy is totally unique. The title for the installation, ‘Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red’, was inspired by a line in a poem written by an unknown soldier in the First World War.

Some people choose to wear white poppies to remember all victims of war from all nationalities. White poppies symbolise a commitment to peace and to finding non-violent solutions to conflicts.

- What other symbols do we use to remember and honour people?
- What monuments and memorials are there in your local area that commemorate significant moments in history?
- How do you want to remember?



