War Memorial and Victorian fountain restored in time for Remembrance

If you've passed Foxbush Corner or the Village Green lately, you may have noticed something different.

Hildenborough's War Memorial and the 1887 drinking fountain have both been cleaned, and stone that had turned grey over the years is pale and bright again. The work was carried out in September by Steve from Military Grave Restorer, who specialises in caring for military graves and memorials. It was funded by Hildenborough Parish Council so that both would be ready for Remembrance.

Because both monuments are Grade II listed, Steve used gentle cleaning products approved for heritage stone. The paving around each has also been relaid, cleaned and repointed, and three new planters now add colour around the fountain.

The War Memorial

The memorial at Foxbush Corner, where Noble Tree Road meets London Road, has stood for more than a century. It was unveiled on 5 October 1920 by Colonel F S W Cornwallis and dedicated by the Bishop of Rochester.

The tall cross, designed by architect Henry Philip Burke Downing, is carved from Clipsham stone. Look closely and you'll see a carving of the Crucifixion at the top, and the words "Lift up your hearts" near the base of the shaft.

The memorial bears 53 names from the parish: 37 men who died in the First World War, and 16 more added after the Second World War. With the stone cleaned, every name can be read clearly again, a fitting tribute as the village paused to remember this November.



Before: the memorial's stone had darkened with age and weather.



After: the cleaned memorial, ready for Remembrance 2026.

The Jubilee Fountain

Long before every home had running water, the fountain gave villagers a place to get a clean drink. It was put up in 1887 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, and the words "The Jubilee of Queen Victoria" still arch over its niche, with the date in a panel above.

It is built of Portland stone with Gothic detailing and a pink granite bowl, and its metal spout was made by J. Tylor and Sons of London.

Fountains like this sprang up across the country in the late 1800s. Cholera outbreaks had led to many village pumps being closed, and a public fountain offered a safe supply of water.

The fountain originally stood beside the B245 and was moved to the Village Green around 2005. It now sits on fresh paving, surrounded by flowers.



Before: the fountain's Portland stone was grey and spotted with lichen.



After: the cleaned fountain on the Village Green.

Looking after our heritage

Caring for landmarks like these is part of the Parish Council's work for the village, and this work will help protect them for years to come. Our thanks go to Steve for his skilled and respectful work.

Next time you're passing Foxbush Corner or crossing the Village Green, why not stop and take a closer look?

Find out more

- Hildenborough War Memorial, Historic England listing
- Drinking Fountain, Mount Pleasant, Historic England listing
- Military Grave Restorer