On the eve of the 100th anniversary of the start of WWI, [Robin Walker](http://www.worcesternews.co.uk/search/?search=Robin+Walker&topic_id=4568), MP for Worcester, and Lord Faulkner of Worcester visited Commonwealth War Graves and memorials around Worcester on 20 June 2014.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission maintains war graves at battlefields around the world from the Somme to Alamein, Gallipoli to Normandy and Monte Cassino to Ypres but also graves all over the UK for the soldiers, sailors and airmen whose lives were lost in military hospitals or at home due to the injuries sustained in battle.

More than 140 war graves are maintained by the Commission in Worcester’s main Astwood Cemetery, 33 in St John’s Cemetery but there are also seven in the churchyard of Claines, St John the Baptist Church.

Worcester’s Commonwealth War Graves commemorate soldiers from a wide range of regiments, a large number of Battle of Britain airmen and sailors who fought in both World Wars. Poignantly they also contain a number of graves for soldiers of other countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, who fought on the Allied side in the Second World War but also German and Italian soldiers who died in hospitals or prisoner of war camps.

Mr Walker and Lord Faulkner were shown around the memorials including the cross of Remembrance in Astwood Cemetery by Andrew Compton, the Regional Supervisor for the Central Region for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Mr Walker has written to local schools to encourage them to visits the Worcester sites as they mark the anniversaries.

Mr Walker said: “Whilst many people will have visited the famous battlefield memorials and it is right that thousands more will do so in the years to come, it is important to recognise the extraordinary history and the many hidden stories that lie so much closer to home in our churchyards and cemeteries here in Worcester.”

There are CWGC graves and memorials in 13,000 locations across the country, and more than 300,000 Commonwealth men and women who died in both world wars are commemorated in the UK, more than half casualties of the Great War.

Lord Faulkner said the visit to Worcester’s war graves was part of a country-wide initiative taken by the War Heritage Parliamentary All-party Parliamentary Group, with the CWGC and the “In from the Cold” voluntary organisation to map war graves in each parliamentary constituency in the UK.

He said: “Up to the end of last week 144 visits for MPs had been organised, and a further 76 are planned for the summer and the autumn. The CWGC’s Andrew Crompton was our guide in Worcester, and both Robin and I would like to thank him and the Commission for the marvellous work that they do.”