



Policy on Memorial Benches

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Review: As required

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1. Introduction

1.1 Wimborne Minster Town Council (the Town Council) acknowledges the wish of some residents to remember loved ones with a memorial bench in one of the open spaces owned by it and it is happy to accede to such requests where possible. However, it is important that those making the request remember that public spaces are for the mutual benefit and enjoyment of all, improving wellbeing and visitor enjoyment.

2. Objectives

2.1 This policy has been produced to:

- Be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial bench;
- Be clear and easily understood by residents and park users;
- Balance contrasting needs of open space users;
- Ensure that the open space areas are not compromised, and the high quality of their appearance is maintained;
- Establish responsibility for the maintenance, repair and replacement of memorial benches.

2.2 The policy will ensure that memorial benches and plaques:

- Are of a design and material approved by the Town Council;
- Will not cause offence to the public;
- Are consistent with their surroundings.

3. Application Procedure

3.1 All applications for memorial benches should be made using the official application form which can be downloaded at: www.wimborne.gov.uk and should be signed by the Applicant. If a hard copy of the application form is required, then this can be requested by telephoning the Town Council office on 01202 881655.

3.2 All memorial benches must be paid for by the Applicant before the installation commences.

3.3 The subject for the memorial bench must either have been a Wimborne Minster parishioner immediately prior to death or have another significant connection with the Town. Details must be given on the application form.

3.4 Applications for a memorial bench cannot be guaranteed or reserved prior to the subject's death. An entry may be made on a waiting list and the application will be treated in order of the date the completed form was received by the Town Council.

3.5 Should a request be refused and the reason given by the Recreation & Leisure Committee not accepted by the Applicant, then the Applicant has the right to request that the matter be referred to the Town Council for a decision and that decision will be final.

- 3.6 The Town Council will endeavour to accommodate the wishes of the Applicant regarding location of the memorial bench, but this will not always be possible.
- 3.7 The memorial bench and plaque will be the property of the Town Council and not the Applicant.
- 3.8 The Town Council accepts no responsibility to the Applicant if the memorial bench or plaque is damaged, vandalised or stolen.
- 3.9 The Town Council reserves the right to remove or relocate memorial benches at any time. Every effort will be made to contact the Applicant in either of these circumstances.
- 3.10 The Town Council will only permit memorial benches for individuals. Applications by individuals requesting a memorial bench for an historic event or pets will not be considered.
- 3.11 The Town Council does not permit the interment or scattering of ashes within its recreation grounds and other open spaces.

4. Memorial Benches and Plaques

- 4.1 The Town Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of Applicants who request a memorial bench but may have to limit the number of benches in a particular open space.
- 4.2 Benches and plaques must be of the type, material and colour specified by the Town Council in order to be coordinated with any other benches already situated in the intended location.
- 4.3 If the bench is to be placed on grass it will usually be fitted to a concrete base. The Town Council will arrange for all installation work to be carried out.
- 4.4 Memorial plaques fitted to benches are to be a maximum height of 5cm and length of 13cm and will be fitted in the centre of the upper most lath of the back of the bench.
- 4.5 Memorial plaques will be bought and engraved by the Applicant. The wording is to be agreed with the Town Council prior to engraving.
- 4.6 The affixing of plaques to existing benches will not be allowed.
- 4.7 The Town Council, in accordance with its current maintenance programme, will maintain any memorial bench. It accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or bench at the end of its useful life as determined by the Recreation & Leisure Committee. If the Applicant wishes to purchase a replacement bench/plaque, then he/she must follow the same application procedure contained within the current Policy.
- 4.8 No additional mementoes e.g. statues, flowers, wreaths, vases etc will be permitted on or around the bench.
- 4.9 The total cost of the installation of a memorial bench will be dependent on the type of bench allowed and the type of fittings required. The Town Council will charge for the bench, base, material and labour at cost plus an administration charge of 10%. The Town Council will procure the bench, all materials and labour.
- 4.10 Should there already be enough benches in the open space of the Applicant's choice, the Applicant may be offered an alternative choice of location for a bench installation. The list of locations is available on request.

4.11 No other types of memorial will be considered and only one memorial bench per subject will be permitted.

5. Review

5.1 This policy will be reviewed if the situation dictates.