

Eastleach Parish Council

www.eastleachparishcouncil.org

Memorial Benches Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy sets out Eastleach Parish Council's approach to the dedication of memorial benches within parish-owned or managed land. The Council recognises that memorial benches provide a valuable opportunity for remembrance while contributing to the amenity of public open spaces.
- 1.2. This policy ensures a fair, consistent and transparent process for managing requests.

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to all requests for:

- New memorial benches installed within parish council land
- Dedication of existing council benches
- Replacement or renewal of memorial bench dedications

This policy does not apply to privately owned land or benches not maintained by the Parish Council.

- 2.2. This policy sets out how we approve memorial benches; who is responsible for their upkeep; what is expected from the donor and the Council; and what happens to the memorial when the bench reaches the end of its life.
- 2.3. The Council will always endeavour to be respectful, sympathetic and fair towards those donating benches; to balance the needs of facility users; and to maintain the high quality of its open spaces.

3. Legal framework

- 3.1. When the Council agrees to install a bench they are bought by the friends and family and donated to the Council. The bench then becomes the property of the Council, and the donor does not retain any right to determine its future management. The Council will nevertheless endeavour to ensure it is properly maintained and cared for.
- 3.2. The applicant agrees to provide the Parish Council with up to date contact details for processing in accordance with its Privacy Policy and any data protection legislation. This data will be retained only as long as necessary for the administration of the memorial bench scheme.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1. Enquiries for a memorial bench should be made by email to the Clerk. The requests will be determined by the Council.

Memorial bench dedications will normally be considered for:

- Former or current residents of the parish
- Individuals with a strong connection to the parish

The Council reserves the right to decline applications that do not meet these criteria or where space is limited.

- 4.2. The Council will endeavour to accommodate any reasonable requests for the installation of memorial benches on Council-owned property only. Requests may not be able to be fulfilled if the location is unsuitable due to the risk of vandalism, antisocial behaviour, over-population of benches, or any other material factors.
- 4.3. Only benches suitable, in-keeping to the immediate surrounds, and benches of a robust design will be considered.
- 4.4. The exact location of the bench will be agreed between the donor and Council staff.
- 4.5. Where an existing bench is in poor condition, the Council and donor may agree to install a memorial bench in its place, the full cost of which shall be met by the donor as detailed below.
- 4.6. Memorial benches will only be considered from people who can demonstrate a close tie with the person being commemorated. The Council reserves the right to refuse a memorial bench should it have any grounds to believe it would be contrary to the wishes of the commemorated person's next of kin.

5. Costs

- 5.1. The cost of the bench will include any plaques/inscription, delivery and installation costs (e.g. fixings, paving or base around the bench). All costs provided will be inclusive of VAT.
- 5.2. A further one-off surcharge of 20% will be added on top of the cost for the continuing and future maintenance of the bench.
- 5.3. Below are some indicative costs. However, these will vary depending on the final design and specifications:
 - New bench: £500-£1,000 + plaque + installation/paving + 20% maintenance surcharge.
 - Plaque on existing bench: 50% cost of like-for-like replacement + plaque.

6. Installation

- 6.1. The arrangements for ordering and installing the bench will usually be made directly by the Council once a specification has been agreed with the donor and once the financial donation has been received.
- 6.2. No scattering of ashes of humans or pets at any site will be permitted.

7. Plaques

- 7.1. Commemorative plaques can be affixed to a memorial bench, subject to agreeing a size, wording and specification with the Council.
- 7.2. Plaques may be subjected to vandalism. Any replacement costs will need to be met by the donor.

7.3. Commemorative plaques may be affixed to existing benches, where there is no other visible sign of it being a memorial bench. The fee for this will be the cost of the plaque and installation, plus 50% of the estimated cost of a like-for-like replacement bench.

8. Maintenance

8.1. The Council will only source high quality/durable benches and will endeavour to maintain and care for the memorial bench.

8.2. Donors should also be aware that benches in public areas may be subject to vandalism and the Council will not be held responsible for any costs in replacing them.

8.3. The Council shall endeavour to maintain and care for a memorial bench for as long as possible. However, it reserves the right to re-site or remove any bench that it deems to be unsafe, unrepairable, or other reasons.

8.4. No placing of flowers or other objects at memorials will be permitted, except with the permission of the Council.

8.5. The donor shall not be permitted to undertake any maintenance of the memorial bench without the permission of the Council.

9. Duration of Dedication

9.1. Memorial dedications are normally granted for a period of 10 years from installation.

9.2. At the end of this period, the Council will:

- Offer renewal (subject to fee and agreement), or
- Remove or reallocate the bench

10. Removal or Relocation

10.1. The Council reserves the right to remove or relocate a memorial bench where necessary for:

- Health and safety reasons
- Site redevelopment
- Environmental or operational needs

10.2. Where possible, the Council will consult with the applicant or their representatives.

10.3. The Council accepts no liability for replacing a bench at the end of its useful life.

10.4. When a bench has been disposed of, the commemoration will automatically cease. In the event that the Council installs a new bench at the same location, it reserves the right to agree a commemoration with a new donor.