



## **Memorials Policy**

**Adopted on September 21<sup>st</sup> 2020**

### **1. Introduction**

Following the request for a contribution for memorial bench Fernwood Parish Council recognised the need for a fair and consistent approach for memorial requests in the Parish.

Parish Councils receive occasional requests from members of the public who wish to place a memorial bench within a public open space. These are often places with which individuals or families have a particular connection or special relationship. There is no legislative requirement for the provision of public or memorial benches although it is accepted that they provide a useful and valued public amenity.

The provision and management of all seats and benches on public open spaces owned or managed by the Parish Council is the responsibility of the Parish Council. This policy covers the provision of memorial benches in public open spaces which includes these areas and streets (subject to Nottinghamshire Council/ Via approval). The Parish Council does not own land managed FirstPort so is unable to assist with memorial requests in these spaces.

The policy welcomes the donation of suitable benches for appropriate locations in the public open spaces that the Parish Council manages or with liaison with other local authorities. The operating principles below will ensure that requests for memorials are responded to in a consistent, efficient and helpful manner. It will result in benches being purchased and installed in appropriate locations to ensure they are easy to maintain and not unduly prone to vandalism.

It is the intention that the policy only covers broad common issues and is not meant to be exhaustive. The content of this policy, including fees, will be revised as necessary to meet changing circumstances.

### **2. Operating principles**

a. Only sites which do not already have a sufficient number of benches will be considered. This will be determined by any site specific management plans or by the Parish Council.

b. Suitable locations within the Parish where people are likely to make good use of the bench will be considered. These will be areas which lack any seating nearby or are at a likely stopping point such as a particular view or rest point on a path. In addition, the location will be chosen to minimise maintenance and possible vandalism. Remote locations with poor access for maintenance and users will not be considered.

c. In locations where there will be several benches in the same area, no more than 80% will be offered as a placement for a memorial bench. This is to prevent the area taking on the ambience of a dedicated 'memorial garden' which may compromise the enjoyment of the space for general recreational activities.

d. Applicants to suggest a bench in keeping with the area.

e. The cost and life expectancy of the bench will depend on the type of bench and its location. To ensure installation is undertaken safely to the required standards, the Council will provide and install the memorial bench with plaque and surfacing in all cases. The donor's costs will include the bench, plaque, inscription, installation & surfacing, and, as the benches should require minimal maintenance, there will be a moderate 10 year 'up front' charge for this, included in the initial purchase price.

f. Retention of a memorial bench will be for the expected life period of the bench only, after which time it may be removed. Removed plaques will be offered to the original donor where practical (Donors must keep the Council updated on any changes of their contact details) . Any replacement bench on that site would be treated in the same way as a new application for a memorial bench.

g. Where there is no space for an additional memorial bench, requests for placement of a memorial plaque on an existing Parish bench will be considered where the bench is in good condition and point c above has been assessed. As the bench has already been provided through public funds, a charge which includes a modest contribution towards the original purchase of the bench, plus the plaque and installation cost will be required. This will accommodate an applicant's wishes and ensure a fair contribution is made towards the provision of the bench as a personal memorial. The funds raised will be used for the repair or provision of other public benches. The same conditions on life expectancy and maintenance will apply to any existing benches as apply to new benches.

h. The Council's standards of maintenance will be accepted as keeping the bench fit for purpose and clean. This will involve occasionally removing built up algae and grime, removal of graffiti and repairing minor faults within resources available. There is a move away from regular painting as in the long term this proves more costly than just replacing the bench when it has reached the end of its natural life.

i. Publicity on the Council website will provide information and an enquiry form for those interested in purchasing memorial benches. See Annex 2.

j. A standard written letter of agreement will be sent by the Council to the applicant to ensure all terms and conditions are clearly understood prior to purchase. The form will be returned to the Council with payment in advance of the memorial bench being purchased & placed. See Annex 3.

### **3. Memorial bench purchase procedure**

This procedure describes the process which will be followed from the first contact with the applicant / donor's enquiry to the last contact to inform them that their memorial bench is in place.

1. Applicant enquiries coming to the Parish Council are directed to the website to view the policy and download a memorial bench enquiry form as shown in Annex 2. If required, this information can be sent by post or e-mail to the applicant.
2. The applicant completes the enquiry form specifying a requested location, bench and plaque wording, and sends this by e-mail or post to the Clerk.
3. The Parish Council considers the requested location for the bench and decides, by applying the operating principles, whether a memorial bench is appropriate in this location. If the requested location is not suitable, the nearest alternative location will be offered.
4. The Parish Council ensure that the requested bench and plaque size and style is suitable for the location and that the plaque text is clear and suitable for use on a public bench. Annex 1 gives details of some bench vendors.

5. The Clerk contacts the applicant to confirm or discuss the details by phone. If an alternative location is required, a letter with a map to illustrate the alternative site being offered will be sent.
6. On agreement, a standard agreement letter is sent to the applicant to confirm arrangements and request payment / donation in full.
7. When payment / donation is received, the Clerk orders the memorial bench with plaque and inscription from the Council's nominated supplier and schedules installation with a completion target of 2 months from receipt of payment / donation and bench from supplier. From this point, the ownership of the bench is with the Parish Council.
8. The Clerk ensures the work has been carried out as specified, photographs the bench, and ensures all information is recorded in the asset management system for future reference.
9. The Clerk ensures a letter and photograph are sent to the donor to notify them that the bench is in place.

## Annex 1a: Bench Choice

The following bench providers are suggested but applicants are welcome to look for alternative providers:

<https://www.memorialbenchesuk.co.uk/>

<https://www.tdp.co.uk/>

Benches need to have a lifespan similar to the suggestion below and be low maintenance.

### Indicative lifespans

Standardise on recycled 'plastic wood' benches, with a 30 year guarantee, and 'natural wood' teak or oak benches with a 10 year guarantee to reduce ongoing maintenance and to facilitate a formal management regime. Further, that existing concrete with wood slat & rail benches to be repaired with recycled 'plastic wood'.

NB. 'Plastic wood' benches have an expected life-span of 50 years\*, and 'natural wood' grade A teak benches an expected of life\*\* of up to 15 years.

\*Eco Plastic Wood

\*\*Memorial Benches UK

## **Annex 1b : Council specification, and prices for installation of memorial plaques**

Plaques should be either bronze, stainless steel, or plastic, and will measure 5" x 2" (127mm x 51mm).

All text must be approved by the Council.

These will be mounted centrally on the topmost back rail, or on the back seat slat of a basic bench.

The Parish Council will order the plaque with the bench. If the case arises where the plaque is provided by the donor direct, for fitting on their new donated bench, it must comply with the specification above, and be received by the Council prior to bench installation.

Plaques provided by a donor, to replace a missing, or damaged plaque, on a bench previously donated by them will be subject to a contribution of £50 towards the cost of fitting by the Council, and photographic evidence of such.

Plaques provided by a donor, to be fitted to an existing Council bench, should comply with the specification above, and will be subject to a contribution of £100 towards the cost of the bench, its maintenance, fitting of the plaque, and photographic evidence.

Plaques can be purchased through the Council to be fitted to a Council bench for a donation of £150 towards the plaque and inscription, the bench, maintenance, and the fitting service and photo.



## Memorial Bench Purchase Enquiry Form

Please complete and return to: The Parish Clerk, Fernwood Parish Council, Fernwood Village Hall, Rubys Avenue, Fernwood, NG24 3RS or email to [office@fernwood-pc.co.uk](mailto:office@fernwood-pc.co.uk)

(Pre-printed forms are available from the same address on request )

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>Telephone Number</b>	
<b>Bench choice</b> <i>(Also indicate here whether you would like a plaque adding to an existing bench)</i>	<i>Insert web link or supplier and product code</i>
<b>Inscription required</b>	<i>Please print (in capital LETTERS) the name &amp; the full inscription, line by line, below – <b>this layout will not be printed</b> - include instructions such as 'centered' and/or 'italics' and/or 'bold' and typeface (Arial typeface is standard but a limited number of other fonts are possible – you will be advised if there is a problem)</i>
<b>Plaque type</b>	Bronze / Stainless Steel / Plastic <i>(Circle your choice)</i>
<b>Preferred Location</b> <i>To assist identifying ideal location, please give grid references, include a photograph(s), and/or a full description.</i>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## **POLICY – Terms & Conditions**

1. All applications for memorial benches should be completed on the official request form and be signed by the applicant.
2. All memorial benches should be paid for by the applicant as a donation.
3. All fees to cover the plot, installation, & maintenance is due to the Council prior to installation.
4. The Parish Council may limit the number of memorial benches in particular areas.
5. The Parish Council will notify the applicant in the event that the memorial bench is damaged, beyond normal wear and tear. The applicant should ensure that the Parish Council is in possession of current contact details.
6. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any memorial bench that has been damaged and is in the view of the Parish beyond economical repair, or dangerous, or has not been repaired within 4 weeks of the notification referred to in condition 5 above.
7. The Parish Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial bench from vandals, third parties, or whilst the Parish Council carries out routine maintenance.
8. Benches must be in keeping with the intended location.
9. Memorial plaques fitted to benches to be a maximum size of 127mm x 51mm (5" x 2") and shall fit in the centre of the upper most lath of the back of the bench.
10. The Parish Council will maintain memorial benches in line with the current maintenance regime.
11. The Parish Council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life and will dispose of any such bench at that time. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant.
12. Any maintenance carried out by a third party will be in strict agreement with the Parish Council and by appointment only.
13. On receipt of a memorial request, a quote will be sent to the applicant by the Parish Council if the application is accepted.

**Annex 3**

**Form of Agreement for a Memorial Bench to be placed in the Parish of Fernwood**

**Council to complete, for the donor to sign**

Memorial Agreement between Fernwood Parish Council and the donor:

..... (name), of .....  
.....  
.....(address)

This letter sets out the terms for the donation of a new memorial bench/plaque situated  
.....(location)  
and marked on the attached map.

Bench type:.....

Plaque material and inscription:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

The donor will donate the sum of £ ..... being the full cost of the installation of the bench and plaque. *(delete which ever is appropriate)*

The donor will donate the sum of £ ..... being the full cost of the installation of the plaque and a contribution to the cost of the bench. *(delete which ever is appropriate)*

The Council will place the bench / plaque in the agreed location within two months of receiving cleared funds. The Council will be responsible for the bench for the period of its natural life (approximately 10 to15 years if teak, or 30 to 50 years if plastic). Once the bench has reached the end of its natural life, the bench and plaque may be removed. The Council will then contact you, the donor, offering to return the plaque to you, or giving you the opportunity to purchase / donate another bench to replace the removed bench. Please keep the Council advised of your contact details, giving reference to your memorial bench. If the Council is unable to contact you, the plaque will be disposed of. The Council cannot guarantee against theft or vandalism and may not be able to replace either the bench or plaque in this event. I understand and agree to all the conditions above and enclose my payment.

Enclosed £.....

Signature.....(Donor)

Date.....