

Bench Placement

Policy Document - Version 1.0



BENCH PLACEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

The Council receives 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 all public open spaces owned or managed by the Parish Council is the responsibility of Environment Committee.

However, any placement of benches within Thurcroft Cemetery would fall under the responsibility of the Facilities Committee. This policy covers the provision of memorial benches in public open space which includes areas such as parks, cemeteries, and streets.

This policy recognises the need for a consistent approach to the provision of memorial benches in public open spaces. A rationalisation of the range and quality of infrastructure is also needed to avoid items which are onerous to maintain or have a poor life expectancy. In addition, opportunities to provide infrastructure for public benefit in different and new ways need to be maximised.

The policy therefore continues to welcome donations of suitable benches for appropriate locations in the public open spaces the Council manages. The operating principles below will ensure that requests for memorial benches are responded to in a consistent, efficient, and helpful manner. It will result in appropriate bench styles being purchased and installed in appropriate locations to ensure they are easy to maintain and not unduly prone to vandalism.

2. Operating principles:

1. Only sites which do not already have a sufficient number of benches will be considered.
2. Suitable locations within the site 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



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point such as a particular view or rest point on a path. In addition, the location will be chosen to minimise future maintenance and vandalism. Remote locations with poor access for maintenance and users will not be considered.

3. Occasionally a unique rather than standard bench design may be requested as a memorial. In these circumstances, details of the bench construction, materials and specifications will need to be submitted to Council for approval. On approval the bench would then be supplied to Council for installation in an agreed location. There is no guarantee that damage could be repaired, and any costly repairs would be at the discretion of the owner.
4. Purchase of a memorial bench will be for the expected life period of the bench only, after which time it will be removed. The cost will include the bench, plaque, inscription, installation and surfacing and, as the benches should require minimal maintenance, there will be no additional cost for this. The cost and life expectancy of the bench will depend on the type of bench and its location. Any replacement would be treated in the same way as a new memorial bench. To ensure installation is undertaken safely to the required standards, the Council will install the bench.
5. 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. The range of new benches has been chosen for durability without the need for regular painting or treatment. The Council doesn't approve any memorial items around the bench, these will be removed.
6. Publicity on the Council website will provide information and an enquiry form for those interested in purchasing memorial benches. The enquiry form is shown in Annex 2.
7. A standard written letter of agreement will be sent by the Council to the customer 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 placed. Annex 3 shows the standard form of agreement.

3. Memorial bench purchase procedure

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



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1. Customer enquiries coming to the Clerk of the Council are directed to the website to view the policy and download a memorial bench enquiry form as shown in **Annex 3**. If required, an enquiry form is posted to the customer.
2. Customer completes the enquiry form specifying a requested location, and bench and plaque style, and sends this by e-mail or post to Clerk of the Council.
3. The Clerk considers the requested location for the bench and decides, by applying the operating principles, whether a memorial bench is appropriate in this location. This will then be considered by the Council following the Clerks recommendation.
4. The Clerk ensures that the requested bench and plaque style is suitable for the location and that the plaque text is clear and suitable for use on a public bench. The bench style will be considered by the Council.
5. The Clerk contacts the customer 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 customer to confirm arrangements and request payment.
7. When payment is received, the Clerk orders the purchase and installation of the memorial bench, for completion within four months of receipt of payment.
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 by post or e- mail to the customer to notify them that the bench is in place.

Annex 2

Memorial Bench Purchase Enquiry Form

Please complete, print and return to: Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall, Green Arbour Road, Thurcroft, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S66 9DD. Alternatively, you can send the form by email to clerk@thurcroftparishcouncil.gov.uk.



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Section A - Contact Details

Name	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone	
Email	

Section B - Bench Style & Preferred Location

Bench Style		
Bench Price		
Location		
Plaque Attached <i>(Circle option)</i>	Yes	No
Plaque Style		
Plaque Message		

Annex 3

Form of Agreement for a Memorial Bench between Thurcroft Parish Council and Customer

Name	
Address	
Telephone	



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Email	
This letter sets out the agreement regarding the purchase of a new memorial bench to be situated at the location shown by the attached map.	
Your bench will carry a memorial plaque in the name of -	
Your memorial message will read;	
(name) will pay the sum of £..... being the cost of the installation and cost of the memorial bench.	
The Council will place the bench with plaque in the agreed location within four months of receiving the cheque and/or plaque. The Council will be responsible for the bench for the period of its natural life (approximately 15 years). Once the bench has reached the end of its natural life, the bench and plaque may be removed. A request to purchase a new replacement bench can be made at the appropriate time. 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 cheque for	
Amount (£)	
Signed	
Date	