



## **WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL**

### **POLICY FOR PROVISION OF MEMORIAL BENCHES IN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

Whitnash Town Council will facilitate the purchase and placement of memorial benches in public open spaces owned by the Town Council.

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 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 by Whitnash Town Council is the responsibility Hall and Playing Fields Committee.

This policy covers the provision of memorial benches in public open space.

This policy recognises the need for a consistent approach to the provision of memorial benches in public open spaces. As resources available to the Council to provide public services reduce, much more consideration of the level of infrastructure that can be provided and maintained is required.

The policy therefore continues to welcome donations for benches for appropriate locations in the public open spaces the Council own.

Requests for memorial benches are responded to in a consistent, efficient and helpful manner. It will result in appropriate bench being purchased and installed in appropriate locations to ensure they are easy to maintain and not unduly prone to vandalism.

#### **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 point such as bus stop. 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. In locations where there will be several benches in the same area, no more than 50% 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.
4. Whitnash Town Council will be responsible for ordering the Memorial Bench through an approved supplier in keeping with all new benches installed.
5. Installation can be done by Whitnash Town Council
6. Purchase of a memorial bench will be for the expected life period of the bench only, after which time it will be removed. The plaque will be returned to the family.
7. Whitnash Town Council reserves the right to remove a memorial bench at any time.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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. All new benches will be chosen for durability without the need for regular painting or treatment.
11. A standard written letter of agreement will be sent by the Council to the Donor 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.

### **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.

1. Customer required to complete a request form for a bench.
2. Town Clerk will consider the requested location for the bench and whether a memorial bench is appropriate in this location. Request will be discussed at the next Hall and Playing Fields Committee meeting for approval from Members.

3. If the requested location is not suitable, the nearest alternative location will be offered.
4. On agreement by the Committee, a standard agreement letter is sent to the customer to confirm arrangements and request payment.
5. When payment is received an order for the purchase of the memorial bench will be issued to the supplier.
6. Installation should be completed within 2 months of receipt of payment.
7. All information will be recorded in the asset register for future reference.

**Council standards for memorial benches and memorial plaques**

1. Plaques are bronze and measure 6 x 3 inch (15 x 7.5 cm). Text is Arial font style and can be up to 50 characters. The Plaque shall fit in the centre of the upper most lath of the back of the bench.
2. All text must be approved by the Town Council.
3. Maintenance standard - Benches will be kept fit for purpose with minor faults being repaired and build-up of algae or grime being removed within available resources.
4. No personal items, flowers or other decorations are permitted to be placed on the Memorial Bench, around a bench, tree or other location. If this were to occur, the Council reserves the right to remove and dispose of any such items be it in a Conservation or public area in the Town.
5. The Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial benches from vandals, third parties or whilst the Council carries out routine maintenance.
6. The Council in line with the current maintenance regime for benches will maintain the bench. The 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. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant.
7. Any maintenance carried out by a third party will be in strict agreement with the Council and by appointment only.
8. The Council will not approve applications for memorial benches to pets.

**Memorial Bench Purchase Enquiry Form**

Please complete, print and return to:

Whitnash Town Council  
Franklin Road  
Whitnash  
CV31 2JH

**Section A your contact details (Please supply your contact details below)**

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone .....

E-mail: .....

**Section B choice of preferred location**

I would like my bench to be placed within.....  
.....

**Section C memorial plaque**

The plaques will be provided by the Council and attached to your bench  
(Please supply the name to be on your plaque – **please print**)

Plaque to be in the name of .....

Please print your memorial message for the plaque below (for Council approval)  
A maximum of 50 letters can be included.

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

**Form of Agreement for a Memorial Bench to be placed in a Public Area for the natural life expectancy of the bench**

Memorial Agreement between Whitnash Town Council and

Name .....

Address.....

.....

.....Post code: .....

This letter sets out the agreement regarding the purchase of

1. A new Memorial bench

.....

Your bench will carry a memorial plaque in the name of:

.....

Your memorial message will read

.....

.....

.....

(Name) .....

Will pay the sum of £.....

1. Being the full cost of the installation on site of the bench with plaque.
2. The Council will place the bench with plaque in the agreed location within two months of receiving the cheque. 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.
3. 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

£.....

Signed.....

Date..... Contact telephone number.....