

Bethersden Parish Council Memorial Bench Policy

1. Introduction

Bethersden Parish Council recognises that memorial benches can provide a meaningful way for individuals to commemorate loved ones while contributing to public amenities. This policy sets out the conditions under which memorial benches may be requested, installed, maintained, and, where necessary, removed.

2. Applications

2.1 All requests for memorial benches must be submitted in writing to the Parish Clerk.

2.2 Applications must include proposed wording for any plaque, preferred location (subject to Council approval), and full contact details of the requestor.

2.3 The application will be considered at the first suitable Council Meeting.

3. Costs

3.1 All costs associated with the provision of a memorial bench are to be met in full by the requestor. This includes:

- Purchase of the bench
- Manufacture and installation of a concrete base
- Installation of the bench and any plaque

3.2 Payment must be arranged and made by the requestor but only once full agreement has been reached with Bethersden Parish Council.

4. Bench Specification and Guarantee

4.1 The Parish Council will provide a list of approved bench styles to ensure consistency and durability.

4.2 All memorial benches must come with a minimum 10-year manufacturer's guarantee.

4.3 Only benches meeting the Council's specification will be permitted.

5. Maintenance Responsibilities

5.1 Ongoing maintenance of the memorial bench is the sole responsibility of the requestor for the duration of its placement.

5.2 Maintenance includes cleaning, preservation treatments, tightening of fixings, and any repairs not covered under the manufacturer's guarantee.

5.3 If, in the judgement of the

Parish Council, a bench becomes unsafe, damaged, unsightly, or poorly maintained, the Council will contact the requestor and may:

- Request that maintenance or repairs be undertaken within a specified time; or
- Arrange removal of the bench if maintenance is not carried out.

6. Insurance

6.1 The memorial bench, base and plaque will be covered under the Parish Council's public liability insurance policy for risks relating to injury or damage to third parties, provided ongoing maintenance has been completed.

6.2 This insurance does not cover repair or replacement of the bench itself.

7. Removal of Benches

7.1 The Parish Council reserves the right to remove a memorial bench if:

- The bench becomes unsafe or unserviceable;
- Maintenance responsibilities are not met;
- The location becomes unsuitable due to operational, safety, or environmental reasons.

7.2 Where possible, the requestor will be contacted before removal; however, the Council retains the right to remove a bench immediately if it poses a risk to public safety.

8. Duration of Placement

8.1 The Parish Council aims to allow memorial benches to remain in place for a minimum of ten years, subject to condition and maintenance.

8.2 At the end of ten years, the Council will review the condition of the bench and may offer the requestor the option to renew, replace, or remove it.

9. Plaques

9.1 Memorial plaques must be approved by the Parish Council before installation.

9.2 Plaques should be no bigger than 15 x 7.5cm (6 x 3 inches) and wording appropriate for a public space.

10. Acceptance of Policy

10.1 Requestors must agree acceptance of this policy in writing before the order can be processed.