

# Hartley Wintney Parish Council Memorial Bench Policy & Procedure

## Introduction

Hartley Wintney Parish Council (HWPC) will consider requests for benches to be installed in memory of a deceased friend or relative. The deceased must have lived in the Hartley Wintney parish immediately prior to their death or had a significant association with the parish in the past.

## Standards for Benches & Plaques

In order to ensure that all installed benches and associated plaques are in keeping with the village in general and the proposed location, HWPC will maintain a limited list of appropriate benches from which a bench can be selected. The approximate costs associated with each bench will also be maintained but the precise cost will only be established on application. If an applicant would like a bench that is not on the maintained list, this can be requested, along with precise details, on the application form; this will then be considered but cannot be guaranteed.

HWPC also need to be mindful of the location and the quantity of benches and therefore a specific requested location may not always be possible, in which case an alternative location may be suggested.

The memorial plaque on the bench will be no greater than 20cm long and 8cm and will be fitted in the middle of the upper lath of the backrest by routing out to ensure that the plaque is fitted flush. It will be glued and screwed in position as appropriate.

HWPC, and only HWPC, will take full responsibility for placing the orders for benches and engraved plaques and arranging the installation.

Additional mementoes (e.g., statues, flowers, wreaths, vases) must not be placed or planted on or around the bench at any time.

## Ownership and On-going Maintenance

To ensure that all benches are kept in good order and in keeping with surrounding area, HWPC will take ownership of the benches on installation and take responsibility for on-going maintenance. The Parish Council will endeavour to maximise the life of the bench but once a bench gets beyond the point where it is reasonable to repair, the Parish Council will attempt to contact the applicant or members of the deceased family and inform them that it is our intention to remove it and give them the opportunity to replace it at their cost.

## Costs

The total costs of the benches will need to be paid by the applicant once the application has been approved and before any orders are placed. The total cost will include:

- The cost of the bench
- The cost of the plaque including engraving
- The cost of installation, including any required base
- A one-off contribution to the future maintenance of the bench

## Application Procedure

Applications can only be made after the death of the individual or individuals. The Parish Office must be contacted in the first instance to discuss a suitable location. If the location is on land managed by HWPC, a standard application form will be sent via post or email to the applicant. If the location is on land managed by Hart District Council or Hampshire County Council, the applicant will be advised regarding who to contact as there will be a separate application process for memorial bench enquiries.

1. The applicant completes the Application Form and returns it by post or electronically, to the Parish Office.
2. The Parish Office will include all correctly completed applications on the Agenda of the next Environmental and Amenities Committee. This committee will consider the application and make the final decision.
3. If the application is approved, the applicant will be sent a contract including all the details, location, plaque inscription and costs. If the application has only been approved for an alternative location, this will be made clear.
4. If the application is NOT approved, the applicant will be informed of the decision, the reason for the decision and advice on any further action. The applicant may appeal and ask for the application to be reconsidered by the Full Council.
5. The applicant will check the details and return the signed contract to the Parish Office along with full payment.
6. The Parish Office will purchase the bench and engraved plaque and inform the applicant of a likely installation date. The bench will be added to the Parish Council's asset register.
7. The Parish Council will arrange for the bench to be installed along with the engraved plaque.
8. Once the installation is complete the Parish Office will inform the applicant, enclosing a picture of the bench in situ.

### **Existing Memorial Benches**

Where permission for a bench has been granted prior to the approval of this policy, the Parish Council will continue to maintain the bench but when it gets to the point where it is not reasonable to repair the bench, the bench will be removed. The Parish Office will endeavour to contact the applicant or members of the deceased family and inform them and give them the opportunity to replace it.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Environment and Amenities Committee.

### **Amendment Record**

Version 1: Initial Issue as Interim Policy – 18 January 2021

Reviewed by Policy Committee – 25 January 2021

Adopted by Full Council – 01 February 2021

Version 2: Reviewed by E&A Committee – 21 October 2021

Agreed by Policy Working Group – 15 November 2021

Adopted by Full Council – 06 December 2021