

Biddulph Town Council



BENCH POLICY

Memorial Benches in the Town and Woodhouse Burial Grounds Policy

REVIEW DATE:

This policy is currently under review as part of a wider review of the Town Council's 'Burial Policy'. It will be published in 2022.

INTRODUCTION

Biddulph Town Council wishes to ensure that friends and relatives of those interred within the Town and Woodhouse Burial Grounds are able to apply for lasting memorials to their loved ones, now, and in the future.

In 2014, Biddulph Town Council opened the Woodhouse Burial Ground. Areas of hard-standing were created for the installation of memorial benches. Councillors recognised that providing memorial benches in this area on a 'first come first served' basis may mean that the option to install a memorial bench would no longer be a possibility for family and friends of those interred at a later date.

To enable the installation of memorial benches to be an option in the coming years, the Town Council has resolved to provide high quality benches sourced from local suppliers, which will be shared by a number of applicants. From August 2017, individuals are no longer able to apply for a bench in memory of their loved ones. However, applications can be made for fixed plaques on memorial benches. This policy applies to both the Town and Woodhouse Burial Grounds.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- To be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial. The policy recognises that the provision of a seat as a

memorial provides a tribute to a loved one, and is a benefit to the community in which they lived

- To be measurable, clear and easily understood by residents
- To balance the contrasting needs of a variety of users
- To ensure that the high quality appearance of the Burial Grounds is maintained
- To establish responsibility for the maintenance, repair and replacement of memorials.

The policy will ensure that memorials:

- Have permission from the next of kin
- Have a common appearance, style and size and are positioned in an appropriate place
- Will not cause offence to others.

It is the intention that the policy only covers broad common issues and is not meant to be exhaustive. The content of this policy will be considered annually, to meet changing circumstances. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Council for approval. Specific requests outside this policy may be considered by the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

This policy will be made available to the general public and all applicants for memorial plaques will be issued with a copy.

GENERAL

Applications for plaques on memorial benches must be made by the next of kin (or be approved by the next of kin) of an individual interred in either the Town Burial Ground or Woodhouse Burial Ground.

Applications can be made for individuals or couples. It is recommended that consideration be given to whether a plaque should be for a couple or for the individuals that were part of that couple. Applications will not be approved for a couple and then separate plaques for the individuals (i.e. three plaques). Only one application may be made per individual or couple. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the option to provide a memorial is available to a wide range of people. Therefore, multiple applications in memory of the same individual will not be granted.

Five memorial plaques shall be fitted to each bench. The bench will be purchased when all five applications have been received. Applicants should be

aware that this may mean there is a delay before the bench is installed. The Council will continue to ensure that applicants are kept up-to-date about likely timescales.

Plaques shall be fitted to the upper most lath of the back of the bench. The inscription on the plaque is to be restricted to "In (Loving) Memory of" the name of the person, recognition of public office (if appropriate) and the dates of birth and death; this shall not exceed 100 letters (including spaces).

The Council aims to ensure that memorial benches have a common appearance, style and size and are appropriate for that location. The Council will source and install benches and will make the final decision about the location of the bench. If the next location for a bench is not in the same location as the grave of a loved one, the Council will discuss this with the applicant.

Benches installed prior to this policy will continue to be the responsibility of the owner. Replacement of benches installed previously is not permitted. All new memorial benches will be subject to this policy.

Any new memorial benches that are not purchased through the Town Council will be removed to a safe compound. The owner will be contacted and removal will be necessary.

No additional mementoes e.g. vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, balloons or other ornamentation etc., shall be permitted on or around the bench. These shall be removed without reference to the original applicant.

The bench remains the property of Biddulph Town Council. Payment received from the applicant is treated as a donation.

Any individual visiting the Burial Grounds is permitted to sit on memorial benches. These are installed for the benefit of visitors to the site, and are not solely for the use of applicants.

The Council will not grant applications for memorial benches to pets.

MAINTENANCE

The Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the benches that are purchased through this policy and will maintain benches to an adequate standard.

The Council will maintain each memorial bench for a period of ten years. This will include any preservation, treatment and repair works.

The Council accepts no replacement liability for a bench that is considered by the Council to have reached the end of its useful life. The Council reserves the

right to remove any memorial benches that have been damaged and are in the view of the Council beyond economical repair.

The Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial benches from vandals, third parties or whilst routine maintenance is being carried out.

FEES

This scheme is not designed to provide an income for the Town Council. The cost of the provision of memorial benches and plaques has been kept as low as possible to ensure that it is not cost-prohibitive for individuals and families.

Costs are as follows:

Provision and installation of 3-seat bench	£800
5 plaques engraved and installed	£100
Contribution to ongoing maintenance for 10 years	£200
Total cost	£1100
Price for memorial bench and plaque per application	£220

Payment is required with every completed application form. Payment is non-refundable.

Prices are subject to review.

APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A PLAQUE ONTO A MEMORIAL BENCH

Date of application

Applicant details:

Full name and title	
Address	
Email address	
Telephone number	
Name of individual(s) to be remembered on the plaque	
Preferred location of memorial bench	

Please notify us of any change of name or address so we can contact you if we need to.

Inscription for plaque:

(PLEASE PRINT- 2 lines of narrative)

Data Protection Act:

Please confirm your consent below. You can grant consent to any or all of the purposes listed. You can find out more about how we use your data from our 'Privacy Notice' which is available from our website www.biddulph.co.uk or from Biddulph Town Hall.

You can withdraw or change your consent at any time by contacting the council office.

We may contact you to keep you informed about what is going on in the council's area or other local authority areas including news, events,

meetings, clubs, groups and activities. These communications may also sometimes appear on our website, or in printed or electronic form (including social media).

We may contact you about groups and activities you may be interested in participating in.

We may use your name and photo in our newsletters, bulletins or on

our website, or our social media accounts (for example our Facebook page or Twitter account).

I apply for consent to introduce this memorial into the burial ground and declare that all the statements to be inscribed on the memorial (for example names and dates) are accurate.

I am the next of kin of the individual(s) named on the plaque.

Signed: **Date:**

Print:

For Office Use only

Application (including correct fee) Received

Memorial Ordered

Memorial Installed

Expiry of Memorial