



Commemorative Bench Seat Policy 2021

Summary:

This policy provides a clear and concise definition of the management processes for the provision of Commemorative Bench Seats and aims to:

- ensure consistency that all customers are treated equally and fairly
- set out a clear agreement period to assist in the ongoing maintenance and management of commemorative bench seats
- address how to resolve any issues that may arise

Last Review Date	October 2021
Next Review Date	October 2024
Approval	
Policy Owner	Streetscene
Policy Author	Dave Stubington – Cemetery & Arboricultural Officer Sarah Glassock – Assistant Cemetery & Arboricultural Officer
Advice & Guidance	Please contact Streetscene
Location	Gosport Borough Council Website
Scope	This policy covers the procedures and management of the provision of commemorative bench seats along the seafront and within parks and open spaces in the Borough.



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Gosport Borough Council supports the needs and principles of allowing commemorative bench seats along its seafront and within its parks and open spaces. The Council is mindful that these facilities are enjoyed by a wide range of people. Therefore the Council shall ensure that the service is managed and regulated for the mutual benefit of all.
- 1.2 The policy will be reviewed every three years and revised as necessary to meet changing circumstances.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The Council is seeking to ensure a clear, measurable and sympathetic approach to the management of its assets within parks, open spaces and seafront.
- 2.2 The policy will ensure that commemorative bench seats have a common appearance, style and size which are appropriate for that location.
- 2.3 The policy will establish responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement.

3. Locations

- 3.1 Commemorative bench seats within the Borough's parks, open spaces and seafront shall be positioned to maximise the benefit and development of the park or open space and the Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicant.
- 3.2 The Council will limit the number of commemorative bench seats in particular areas so that they shall not detract from the prime purpose of the park, open space or seafront and ensure that the area remains aesthetically pleasing.
- 3.3 The size and location of the park, open space or seafront will determine the number of commemorative bench seats that may be permitted.
- 3.4 Commemorative bench seats situated along the seafront at Stokes Bay and Lee-on-the-Solent are in popular demand, therefore seats in these locations will be limited and evenly spaced in a consistent manner so as not to detract from the surroundings.
- 3.5 Once a site reaches the maximum capacity any applicable waiting lists will be closed. The Council reserves the right to refuse applications on this basis.



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- 3.6 The Council shall specify the type of seat to be installed to ensure it is in keeping with the intended location.
- 3.7 The Council reserves the right to relocate a commemorative bench seat, within the same site where possible, should the original position become unsuitable in the future.
- 3.8 Under no circumstances will any installation of a commemorative bench seat by a third party be permitted. If it is found that a commemorative bench seat has been installed by anyone other than the Council, the bench will be removed without notice and without guarantee of safe return.

4. New Commemorative Bench Seats

- 4.1 All commemorative bench seats are subject to a 10 year agreement commencing from the date of installation and can be renewed after this period if the applicant wishes. The fee covers the purchase, delivery and installation of the seat and plaque and a contribution towards the ongoing repair and maintenance for the 10 year period.
- 4.2 The Council will only accept instruction from the original applicant or will require written permission from them allowing someone to act on their behalf or to transfer the ownership.
- 4.3 At the end of the initial 10 year period the Council will endeavour to contact the applicant to offer them the opportunity to renew the agreement for a further 5 year period (renewed every 5 years thereafter). A renewal fee will be applicable.
- 4.4 The applicant may contact the Council no earlier than one year prior to the end of the agreement period to extend the agreement for a period of 5 additional years.
- 4.5 Where the agreement is not renewed the plaque will be removed and returned to the applicant. The bench, if still in a good, safe condition, will then be made available for others to use.
- 4.6 The applicant should ensure that the Council is in possession of current contact details. This information will be retained in accordance with the Council's retention policy and will not be kept for longer than necessary.
- 4.7 In the event the Council are unable to contact the applicant after the 10 year agreement period the Council shall remove the plaque and store for a period of 12 months before disposal. The bench, if still in a good, safe condition, will then be made available for others to use.
- 4.8 The Council reserves the right to remove any commemorative bench seat



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which in its opinion is damaged or beyond economic repair and will endeavour to notify the applicant.

5. Existing Commemorative Bench Seats

- 5.1 For commemorative bench seats installed prior to January 2022, where the Council are in possession of current contact details, the original applicant will be contacted and advised that a further 10 year agreement will apply at no cost.
- 5.2 Where the Council are not in possession of current contact details officers will make every effort to identify and contact the original applicant within the 10 year agreement period by placing notices on commemorative bench seats and various media outlets. In the event the Council are unable to contact the applicant after the 10 year agreement period item 4.7 will apply.
- 5.3 On the expiry of the initial 10 year period items 4.3 to 4.8 will apply.

6. Charities & Service Organisations

- 6.1 Existing commemorative bench seats arranged and installed through charities and service organisations in agreement with the Council will be exempt from the agreement period.

7. Plaques & Memorabilia

- 7.1 Only plaques authorised, purchased and installed by the Council will be permitted. Unauthorised plaques will be removed with immediate effect without notice.
- 7.2 Memorial plaques shall be stainless steel measuring 150mm x 50mm affixed forward facing to the centre of the upper most slat.
- 7.3 The final wording on the plaque shall be approved by the Council to ensure it is appropriate and inoffensive. The Council reserves the right to refuse an inscription that could be deemed offensive.
- 7.4 The Council cannot accept responsibility for an incorrect inscription as a result of an incorrectly approved proof.
- 7.5 Additional plaques shall be authorised, purchased and installed by the Council and affixed in a symmetrical manner. Placement of additional plaques will not extend the agreement period and must be arranged by or in memory of the original applicant.
- 7.6 No additional items such as flowers, wreaths, vases, ornaments, pictures or other mementos shall be permitted on or around the bench and will



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removed with immediate effect without notice.

8. Maintenance

- 8.1 In the event a new commemorative bench seat becomes unserviceable within the first 10 year period through general wear and tear the Council will repair or replace as appropriate.
- 8.2 The Council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the commemorative bench seat at the end of its useful life (10 years).
- 8.3 Where a plaque or commemorative bench seat becomes damaged beyond economical repair for any reason other than general wear and tear such as vandalism, third party damage, etc, the Council reserves the right to remove the bench and not provide a replacement.
- 8.4 Where a commemorative bench seat remains serviceable and there is a request to address cosmetic damage the applicant will be liable for any costs incurred.
- 8.5 The Council will undertake an annual condition survey of all commemorative bench seats within the Borough, carry out or programme any routine maintenance and repairs that may be required with a view to prolonging the serviceable life of the bench.
- 8.6 Maintenance and repairs will be undertaken by the Council. No unauthorised maintenance or repairs shall be undertaken by third parties.

9. Process

- 9.1 Customers must complete a Commemorative Bench Seat Application Form provided by Streetscene.
- 9.2 On receipt of the application form the customer may be placed on a waiting list should this apply for their chosen location, otherwise the Officer shall contact the applicant to agree on the location of the commemorative bench seat and arrange for the purchase and installation.
- 9.3 It can take up to 12 weeks for a bench and plaque to be delivered and installed.
- 9.4 Payment is required in full.
- 9.5 The Council will not grant applications for commemorative bench seats in memory of pets.