



Buckingham Town Council
Sponsorship of Commemorative Benches Policy

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1. Introduction

Memorial seats displaying a commemorative plaque may be sponsored by families, charities, businesses or any other organisations wishing to celebrate the life of a loved one or a special occasion. The Town Council is mindful that the areas where these commemorative benches can be placed are enjoyed by a wide range of people and so need to ensure that the service is managed and regulated for the benefit of all.

The term 'commemorative bench' also applies to 'memorial bench'.

This policy is separate to the Cemetery Memorial Bench Policy and does not relate to any memorial benches requested to be installed at the Brackley Road cemetery.

2. Background and Objectives

2.1 The Council seeks to use a clear, measurable and sympathetic approach to the management of its assets in open spaces around Buckingham, taking into account of the sometimes-contrasting needs of a variety of facility users.

2.2. The policy will ensure that commemorative benches are erected which have a common appearance, style and size and will not cause offence to others and will establish responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement.

3. Service and Conditions

3.1 Buckingham Town Council offers a sponsorship service for a bench on Town Council owned land to display a commemorative plaque.

3.2 The placing and maintenance of commemorative benches of Council land is undertaken by the Town Council's Greenspaces Team.

3.3 All requests for commemorative benches should be emailed to the Town Council's Estates Team on: Estates@buckingham-tc.gov.uk or Greenspaces@buckingham-tc.gov.uk

3.4 Benches and plaques provided will be of the type and colour specified by the Estates Team to be in keeping with the intended location. Bespoke and 'unique' designs will not be considered.

3.5 Applicants can request a specific location, details of the parks under the Town Council's land ownership can be found here: [Parks And Green Spaces | Buckingham Town Council \(buckingham-tc.gov.uk\)](https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/Parks-And-Green-Spaces)

Agreed Feb 2023

3.6 The exact location of the bench will be determined by the Council, dependant on need and availability. Whilst the Council will try to locate a bench at a requested site, due to the popularity of some locations, this cannot be guaranteed. Also, the Council will limit the number of commemorative benches in particular areas so that they shall not detract from the prime purpose of the open space.

3.7 Benches are ordered from the Town Council's supplier(s) and applicants are requested to pay a 50% deposit before the bench is ordered and the balance must be settled after the bench has been installed.

3.8 Applicants will be sent a proof of the bench and commemorative plaque for approval before any orders are placed with the supplier. The lead time for ordering, delivery and installation can vary and an application can take up to 6 months to process.

3.9 It is expected that any commemorative bench will have a serviceable life of 15 years. This 15 year period is calculated from the date of installation.

4.0 All assets on Town Council land are regularly inspected by the Greenspaces Team. Any benches that found to be in a poor state of repair will be reported to the sponsor to ascertain whether:

4.0.1. The sponsor requires removal and the return of any plaque/bench to the sponsor.

4.0.2. The sponsor can reapply for a new seat and plaque in the same location, or families may wish to pay for a further period of sponsorship for the plaque only, if the bench is still in an acceptable condition.

4.1 Should contact details not be available and a memorial bench is deemed to be unrepairable and unsafe for use, then any plaques will be from removed benches and retained by the Council for a year, for the sponsor to collect.

4.2 Should a bench or plinth become unsafe or damaged through general wear and tear, the Town Council will arrange for repair.

4.3 Under no circumstances will any installation of a bench by a third party be permitted. If it is found that a bench has been installed by anyone other than the Council, the bench will be removed without notice and without guarantee of safe return

4.4 No additional mementoes e.g. banners, vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, balloons or other ornamentation etc., shall be permitted on or around the bench. If found, these will be removed without prior notice. The bench should be accessible to be sat on at all times.

5.0 Request for benches on land not owned by Buckingham Town Council

5.1 If the request location is not on Town Council owned land, then the office will attempt to discover the land owner and facilitate a dialogue between parties.