

# **Sutton Parish Council**

## **Bench/Seating and Memorial Policy**

**October 2023**

## Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	3
2.	APPLICATION PROCESS FOR MEMORIAL BENCHES/BENCHES/SEATING .....	3
3.	CONDITIONS FOR MEMORIAL BENCHES .....	3
4.	ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF MEMORIAL.....	4
5.	TREE AND SHRUB MEMORIALS.....	4

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sutton Parish Council (SPC) aims to ensure a clear, structured and sympathetic approach to the management of memorialisation to parishioners on public land. This also needs to account for the sometimes-contrasting needs of a variety of users.

The policy also seeks to ensure that memorial benches are installed which are instigated by the next of kin or executor and that benches have a common appearance, style and size which are appropriate for that location. The policy will establish responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement.

Any applications or queries on memorialisation should be made to the Clerk at 01625 850532 and/or [clerk@suttonparish.co.uk](mailto:clerk@suttonparish.co.uk)

## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR MEMORIALS/BENCHES/SEATING

In the first instance, the applicant should read this policy and then contact the clerk for an application form. The applicant will be asked, at a minimum, to confirm the following:

- That the applicant is the next of kin or executor for the person being memorialised
- Name contact details of applicant and name of person being memorialised
- Confirmation that person being memorialised was a resident of Sutton, or otherwise
- The full plaque inscription
- Preferred style of bench, and colour
- Preferred bench location and position, and any alternative locations
- Confirmation of commitment to onward maintenance of the bench (see Conditions)
- Name of contractor chosen to install the bench
- Acceptance of all Conditions

The clerk will present the application to SPC at the next council meeting for consideration of approval. SPC councillors may have further questions of the applicant before approval can be given; best attempts will be made not to prolong the decision-making process.

## 3. CONDITIONS FOR MEMORIAL

- (a) Applicant is required to maintain the bench for the duration of its life.
- (b) Applicant should ensure that SPC is always in possession of current contact details.
- (c) The rights to the placement of the bench remain those of the applicant and cannot be passed to others unless specifically agreed by SPC and the applicant.
- (d) Person being memorialised must have been a resident of Sutton Parish – exceptions on a case by case basis.
- (e) Applicant is required to pay for bench, plaque, and all installation costs.
- (f) Method of installation to be agreed by SPC; eg on paving slabs, on concrete foundation.
- (g) Contractor installing the bench must be approved by SPC.
- (h) Bench style/colour to be approved by SPC; must be in-keeping with the area.
- (i) Bench plaques to be maximum size: 175mm x 75mm in the centre, upper most bench slat.
- (j) Plaque inscription to be approved by SPC; SPC reserves the right to refuse applications on this basis. An additional plaque may be added, if maintenance becomes too great, on agreement with SPC.
- (k) SPC will not grant applications for memorial benches to pets.

- (l) SPC will limit the number of benches in some areas: final decision by council.
- (m) Location/position to be chosen to maximise the benefit and development of the village.
- (n) 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.

#### **4. ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF MEMORIAL BENCHES**

- (o) SPC will contact the applicant in the event that the bench is damaged or beyond repair.
- (p) Damage to bench must be resolved by the applicant with no cost attributed to SPC.
- (q) SPC reserves the right to remove a bench if:
  - i. In the view of the clerk or council, it is deemed to be beyond economical repair.
  - ii. If it has not been repaired within 2 months of alerting the applicant using the contact details provided, unless an action plan to repair/replace the bench has been agreed within those 2 months
  - iii. If the bench is deemed to be dangerous or a risk to the public we will carry out action and then look to recover the costs – this could result in the bench being removed immediately.
  - iv. SPC accepts no replacement liability for the bench or plaque at the end of its life and will dispose of any such bench.
  - v. In the event that a damaged bench is removed, SPC will offer the applicant the option to place a new bench; if the applicant cannot be contacted using the provided contact details, after a period of 3 months, SPC reserves the right to offer the bench place to another applicant.

#### **5. TREE AND SHRUB MEMORIALS**

SPC regrets that no tree or shrub memorials are permitted. Unauthorised placement of trees or shrubs may result in them being removed without notice.