

WARBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Policy and guidance on the placement of memorial benches and plaques

Warborough Parish Council occasionally receives requests from members of the public or organisations who wish to place memorial or commemorative benches or plaques in the villages in areas managed or owned by the Council.

These requests are understandable and appreciated as often parishioners have been resident for many years and may have made a significant contribution to village life. This policy is intended to provide any applicants with guidelines for such requests.

What to consider before making an application?

- The Parish Council will consider each application on its merits, but before applying an applicant could consider factors such as suitability of location, if there are others already in the vicinity, if it offers obvious amenity value (i.e. is the proposed site on or near a footpath), and if the proposed site is of some significance to the Applicant.
- The person to be commemorated should normally be a resident of the Parish, ideally of long standing and have made a significant contribution to village life. However the Applicant is welcome to add any other factors that would assist the Parish Council in its assessment.
- The Applicant should also consider if the location indicates that planning permission is required. In the event of doubt, the Applicant can seek the advice of SODC. Any costs associated would normally be the responsibility of the Applicant.

What the process is to purchase and install a bench or plaque?

- The bench or plaque must be purchased through the Parish Council. The Applicant can recommend design, but the Parish Council will review this to ensure its style is in keeping with village character.
- The materials used should be sufficiently robust to last for a minimum of 25 years without replacement, and the cost of preparing the Site (for example a concrete base and metal fixings) will be at the cost of the Applicant.
- The bench or plaque can be inscribed appropriately, but the Parish Council would normally approve the wording to confirm it is appropriate.
- The Parish Council cannot guarantee that the bench or plaque will be placed at the location requested - if this is the case, an Officer will contact you to discuss an alternative site
- Benches or plaques may need to be made to order and therefore delivery time will be dependent on the supplier
- Once installed, the bench will become the property of the Parish Council and will be available for use by the general public

- Please note in order to avoid “over-crowding” the number of sites is limited, and approval will be given subject to availability.
- Payment is required in advance once the Placement Request has been approved.

Maintenance and replacement of the bench or plaque

- The bench will be repaired, if vandalised where it is deemed economic by the Council.
- If the bench is vandalised or damaged beyond economical repair, it will be removed and disposed of at the discretion of the Parish Council. The Parish Council will not be responsible for replacement of the damaged bench. The purchaser will be notified of the removal at the last known address.
- If the bench goes missing the Parish Council will not be responsible for its replacement.
- A claim may be made under the Parish Council’s insurance policy for damaged or missing benches subject to the terms and conditions of the Parish Council’s insurance policy at the time of the incident – any excess due to be paid by the donor of the bench.
- After a minimum of 25 years, if the Applicant cannot be contacted, it may then be appropriate to refurbish or replace a bench in a location with an alternative inscription. The Applicant accepts this as a condition of approval.