

Memorial Benches, Planting and Plaques

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council (SCPC) recognises that members of the community may wish to remember loved ones with a memorial placed in a public open space but is mindful that these are shared spaces and therefore it is appropriate to manage and regulate such installations. This policy will ensure that each request is treated fairly and transparently.

All applications should be made in writing to the Clerk.

Memorial Benches

1. Requests for Memorial Benches

For areas of land owned by the County or District Council then their permission will be required as landowner, in addition to the Parish Council 's agreement to insure and maintain the bench.

Requests for Memorial benches will be considered by the Parish Council at the next possible meeting. As sites are limited, priority will be given to those who can demonstrate a strong connection to the village.

A request for a particular location will be considered but the final decision will rest with the committee according to the perceived impact that siting a bench may have (for example being placed close to residential premises may cause a nuisance to the homeowner). If SCPC are not the owner of the land, then approvals will be required from the relevant authority.

The design of the bench must be submitted to the Parish Council as part of the application. A list of possible suppliers includes:

www.davidogilvie.com www.uk.glasdon.com www.oxfordoakpublicspace.co.uk

The requestor will pay the supplier and installer directly. The installer must be approved by the Parish Council.

The requestor may mount a small memorial plaque on the bench, the wording of which should be advised to the council prior to mounting. The Parish Council will not withhold permission unless the wording used is considered unsuitable.

Memorials will be limited to benches. No additional mementos (vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, stuffed toys etc) will be permitted on or around the memorial.

All benches will be subject to a maintenance fee, benches near to residential properties will be subject to an additional administration fee to cover the consultation with residents. If a bench requires planning permission, then the requestor will need to submit and pay for the application.

2. Maintenance (benches)

Benches are expected to have a serviceable life of 10 years. On reaching the end of its serviceable life a bench will have to be removed, unless deemed safe to stay in place. The original requestor will be contacted if possible and any memorial plaques will be returned.

The Parish Council will be responsible for general maintenance of benches to ensure they meet health and safety requirements and will be regularly reviewed. Works will be carried out as necessary. To enable this a maintenance fee of £200 is required at the time of installation.

SCPC reserves the right to relocate benches where there is a need to do so. This may be temporary to allow works to be carried out, or more permanent if a location becomes unsuitable over time.

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council
October 2023

3. Consultation with residents (benches)

Where the proposed site is in a residential street (including the Village Green and All Saints Lane), the Parish Council will need to consider the opinion of residents. The Clerk will write to all households within 50metres (as the crow flies) of the proposed location giving them 21 days to submit a response.

Due to the time involved in administering the consultation an administration fee of £50 will be required before the consultation is commenced.

The results of the consultation will be available to the public although all identifying names, addresses and contact details will be redacted.

Memorial planting

1. Requests for Memorial planting – trees and shrubs

Requests to plant tree or shrubs as a memorial will only be considered for Parish Council owned sites. (Recreation Ground, Cemetery, Village Green, All Saints Lane)

Requests for Memorial planting will be considered by the Parish Council at the next possible meeting. As sites are limited, priority will be given to those who can demonstrate a strong connection to the village.

A request for a particular location will be considered but the final decision will rest with the committee according to the perceived impact that the planting may have.

The type and size of tree or shrub will need to be submitted to the Parish Council. The requestor will pay the supplier and installer directly. The installer must be approved by the Parish Council, ideally the Council's current grounds maintenance contractor will be used.

The requestor may mount a small memorial plaque on a ground spike near the tree/shrub, the design and wording of which should be advised to the council prior to mounting. The Parish Council will not withhold permission unless the wording used is considered unsuitable. No additional mementos (vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, stuffed toys etc) will be permitted on or around the memorial.

2. Maintenance (planting)

The requestor will be responsible for the first 24 months of maintenance, including watering. After this point the Parish Council will be responsible. Any memorial plaque installed along with the planting should have a lifespan of at least 5 years, after 5 years the Parish Council reserves the right to remove the memorial. The original requestor will be contacted if possible and any memorial plaques will be returned.

3. Consultation with residents (planting)

Where the proposed site is on the Village Green or All Saints Lane, the Parish Council will need to consider the opinion of residents. The Clerk will write to all households within 50metres (as the crow flies) of the proposed location giving them 21 days to submit a response.

Due to the time involved in administering the consultation an administration fee of £50 will be required before the consultation is commenced.

The results of the consultation will be available to the public although all identifying names, addresses and contact details will be redacted.

Memorial plaques

1. Requests for Memorial plaques (separate to requests for benches and planting)

Requests to install a memorial plaque will only be considered for Parish Council owned benches which were not originally dedicated to an individual or organisation OR for the internal face of the Cemetery wall.

The inscription on the plaque will need to be submitted to the Parish Council. The Parish Council will not withhold permission unless the wording used is considered unsuitable.

The production and installation of the plaque will be arranged by the Parish Council. The requestor will pay the Council for the actual cost of production and installation plus a £50 administration fee, before the plaque is ordered.

No additional mementos (vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, stuffed toys etc) will be permitted around the memorial.

2. Maintenance (plaques)

The Parish Council will ensure the memorial plaque remains legible for 5 years. After 5 years the Parish Council reserves the right to remove the memorial. The original requestor will be contacted if possible and any memorial plaques will be returned.

If the memorial plaque is installed on a bench and the bench is removed during the 5 year period then the plaque will either be remounted on a new bench in the same location or transferred to the Cemetery wall.

Scattering or interment of cremated remains (ashes)

The Council will not give permission for the scattering of cremated remains at any site. The Council will allow the interment of cremated remains at the Cemetery in a marked plot subject to the rules and regulations for the Cemetery.