

Memorial and Commemorative Bench

Principles:

The following principles are applied in order to maintain a consistent approach to the provision of benches or plaques, maintain quality & design standards, to ensure they are being located in appropriate places and define maintenance responsibilities.

1. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is responsible for the maintenance of benches placed on verges and footpaths at the side of public highways, although ultimate permission to place a highway bench is required from the Highway Authority (County Council).
2. Sites which already have sufficient supply of benches will not be considered for additional benches although the provision of plaques on existing benches may be appropriate. This will be determined by the Council using site management plans, local knowledge or following a visit to the location.
3. The placing of new benches at a site will only be permitted if it is likely that the site is suitable and public will make good use of it and that it provides a valuable amenity. Isolated or remote locations may be deemed inappropriate for reasons including:
 - of poor access
 - risk of vandalism
 - the cost of providing one off specially designed benches in conservation areas or listed public open spaces and especially sensitive areas where there may be objection from the public to new benches.
 - where a proposed bench would impede access, street cleaning or other maintenance activities
4. Where several benches are located together, no more than 50% may be memorialised. This is to prevent areas being dominated by memorial benches which some park users may find out of keeping with the environment.
5. The choice of bench will be determined based on existing bench styles/designs in the immediate vicinity. Appendix 1 shows the type of benches currently available and in use at key locations, notwithstanding the overarching principle of seeking to match bench provision in proximity. Plaques will be limited to bronze or stainless steel on cast iron ended benches and bronze or aluminium on recycled plastic benches.
6. Purchase of a bench will be for the anticipated life span of the bench only, at 15 years, after which time it may be removed by the Council. The fee payable will include the purchase price of the bench and/or plaque, inscription, installation, surfacing and associated administrative costs. The Council will manage all these works including the supply of the bench and/or plaque. Donated benches or those sourced directly by a customer will not be accepted, to avoid any inconsistencies in style and quality.
7. The cost of routine maintenance is included in the fee payable. Depending on wear and tear timber benches will receive routine maintenance (painting/varnishing) at no more than once every 5 years for park benches. Recycled plastic benches do not require any routine maintenance.
8. Where there is no space for an additional bench, a request for the placement of a plaque on an existing bench will be considered where the bench is in good condition and principle 3 has been assessed. If the bench has been provided through public funds previously, the charge payable for the plaque includes a contribution towards refurbishment of the bench or where appropriate the contribution may be put towards the refurbishment of street furniture in the area to maintain consistency of style. The plaque will be retained for the life of an existing bench, but the Council will use best endeavours to relocate plaques to replacement benches at the end of their useful life, subject to a 15 year minimum in line with the provision of benches themselves.
9. Enquiry forms for those interested in purchasing benches are made available on the Council's website. Once approved, the Council, will issue a letter or email confirming agreement to the customer outlining the terms and conditions associated with purchase. This is to be signed and returned along with the appropriate payment in advance of physical works.