

Environmental Operations **Policy Statement**

Parks Memorial Benches

Objectives

- To outline the Council's approach to the donating and installation of Memorial benches

Introduction

Benches are available to donate to the council to commemorate a loved one or allow members of the public to make a dedication of their choice. Donated memorial benches can be placed in many Council owned parks, open spaces and on highway land (subject to Harrow Council approval) within the Borough.

This policy supersedes all previous arrangements, policies and agreements and applies to all benches on Harrow Council land.

Responsibilities

Those responsible for the implementation of this policy:

Head of Environmental Operations
Grounds & Streets Operations Manager

References

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other policies on:

Grounds & Streets

Policy Framework

Harrow Council will:

- Welcome donations of new memorial benches
- Ensure all benches are purchased through our Grounds and Streets team
- Ensure a uniform appearance to all benches around the Borough
- Ensure any new bench installation matches existing benches within the designated park
- Endeavour to offer a wide range of locations across the Borough
- Endeavour to accommodate the donor's preference for the bench location.
- Reserve the right to relocate benches within the same open space if required

- Reserve the right to refuse an application if the preferred location is unsuitable and our offers of an alternative site are refused
- Remove any bench that is damaged beyond repair and inform the customer. A replacement bench will be charged at the standard charge applicable at the time
- Not permit third parties to provide their own benches for installation on Harrow Council land

Practical Implications

Bench Design

- The standard 'Harrogate' Seat Bench is a classic 3 seat hardwood bench. The bench is 1.8m wide. Bronze plaques and arm rests come as optional extras (at extra cost). Once installed the bench shall become the property of the council.

Timescales

- Applications for donated memorial benches are processed all year round. The council will respond within 10 working days on receipt of a request.
- Once the application has been approved and the payment has been processed, the council will purchase the bench, have the plaque inscribed and arrange for installation. The installation of a bench and plaque can take up to 16 weeks. The customer will be informed once the bench has been installed.

Location

- The Council will endeavour to accommodate requests for a bench to be placed at a specific location within a park, garden or cemetery but reserves the right to relocate benches within the same open space if required. No further applications are being accepted for donated benches in Pinner Memorial Gardens.

Conditions of Dedication

- New memorial benches will normally remain on site for a period of ten years, after which time the space becomes available for a new installation.
- At the end of the ten-year period the council will attempt to contact the seat donor and offer to extend the period based on the charge of the service at that time of renewal.
- If after ten years a new period is not entered into the bench will be removed and the space will be made available for reallocation to a new donor.
- Once the seat has been installed it becomes the property of the council.
- Floral tributes and related memorabilia are not permitted to be left on or at seat locations. Any such items found will be removed by the council.

- At the end of the dedication term, and where it is not possible to contact the seat donor to offer to extend the period or where the seat donor chooses not to renew the donation, the council may remove the memorial plaque and where reasonably practicable, return it to the bench donor.
- It is the responsibility of the donor to notify the council of any change in address or contact details.

Vandalism and Damage

- If the bench is damaged beyond repair the council will remove it. We will look to offer a replacement, but this will be at the standard charge applicable at the time. The council does not hold insurance cover for the damage, loss, or destruction of benches. The council will not replace benches that are lost or damaged beyond repair. The donor of the seat will be notified if this is the case.

Equality and diversity

- The Environment & Culture Department will adhere to Harrow Council's Equality and Diversity policy in the implementation of this policy, and as such will not discriminate against any resident on the grounds of his/her race, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, age, religion, or class (Please refer to Harrow Council's Equality & Diversity Policy for further information).

Value for money

- We will embed a comprehensive approach to managing our resources to provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services to meet our residents' needs.

Review

- This policy and procedure will be reviewed one year after implementation unless:
 - There are significant changes to legislation or regulation
 - Deficiencies or omissions are identified
 - The policy is deemed to be no longer effective or in line with business values

Appendix 1

New Bench & Plaque

To ensure uniformity across the Borough, the Council offers the 'Harrogate' style bench. The Harrogate bench is made of a suitable hardwood (Iroko), with cast iron legs, standard black and the dimensions are as follows:

- Length 1800mm
- Width 595mm
- Height 775mm



Charges for New Bench & Plaque

- The standard charge (excluding VAT) for this service, with effect from 31st May 2023, is as follows:
 - Supply of the bench, creation of base, wood treatment and installation = £1216.95
 - Fitted bronze plaque and inscription = from £80 priced per letter (will be quoted by supplier on receipt of inscription)
 - 10% administration fee
- Any additional extras will be added to the fee prior to purchase.
- The charge may alter from time to time as and when the council reviews its fees and charges.
- The Council requires full payment in advance of the order.

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