

Poundstock Parish Council Cemetery Memorial Benches Conditions & Procedures

Introduction

The Council receives occasional requests from members of the public who wish to place a memorial bench within the cemetery. Although there is no legislative requirement for the provision of public or memorial benches, it is accepted that they provide a useful and appropriate public amenity in these areas.

Site operations, maintenance access, and proximity of other benches restricts the space available for new benches so the nearest appropriate space to the requested location is offered. Memorial benches in bereavement areas can be expected to be used mainly, but not exclusively, by those visiting a specific memorial. It should be noted and accepted that the purchaser of the bench has no particular rights to a bench and any person may sit on any memorial bench in the cemetery, in comfort and with respect.

The purchaser of the bench is required to accept responsibility for maintenance to ensure the bench remains fit for purpose. The Council will accommodate requests for the placement of memorial benches in bereavement areas according to the operating principles below.

After the expiration of a 10-year period, the dedication may be removed and the plot made available for a new dedication. It is the bench owner's responsibility to ensure that the council has up-to-date contact details for them at all times.

Operating principles:

Location for benches will be agreed as near to the requested location as possible. Benches will be located where they do not impede the operation or maintenance of the site.

The bench style for use in all bereavement sites is to be of high-quality hardwood being of low maintenance. Installation is to be undertaken safely to the required standards.

No articles are permitted on or around any memorial bench. Should any article be found, they will be removed and possibly at the expense of the person responsible depending on the work required to do so. Maintenance responsibility lies with the purchaser and benches must be maintained so they remain structurally sound and are kept free from a build-up of algae and grime. Benches will remain on site as long as they are adequately maintained for a limited period of 10-years. Unsafe or poorly maintained benches will be removed and plaques kept for possible return to the owners.

Existing Bench Regulations:

After the initial 10-year period has expired the bench owner may wish to continue with the memorial by re-registering for a further 10 years. Providing the existing plinths are safe and there are no issues with the location of the original bench, the new bench will be placed in the same location. However, should the original

location be deemed unsuitable, the bench would have to be relocated, with the original location being returned to grass.

All efforts will be made to reallocate the bench to an available plinth as close as possible to the initial position. It should be noted that all bench locations will be distributed on a first come first served basis. If, at this time, the bench owner no longer wishes to continue with the memorial, they would be given a period of 30 days to remove the bench and plinth from site and undertake remedial grounds works to return the area to grass. If this work is not completed within the given timescale the council will arrange for this work to be completed without notice and without guarantee of safe return of the bench. This may also result in the associated costs being recharged to the bench owner.

Should an existing bench or plinth fall into disrepair or become unsafe, it would be the bench owner's responsibility to undertake remedial works. All efforts will be made to notify the bench owner of a problem as soon as possible. If after a period of 30 days, no suitable remedial action has been taken, the Council reserves the right to remove the bench, which may result in the associated costs being recharged to the bench owner. If the condition of the bench or plinth means that it is not possible to repair the damage, the owner would be given the opportunity to purchase a new bench or to remove the bench and plinth entirely and to return the area to grass.

The Council reserves the right to re-locate or remove the bench from the Cemetery without prior notice to allow cemetery maintenance and refurbishment works. The Council cannot guarantee against theft or vandalism and cannot be held responsible for any such actions.

A standard written letter of agreement will be sent by the Council to the customer to ensure all terms and conditions are clearly understood prior to installation of a bench.

Disability Discrimination Act 1955

Copies of this document in larger font size can be made available on request by emailing clerk@poundstock-pc.gov.uk

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this Document will be posted on the Council's website www.poundstock-pc.gov.uk