

The Bourtons Parish Council

Policy for the Installation of Memorial Benches

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Bourtons Parish Council [BPC] & All Saints Church, Great Bourton occasionally receive requests for the installation of memorial benches in their grounds and public spaces.

It is therefore appropriate that all such requests are treated with dignity and respect for both the applicants and the location where they are asked to be placed.

The Parish Council, as the lead body in this regard, having responsibility for the All Saints Churchyard [as it is now closed for burials], the Bourtons Burial Ground and all other public spaces within the Parish has determined that it should have a policy which clearly sets out the criteria under which such requests are considered.

1.1 CONTEXT

It is the intention that this Policy will apply to all areas where the Parish Council has authority. By the very nature of such requests being unique the policy cannot be exhaustive and will be regularly reviewed in the experience of future requests received.

2.0 LOCATIONS

All land within the jurisdiction of The Bourtons Parish Council as described below :

- 2.1 The Bourtons Burial Ground, Foxden Way, Great Bourton, owned and operated by BPC on behalf of residents.
- 2.2 The All Saints Churchyard, Great Bourton. This Churchyard is now closed for burials and responsibility for the ongoing maintenance has legally passed to the Parish Council. The Churchyard remains in the ownership of the Church and opinions and guidance from the Parochial Church Council will always be sought regarding applications for memorial benches [and other memorials] within the Churchyard.
- 2.3 The grounds of The Bourtons Community Hall. Such requests will be considered in consultation with the Bourtons Community Hall Management Committee.
- 2.4 The Little Bourton Children's Playground, Chapel Lane, Little Bourton.
- 2.5 The Great Bourton Children's Playground, Main Street, Great Bourton. Note that this Playground is not in the ownership of the PC and consultation will be sought from the landowner, who has the right to refuse such requests.
- 2.6 All other public spaces within the Parish, either owned or managed by the Parish Council. Where such public space is owned by another authority they will always be consulted and have the right to refuse any requests.

3.0 GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 3.1 All applications for a memorial bench must be made using the official application form to be found on the BPC website : bourtons-cherwell-pc.gov.uk
- 3.2 All contact with BPC should be via the Clerk : clerk@bourtons-cherwell-pc.gov.uk .

- 3.3 Current contact details for the person(s) responsible for the bench must be lodged with BPC. It is the responsibility of the responsible person(s) that these contact details are kept updated.
- 3.4 BPC has the right to refuse any application that it does not consider appropriate, relevant to the Parish or fails to meet any of the detailed T&C's or Criteria described within this Policy. Once a decision has been determined, there is no right of appeal.
- 3.5 No memorials can be installed within the Parish without the permission of BPC.
- 3.6 The precise location of the memorial bench within the area will be specified by BPC.
- 3.7 BPC cannot accept responsibility for any memorial benches that are subject to damage by vandals, third parties, or by routine grass and ground care maintenance work carried out by approved BPC contractors, although BPC will ensure that appropriate care is taken by all such contractors.
- 3.8 In the instance of a bench being damaged [and where the repair cost is not covered by the Councils' insurance], or where wear & tear requires repair, it is the responsibility of the responsible person(s) to arrange or fund this work promptly, and within one month of being advised by BPC.
- 3.9 BPC reserves the absolute right to remove any memorial bench that has been damaged or not been kept in good condition, following notification to the responsible person(s).
- 3.10 BPC accepts no liability for replacement of the bench once it has reached the end of its useful life and will dispose of such benches having first advised the responsible person(s).
- 3.11 Any maintenance work carried out by a third party on behalf of the responsible person(s) must be agreed in advance by BPC and be by appointment.
- 3.12 All related costs including initial installation and ongoing maintenance etc. are the responsibility of the applicant and must be undertaken by them or a contractor approved by BPC.
- 4.0 CRITERIA
 - 4.1 All benches should conform to a traditional design and should ideally be constructed from sustainably sourced hardwood, preferably from a UK forest location.
 - 4.2 The detailed design must be approved by BPC prior to installation. For the avoidance of doubt, it is recommended that a pictorial image of the selected bench and confirmation of its construction [including materials] be sent to BPC for approval prior to purchase. All benches must be manufactured by a recognised producer.
 - 4.3 Any memorial plaques fitted to benches shall be of a maximum size of 175mm x 75mm and be fitted in the centre of the uppermost lath of backrest. All text must be approved prior to fitment, in line with existing policy of BPC at the Burial Ground. Discrete carving of memorial details is acceptable subject to the same conditions for plaques described above.
 - 4.4 All benches must be mounted on, and secured to a concrete slab whose finished surface is level with the ground to avoid trip hazards.

This policy was adopted by BPC on July 11, 2023, in conjunction with All Saints Parochial Church Council and will be reviewed every five years.