



Parish Council

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Memorial Policy

Change Log		
Review Date	Action	By Whom
August 2025	Creation	AB

Memorial Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the Council's approach to requests for memorial installations, including benches, trees, plaques, and other commemorative features, in public spaces managed by the Council.

It ensures a consistent, respectful, and sustainable approach while preserving the character and accessibility of public areas.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all requests from individuals, families, community groups, or organisations seeking to install a memorial within/on Council owned or managed land, including:

- Memorial benches
- Memorial trees
- Memorial plaques
- Other approved commemorative installations

3. Guiding Principles

1. **Respect and Sensitivity** – Memorials should be respectful, dignified, and appropriate to the location.
2. **Public Benefit** – Memorials should enhance the amenity of public spaces for all users.
3. **Sustainability** – Materials and placement must be durable, safe, and low maintenance.
4. **Consistency** – The Council will apply this policy fairly and consistently.
5. **Accessibility** – Locations must meet accessibility requirements and not obstruct safe use of public spaces. All approved memorial benches will be installed in compliance with current accessibility legislation and Council design standards.

4. Eligibility & Priority

Memorial benches and other commemorations will be prioritised for:

1. Recently deceased residents of the council area.
2. Individuals or groups with a demonstrated contribution to the local community.
3. Historical or cultural figures connected to the location.

Note: Applications will only be accepted six months or more after the date of death to ensure a sensitive and considered approach.

5. Memorial Benches

5.1 Design & Specification

- Benches must meet Council approved design, size, and material specifications.
- Materials will be selected for durability, sustainability, and low maintenance (e.g., recycled plastic, treated hardwood, or metal).
- All plaques must be weather resistant, securely fixed, and of a standardised size and format set by the Council.

5.2 Location & Quantity

- Locations will be determined by the Council to avoid overcrowding and ensure accessibility.
- A maximum number of memorial benches per park or designated area will be set by the Council; once capacity is reached, alternative locations will be offered.
- The Council will maintain a waiting list for requested locations. Applications will be processed in order of receipt if space becomes available.
- All proposed locations are subject to site inspection and, where required, underground service checks (ground scans) before installation. The Council reserves the right to amend the exact siting of a memorial to ensure safety, accessibility, and service protection.

5.3 Maintenance & Replacement

- The Council will maintain memorial benches for a period of 10 years from installation.
- If a bench or plaque is damaged or vandalised, the Council will repair it where possible. If repair is not possible, the Council will contact the donor to discuss replacement or removal.
If the cost of repair or replacement exceeds £250.00, the Council reserves the right to request a contribution from the donor before work proceeds.
- After 10 years, the Council will contact the donor (where possible) to offer renewal, replacement, or return of the plaque before removal.
If no response is received within 6 months, the Council will remove the bench and offer to return the plaque to the donor if possible. If the donor cannot be located, the Council will respectfully dispose of the plaque.

5.4 Costs

- All costs associated with purchase, installation, and plaque engraving are to be covered by the applicant.
- Fees will be reviewed annually in the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

5.5 Donations and Ring-fencing of Funds

1. The Council may accept financial donations from individuals, families, community groups, or organisations towards the cost of memorial installations or improvements to public spaces.
2. All donations intended for memorial purposes must be accompanied by written confirmation of the donor's intent, including any preferred location, type of memorial, or wording for inscriptions.
3. Funds received for specific memorial projects will be ring-fenced in the Council's accounts and used solely for the agreed purpose.
4. If, after 12 months, it is not possible to progress the agreed memorial (e.g., due to location capacity or policy changes), the Council will offer the donor:
 - An alternative memorial option or location; or
 - A refund of the donation (less any costs already incurred).
5. General donations without a specific memorial request may be ring-fenced for the enhancement and maintenance of public seating, landscaping, and memorial features in Council managed areas.
6. The Council will maintain records of all donations, allocations, and expenditure related to memorial funds, which will be available for inspection upon request.

6. Other Memorial Types

- **Trees:** Must be of approved species, planted in suitable locations, and maintained in line with Council tree care standards.
- **Plaques without benches:** May be placed in approved memorial walls, gardens, or structures.
- **Other features:** Considered on a case by case basis.

7. Environmental & Heritage Considerations

- Placement must not disturb sensitive habitats, heritage assets, or protected landscapes.
- Materials will be sustainably sourced where possible.
- To maintain public amenity, personal items, flowers, and decorations may not be permanently affixed to memorial benches. Any temporary tributes will be removed after 5 days

8. Application Process

1. Applicant completes the 'Memorial Request Form'.
2. Council reviews the request, considering location availability, design compliance, appropriateness, and environmental factors.
3. Applicant is informed of approval or refusal.
4. Upon approval, payment is required before installation is scheduled.

9. Duration of Memorials

- Memorial installations are approved for 10 years.
- The Council reserves the right to relocate, remove, or replace memorials due to safety concerns, redevelopment, environmental protection, or site changes.

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or as required by legislation or best practice.