Hagley Parish Council

MEMORIALS POLICY

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Hagley Parish Council
Policy for Provision of commemorative /memorial trees and benches in The Parish of Hagley

Introduction

The Council receives occasional requests from members of the public who wish to place a commemoration or memorial within a public open space, particularly a bench or tree. There is no legislative requirement for the provision for these, although it is accepted that they provide a useful and valued public amenity.

This policy covers the provision of commemorations and memorials in public open space which includes areas such as the playing field and the cemetery on Park Road.

If a memorial is required on a highway then this has to be agreed with Worcestershire County Council (WCC). In this case WCC will require Hagley Parish Council (HPC) to take on the responsibility for the memorial **including the maintenance and insurance.**

HPC can only accommodate some requests and as no procedures have been in place previously the decisions are often left to the discretion of the clerk and councillors at the time. This policy recognises the need for a consistent approach to the provision of memorial trees and benches in public open spaces.

The policy therefore continues to welcome donations of suitable memorials/commemorations for appropriate locations in the public open spaces that the council owns and to ensure the recreational use of open spaces is not compromised and ensure the quality of their appearance is maintained.

All applications for memorials/commemorations should be made using the form below to the Parish Council and must be paid for by the applicant once approval is given in writing from the Parish Council, this includes any installation costs.

Please note HPC cannot confirm how long it will take for a tree to be planted or a bench installed. We will do our best endeavours to install them as soon as possible but this can take up to 2 years.

Commemorative / Memorial Trees

The planting of memorial trees may be permitted. However, due to existing trees and dependent on the level of demand, the planting of trees may not always be possible.

1. The Parish Council is prepared to consider the installation and adoption of memorial/commemorative trees where the proposed site is on land owned by the Parish Council. The Parish Council will not adopt or control trees planted on private land; in such cases the siting is entirely a matter for the donor and the landowner.

2. The species of tree will be at the discretion of the Parish Council, chosen to enhance the planting scheme of the specific area. The suggested trees for Hagley Playing Fields include oaks, sweet chestnuts, hornbeams, limes and hawthorns. Horse chestnuts are not recommend as they are prone to canker and could eventually rot and become brittle. Suggested planting at the cemetery include blossom, fruit, sorbus or rowan trees or other varieties of smaller trees.

3. The Parish Council will take over the maintenance of the tree, however will not be liable for the replacement of old or diseased trees which may be removed.

4. The trees that are planted at Hagley Playing Fields must be a heavy standard tree (this is usually 2 to 3 metres in height) and formative pruning needs to be done so it grows to be a suitable shape.

5. All trees must have guards in order to protect them from damage.

6. Trees will be planted during the autumn and winter planting season (usually between October and March) by the Council.

7. The tree along with the planting is to be paid for by the person requesting the memorial/commemoration.

8. The tree will be solely owned by the Parish Council and if there is a plaque it will remain in place for a minimum of 10 years unless it is in a poor state of repair. Further extensions may be considered.

9. No additional mementos such as cut or plastic flowers, flowers in pots, statues or vases will be permitted alongside any tree. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any such mementos or flowers.

10. Hagley Parish Council will not accept responsibility or liability in respect of any damage to or loss of a memorial tree whatever the circumstances, including damage caused by a third party.

11. If the memorial tree is vandalised or does not thrive the applicant will **have the opportunity** to replace the tree. If the applicant does not decide to replace the tree, the existing tree will be removed and no further tree will be planted.

12. The Parish Council will regularly inspect and monitor the health of the tree after planting, and reserves the right to fell, or remove any diseased or damaged limbs or remove the tree if necessary.

13. The Parish Council accepts no replacement liability for the tree at the end of its life and will dispose of any such item.

14. Trees are to be planted between October and March when enough water is available.

Commemorative / Memorial Benches

HPC are not currently installing benches due to the limitations of space, this will be reviewed at a later date.

There is very limited space available to accommodate memorial/commemorative benches but these maybe considered in exceptional circumstances.

1. Only sites which do not already have a sufficient number of benches will be considered.

2. Suitable locations within the site where people are likely to make use of the bench will be considered. These will be areas which lack any seating nearby or are at a likely stopping point such as a particular view or rest point on a path. In addition, the location will be chosen to minimise future maintenance and vandalism. Remote locations with poor access for maintenance and users will not be considered.

3. HPC recommend a bench similar to the Sandhurst bench on the Memorial Benches website, however we appreciate that there may be occasions when a unique rather than standard bench design may be requested as a memorial. In these circumstances, details of the bench construction, materials and specifications will need to be submitted to HPC for approval. On approval the bench would then be supplied to HPC for installation in an agreed location. There is no guarantee that any damage to the bench could be repaired once it is installed and any costly repairs would be at the discretion of the owner.

4. Purchase of a memorial bench will be paid for by the person(s) requesting the memorial/commemoration and will be for the expected life period of the bench only, after which time it will be removed. The cost will include the bench, plaque, inscription, installation and surfacing and, as the benches should require minimal maintenance, there will be no additional cost for this. The cost and life expectancy of the bench will depend on the type of bench and its location. Any replacement would be treated in the same way as a new memorial bench.

6 The extent of the Council's adoption will be limited to holding the items on the HPC's asset register for insurance purposes, and in compliance with any licence requirements of WCC if applicable.

7. The Parish Council accepts no liability for damage to benches or plaques on benches by a third party. Any minor repairs caused by damage or vandalism will be carried out by the Parish Council but more major damage or vandalism will need to be repaired at the donor's cost otherwise the bench may need to be removed.

8. The Parish Council will not adopt or control benches sited on private land; in such cases the siting is entirely a matter for negotiation between the donor and the landowner.

9. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any donated benches which are in the view of the Parish Council beyond economical repair or no longer fit for purpose through age or damage. Regular inspections by the Parish Council will determine if a bench is safe and fit for purpose, and the Parish Council or its officers shall be the final arbiters of such a decision to remove any item.

10. The Parish Council will not be liable for relocation of benches should Worcestershire County Council or any other authority or landowner decide to rescind their permission to allow the installation of such items on their property.

11. The Council may refuse a request for benches at a particular location or suggest an alternative location.

12. The bench will be fitted to a slabbed area. Council operatives will carry out all installation work.

13. Any maintenance carried out by a third party will be in strict agreement with the Council.

General terms and conditions

1. The Parish Council will keep a record of donors and their contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the responsibility of the donor to provide the clerk with updated details in writing.

2. The Parish Council will undertake regular assessment of all memorials and reserves the right to remove any memorial that is no longer considered safe and fit for purpose.

3. The Parish Council does not accept applications for commemorations /memorials for pets.

4. All benches and trees (including the installation/planting) should be paid for by the applicant on or before the completion of the installation.

5. Memorials will be positioned to maximise the benefit and development of the area, but the Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicants. The Council may limit the number of memorials in a particular area.

6. Unauthorised memorials will be removed by the Council.

If you have any queries or need further information please contact the Parish Office on 01562 882639 or clerk@hagleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

The Council reserves the right to amend these regulations and to deal with any circumstances or contingency not provided for in the regulations as necessary.

APPLICATION REQUEST FOR A MEMORIAL TREE OR BENCH

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

(Please notify us of any change of name or address so we can contact you if required).

Memorial/commemorative tree

Proposed species of tree: _____

Proposed location of tree: _____

Name of person for dedication: _____

Memorial/commemorative bench

Proposed Location of bench: _____

Dedicatory Plaque Yes / No (Please delete as applicable)

Name of person for dedication: _____

Proposed inscription: _____

_____

Signed: _____ Dated: _____