

WEST PARLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Memorial Benches / Trees Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Policy

West Parley Parish Council (WPPC) recognises the wish of some residents to remember loved ones with a memorial bench or tree on Parish Council land. We are happy to consider requests for memorials, but it is important to remember that the land is enjoyed by a wide range of users and residents. The Council wishes to ensure that any memorials are sited appropriately and for the mutual benefit of all.

1.2 Objectives

This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- 1.2.1 To be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial
- 1.2.2 To be clear and easily understood by residents and users of our land.
- 1.2.3 To balance the contrasting needs of a variety of land users
- 1.2.4 The policy will ensure that memorial benches:
 - Have a common appearance, style and size
 - Are not out of place in the area in which they are placed
- 1.2.5 The policy will ensure that memorial trees:
 - are appropriate size and species for the location
 - will not negatively impact residents
 - will not create visual obstruction if on the public highway

2. GENERAL

- 2.1 All applications for a memorial bench or tree in green spaces should be made officially to the Parish Clerk and should be signed by the Applicant.
- 2.2 The Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of Applicants, but for a number of reasons can only accept memorials in certain defined areas and Council may also limit the number of memorials in a particular area.
- 2.3 The Council will normally only permit memorials to individuals who have lived in or have a special connection to West Parley. This is limited to one item per family.
- 2.4 The council regrets that it is unable to accommodate memorials to deceased pets.
- 2.5 Whilst interment of ashes is prohibited, the scattering of ashes may be authorised with prior permission granted following receipt of a written request signed by the applicant.

3. LOCATION

- 3.1 This policy relates to all green spaces that WPPC owns and manages, namely:
 - West Parley Recreation Ground
 - Parley Wood
 - West Parley Community Sports and Social Club with associated playing fields
 - West Parley Parish Council car park
- 3.2 Applications for an item to be placed on land owned by the Principal Authority, should in the first instance be to the Parish Council who will liaise with the appropriate department of Dorset Council.
- 3.3 The Parish Council will have the final say on locations of benches and trees, if on land owned by the Parish Council.

4. MEMORIAL BENCHES

- Benches designs must be agreed by the Council and ideally must co-ordinate with other benches already situated on our land.
- No additional mementoes other than a brass plaque, e.g. statues, flowers, wreaths, vases, etc. will be permitted on or around the bench.

5. MEMORIAL TREES

- 5.1 The planting of trees may not be possible in some areas.
- 5.2 Locations will need to be discussed with the Parish Clerk.
- 5.3 Trees should be chosen to fit into existing planting schemes.
- 5.4 Non-native trees will not generally be permitted by West Parley Parish Council.
- 5.5 The Council will charge for the plant and planting labour, if the latter is required, at cost.
- 5.6 The Council will maintain the tree or plant in line with its current maintenance programme.
- 5.7 The Council will only plant trees during the winter months, when they have the best chance of survival.
- 5.8 Memorial plaques on trees are permitted.
- 5.9 No additional mementoes, e.g. statues, vases, etc. will be permitted on or around the plant or tree.

6 COSTS

- 6.1 The Applicant must pay for all memorials before installation.
- 6.2 Dependent upon the location of the bench, it may need to be fitted to a concrete base. The Council will be responsible for arranging all installation work, at the applicant's expense.
- 6.3 If the applicant cannot be contacted to fund a replacement item, the Council will remove the bench/tree.

7 RISKS

- 7.1 The Council cannot accept responsibility if a memorial is damaged, vandalised or stolen.
- 7.2 The Council reserves the right to remove a memorial bench at any time.
- 7.3 The Council will not be liable for the replacement of old or diseased plants.
- 7.4 Any replacements of memorial trees or plants will be the responsibility of the original Applicant and will follow the same process as the procedure within this Policy.

8 RESPONSIBILITY

- 8.1 The Council, in accordance with its current maintenance programme, will maintain any memorial bench and tree.

9. STATUS

This procedure is to be considered for adoption at the full Council meeting on 15th December 2021.

Adopted 15th December 2021
Review period : 4 yearly

Review due December 2025

Chairman