

Commemorative Plaques, Benches & Memorials Policy

20th February 2024



Adopted: February 2024

Review: February 2026

Introduction

Biggleswade Town Council (BTC) continues to receive requests for commemorative benches and plaques to be installed across Biggleswade. To support this service, careful management and regulation is needed to ensure fairness and consistency for all and so a policy is required. The contents of this policy may need to be reviewed from time to time to meet changing circumstances and opportunities.

Enquiries should be directed to enquiries@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk or 01767 313134.

Objectives

- To ensure that benches and plaques have a consistent appearance, style and size that is acceptable and appropriate to the preferred location.
- To establish responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement of benches and plaques.
- To ensure commemorations are only accepted via request from a suitable applicant (e.g. family member, close friend etc).
- To establish the level of service required to manage the scheme.

General

The nature, location and number of existing commemorative features may limit the number of plaques and benches permitted on some occasions. There is currently a saturation of furniture within some areas of Biggleswade, therefore new benches will only be installed where old benches are scheduled for removal. BTC will maintain a list of suitable locations for new benches and Officers have discretion to decide the final location of benches and plaques. There is currently no availability for addition benches in the Market Square. However requests for plaques for existing benches can be made.

There may be instances where there are no suitable locations available. Applicants would then be placed on a waiting list and advised whether they would like to continue to proceed when a location becomes available.

The Council cannot accept liability for vandalism or accidental damage to commemorative features. If this results in minor repair work being needed, the Council may make reasonable efforts to return the bench and/or plaque to a satisfactory condition at its cost. At the discretion of the Town Clerk, the Council may ask the applicant to fund the cost of repair. In the event the applicant will be advised of the costs to repair or replace. The Council reserves the right to remove any damaged commemorative features, where the applicant has not agreed to fund repair work within 2 weeks of being notified. A bench may be removed immediately if the condition of a damaged bench could be considered dangerous or unsightly. Any commemorative features removed due to damage will be stored for a minimum of 3 months.

Additional items may not be placed on or around commemorative features such as flowers, wreaths etc.

Final wording of plaques will be at the discretion of Council.

Plaques and benches will remain in place for a maximum period of 15 years. After this period, the Council will collect and store the plaques for up to 5 years, which can be collected by a customer if they wish. Benches will either be refurbished, recycled or disposed of at the discretion of the Town Council.

Charges

All below costs are inclusive of basic maintenance over the 15-year period in order to preserve the condition and appearance of the commemorative feature as best as possible. The Council shall purchase and own all commemorative features purchased through this policy and retains the final decision and ownership.

Benches & Plaques

- Installation of a brass plaque with space for three lines and up to 35 characters on each line, on an existing bench without a plaque present (includes minor refurbishment and maintenance)
£600 excluding VAT
- Installation of a new bench including brass plaque installation with space for three lines and up to 35 characters on each line (includes maintenance)
£1,100 excluding VAT

There is one choice for benches as indicated below, either in green or black depending on location:



Heritage Seat.

Made from hardwood iroko slats with dark green or black galvanised steel end stanchions.

(£495)

Requests for green open spaces locations can only be made with green benches. Town centre locations and cemeteries must be in black.

Please complete an application form on the next page if you wish to proceed.

Commemorative Plaques & Benches Application Form

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone number:

Alternative phone number:

Email address:

☐

Brass Plaque Only

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Heritage Seat + Brass Plaque

Proposed location description:

Please ensure to read the Commemorative Plaques, Benches & Memorials Policy for guidance.

Please complete the attached form regarding plaque inscription details.

Sign below to confirm the above form is accurate.

Signature:

Date:

Plaques Guidance & Accompanying Form

Only enter one character per space. Spaces and punctuation count as a character.

34 characters can be entered per line with a maximum of three lines permitted.

Please complete the below grid with the inscription to be engraved on the plaque.

[illegible]

Sign below to confirm details of this form are accurate.

Signature:

Date:

Please return the form via one of the below options:

- Hand in to Biggleswade Town Council Offices
- Post to 'Commemorative Plaques and Benches Application Form, Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 8DL
- Email to enquiries@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk with subject 'Commemorative Plaques and Benches Application Form'

For any queries relating to this policy and application forms, please call on 01767 313134 or email enquiries@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk