

Catterick Village Parish Council Policy for the Siting of Commemorative/Memorial Benches in Public Open Spaces.

Catterick Village Parish Council will facilitate the purchase and placement of memorial benches in public open spaces owned or managed by the Council on request and where appropriate opportunities exist.

Aim.

The aim of this policy is to lay down the considerations regarding the placement of memorial or commemorative benches within Catterick Village.

Introduction.

Catterick Village Parish Council occasionally receives requests to place a commemorative/memorial bench within a public open space. These are often in places with which individuals or families have a particular connection or special relationship. There is no legislative requirement for the provision of public or memorial benches but it is accepted that they provide a useful and valued public amenity.

General.

Most requests have been accommodated but procedures followed have varied over time, with decisions often being left to the discretion of the Councillor who has been allocated the request. This case by case approach is generally accommodating to the donor but could lead to over provision and inappropriate siting of memorial benches in some areas. Other problems maybe maintenance difficulties due to a wide range of bench styles being used and ineffective recording of memorial bench information. This policy recognises the need for a consistent approach to the provision of commemorative/memorial benches in public open spaces.

Policy:

Location:

Suitable locations where people are likely to make good use of the bench will be considered but only on sites which do not already have a sufficient number of benches; all placements must be agreed by the Parish Council.

Placements will only be agreed in 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.

Requests for benches to be sited in the cemetery will be considered only for those buried within the cemetery.

There will be a maximum number of 13 benches allowed within the Cemetery and 14 along the Beck on Low Green (this includes a bench at the head of Oran Lane) at any one time. Although the Parish Council is responsible for St Anne's church yard, the siting of a bench within the church grounds can only be granted through St Anne's Parish Parochial Council.

Allocation of sites for memorial benches will be on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Where there is no space for an additional commemorative/memorial bench, requests for placement of a memorial plaque on an existing bench will be considered where the bench is in good condition. The Parish Council will consider the original donor's or representative's opinion.

The Parish Council retain the right to move the position of the bench at any time, should they consider this appropriate. All reasonable attempts will be undertaken by the Parish Council to advise the donor or their representatives of their action and the new siting of the bench.

Installation:

The Parish Council must agree the type of specified bench (generally made from a long life, vandal proof recycled material), appropriate fixings, proposed location, installation process and wording of inscriptions before any action is taken.

The donor will be responsible for the meeting of all costs, including the purchase of the bench and fixings, the inscription and installation.

The installation must take place at a time agreed with the Parish Council, by an agreed installer.

Maintenance:

The maintenance of the bench will be the responsibility of the donor, or their representatives. This will involve occasionally removing built up algae and grime, removal of graffiti, repairing minor faults and making good of damage incurred from whatever source. The Parish Council's standards of maintenance will be accepted as keeping the bench fit for purpose and clean.

Purchase of a memorial bench will be for the expected life period of the bench only, after which time it may be removed. Should a donor request a replacement commemorative/memorial bench it will be treated in the same way as a new bench.

The same conditions on life expectancy and maintenance will apply to any existing benches as apply to new benches.

Removal:

The Parish Council retains the right to remove the bench from the site should the bench be considered unserviceable. All reasonable attempts will be made to contact the original donor or representatives before this action is taken.

Administration:

All enquiries for commemorative benches will be added to the Commemorative Bench File held by the Parish Clerk, and allocated a file number.