



ACKWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Bench Policy

The Parish Council owns and maintains a small number of benches located throughout the village, including within public open spaces, play areas, highways verges and the cemetery. These benches are provided for the benefit and enjoyment of residents and visitors.

This policy sets out the Council's approach to the provision, maintenance and installation of benches, including memorial benches and plaques.

1. Council Responsibilities

The Council will:

- Maintain benches it owns in a safe and serviceable condition, subject to available resources.
- Carry out periodic visual inspections as part of routine parish inspections.
- Repair, remove or replace benches where necessary and where budget permits.
- Determine the location, style and specification of any new benches and where applicable with the approval of the District Council.
- Retain ownership and control of all benches placed on Council or District land following approval by the Council.

The Council reserves the right to relocate, repair, replace or remove any bench at its discretion.

2. Memorial Plaques on Existing Benches

The Council recognises that residents may wish to commemorate loved ones through the installation of memorial plaques.

However, due to the limited number of benches within the parish and the finite space available, the Council will not normally permit additional memorial plaques to be attached to existing Parish Council owned benches.

This approach ensures that benches remain available for the enjoyment of all members of the community and avoids creating situations where multiple plaque requests cannot be accommodated fairly.



3. Cemetery Memorial Benches

The Council may permit the installation of memorial benches at the Cemetery subject to:

- A written request being submitted to the Council.
- Approval of the proposed location by the Council.
- The suitability of the site and available space.
- Future maintenance implications.
- Compliance with this policy.

Approval of a memorial bench is entirely at the discretion of the Council and each application will be considered on its individual merits.

The Council reserves the right to refuse applications where a proposed location is unsuitable, where sufficient seating already exists, or where the installation would negatively affect the appearance or use of the area.

4. Design and Specification of Memorial Benches

To maintain consistency across the Cemetery, memorial benches must:

- Be of a design approved by the Council before purchase.
- Be in keeping with the character and appearance of the cemetery and surrounding area.
- Be of a standard size suitable for public use.
- Not be excessively large.
- Not be overly ornate, decorative or elaborate.
- Be constructed from durable, low-maintenance materials.

The Council may specify or recommend a preferred style or supplier where appropriate.

A modest memorial plaque may be attached to an approved memorial bench, subject to Council approval of its size, design and wording.

The Council reserves the right to require the removal or replacement of any plaque that is not in accordance with this policy.

If a memorial bench reaches the end of its serviceable life, the Council will determine whether it is removed, considering its condition.