



SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Memorial Trees, Benches and Plaque Policy

Version	Date Adopted Policy	Minute Reference	Review Date
1	September 2018	A & S 481-18	October 2022

Memorial Trees, Benches and Plaque Policy

1. Introduction

Saffron Walden Town Council supports the needs and principles of allowing trees and benches as memorials in certain areas it controls and its green space areas, but is also mindful that these facilities have many uses and are enjoyed by a wide range of people. The Council will therefore ensure that the issue is managed and regulated for the mutual benefit of all.

2. Policy Aims

This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- To be respectful, sympathetic and easily understood by customers
- To balance the sometimes-contrasting needs of a variety of facility users
- To maintain and enhance the high-quality appearance of sites and not detract from their prime recreational purpose
- To clearly establish the responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement of memorials
- To achieve full cost recovery by SWTC for any memorials provided

3. Sites Included

Only the sites under the direct ownership and management of Saffron Walden Town Council will be subject to this policy. Recreational open spaces within the wider District and managed by the other Councils will be subject to their own policies. The sites listed below are included within the policy, but further sites may be added in the future.

- The Common
- Anglo American Fields

4. Rules and Management

4.1 Memorial Benches

4.1.1 Memorial benches will be positioned to maximise the benefit and development of the site and the number of memorial benches in a particular area will be limited. However, the Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicants wherever possible.

4.1.2 In order to maintain consistency of appearance, quality and control over location, all benches will be ordered and installed by the Town Council, of a design and specification as determined by the Council.

4.1.3 The total cost of the installation of a memorial bench (including plaque and installation) will be paid by the applicant with a further 10% donation to the Town Council to cover simple ongoing maintenance.

4.1.4 The council in line with the current maintenance regime for benches will maintain the bench for a period of ten years (10 years). However, no replacement liability will be accepted at the end of the useful life of the bench (Ten years) or if it is damaged through vandalism.

4.1.5 Each site has limited space that can be accommodated and will be subject to the Council's approval. Alternatively, an option to refurbish or replace an existing old bench with a new one may be offered subject to the condition of the existing bench.

4.2 Memorial Trees

4.2.1 The planting of memorial trees will only be permitted on The Common or the Anglo-American Playing Fields and the number of trees permissible may be limited dependant on location and size.

4.2.2 The species of tree will be of a native variety and will be at the discretion of the Town Council in keeping with the local environment. Trees will be planted during the autumn and winter planting season by the Council, but the applicant and family members may be present and assist if practicable and desired.

4.2.3 Due to large numbers of existing trees and shrubbery and dependent on the level of demand, the planting of trees may not be possible at certain or any sites.

4.2.4 The total cost of the tree and tree guard including installation will be dependent on size appropriate for the site and will be paid by the applicant with a 10% additional donation to the Town Council for the cost of the first years watering.

4.2.5 Saffron Walden Town Council will not accept responsibility or liability in respect of any damage to or loss of a memorial tree or tree guard unless this is reasonably shown to be due to the negligence of the Council. All trees planted as a memorial in the first year will be maintained by the Council.

4.2.6 Saffron Walden Town Council will allow plaques on the guards of memorial trees (whilst the guards are in place) but will not permit plaques to be fixed to any tree or post.

4.3 Memorial Plaques

4.3.1 No Memorial plaques are permitted on trees.

4.3.2 No flowers or similar memorials shall be permitted to mark the site at any time. The Council will not grant applications for memorials to, or to scatter the ashes of pets. The scattering of human ashes will also not be permitted as the location sites are not consecrated ground.

Bridge End Garden and the Cemetery have their own policies and are not covered here. Bridge End Gardens is covered separately under the Management Plan for BEG. The Cemetery will be subject to a separate process and will be governed by the availability of grave spaces and noting that the cemetery is within the conservation area.