

POLICY FOR PROVISION OF  
MEMORIAL BENCHES, PLAQUES AND  
TREES IN PUBLIC PARKS, OPEN SPACES  
AND CEMETERIES



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## **POLICY FOR PROVISION OF MEMORIAL BENCHES, PLAQUES AND TREES IN PUBLIC PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND CEMETERIES**

Dundee City Council will facilitate the donation and installation of memorial benches, plaques, and trees in public parks, open spaces and cemeteries owned or managed by the Council where appropriate opportunities exist.

### **Background Information**

The provision and management of all seating, trees and benches in all public parks, open spaces and cemeteries owned or managed by the Council is the responsibility of Neighbourhood Services, Environment. This policy covers the provision of memorial benches, plaques and trees in public parks, open spaces and cemeteries.

The Council receives regular requests from members of the public who wish to place a memorial bench within a public park, open space or cemetery. Often, these locations are places with which individuals or families have a particular connection or special relationship. It is accepted that these benches provide a useful and valued public amenity in these locations, although there is no legislative requirement for the provision of public or memorial benches by local authorities. Similarly, trees are commonly used as a memorial, and it is recognised that these trees can be of benefit to enhance the public amenity and biodiversity of these areas as part of our living landscape.

Historically, most requests have been accommodated, but the approach was not always consistent resulting in the overprovision and inappropriate siting of memorial benches in some areas, leading to maintenance difficulties due to a wide range of bench styles being used and ineffective recording of memorial bench information.

A service audit to identify areas that may require new benches and collate details of existing memorial benches has been conducted. From this audit, the Council has been able to identify areas which can support additional benches, allowing the Council to inform customers on what is available to them. **In cases where an area cannot support an additional bench, the provision of a memorial plaque on an existing bench or an alternative area which can support a new bench may be provided for consideration.**

This policy recognises the need for a consistent approach to the provision of memorial benches and trees in public parks, open spaces and cemeteries. A greater consideration of the level of infrastructure that can be provided and maintained by the Council is required, particularly as resources for public service provision reduce, in addition to maximising the use of new and innovative opportunities for better provision. A rationalisation of the range and quality of infrastructure is also needed to avoid items which are onerous to maintain or have a poor life expectancy.

The policy therefore continues to welcome donations of suitable benches and trees for appropriate locations in the public parks, open spaces and cemeteries the Council manages. The operating principles below will ensure that requests for memorial benches and trees are responded to in a consistent, efficient and helpful manner. It will result in appropriate bench styles and tree species being donated and installed in appropriate locations to ensure they are easy to maintain and not unduly prone to vandalism.

## **Operating principles:**

1. Applications to the Council's Memorial Bench/Plaque/Tree Scheme are open year-round but are considered between August and October each year, depending on available resources and existing demand. For up-to-date information on the scheme, please check the council's Bereavement services webpage, under the 'Memorials' tab.
2. When installing new benches, only sites which do not already have sufficient bench provision will be considered. This will be determined by existing site-specific Management plans.
3. Only suitable locations within the site where people are likely to make good use of the bench will be considered. These will be areas with insufficient 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. Only publicly accessible open spaces will be considered.
4. A limited selection of suitable, low maintenance, standard designs for memorial benches will be available at a range of costs; the bench style supplied in an area is location specific and will not be determined by the customer. Annex 1 shows the range of bench and plaque options with suggested prices.
5. For a new bench, the cost will include the bench, plaque, inscription, installation, ground surfacing (if necessary) and an upfront maintenance fee to cover future maintenance for the term of the agreement only. The cost and life expectancy of the bench will depend on the type of bench and its location. Any replacement would be maintained in the same way as a new memorial bench. To ensure installation is undertaken safely and to the required standards, the Council will in all cases be responsible for installing the memorial bench with plaque and any required ground surfacing.
6. Where there is insufficient space for an additional memorial bench, requests for placement of a memorial plaque on an existing bench will be considered. Only standard benches in serviceable condition and without an existing memorial plaque will be considered. As the bench has already been provided through public funds, the cost will cover a fee to contribute towards the bench, the plaque, inscription and installation and basic maintenance. This will accommodate the customer's wishes and ensure a fair contribution is made towards the provision of the bench as a personal memorial. The funds raised will be used for the repair or provision of other public benches. The same conditions of maintenance will apply to any existing benches as apply to new benches.
7. The Council's standards of maintenance will be accepted as keeping the bench fit for purpose and clean. This will involve removing built up algae and grime, as well as repairing minor faults within resources available. There is a move away from regular painting as in the long term this proves costlier than replacing the bench when it has reached the end of its serviceable life. The range of new benches has been chosen for durability to remove the need for regular painting or treatment.
8. The placement and species of a memorial tree will be decided by the assigned officer on a site-by-site basis and in consultation with the Council's Forestry Section. This is to ensure both the location and tree species are appropriate for the site and that the tree meets biodiversity and maintenance considerations. The customer may request a specific park/open space in which to place the tree, but not a specific location within the park/open space. There is no guarantee that the requested park/open space will be suitable for a memorial tree, and alternatives may be suggested.
9. The donation of a memorial tree is not subject to a fixed term but is for the life of the tree only. The cost for a memorial tree is £900 and is subject to annual review. The cost will include the tree, planting, a guard and stake to protect the tree from rabbits and deer (to be removed once the tree has outgrown the risk), a plaque (if required) and an upfront fee to cover basic maintenance that may be required in the first years after the tree's installation.
10. The life expectancy of the tree will depend on the species and location. Trees will be planted during the dormant season, typically between November and March. Trees that fail within the first year of planting will be replaced at the Council's expense, any further replacements will be at the expense of the customer and in prior agreement with the Council. A memorial plaque may be attached to a wooden plinth positioned at the base of the tree. The Council is not liable for the replacement of plaques/plinths which go missing or are vandalised.

11. Those interested in purchasing memorial benches and memorial trees should complete an enquiry form in the first instance (Form 1).
12. A standard Letter of Agreement will be sent in writing by the Council to the customer to ensure all terms and conditions are clearly understood prior to donation. The form will be returned to the Council with payment in advance of the memorial bench/plaque/tree being placed. Form 2 shows the standard form of agreement.

## Memorial bench/plaque/tree procedure

This procedure describes the process which will be followed by Council officers from the initial customer enquiry/contact through to the final contact informing the customer that their requested memorial is in place.

1. Customer enquiries received by Customer Services or Neighbourhood Services will be directed to the website to view the policy and download the enquiry form as shown in Form 1.
2. Customer completes the enquiry form, specifying a requested location and plaque style, and submits this via email to [environment.mgt@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:environment.mgt@dundeecity.gov.uk) or by post to Dundee City Council, Neighbourhood Services – Environment, 5, City Square, Dundee. DD1 3BA (**NB we are not able to accept forms delivered by hand**). The appropriate officer is then allocated the request for action.
3. The allocated officer considers the requested location for the bench/tree/plaque and decides, by applying the operating principles, whether a memorial bench/tree is appropriate in this location. If the requested location is not suitable, an alternative location may be offered. In areas of excess demand and where there is already sufficient provision, a limited waiting list may be permitted. Customers on this waiting list will be notified when a space becomes available, though this may not be for several years.
4. In cases of a new bench being placed, the allocated officer will inform the customer which bench is suitable for the location and will ensure that the plaque text is suitable for use on a public bench. The Council will supply one of four bench styles, detailed in Annex 1. The style of bench supplied will be at the discretion of the Council on a site-by-site basis.
5. In cases of a new tree being planted, the allocated officer will inform the customer which trees are suitable for the location and will ensure that the plaque text, if required, is suitable for use on a public memorial. The species of tree supplied will be at the discretion of the Council on a site-by-site basis.
6. The responsible officer contacts the customer to confirm or discuss the details by phone or email. If an alternative location is required, an email with a map to illustrate the alternative site being offered will be sent.
7. On agreement, a standard agreement letter (Form 2) is sent to the customer to confirm arrangements and request payment.
8. When payment is received, the responsible officer orders the procurement and installation of the memorial, for completion within 4 months of receipt of payment (or as close to this as possible in the case of memorial trees).
9. The responsible officer ensures the work has been carried out as specified, photographs the bench/tree and ensures all information is recorded for future reference.
10. The responsible officer ensures an email confirmation with photograph is sent to the customer to notify them that the bench/tree is in place.
11. The responsible officer updates the database with the contact details of the customer, memorial plaque details and the location of the bench/tree.
12. For leased memorials (benches and plaques), the customer will be notified in writing at the expiry of the agreement and will have 30 days in which to confirm they would like to retain the location and commence a new agreement with the Council, the details of which will be confirmed at that time. In all cases it remains the responsibility of the customer to update the Council of any changes to their contact details.

## Annex 1

### **Council styles and current prices for installation of new memorial benches with plaques, the addition of a memorial plaque onto an existing bench, or memorial trees.**

#### **Plaques**

Memorial plaques can be fitted to existing benches, where available, for £300. This includes the plaque, inscription, installation, and a contribution towards the cost of the bench to cover future maintenance.

Plaques are available in a stainless steel finish (see below example) and size is standardised based on the bench they are fitted onto. Text will be laser etched in Arial font and can be up to 100 characters (including spaces) across up to 4 lines of text. All text must be approved by the Council to ensure it is appropriate for public display.



#### **Benches**

The style of bench supplied will be determined on a site-by-site basis, at the discretion of the Council. As a guide, the style of bench already located in your preferred site is likely to be the style supplied, depending on maintenance and conservation requirements.

#### **Glen Clova**

A Glen Clova bench costs £1040. This covers the bench, the plaque, the installation and an upfront fee to cover future maintenance that the Council may need to perform on the bench. In some cases, an additional charge of £760 will be required to install a concrete plinth underneath the bench. This is required to ensure the security of the bench, and if deemed necessary by the Council, is non-negotiable. Thus, in those cases the total cost for a Glen Clova bench will be £1800.



These benches are 1.5m long and are made of sustainably sourced hardwood making them hardy to the elements.

### Lowther

A Lowther bench costs £950. This covers the bench, the plaque, the installation and an upfront fee to cover future maintenance that the Council may need to perform on the bench. In some cases, an additional charge of £760 will be required to install a concrete plinth underneath the bench. This is required to ensure the security of the bench, and if deemed necessary by the Council, is non-negotiable. Thus, in those cases the total cost for a Lowther bench will be £1710.



These benches are 1.9m long and are made from recycled plastic with cast aluminium ends. They are a minimal maintenance bench and are designed to last.

### Chisolm

A Chisolm bench costs £1450. This covers the bench, the plaque, the installation and an upfront fee to cover future maintenance that the Council may need to perform on the bench. In some cases, an additional charge of £760 will be required to install a concrete plinth underneath the bench. This is required to ensure the security of the bench, and if deemed necessary by the Council, is non-negotiable. Thus, in those cases the total cost for a Chisolm bench will be £2210.



These benches are 1.85m long and are made of steel, so require minimal upkeep and can withstand harsh weather.



## Albany

An Albany bench costs £1230. This covers the bench, the plaque, the installation and an upfront fee to cover future maintenance that the Council may need to perform on the bench. In some cases, an additional charge of £760 will be required to install a concrete plinth underneath the bench. This is required to ensure the security of the bench, and if deemed necessary by the Council, is non-negotiable. Thus, in those cases the total cost for an Albany bench will be £1990.



These benches are 2.05m long and are made of steel so are more resistant to vandalism and the weather.

## **Maintenance Standard**

Benches will be kept fit for purpose with minor faults being repaired and build-up of algae, grime or graffiti being removed within available resources.

## **Memorial Trees**

The cost for a memorial tree is £900. The cost will include the tree, planting, a guard and stake to protect the tree from rabbits and deer (to be removed once the tree has outgrown the risk), a plaque (if required) and an upfront fee to cover basic maintenance that may be required in the first years after the tree's installation.

The placement and species of a memorial tree will be decided by the assigned officer on a site-by-site basis and in consultation with the Council's Forestry Section. This is to ensure both the location and tree species are appropriate for the site and that the tree meets biodiversity and maintenance considerations.

**NB: All prices are valid for 2024 and may be subject to change.**

**Form 1 - Memorial Bench, Plaque or Tree Enquiry Form:**

This form is to be completed with reference to the Policy for the Provision of Memorial Benches, Plaques and Trees in Public Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries. Please complete and return to [environment.mgt@dundee.gov.uk](mailto:environment.mgt@dundee.gov.uk) or by post to Dundee City Council, Neighbourhood Services – Environment, 5, City Square. Dundee. DD1 3BA. **(N.B. we are not able to accept hand-delivered forms).**

**Section A - Contact Details**

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
E-mail:	

**Section B - Request Details**

Please tick the option below which best describes the nature of the memorial you wish to adopt:

	Please tick
Bench (with plaque)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tree (with plaque)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plaque (for existing bench)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where would you like a new bench, tree or plaque placed? Please try to be as specific as possible. *(In cases where an area cannot support an additional bench, plaque or tree, an alternative area may be provided for consideration.)*

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**Section C - Plaque Details**

All plaques will be provided and installed by the Council. Name of the person to be commemorated:

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Please print your memorial message for the plaque below for Council approval. A maximum of 100 characters (including spaces) can be included across up to 4 lines of text.

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**Form 2 – Example of Standard Letter of Agreement for a memorial bench, plaque or tree to be placed in a public area:**

Memorial Agreement between Dundee City Council and payee.

Payee Name:	
Address:	
Contact number:	
E-mail:	

This letter sets out the agreement regarding the adoption of below. (complete as appropriate)

	Type	Location
1. A new bench (with plaque)		
2. A new tree (with plaque)		
3. A memorial plaque to be placed on an existing bench		

The agreement will be for the term of:

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The name of the person to be commemorated:

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Your memorial message will read:

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(Payee name)	will pay the sum of £
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(delete either 1, 2 or 3 as appropriate)

1. being the full cost of the installation of the bench with a plaque and a maintenance fee to cover future maintenance undertaken by the Council, as defined by the Maintenance Standard.
2. being the cost of the installation of the plaque and a maintenance fee to cover future maintenance undertaken by the Council, as defined by the Maintenance Standard.
3. being the full cost of the installation of the tree with/without (delete as appropriate) a plaque, and a maintenance fee to cover future maintenance undertaken by the Council.

## **Terms and Conditions**

All memorial bench/tree adoptions/donations will be situated within publicly accessible, council-owned open space. All memorial benches/trees will remain the property and responsibility of the Council, for use by the public. The memorial bench/tree is therefore considered a donation from yourself (the customer) to the City of Dundee, meaning the public has full, unimpeded access to and use of the bench/tree.

### **Newly Installed Memorial Benches:**

The donation of a newly installed memorial bench and plaque will be for a term of 15 years only from the date of installation, after which time the bench or plaque may be removed. Requests for additional or replacement plaques must be made in writing through the completion of a separate Form 1. Additional or replacement plaques will be subject to the conditions of the original agreement and will not extend the length of term.

After a term of 15 years, and where up-to-date contact details are held, the opportunity will be given in writing for the customer to retain the location. The customer will have 30 days from the expiry of the term to confirm they would like to retain the location and commence a new agreement with the Council, the details of which will be confirmed at that time. If the customer declines to take on another term or does not confirm within 30 days of expiry, the location may be made available to others. In all cases it remains the responsibility of the customer to update the Council of any changes to their contact details.

### **Plaques affixed to existing benches:**

The adoption of an existing bench through the donation of a memorial plaque will be for the period until the end of the bench's serviceable life, not exceeding 15 years. After this time the bench and plaque may be removed. Requests for additional or replacement plaques must be made in writing through the completion of a separate Form 1. Additional or replacement plaques will be subject to the conditions of the original agreement and will not extend the length of term.

When the term of adoption has expired, and where up-to-date contact details are held, the opportunity will be given in writing for the customer to retain the location and donate a new bench and plaque. The customer will have 30 days from the expiry of the term to confirm that they would like to retain the location and commence a new adoption agreement with the Council, the details of which will be confirmed at that time. If the customer declines to take on another term or does not confirm within 30 days of expiry, the location may be made available to others. In all cases it remains the responsibility of the customer to update the Council of any changes to their contact details.

### **Memorial Trees:**

The donation of a memorial tree is not subject to a fixed term, and is for the life of the tree only. The placement and species of a memorial tree will be determined by the assigned officer on a site-by-site basis in consultation with the Council's Forestry Section. This is to ensure both the location and tree species are appropriate for the site and that the tree meets biodiversity and maintenance considerations. The customer may request a specific park/open space in which to place the tree, but not a specific location within that park/open space, which will be determined according to the relevant management plan. There is no guarantee that the requested park/open space will be suitable for a memorial tree, and alternative locations may be offered.

The life expectancy of the tree will depend on the species and location. Trees that fail within the first year of planting will be replaced at the Council's expense, any further replacements will be at the expense of the customer and in prior agreement with the Council. A memorial plaque may be attached to a wooden plinth at the base of the tree and inscribed subject to the approval of the Council. The Council is not liable for the replacement of plaques/plinths which go missing or are vandalised.

In all cases, once the bench/tree has reached the end of its serviceable/natural life, the bench/tree and plaque may be removed. A request to donate a new replacement bench/tree can be made at the appropriate time.

The Council aims to place bench and plaque requests in the agreed location within four months of receiving payment, or as close to this as possible in the case of memorial trees, which should be planted during the dormant season between November and March.

**Maintenance Standard:**

The Council's standards of maintenance of public benches will be accepted as keeping the bench fit for purpose and clean. This will involve removing built up algae and grime and repairing minor faults within resources available. Maintenance carried out by anybody other than the Council, including pruning of trees, is strictly forbidden. The Council cannot guarantee against theft or vandalism and may not be able to replace the bench, tree, or plaque in this event.

In cases where the bench must be removed for a period, for instance in cases of roadworks, the Council will aim to make the customer aware of this, however, in times of emergency this may not be possible.

The Council understands the sensitive nature of memorial benches and trees, however, articles attached to a bench or tree, for instance balloons and flowers are prohibited. In cases where these articles are found by the Council they may be removed.

By donating a memorial, you are accepting that you have no preferential claim over it and that it is for general public use.

Only Council supplied and installed plaques are permitted. By requesting a plaque, you are accepting that you are not permitted to supply or affix your own plaque to any bench, tree, or tree stake. Where plaques are found to have been installed without permission from the Council through the procedure outlined above, a notice will be posted at the memorial giving 30 days for its removal, after which time the plaque will be removed by Council staff.

All costs are subject to annual review.

I understand and agree to all conditions above and confirm to pay by BACS on request the sum of £.....

Signed.....

Date.....