

Aston Clinton Parish Council

Memorial Bench Policy

Adopted: February 2024 Next Review: February 2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Parish Council receives occasional requests from members of the public who wish to place a memorial bench within a public open space.
- 1.2 There is no legislative requirement for the provision of public or memorial benches although it is accepted that they provide a useful and valued public amenity.
- 1.3 This policy recognises the need for a consistent approach to the provision of memorial benches in public open spaces and has been produced with the following guiding principles:
 - To be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial bench.
 - To establish responsibility for the maintenance, repair and replacement of memorial benches.
 - To ensure that memorial benches are not out of place in the area in which they are placed.
- 1.4 The provision and management of all seats and benches on all public open spaces owned by the Parish Council is the responsibility of the Facilities Committee.
- 1.5 The Facilities Committee will consider requests for memorial benches on an individual basis and retains the right to refuse or limit the number of benches.
- 1.6 Permission for a memorial bench will be granted for a maximum period of 15 years from the date of installation, after which the bench will be removed.

2. Procedure

- 2.1. All applications for memorial benches must be made on the official application form and signed by the donor. Applicants must provide information about the manufacturer, preferred style/type of bench, product code and cost.
- 2.2. The applicant will be responsible for all costs incurred including (but not exclusively) the purchase of the bench, plaque and the installation.
- 2.3. The Parish Council will only permit memorials to individuals or, in exceptional circumstances, a historical event. Applications for memorials to pets will not be considered.
- 2.4. The Parish Council will consider each application on its merits.
- 2.5. Memorials will be limited to benches. No additional mementos (eg vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, balloons or other ornamentation etc) will be permitted on or around the memorial. These will be removed without reference to the original applicant(s).
- 2.6. The Parish Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicant(s) but it may limit the number of memorials in a particular area.
- 2.7. Where there is no space for an additional memorial bench, requests for placement of a memorial plaque on an existing bench will be considered where the bench is in good condition. As the bench has already been provided through public funds, a charge which includes a modest contribution towards the original purchase of the bench, plus the plaque and installation cost will be required. The same conditions on life expectancy and maintenance will apply to any existing benches as apply to new benches.

- 2.8. Whilst the Parish Council will not automatically expect a uniform style of bench in any one location, the Parish Council may choose to require it.
- 2.9. The Parish Council will decide on whether the bench will be fitted to a concrete base or a slabbed area under and directly in front of the bench to allow for ease of use by the public.
- 2.10. The text and style of the inscription on any memorial plaques shall be submitted to the Parish Council for approval at the same time as memorial bench application. Memorial plaques will be no larger than 175mm wide by 75mm high and shall be fitted in the centre of the upper most lath of the back of the bench.
- 2.11. The installation of a memorial bench shall be carried out only in accordance with the details provided on the application form and by a contractor approved by the Parish Council. This is to ensure compliance with both Health & Safety and insurance requirements.
- 2.12. The Parish Council accepts no responsibility if a memorial bench is damaged, vandalised or stolen. Any damage will be notified to the named applicant(s). If the damage has not been repaired within 4 weeks of this notification, the Parish Council may arrange for the removal of the memorial bench.
- 2.13. The Parish Council will not be responsible for any maintenance of any memorial bench. However, if any maintenance is, in the opinion of the Clerk to the Parish Council, required, the applicant(s) will be informed and given a period of 4 weeks in which to complete the necessary works. The applicant is responsible for the bench for the period of its natural life (approximately 15 years).
- 2.14. Any maintenance carried out by a third party will be in strict agreement with the Parish Council and by appointment only.
- 2.15. The Parish Council will undertake an annual assessment of all benches and reserves the right to remove any bench that is no longer considered safe and fit for purpose. In this event, the named person(s) on the application form will be informed. Any related inscribed plaque will be returned to the donor or disposed of if contact cannot be made.
- 2.16. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove or re-site memorial benches at any time.
- 2.17. The Parish Council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life and will dispose of any such bench. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant.
- 2.18. The Parish Council will keep a record of donors and their contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the responsibility of the donor to provide the Clerk to the Parish Council with updated details in writing. Failure to do so could lead to the memorial being removed without further notice.

3. Application – Request for a Memorial Bench

Applicant's details

Full Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone: (landline and mobile)	
Email:	
Relationship to the person for whom the bench is being provided to remember:	
Please ensure that you notify the Clerk of any change in contact details so that we can contact you if necessary.	

Details of the Memorial Bench

Dedicated to:	
Association with Aston Clinton Parish:	
Preferred location:	
Name and address of the manufacturer of the bench:	
Proposed bench style / name:	
Product code:	
Cost of bench: (excluding VAT)	

Description and cost of fixings: (excluding VAT)	
Name, address and telephone number of the contractor who is expected to install the memorial bench:	
Proposed plaque inscription (max size 175mm x 75mm) (if any)	

Declaration by the applicant.

I declare that I have read and understood Aston Clinton Parish Council’s Memorial Bench Policy.

I understand that the permission granted for a memorial bench is for a maximum period of 15 years from the date of installation, after which the bench will be removed.

Signed: Date

**When completed, please send to the Parish Clerk, Aston Clinton Parish Council,
Aston Clinton Park, London Road, Aston Clinton HP22 5HE
or email clerk@astonclinton.org**