



Winchester
City Council

Winchester City Council
Memorials, Monuments and
Commemorative Installations
Policy
January 2025



Introduction

Winchester City Council has supported requests for memorial trees and benches for many years on open spaces it owns. Most requests for benches and trees are received from individuals commemorating the lives of family members but a few have been received from groups of organisations seeking to mark a particular event of local or national importance.

The purpose of this policy is to provide advice and guidance to those wishing to adopt, sponsor or install a memorial on council owned open spaces. It will be used to assess applications for such memorials and their unique requirements to ensure decision making is transparent and fair when considering requests.

For the purposes of this policy the term memorial refers to any type of manmade or natural asset used to remember, commemorate or celebrate an individual, groups of individuals, organisation(s), event(s) or time. The policy covers benches, trees (new and existing) and special request memorials.

The underpinning principles for memorials are that they should:

- Be meaningful and with a connection to the place.
- Allow access for all with space to reflect and contemplate.
- Maintain the quality, nature and character of the open space in which they are proposed.
- Avoid a sense of overcrowding and is sensitive to what is in the surrounding area.
- Not be overtly political or religious.

The council holds a list of the current locations which accommodate trees and benches. It also has a list of all council open spaces that may be proposed as location for other forms of memorials. All applications and requests will be assessed against the capacity and suitability of these sites to accommodate the proposed memorial.

Issue Date: January 2025

1. Benches

Applications for benches are assessed by the council's Open Space team. Providing there is space in the desired location, the following criteria apply:

- Benches provided will adhere to the council's specification, except in exceptional circumstances.
- The cost of the bench includes an engraved plaque, installation and maintenance for a period of 10 years. If the seat is damaged or deemed unrepairable within this time, the council will pay for repair or replacement of the bench.
- The wording on the plaque will be approved by the council.
- Where it is not possible to accommodate the request for a new bench, the applicant may be offered an existing (refurbished) bench (that does not have a plaque) with in same location to place a memorial plaque subject to availability. Alternatively, the request may be placed on a waiting list which is held by the council.
- No additional items are permitted in the vicinity of the bench e.g., flowers, wreaths, soft toys, vases. Any such items found will be removed without notice. The sponsor will be notified that the items will be kept for a period of one month and thereafter recycled or disposed of.

The Council reserves the right to remove any bench in the following circumstances:

- after a period of 10 years (lifetime period).
- in the event of disrepair and/or vandalism.
- In the event of any future redevelopment scheme.

2. Trees

Memorial trees contribute many benefits visual appeal, shade, wellbeing and add to the biodiversity of the district.

Applications for a new memorial tree will be assessed against the following criteria:

- A Tree Officer will advise of suitable locations and discuss species of tree with the applicant which will be in accordance with the planting scheme of the area.
- The plaque will be provided by the council's approved contractor with agreed inscription. The plaque will be replaced once if damaged or removed within the first 10 years of planting.
- The tree will be the property of the council and will be managed and maintained in line with the council's approved Tree Strategy.
- Trees are planted by the council's approved contractor in February each year and sponsors can be invited to attend the planting.
- The charge to sponsor a new tree will include the cost of the tree, the plaque, planting, watering and maintenance costs.

Adoption of an existing tree will be considered under the Tree Adoption Policy. Adopting an existing tree will include a small plaque.

- Applicant will agree suitability of tree with the council. A list of trees and locations is available from the Natural Environment team.
- The plaque will be secured to a suitable branch or trunk of the tree in a visible position.
- The plaque will be provided by the council's approved contractor with the agreed inscription.
- The sponsorship fee will include the cost and maintenance of the plaque.
- In the event of the plaque going missing or damaged, the Council will undertake to replace the plaque free of charge on one occasion only.
- No additional items are permitted on or around any tree e.g., flowers, wreaths, soft toys, vases. Any found will be removed without notice. The sponsor will be notified that the items will be kept for a period of one month and thereafter recycled or disposed of.

3. Special requests / one-off memorials or commemorative installations

The council sometimes receives requests for memorials other than benches or trees. These are usually from organisations rather than individuals. There are a limited number of suitable locations with space to accommodate such request, so they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Initial requests should be directed to the Open Space team at the City Council. Relevant and appropriate council members and officers will be consulted on the request, site and design of the memorial.

The applicant should show how their proposal meets the following criteria for a memorial:

- There must be a justifiable link between the subject and the location.
- It should be demonstrated that equity, inclusion and diversity within the location and type of memorial has been considered.
- The memorial would enhance and not detract from the current use and purpose of the site.
- It has been checked whether planning permission is required.
Long-term funding is evidenced, which should include design, production, installation and maintenance costs to confirm that the applicant can meet these costs.
- A process for management, repair and maintenance is demonstrated. This should include the expected lifespan of the memorials and the procedure to renew, replace or decommission after that time.
- The project must meet safety specifications.

The new memorials need to align with council policy for carbon reduction and with the council's Cultural Strategy.

The council reserves the following rights:

- To carry out repair, relocation and removal of memorials and commemorative installations without notifying the sponsor. But the council can be contacted for information about a memorial.
- To remove a commemorative plaque if something later affects the status or meaning so as to cause offence.

4. Fees and charges 2025/26

Memorial	Details	Fee
Bench	Plaque and contribution to whole-life cost for 10 years.	£1,950
Tree Sponsorship	Engraved plaque	£210
New Tree Planting	Contribution towards the supply, planting and aftercare for 2 years.	£650