



Adopted: 13 February 2025
Minute No: 25/049
Next Review: February 2026

MEMORIAL BENCH POLICY

This policy will take effect from 13th February 2025 and relates to all new applications accepted since that date. An Appendix to the policy sets out how the Town Council will manage existing benches.

West Mersea Town Council acknowledges that the dedication of a bench to a loved one is a tradition which many wish to continue. However, the Town Council must take into account that there is a finite number of spaces for such memorial seats.

All requests must be made in writing on the attached form and in agreement with the next of kin, personal representative and/or the executors.

Memorial benches will be permitted on various locations, the Town Council will try to accommodate the request and preference of the families as to the location, but this must be agreed by the Town Council.

- a) Benches must be purchased through the Town Council.
- b) The Town Council will manage the installation of all benches.
- c) The inscription on the plaque rail shall be a suitable statement which must be approved by the authorised officer of the Town Council.
- d) The Council in line with current maintenance arrangements will maintain the bench but the Council accepts no liability for replacement of the bench or the plaque at the end of its useful life.
- e) No additional mementos such as vases, statues, flowers or wreaths shall be permitted on or around the bench.
- f) There are no designated locations on land owned or leased by the Town Council where ashes can be scattered including around memorial benches.
- g) If the bench is no longer safe the Town Council reserves the right to remove the bench.
- h) It is the responsibility of the owner of the bench to inform the Town Council of any change of address.

Appendix A

Whilst the above policy deals with new applications for benches, there is a need to specify how the Town Council will manage the large number of benches in situ. When the memorial seat is coming to the end of its life the Town Council will try to contact the owner by telephone, email or post to inform them of the situation and whether they would like the bench and memorial plaque to remain. If there is no reply after 6 weeks the Town Council will remove the memorial plaque and retain for a year. If the bench is in a poor state of repair, it will be removed.

In the event of damage, the Town Council reserves the right not to replace the bench or to offer the owner the opportunity to facilitate a replacement.