Commemorative Benches and Trees in Parks & Greenspaces
**Introduction**

The Council’s parks and greenspaces have long been requested locations for commemorative benches and trees. The Council has undertaken to offer this service in a supportive and sensitive way whilst being mindful that its open spaces have many uses and are enjoyed by a wide range of people. This means that the service requires appropriate management and regulation.

The content of this policy may need to be revised to meet changing circumstances, trends and opportunities. The scheme offers opportunities to celebrate special occasions as well as providing memorials for loved ones.

Enquires about cemetery memorial benches or trees should be directed to the Bereavement Services at Norse Road cemetery (01234 718150).

**Objectives of the scheme**

- To adopt a consistent and sympathetic approach to the management of the scheme which takes account of the needs of all parks and greenspace users.

- To ensure that commemorations are only agreed following a request by a suitable applicant such as family member, Executor or close friend.

- To ensure that features have a common appearance, style and size that is acceptable to all greenspace users and is appropriate for the preferred location. Please refer to the location guide on pages 7 and 8.

- To establish responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement.

- To establish the standards of service needed to manage the commemorative scheme.
General

• The size, nature and location of the park or green space may limit the number of plaques, benches or trees permitted in some instances. In these cases the Council may be able to offer alternative locations for the applicant’s consideration.

• All applicants shall pay for commemorative benches, plaques, trees and other features in full prior to installation.

• All features will be located so as not to interfere with site management needs or the activities and enjoyment of greenspace users. Locations are subject to the final agreement of the Council.

• The Council cannot accept liability for any malicious or accidental damage to commemorative features. The Council reserves the right to remove any damaged commemorative features where the applicant has not agreed to works within 4 weeks of the notification.

• Where possible the Council shall advise applicants of any significant damage to features and the costs of repair or replacement work. It will be the applicant’s responsibility to agree and fund repairs or replacement work in these instances.

• The Council will not grant applications for memorials to pets.

• Additional mementos e.g. vases, statues, flowers or wreaths etc, are not permitted on or around commemorative features.

• Benches will be of the type and colour specified by the Council to be in keeping with the intended location.

• Plaques will be retained in situ for a maximum period of 15 years. Expired plaques will be removed and kept for a further 6 months. Should these items not be claimed within this time then the Council will recycle or dispose of them.
• The Council will advise on the range of tree species that are suitable for the intended location and can make recommendations if requested.

• The Council will only permit plaques to be placed by trees in exceptional circumstances e.g. for a nationally recognised commemorative purpose.

• The Council cannot accept liability for the replacement of old or diseased trees or other plants. Newly planted trees that fail within the first two years will be replaced by the Council at no additional cost.

• Applications for trees can be placed at any time of year but planting will only be done during the winter season (end November to end February) and applications for the winter should be submitted no later than 30 September of any year. This will allow time for ordering good quality trees and to arrange planting for the most advantageous times.
Charges for commemorative benches and trees

All charges include basic maintenance to maintain the condition and appearance of commemorative features.

A. Benches

• Existing benches (currently without a dedication) including bronze cast plaque and initial minor refurbishment where necessary.
  £600 including VAT

• Supply and installation of a new bench appropriate to match existing style in chosen location. To be on a new plinth or existing hardstanding (as appropriate to location) and include a bronze cast plaque for 15 year period.
  From £1600 including VAT

• Additional bronze cast plaque or replacement of applicant’s existing plaque
  £150 including VAT

B. Trees

• Applicants will be advised of suitable tree species for their desired location. Trees supplied will be subject to Officers’ recommendation.

• The trees supplied are 3 to 4 metres tall and will have a well-developed head of branches. The price of the tree includes the tree guard as well as planting, staking and tying, and its first season’s watering.
  £400 including VAT.
Location Guide for the Provision of New Commemorative Benches

The Embankment

6ft Westminster bench £1,600
(pictured)

8ft Westminster bench £2,000
Hardwood with teak oiling

Longholme Island

5ft Larbreck bench £1,600
Hardwood

Russell Park

6ft Elwood bench £1,600
Enviropol

6ft Stanford bench £1,600
Enviropol and aluminium
Mowsbury Park

5ft Tudor bench £1,600
(pictured)

8ft Tudor bench £2,000
Hardwood

Bedford Park

6ft Stanford bench £1,600
Enviropol and aluminium

Priory Country Park

5ft Tudor bench £1,600
Hardwood

If you wish to make an application for a location not listed here, please return the completed pack stating the proposed location for consideration.
Please note that the Council can no longer accept the following applications:

• Provision of new commemorative benches and/or dedications for Mill Meadows.

• Provision of new commemorative benches for the surrounding area of the ornamental lake in Bedford Park.

• Provision of new commemorative benches for Harrold-Odell Country Park. Applications for commemorative trees (native hardwood only) will still be considered.

In order to use more sustainable seating options in our parks and open spaces, Bedford Borough Council now offer two recycled material memorial bench options:

• The Elwood bench with timber effect (Enviropol)

• The Stanford bench (Enviropol and aluminium)

These environmentally-friendly benches are far more durable than their traditional wooden counterparts and will not rot, warp or crack.

The recycled material is also resistant to fire and vandalism.
Commemorative Benches and Trees
Register of Interest

Name: ........................................................................................................................................

Address: ...................................................................................................................................

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Postcode: ....................................................................................................................................... 

Contact Number(s)    Home: ........................................................................................................... 

Mobile: .................................................................................................................................

Email: ..........................................................................................................................................

Details of preferred site and location for bench / tree:

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Please select preferred option below:

☐ Affix plaque to existing bench
☐ New bench with plaque
☐ Tree to be planted

Note:
Please refer to guidance document for further information and charges.

If applicable please confirm that you have completed and attached the form confirming plaque detail.

Signature: ...........................................................................................................................................

Date: .............................................................................................................................................

Please return completed form to:

✉ Business Support Team
   Environmental Services
   Borough Hall
   Room 401
   Cauldwell Street
   Bedford MK42 9AP

or email to:

✉ envservices@bedford.gov.uk
Details for a cast bronze plaque (9 inches x 2 ½ inches)

Please read these notes carefully to help you in choosing your layout.

• Enter only one character per box and leave one box between each word. A punctuation mark is one character.

• Name lines are in large text and have a maximum of 22 letters and spaces

• Verse lines are in a smaller text and may have a maximum of 34 letters and spaces. The top and bottom lines have an area marked on the grid to allow for screw fixings.

• If more than 22 letters/spaces are required on a name line we will use the next line if it is otherwise blank. If there is no spare line the text may need to be reduced to the size of verse text.

• The maximum number of lines is 5 lines per memorial plaque.

• If only a short inscription is required, the height of the text can be increased to fit the plaque so it will look and read well.
Details for a cast bronze plaque (9 inches x 2½ inches)

Please fill in the grid below with the details required on the plaque:

Plaque example (not to scale):

MICHAEL SANDERSON
7·09·1971 - 29·07·2003
LOVED AND REMEMBERED ALWAYS
TILL WE MEET AGAIN SON SLEEP WELL
MUCH LOVED BY ALL THE FAMILY
For more information:

Business Support Team
Environmental Services
Borough Hall
Room 401
Cauldwell Street
Bedford MK42 9AP

envservices@bedford.gov.uk

www.bedford.gov.uk