



Informal policy on memorial benches

We will consider all applications for new benches and/or plaques. We will only install new benches where we feel there is a real need for them. We won't litter our parks with too many benches but find that most requests are for larger parks where it is usually possible to accommodate a new one.

If the location is one that we have already identified the need for a new bench at we will consider funding the installation. If not then the resident will be asked to pay the full cost. We will meet them on site to agree the precise location. This will take into consideration their preference (a favourite view perhaps) but must also include a sensible approach to spreading our benches out to create logical stopping points for visitors wishing to take a rest around a walking route. We will not place them where they might either encourage anti-social behaviour or where nearby residents might be affected by noise.

We explain that we use only two styles of benches so that we can retain some design consistency across each park and because they are tried and tested re. vandalism.

In most of our parks we use the earth anchor recycled plastic bench:

<http://www.earth-anchors.com/Seats--Benches/Cast-Iron/Evergreen-Seat-1.8-metre-p-21-28-57.aspx>



In some of our rural parks we use a bespoke chunky oak bench designed and supplied to us by a local specialist (e.g. Pishiobury Park).

These come flat packed and can be installed by volunteers if appropriate.

We do not allow plaques in our parks to commemorate trees or any other feature other than on benches. Our view is that the place for memorials is the local churchyard or cemetery. To date we have allowed a brass plaque which the resident must arrange for themselves and we have then installed by routing out to let the plaque sit flush with the surface, glued and screwed. More recently we have tried out the service provided by Earth Anchors to have words engraved directly into the seat back. This can either be retro fitted to an existing bench or ordered with a new bench. The resident will pay for the full cost of this but we will make the arrangement with the supplier on their behalf as part of an order for a new bench. They must however email the text to us which we will forward to the supplier. The supplier will then confirm to both parties.

If retro fitted the resident must also pay the installation cost.

We've not found it necessary to set up any formal agreement to protect the authority. We would transfer a plaque free of charge if we need to replace a bench. We will not pay for replacement if the plaque is damaged or stolen.

Ian Sharratt

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