



GREAT DUNMOW TOWN COUNCIL

Memorial Trees, Benches and Plaque Policy

Version	Adopted	Minute Reference	Date of Next Review
1	09/01/25	FC139iv	January 2027

Introduction

Great Dunmow Town Council supports the need and principles of allowing trees and benches as memorials in certain areas it controls and its green space areas, but is also mindful that these facilities have many uses and are enjoyed by a wide range of people. The Council will therefore ensure that the issue is managed and regulated for the mutual benefit of all.

Policy Aims

This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- To be respectful, sympathetic and easily understood by everyone
- To balance the sometimes contrasting needs of a variety of facility users
- To maintain and enhance the high-quality appearance of sites and not detract from their prime recreational purpose.
- To establish the responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement of memorials.
- To achieve full cost recovery by Great Dunmow Town Council for any memorials provided

Sites Included

Only the sites under the direct ownership and management of Great Dunmow Town Council will be subject to this policy. Recreational open spaces within the wider District and managed by the other Councils will be subject to their own policies. The sites listed below are included within the policy, but further sites may be added in the future.

- The Recreation Ground
- The Downs
- Talberds Ley
- The David Cock land
- Town Council Cemetery
- Town Square
- Doctors Pond
- Parsonage Downs
- Threaders Green
- Chelmer Valley land
- Braintree Road Picnic Area
- Harp Mead
- Town Council Playgrounds
- Jubilee Allotments
- Castleden Meadow
- Land at Brick Kiln Farm

Rules and Management

Memorial Benches

- 1 Memorial benches will be positioned to maximise the benefit and development of the site and the number of memorial benches in a particular area will be limited. However, the Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicants wherever possible.

- 2 In order to maintain consistency of appearance, quality and control over location, all benches will be ordered and installed by the Parish Council, of a design and specification as determined by the Council.
- 3 The total cost of the installation of a memorial bench (including plaque and installation) will be paid by the applicant with a further 10% donation to the Parish Council to cover simple ongoing maintenance.
- 4 The Council in line with the current maintenance regime for benches will maintain the bench. However, no replacement liability will be accepted at the end of the useful life of the bench (ten years) or if it is damaged through vandalism.
- 5 After a period of 10 years, or when the bench becomes unusable, any memorial plaque will be removed and offered back to the donor. If they are uncontactable or do not want the plaque returned, the plaque will be recycled. If a community bench has been identified, the donor will be offered the option to pay to transfer the plaque to that community bench.
- 6 Each site has limited space that can be accommodated and will be subject to the Council's approval. Alternatively, an option to refurbish or replace an existing old bench with a new one may be offered subject to the condition of the existing bench.
- 7 In order to reduce the costs to individuals wishing to install a memorial dedication, they will be given the option of purchasing a plaque which can be installed on any identified council memorial sites such as the Coronation Shelter. These plaques will be installed by the Council to its own specification. All costs will be payable by the donor.

Memorial Trees

- 1 The planting of memorial trees will only be permitted in certain areas. The number of trees permissible may be limited dependent on location and size. Written applications will be considered by the Downs and Commons Committee whose decision is binding.
- 2 The species of tree will be of a native variety and will be at the discretion of the Downs and Commons Committee in keeping with the local environment. Trees will be planted during the autumn and winter planting season by the Council, but the applicant and family members may be present and assist if practicable and desired.
- 3 The total cost of the tree and tree guard including installation will be dependent on the size appropriate for the site and will be paid by the applicant with a 10% additional donation to the Parish Council for the cost of the first year's watering.
- 4 Great Dunmow Town Council will not accept responsibility or liability in respect of any damage to or loss of a memorial tree or tree guard unless this is reasonably shown to be due to the negligence of the Council. All trees planted as a memorial will be maintained by the Council in line with its policy.
- 5 Great Dunmow Town Council will allow plaques on the guards of memorial trees (whilst the guards are in place) but will not permit plaques to be fixed to any tree or post.

Memorial Plaques

- 1 No memorial plaques are permitted on trees.
- 2 No flowers or similar memorials shall be permitted to mark the site of a death at any time. The Council will not grant applications for memorials to, or to scatter the ashes of, pets.