

KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL

Memorials Policy

Introduction

It is Council policy to accept donations for the purpose of planting trees, shrubs (referred to as memorials), and benches and plaques, within the town, to memorialise a departed family member or friend, subject to the availability of space.

All donations shall be in compliance with the following:

- applications will be considered for bench memorial donations, subject to sufficient space and agreement of their siting;
- memorial donations will be accepted for the purpose of the purchase and planting of trees and shrubs;
- memorials shall be self-supporting, e.g. all costs relating to a memorial shall be at the expense of the donor(s), including purchase, installation, repair or replacement, if necessary. Council will consider the sort of items purchased, e.g. for benching, this would need to be vandal resistant and in keeping with the appearance of other similar benches in the area;
- memorials shall remain the property of Council and legal ownership of a donated piece of street furniture, e.g. bench, tree or shrub remains with Council;
- a small floral arrangement or card is permitted to be placed on or by memorial benches, trees or shrubs for an anniversary or significant memorable date. Any flowers or cards left will be removed after 3 weeks and disposed of, or earlier if perished by weather conditions. No ashes may be scattered or interred by a memorial bench, tree or shrub.

Council's decision in all matters relating to memorial donations is final.

Types of Tree/Shrub and Locations

Council will provide potential donors with a list of tree species etc. for memorial use to select their memorial. The exact siting of the memorial will be decided by Council. Whilst Council tries to position a tree at a requested location, this cannot be guaranteed. All planting will be carried out by Council staff or its approved contractors.

Plaques

Memorial donations will be recognised by use of a memorial plaque, which will be placed near the donated tree(s). Standard memorial plaques shall be used to promote consistency size – maximum 17.5cm wide x 7.5mm (7" x 3") high on stainless steel with plaque wording approved by Council. No structures or planting around the memorial will be permitted.

Ceremonies

A ceremony or gathering at the time of a memorial dedication is permitted, but must be arranged in advance with Council.

Trees/Shrubs

Council does not guarantee tree or shrub survivability. Trees and shrubs are planted between mid-November and mid-March when the species are dormant, to minimize stress and ensure their successful establishment.

Larger Memorials

Council is happy to consider proposals for larger memorials such as statutes, plinths etc. However, in this case it should be to commemorate a significant person or event, typically of national or regional significance. In this case any proposal would need to comply with applicable planning requirements and be seen to have significant support in the community.

Records

Council shall maintain a record of each donation which shall contain all pertinent information such as the donor's name, person's name that is being memorialised, tree location and type of tree etc.

Maintenance and Replacement of Sponsored Trees

Council monitors and carries out routine maintenance on newly planted trees (watering, mulching, and loosening of ties) for 3 years to ensure their satisfactory establishment. After this time the trees will be included within Council's routine Tree Maintenance Programme.

For the first 3 years Council will replace the tree in the unlikely event that it fails to establish and dies.

For the first 3 years Council will replace a tree if it suffers irreparable damage from vandalism providing replacement is practicable.

If unforeseen circumstances require it, Council reserves the right to move or remove the tree if deemed necessary and plant a replacement tree in an appropriate alternative location.

Maintenance of Sponsored Shrubs

Council monitors and carries out routine maintenance on planted shrubs (watering, mulching, and loosening of ties) within Council's routine maintenance programme to ensure their satisfactory establishment.

If unforeseen circumstances require it, Council reserves the right to move or remove the shrub if deemed necessary and plant a replacement shrub in an appropriate alternative location.

Maintenance of existing Memorial Benches

Council monitors and carries out routine maintenance on memorial benches within Council's routine maintenance programme.

If unforeseen circumstances require it, Council reserves the right to move the bench to an alternative location or remove the bench if deemed necessary due to its falling into disrepair.

Should a bench become unsightly or unsafe, Council will notify the donor at the last known address to advise of its intention to remove the bench – if no response is received within 2 weeks, the bench will be removed. In cases where the bench is a health and safety hazard, it will be removed immediately and the donor will be notified. Any memorial plaque will be returned to the donor if the bench is removed.

In the event of damage by vandalism, if Council is unable to recover the insurance excess, it reserves the right not to replace the bench or to offer the donor the opportunity to pay the excess in order to facilitate a replacement.

If any alteration or addition is required to the memorial bench plaque, Council will agree the wording and arrange for the replacement plaque to be installed.

Approximate Costings for Memorial Trees/Plaques

Trees/Shrubs – this will include the cost price to include the tree post and delivery, plus £20 for planting and upkeep.

Memorial Plaques – all plaques will be stainless steel with no more than 35 words – the approximate cost will be £50 plus VAT – the actual cost to be confirmed with the manufacturer. A £20 administrative fee will be charged for any addition/update to existing plaques. The cost of all memorials must be paid in full prior to their installation.

Please write to Council, who will confirm the price and other relevant details in writing. Council will order and take delivery of your chosen memorial. Installation will be undertaken by staff or contractors appointed by Council. If you wish to be present when the tree/shrub is planted, please advise Council in your application to: Kesgrave Town Council, Ferguson Way, Kesgrave, Suffolk, IP5 2FZ Tel. (01473) 625179; enquiry@kesgravetowncouncil.org.uk.

Last reviewed: 02 June 2025

Next review due: 02 June 2028