



# Penrith Town Council

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## MEMORIAL SEATS POLICY

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Penrith Town Council has adopted this policy to facilitate members of the public if they wish to donate towards:
- A new replacement bench seat with accompanying plaque in memory of a deceased person
  - A plaque on its own to be fixed to an existing seat of a new style
- 1.2 This policy relates to the administrative area covered by Penrith Town Council only.

### 2. Objectives

- To respond to requests by relatives and friends of a deceased person to provide some lasting memory of that person.
- To contribute to the overall amenity of the town by providing bench seats and securing their maintenance for the future.

### 3. Background

- Penrith Town Council received 45 seats and benches from Eden District Council via an asset transfer on the 19 October 2018. The seats varied in style, age and condition.
- The Council in addition to approving a Memorial Seat Policy, had been asked to take into consideration a phased replacement of many of the 45 benches to provide the town with consistency of design and appearance. The Council has replaced a number of seats across the Town with the new style of seat.
- The Council is now responsible for additional sites including Fairhill and Thacka Beck which have been devolved to the Town Council. The Town Council will now consider applications for seats to be installed at these sites.
- For this policy any application for a memorial seat will be received to provide a replacement seat in an existing location and also at Fairhill and Thacka Beck, whilst still enabling the phased replacement of the old seats, and where there is no current memorial dedication.

## **4. Conditions**

- 4.1 All requests for either new bench seats with plaques or for plaques to be fixed to existing bench seats of the new style must be made on the relevant form, signed and submitted to the Services and Contracts Manager.
- 4.2 New bench seats will be of a type, design and colour approved by the Council to ensure some consistency with existing ones in place throughout the Penrith Parish.
- 4.3 The purchase of each bench seat and/or plaque and their installation will be carried out by the Council.
- 4.4 Once installed the bench seat and plaque will become the property of the Council. It will be maintained for an initial period of 10 years.
- 4.5 After the period of 10 years the Council will endeavour to contact the donor and seek a further agreement for continued maintenance of the plaque and bench seat. This agreement will likely be subject to a further fee being charged. If the donor cannot be contacted for any reason, the Council may at its discretion remove the plaque and allow the bench to be available to new donors.
- 4.6 Where an existing memorial plaque is in place, and should that bench be replaced, the memorial plaque will be replaced with the same inscription detail for a period of 10 years from the date of replacement.
- 4.7 The Council will maintain a database of applicants, including the expiry date of 10 years, and any waiting lists that may develop.
- 4.8 The Council will not permit the provision of bench seats and plaques other than as supplied by or through the Council.

## **5. Location**

For this policy:

- 5.1 The provision of seats where there is an existing memorial plaque displayed will require that the existing memorial plaque be replaced with like for like wording for a period of 10 years from the date of installation.
- 5.2 The provision of new seats will be in existing locations and will replace one of the old-style seats that does not currently display a memorial plaque. The Council will permit applications for new seats at Fairhill and Thacka Beck.
- 5.3 Where the Council has provided a new style seat as part of its phased replacement and does not display a memorial plaque, then donors can choose to have a plaque installed at this location.
- 5.4 The Council cannot install bench seats on private land or other areas of public land that it has no control over.

## **6. Seat design**

- 6.1 New bench seats will be of a type, design and colour approved by the Council to ensure some consistency. The chosen seat is:



- 6.2 Where space prevents the preferred seat from being installed, then the Council will select an alternative seat design of its choice.

## **7. Plaques / inscriptions**

- 7.1 Only one memorial plaque measuring 150mm x 40mm is permitted per bench and this will be ordered at the same time as the bench.
- 7.2 Where only a plaque is being ordered the same dimensions apply.
- 7.3 There is no maximum number of characters permitted, however it should be noted that the more wording required the smaller the font will be to accommodate the plaque size. We therefore recommend a maximum of 70 characters.
- 7.4 All wording to be printed on to the plaques must be approved by the Council prior to the order being placed. The Council may determine a consistent font to be used on all plaques.

## **8. Maintenance**

- 8.1 Penrith Town Council will inspect the benches and plaques on a regular basis. Where there are any defects with the benches the Council will instruct its Community Caretaker to undertake any repairs.
- 8.2 Seats may be removed by the Council if they become unsafe or are beyond reasonable repair. The Council cannot replace stolen seats.
- 8.3 Penrith Town Council cannot guarantee the long-term safety or security of the seat. The Council cannot guarantee against theft or vandalism and may not be able to replace the bench or plaque in this event.

## **9. End of 10 year term**

- 9.1 At the end of 10 years where no renewal fee is paid, the plaque will be returned to donor.
- 9.2 Where the Council is unable to contact the donor, the Council will keep the plaque for 12 months.
- 9.3 When vacated plaque space becomes available the seat will be available to a new applicant or the next person on the waiting list.

## 10. Charges

Description	(£)
New bench seat with plaque, including 10 years maintenance fee.	£1000
Plaque fixed to existing new style bench seat, including 10 years maintenance fee. See Note 1	£200
Renewal of seat/plaque, including maintenance fee after initial 10 years expires. Price is for a further 10 years. See Note 2	£200

**Note 1** - No new plaques can be fixed to any of the old-style benches

**Note 2** - Cost for additional 10 years or when seat/plaque reaches the end of its meaningful life, or whichever is soonest.

- 10.1 The charges will be reviewed by the Council annually to be effective from the 01 April each year.
- 10.2 Once the location of the seat and wording for the plaque has been agreed and any necessary consents are approved, the Council will raise an invoice to the donor.
- 10.3 Once payment has been received in full the Council will arrange for the order and installation to proceed. The Council will install the benches.

## 11. Exclusions

- 11.1 Penrith Town Council cannot be held responsible or liable for any decisions or amendments made to any of the benches prior to the 19 October 2018, which was the date that the benches were devolved to Penrith Town Council.

**Adopted: 2018**

**Reviewed March 2021**

**Next Review: 2028**