



# SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

## POLICY ON THE DEDICATION OF BENCHES, TREES AND SHRUBS WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE PARKS

Shrewsbury Town Council supports the needs and principles of allowing memorial benches, trees and shrubs in its town centre parks. The Council is mindful that these facilities are enjoyed by a wide range of people. Therefore, the Council will ensure that the issue is managed and regulated for the mutual benefit of all.

The content of this policy will be revised as necessary to meet changing circumstances, fashion and trends. The policy will be reviewed at least every four years and proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Council for approval.

This policy will be made available to the general public and all applicants for memorial benches, trees and shrubs will be issued with a copy.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The Council is seeking to ensure it is adopting a clear, measurable and sympathetic approach to the management of its Town Centre Parks, which will take account of the sometimes contrasting needs of a variety of users.

The policy will also ensure that only memorial benches, trees and shrubs are erected which are instigated by the next of kin or executor and that benches have a common appearance, style and size which are appropriate for that location and will not cause offence to others.

The policy will establish responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement. The Council through this policy will endeavour to always offer the highest standard of service in undertaking its management and regulatory responsibility.

### **Location**

**Please note that there are no available spaces for memorial benches, trees and shrubs with plaques within The Dingle.**

The planting of Memorial trees and shrubs shall only be carried out between November and February to ensure the most efficient growing conditions.

### **Memorials**

Shrewsbury Town Council offers memorialisation within its town centre parks, which include the following:

- Memorial tree with or without a plaque (subject to availability)
- Memorial shrub with or without a plaque (subject to availability)
- Memorial bench with plaque (subject to availability)
- **Memorial bench renewal – 5 year lease**

Memorial benches, trees and shrubs shall be positioned to maximise the benefit and development of the park but the Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicants.

The Council will limit the number of memorial benches in particular areas so that they shall not detract from the prime purpose of the park. Therefore, the size and location of the park shall limit the number permitted. The Council reserves the right to refuse applications on this basis. The Council shall specify the type of benches, trees and shrubs to be installed/planted to be in keeping with the intended location.

There are opportunities for other locations to be used providing they are in accordance with this Council policy and with the required authorisation from the Town Clerk.

### **Lease Period**

All memorials are based on a 10-year lease and can be renewed after this period if the applicant wishes. The initial fee covers the purchase, delivery and installation of the memorial, together with the ongoing repair and maintenance for the 10-year period.

Upon the end of the 10-year period any memorials can be renewed if the applicant wishes. The Council reserves the right to remove any bench, tree or shrub, which in its opinion is damaged or beyond economic repair.

### **Renewal of Memorials**

The initial memorial lease period may be renewed at the end of the 10-year lease, on payment of the appropriate fee. The renewal would then be on a 5-year rolling lease.

It is the responsibility of the memorial lease holder to ensure that the lease is renewed by the appropriate date if you wish to continue the memorial. The Town Council will write to the last known address of the memorial owner when the memorial lease is due for renewal. You are recommended to inform the Town Council if you change your address/contact details.

In the case where the memorial lease is not renewed, the inscription plates will be removed one month after the renewal date has expired. The memorial will then be available to lease to new owners.

The Town Council will store the memorial for 12 months, after this period the memorial plaques will be recycled.

### **Inscriptions for Both Bench & Tree Plaques**

Memorial plaques shall be affixed in the centre of the upper most lath of the back of the bench. In the case of trees and shrubs plaques shall be secured by a central pointed fixing.

The inscription on the plaque is to be restricted to "In (Loving) Memory of" the name of the person and the dates of birth and death.

### **Process**

Once an application has been received and location agreed, the Town Council shall arrange for the purchase and planting/installation of the preferred memorial.

The Council reserves the right to remove any memorial benches, trees or shrubs that have been damaged and are in the view of the Council beyond economical repair.

The Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial benches, trees or shrubs from vandals, third parties or whilst the Council carries out routine maintenance in the park.

The Council will not grant applications for memorial benches to pets.

No additional mementoes e.g vases, statues, flowers, wreaths, balloons or other ornamentation etc., shall be permitted on or around the bench/plaques/shrubs & trees. These shall be removed without reference to the original applicant.

### **Payment**

Payment is required with every completed application form. The application form will be sent out once the type of memorial and location has been agreed. Payment can be accepted by cash, Cheque (made payable to Shrewsbury Town Council) or via BACS payment.

### **Conditions**

Shrewsbury Town Council reserves the right to plant trees, install benches or place memorial plaques where suitable, but will where appropriate accommodate requests.

Once planted/installed, the tree/shrub/bench cannot be repositioned or removed from the site. However, should a tree or bench become unsafe, Shrewsbury Town Council reserves the right to remove immediately in the interest of health and safety until repairs or replacement can take place.

Shrewsbury Town Council will maintain responsibility for the memorial and associated plaque during the 10-year lease period. This will include any preservation, treatment, repair works and replacement of the memorial where required due to fair wear and tear or vandalism.

**Adopted by Council Sept 2018**

**Reviewed 2023**