



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Memorial Benches Policy

Policy Statement

There is no legislative requirement for the provision of public or memorial benches although it is accepted that they provide a useful and valued public amenity. The provision and management of all seats and benches on all public open spaces owned or managed by the council is the responsibility of the Alston Moor Parish Council.

Alston Moor Parish Council supports the principle of allowing memorial benches within the parish and 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.

It is the intention that the policy only covers broad common issues and is not meant to be exhaustive. The content of this policy will be revised as necessary to meet changing circumstances.

1. Location - Benches

The council will be prepared to consider adopting benches where the proposed site is on land owned by the council. Where the proposed site is on or near the highway and subject to a licence from Westmorland and Furness Council or another highways authority the council will be prepared to consider adopting a bench where it is necessary to apply for the appropriate licence. The extent of the council's adoption will be limited to holding the bench on the council's asset register for insurance purposes, and to comply with the licence requirements of Westmorland and Furness Council if applicable. The council will not adopt or control benches sited on private land, where the siting of a bench is entirely a matter for the donor and the landowner.

2. Terms & Conditions

General. Any application for a memorial bench, must relate to a deceased member of the community, who have either lived or had a major influence on the area known as Alston Moor.

- i. All applications for memorial benches should be completed on the official request form and be signed by the donor.
- ii. The council will not be responsible for any costs relating to the memorial bench and the donor may make arrangement to pay for all the costs prior to installation, including plinth if required.
- iii. All memorial benches and any associated plaques should be paid for by the donor before the completion of the installation. Where the bench is installed on or adjacent to the public highway under the terms of a licence from

Westmorland and Furness Council or another authority the donor will be responsible for any installation costs.

- iv. Benches will be of the type and colour approved by the council to be in keeping with the intended location. The council may limit the number of memorial benches in particular areas.
- v. Memorial plaques will be bought and engraved by the donor. The proposed inscription on the plaque or on any engraving on the bench itself is to be subject to the approval of the council which shall have sole discretion to approve or reject. The maximum plaque will be 20cm by 8cm.

The donor remains responsible for maintaining the bench to appropriate standards of appearance and safety. The council will notify the donor in the event that the memorial bench is damaged or requires maintenance. The donor should ensure that the council is in possession of current contact details for the donor or the donor's nominee who shall be responsible for maintenance.

The council reserves the right to remove any memorial benches that have been damaged and are in the view of the council beyond economical repair or have not been repaired within 8 weeks of the notification referred to in (3.5) above. The council or its officers shall be the final arbiters of such a decision to remove any bench.

The council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial bench from vandals or third parties. The council's required standards of maintenance will be a requirement to keep the bench fit for purpose and clean.

The council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life and will dispose of any such bench, where possible returning any plaque to the donor or the donor's family. Any replacement of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original donor. The original donor will be given first option for renewing the bench at their expense.

The council will keep a record of donors and their contact details for future reference in accordance with data protection laws. It is the responsibility of the donor to keep the council informed of any change of circumstance or address.

The council will not be liable for relocation of benches should Westmorland and Furness Council or any other authority or landowner decide to change their policy and rescind the permission to host benches on their property.

3. Application Process

The donor will require to complete the Alston Moor Parish Council application form available either from the clerk at Alston Town Hall, Front Street Alston, CA9 3RF , or from the council website (alstonmoorparish.gov.uk) No other application will be accepted, although any letter of support of an application may be included.

Once the completed application is received the clerk will add to the next available council full council for approval, prior to which the details including the application will be circulated to all councillors.

If the application is accepted, the applicant will be sent a contract including all the details, location, plaque inscription and costs. If the site location has been refused but another offered in its place, the applicant will be informed and asked if they wish to proceed with the new location. This could include the replacement or restoration of an existing bench that has fallen into disrepair and which is has not been possible to get restored by the original donor of the bench.

If the application is not approved, the applicant will be informed of the decision, the reason for the decision and advice on further action. (this may be because the selection of material is felt inappropriate and they may wish to resubmit new proposal)

The applicant will check the details and sign an acceptance form. Any mistakes not highlighted will not be the responsibility of the council.

4. Existing Memorial Benches

Where permission for a bench has been granted before the adoption of this policy, The council will continue to maintain the bench but when it gets to a point where it is not reasonable to repair, the bench will be removed. The parish office will endeavour to contact the applicant or members of the deceased members family and inform them and give them the opportunity to replace it, under the terms of this new policy.

5. Records

All successful applicants benches will be recorded and included on the council's register.

Please note that the memorial benches will not be insured and any Loss or damage will be the responsibility of the donor or the donor's representative.

Date of policy: October 2025

Supersedes: Memorial Benches Policy 2021

Policy effective from: October 2025

Date for next review: October 2027