



Memorial Seat and Tree Policy

September 2025

Policy No. PS001

Version Control Sheet

Title: **Memorial Seat and Tree Policy**

Purpose: **To detail the Memorial Seat and Tree Policy for Mid Devon District Council (Council) to standardise requests for memorial benches or trees on Council land.**

Owner: **Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience**

Date: **September 2025**

Version Number: **1.0**

Status: **Draft**

Review Frequency: **Every three years**

Next review date: **September 2028**

Consultation **This document was sent out for consultation to the following:**
People's Park Trust

Document History

This document requires/obtained the following approvals.

Title	Date	Version Approved
People's Park Trust	April 2025	Draft
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement PDG	September 2025	Draft
Cabinet	November 2025	Draft
Full Council	December 2025	Draft

Related Policies:

N/a

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1 Introduction

Consideration will be given to requests for a seat with (or without) a plaque or a tree on Council land in memory of loved ones passed away and other special events. The subsequent provision of a seat or tree is to be fully funded by the applicant.

There will not always be an immediately available space for a seat or tree and those requests that can't be accommodated immediately, there will be the option to be added to be added to a waiting list that will be maintained by the Council.

Ownership of any approved seat or tree will remain with the Council with no obligation to replace trees that either fail after completion of aftercare periods or are vandalised after an initial 6-month period. Similarly, the Council will have no obligation to replace benches after an initial 10-year timeframe or if they are vandalised after an initial 6-month period.

Changes to policy and guidance will occur infrequently, as such this policy should be reviewed every three years.

2 Purpose

This policy formalises the previous ad hoc approach applied for purposes of clarity, equity and transparency.

3 Scope

This policy covers mainly ornamental parks and cemeteries owned by the Council. Primarily this includes:

Tiverton

- People's Park
- Westex Recreation Ground
- Cemetery

Crediton

- Newcombes Meadow
- Cemetery

Other sites, for example play areas and other open-spaces, may be considered.

4 Responsibilities

This policy will be managed, promoted, and regulated through the Council's Property Services Team, who will undertake the following:

Trees

- Trees will be selected taking into account the applicant's wishes where appropriate to do so, but the key concern will be to choose a tree which aligns with and complements the existing trees within the relevant location, i.e. right tree, right place. The Council's specialist staff will have authority to decide on this matter and their decision will be final with explanation given to the applicant.
- The tree will be purchased and planted by the Council to ensure the right genus and quality in accordance with industry standards and good practice. The

applicant (and family members) may be present for the purchase and/or planting, if they request to.

- The Council will provide aftercare including watering for a an initial 6-month period after planting and for the two summer seasons after planting where necessary and replace in the next planting season any tree that has failed for whatever reason. The Council will have no obligation to replace trees that fail after completion of aftercare periods or are vandalised after the initial 6-month period.

The following restrictions apply:

- No plaques or other marker will be permitted to accompany any tree as these may be the subject of theft and/or vandalism.
- Natural floral tributes may be placed up to 3-times annually (birthday, anniversary or religious event) with any wrapping removed and may remain in place for up to 1 week.

Seats

- Where there is a need for a seat to replace either a missing seat or one which is in a poor state of repair, upon request the Council's specialist staff will provide a seat manufactured in recycled plastic to align with the style of others within the relevant location.
- An engraved stainless steel plaque with appropriate wording may be affixed to the bench.
- A seat is offered for a period of 10-years. Should a seat or plaque become damaged or unsafe through general wear and tear during the 10-year period, the Council will arrange for repair or replacement, as appropriate. The Council cannot guarantee the long-term safety or security of the bench and, in the event that the seat or plaque is stolen or damaged through vandalism, the Council shall not be responsible for providing a replacement.

The following restrictions apply:

- Natural floral tributes may be placed up to 3-times annually (birthday, anniversary or religious event) with any wrapping removed and may remain in place for up to 1 week.

Applicant's Details

The Council will maintain a record of each applicant and the applicant's contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the Council with updated details in writing. Failure to do so could lead to the tree or bench being removed without the applicant being notified.

5 Costs (as at September 2025)

The cost of any memorial seat or tree will be met in full by the applicant. All costs are subject to annual review but will increase by at least the appropriate annual Consumer Prices Index.

The cost for the supply of a container grown tree with a full season's growth, planting, staking, mulching and after care is £325 plus VAT.

The cost for the supply of a seat, plaque (if necessary) and installation for a 5-year period is £1,396 plus VAT.

Replacement plaques will be charged at £95 plus VAT.

Requests for minor repair, where it is possible, will be charged at £100 plus VAT and plaque retouching at £20 plus VAT.

6 Complaints

Any complaints relating to the implementation of this policy will be dealt with through the Council's Complaints Procedure.

7 Application Process

Applications must be made in person/by post to Mid Devon District Council, Phoenix House, Tiverton, EX16 6PP.

8 Review Period

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

This document, which is owned by the Property Services Team, forms part of the Council's Parks and Open Space Management Policy framework and, as such, must be fully complied with.