REPORT PC26.143c Memorial and Dedication Policy
Author: Jon Sloan, Parish Clerk
Date: November 6, 2026

1. REPORT SUMMARY
   To present a revised Memorial and Dedication Policy for approval and adoption by the Council.

2. BACKGROUND
   The Council has previously operated a Memorial Policy adopted under minute reference PC22.129 (September 2022). Following review, the policy has been updated and modernised to provide clearer guidance on memorial requests relating to benches, trees, plaques, roadside memorials and the scattering of ashes on Parish Council land.

   The revised policy seeks to balance the wishes of residents wishing to commemorate loved ones with the Council's responsibility to manage public land, assets and facilities in the wider interests of the community.

   This daft policy is a significant rewrite. Therefore comparisons to the previous policy would be difficult to practically achieve.

3. SUMMARY
   The revised policy has been reviewed against good practice commonly adopted by parish and town councils and the Clerk considers it to provide a proportionate and practical framework for the management of memorial requests. In particular, the policy:

   - clearly establishes that memorials are discretionary
   - preserves the Council's ability to manage and develop land and assets in the future
   - avoids creating unnecessary long-term liabilities by defining maintenance responsibilities and retaining flexibility regarding replacement and removal of memorials
   - addresses the principal forms of memorial requests likely to be received by the Council
   - incorporates appropriate data protection provisions and application procedures
   - confirms that approved memorials become Council property, reducing the potential for future ownership disputes.

   Subject to Council approval, the revised policy would supersede the current policy adopted under minute reference PC22.129.

4. RECOMMENDATION
   It is recommended that Council **resolves**:

   To approve and adopt the Memorial and Dedication Policy attached to this report, with effect from the date of this meeting, and that it shall supersede the previous Memorial Policy adopted under minute reference PC22.129 (September 2022).

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Laverstock and Ford Parish Council

DRAFT Memorial and Dedication Policy

Purpose/Principles	To provide guidance on requests for Memorials and Dedications on Parish Council land or property
Scope	Employees, Councillors, Members of the public, suppliers, contractors
Date adopted:	
Minute Reference:	
Previous versions (Dates):	PC22.129 (September 2022)
Next review:	January 2031
Policy owner:	Communications and Community Engagement Committee
Supersedes:	PC22.129

1. Purpose

1.1. Laverstock & Ford Parish Council recognises that many individuals and families wish to commemorate loved ones through the provision of memorial benches, trees, plaques or similar features within parish-owned land and facilities.

1.2. This policy aims to:

- provide a consistent and fair approach to memorial requests;
- ensure public spaces remain welcoming and accessible to all users;
- manage memorials in a practical and sustainable manner;
- balance the wishes of applicants with the wider interests of the community.

1.3. The Council reserves the right to determine whether a memorial is appropriate and whether a proposed location is suitable.

2. General Principles

2.1. Memorials will normally only be considered where the person being commemorated lived, worked, volunteered within, or otherwise had a significant connection with the Parish.

2.2. Approval of any memorial request is entirely at the discretion of the Council. Applications may be determined by Full Council, an authorised Committee, or by the Parish Clerk acting under delegated authority.

2.3. The Council may refuse any request where it considers that a memorial would: create visual clutter; detract from the character of the location; conflict with future management plans; generate unreasonable maintenance obligations; be inappropriate for any other reason.

2.4. Memorials must not contain wording, symbols or imagery that could reasonably be considered offensive, political, commercial or discriminatory.

2.5. The Council reserves the right to limit the number of memorials within any particular location.

2.6. All approved memorial benches, plaques, trees and associated fixtures become the property of the Council upon installation.

2.7. Approval of a memorial does not confer any right for the memorial to remain in a particular location indefinitely. The Council retains the right to alter, relocate or remove memorials where required for operational, environmental, safety or redevelopment purposes.

3. Memorial Benches

3.1. Applications for memorial benches must be submitted using the Council's application form. The Council will determine: whether a bench is appropriate; the most suitable location; the style and specification of the bench. Applicants may express a preference for location, but final approval rests with the Council. To ensure consistency, accessibility and ease of maintenance, only bench designs approved by the Council will be permitted.

3.2. Costs. Applicants will normally be responsible for: purchase of the bench; delivery; installation costs; plaque costs; any agreed associated works. Payment must be made before installation.

3.3. Plaques shall be modest in size and design and fitted in a position approved by the Council. The wording must be approved by the Council before manufacture.

3.4. Maintenance. The Council will undertake routine maintenance of memorial benches as part of its normal asset management programme. However, the Council accepts no liability for vandalism, accidental damage, theft, deterioration or loss.

3.5. Duration. Memorial benches will normally remain in place for a period of ten years from installation. At the end of this period the Council may: retain the bench; offer renewal to the original applicant or family representative; remove or replace the memorial. The decision will depend upon the condition of the bench, availability of space and Council policy at the time.

4. Memorial Trees

4.1. Applications for memorial trees must be made in writing. The Council will determine: whether planting is appropriate; species selection; planting location; timing of planting. Species shall be selected by the Council having regard to: principally any Council-adopted tree policy or strategy in effect at that time, site conditions; biodiversity objectives; disease resilience; long-term management requirements.

4.2. Costs. Applicants shall meet all approved costs associated with: provision of the tree; planting; establishment works; commemorative plaque where approved

4.3. Where a plaque is approved it shall normally be discreetly located and of a standard design approved by the Council.

4.4. Maintenance. The Council will manage memorial trees in accordance with its tree management practices.

4.5. The Council cannot guarantee the survival of any tree. Where a memorial tree dies, becomes unsafe or requires removal, the Council shall not be obliged to replace it.

5. Memorial Plaques

5.1. Requests for stand-alone memorial plaques will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
5.2. The Council will determine: whether the proposed plaque is appropriate; its size and design; its location.
5.3. The Council reserves the right to refuse applications where an excessive concentration of plaques already exists.

6. Replacement Memorials

6.1. Where a memorial bench, plaque or tree is damaged, stolen, vandalised or removed for operational reasons, any replacement request shall be treated as a new application and assessed under the policy in force at that time.
6.2. The Council is under no obligation to provide a replacement memorial.

7. Roadside Memorials

7.1. This section applies only to memorials situated on land owned or managed by the Parish Council.
7.2. The Council recognises the importance of roadside floral tributes and temporary memorials following a bereavement.
7.3. Such memorials will normally be permitted for a reasonable period provided they: do not create a hazard to highway users; do not obstruct maintenance operations; do not damage Council land or property.
7.4. Where safety concerns arise, the Council reserves the right to remove, relocate or modify any memorial after making reasonable efforts to contact the family concerned.
7.5. The Council may remove items that have become damaged, unsightly, unsafe or abandoned.

8. Scattering of Ashes

8.1. Permission must be obtained from the Council before ashes are scattered on land owned or managed by the Council. The applicant must obtain any other permissions required by law and provide evidence of such.
8.2. Requests will be considered having regard to: the suitability of the location; environmental considerations; public use of the site; future management requirements.
8.3. The following are not normally permitted: memorial structures; permanent markers; fencing or enclosures; planting of trees, shrubs or flowers without specific approval.
8.4. The Council reserves the right to refuse requests where it considers the proposed location unsuitable.

9. Removal of Memorials

9.1. The Council reserves the right to remove, relocate or modify any memorial where: it has become unsafe; it is beyond economic repair; land management requirements necessitate removal; redevelopment or asset replacement is required; the memorial no longer complies with Council policy.

9.2. Where reasonably practicable, the Council will seek to notify the applicant or family representative before removal.

10. Applications

10.1. Applications should be submitted to:
The Parish Clerk, Laverstock & Ford Parish Council. Current contact details are available on the Council's website.

10.2. Applications should include:

- applicant contact details;
- details of the person to be commemorated;
- preferred memorial type;
- preferred location;
- proposed wording for any plaque.

10.3. Applications may be determined by Full Council, an authorised Committee, or by the Parish Clerk acting under delegated authority.

11. Data Protection

11.1. Any personal information supplied as part of a memorial application will be processed in accordance with the Council's Privacy Notice / Data Protection Policy and applicable data protection legislation.

11.2. Information will be retained only for as long as necessary in accordance with the Council's Document Retention & Deletion Policy.

11.3. The Council's current Policies and Privacy Notice are available on its website.

== POLICY ENDS ==

Appendix 1

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council
Memorial Application Form
Applicant Details
Name:
Address:
Telephone:
Email:
Name of person(s) for dedication:
Connection to Laverstock and Ford Parish:
Preferred Location:
Type of Memorial/Honour: Bench/Tree/Other (specify)
Details of Bench/Tree/Other:
Plaque Wording (max 160 characters over 4 lines): *Please remember, longer inscriptions over 4 lines will result in smaller text.*
Preferred material (brass/aluminium/stainless steel):
I have read the memorial policy and agree to adhere to the specifications, terms and conditions herein.
I have also read the Council's privacy statement and relevant Policies.

Signed: _____
Date: _____
Please return completed form to: Parish Clerk Laverstock and Ford Parish Council Parish Office Hampton Park Pavilion Ash Cresent, Bishopdown Farm Salisbury SP1 3GY Or by email to parish-clerk@laverstockford-pc.gov.uk