

Headley Parish Council Memorials Policy





OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

1. When loved ones die, their friends and relatives will often want to commemorate them with a lasting memorial. Often this will be in the form of a tree, bench¹ or plaque which not only honours their memory but provides a beautiful and functional improvement to the local environment and the community.
2. Headley Parish Council (HPC) is happy to consider requests, but it is important to remember that public land is enjoyed by a wide range of local residents and other users. When siting memorial trees and benches, HPC will always take into account existing benches, trees, geographical features and soil conditions before accepting a donation.
3. This policy sets out how HPC approves memorial benches, plaques and trees; who is responsible for their upkeep; and what is expected from the Donor² and the Council. The Council will always endeavour to be respectful, sympathetic, and fair towards those donating trees, benches and plaques; to balance the needs of facility users; and to maintain the high quality of its open spaces.
4. This policy applies only to land under HPC ownership, regardless of location, including its greens, allotments³, playing fields, woodlands and open spaces⁴. Land in private ownership or managed by other authorities, such as Hampshire County Council, is not included.
5. Whilst this policy is as comprehensive as possible, it cannot cover every eventuality. Situations that occur outside of this policy's scope will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis at HPC's discretion.
6. HPC reserves the right to refuse any Memorial application which it deems unsuitable. The decision of HPC will be final.
7. Memorial trees, benches and plaques and their installation are purchased by way of a monetary donation to HPC. Memorials will not be ordered until the full donation has been received.
8. The content of this policy may be revised as necessary at the discretion of HPC.

¹ For the purpose of this document, "bench" also includes picnic tables and any proposal to instal the latter will be subject to the same principles.

² For the purpose of this document anyone who requests a memorial bench, tree or plaque is referred to as 'the Donor'.

³ Subject to agreement with the Headley Allotments and Horticultural Association (HAHA).

⁴ The Open Spaces include Headley Village Green, Arford Common, Headley Hill Woods, Saunders Green, Stanford Green, Parish-owned land on Longcross Hill, Fuller's Vale Pond and The Pound.



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

9. The planting of trees or installation of benches or plaques on land as memorials is a private arrangement between the friends and relatives commissioning the memorial and the landowner. As such, HPC can only approve memorials on HPC-owned land. Any planting or installation can only be carried out after prior written approval by HPC, and relevant parties, and at a predetermined time and location.
10. Generally speaking, installing trees, benches and plaques will not be subject to planning permission, restrictive covenants, or other restrictions. However, there may be cases where HPC is unable to install memorials for such reasons.
11. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, HPC must consider the effect of its decisions on crime and disorder. It may deem a location unsuitable, if it may attract antisocial behaviour.
12. 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. When HPC agrees to install a bench, plaque or tree, the cost of the memorial is borne by the Donor. The tree, bench or plaque is the property of HPC, and the Donor does not retain any right to determine its future management. HPC will nevertheless endeavour to ensure it is properly maintained and cared for.

ELIGIBILITY FOR A MEMORIAL

13. HPC will endeavour to accommodate any reasonable requests for the planting of memorial trees or installation of memorial benches and plaques on HPC-owned or managed property only.
14. Memorial benches, trees and plaques will only be considered from people who can demonstrate a close tie with the person being commemorated and that there is a local link to the parish. Memorials to pets are not permitted. HPC reserves the right to refuse a memorial bench, tree or plaque should it have any grounds to believe it would be contrary to the wishes of the commemorated person's next of kin; the wording on the plaque could cause offence to the wider community; or for other reasons that HPC considers appropriate. The reasons will be supplied to the applicant if requested.
15. Enquiries for a memorial bench, tree or plaque should be made by the Donor to HPC using the relevant form, which requires clear specifications and proposed wording. The request shall then be brought for consideration before the appropriate Committee. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests may not be able to be fulfilled if the location is unsuitable due to the risk of vandalism, antisocial behaviour, over-population of trees or benches, or any other material factors.



16. HPC will endeavour to accommodate any reasonable requests for the planting of memorial trees or installation of memorial benches or plaques on HPC-owned property only.
17. Only trees, benches and plaques suitable and in keeping with the immediate surrounds will be permitted. HPC will approve the style and make of bench in advance. To ensure the health and safety of the public, HPC will only approve high-quality, durable benches and plaques.
18. It is the Donor's responsibility to ensure that the requested location is well-communicated to HPC. The final location of the tree, bench or plaque will be decided by HPC, and will be confirmed in writing.

COSTS

19. The cost of the tree or bench and any plaque and installation costs will be fully borne by the Donor and **must be paid in advance**. HPC will welcome donations towards the ongoing maintenance of the memorial.

TREES

20. HPC will always try to accommodate the wishes of applicants, however as trees are dynamic living organisms they need specific conditions to thrive and survive. As such, certain trees may not therefore be deemed to be in keeping with the existing species, e.g. Eucalyptus. The final planting location will be at HPC's discretion. Only a tree purchased specifically can be used as a memorial. Existing trees may not generally be used.
21. Any person wishing to purchase a particular tree must give its full name as there are numerous types of tree within any given species and simply saying e.g. oak or plum is insufficient to guarantee that the right type of tree is selected.
22. Tree species will be selected taking into account the wishes of the applicant, existing trees in the area, the proposed tree's final expected size, soil conditions and geography of the area. Wherever possible HPC will offer a choice of species suitable for the location.
23. Tree species availability and price can vary significantly, therefore the price agreed when the donation is paid will be honoured by the HPC unless supplier costs increase significantly between receipt of the memorial request and the ordering of the memorial.
24. Trees will always be sourced from reputable growers or suppliers and be of a high standard. Wherever possible, the proposed tree purchased will not be bare root.



25. Trees will generally be planted between November and March, as this is widely recognised as the best time to establish newly planted trees.
26. Trees will be planted with a suitable sized stake/stakes, at the correct depth, and top dressed with a good layer of mulch. A suitable stem guard will be added if the area is prone to deer or rabbits. The additional costs of these will be borne by the Donor.
27. Whilst every effort will be made to maintain newly planted trees, HPC cannot be held accountable for trees that do not establish or die, for whatever reason.
28. No additional mementoes, e.g. statues, flowers, wreaths, vases, etc., will be permitted on or around the tree. HPC reserves the right to remove and dispose of any such items. A charge may be levied on the Donor to cover the costs of removal.
29. Scattering of cremated remains and burial of urns with cremated remains around trees is not permitted at any time.
30. Once a tree has been planted, it is expected that it will remain in perpetuity. However, HPC reserves the right to remove the tree for a variety of reasons including safety, disease, mortality, changing environment, changes to infrastructure and common law nuisance.
31. Memorial Trees will be recorded on a register kept by HPC. HPC will keep a record of Donors and their contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the responsibility of the Donor to provide HPC with updated details in writing. Failure to do so could lead to plaques or trees being removed without notice to the Donor.

BENCHES

32. HPC will always try to accommodate the wishes of applicants, however only sites which do not already have a sufficient number of benches will be considered.
33. All inscriptions must be approved by HPC prior to installation. HPC reserve the right to refuse any inscription that is deemed offensive or inappropriate.
34. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate the applicant's wishes, the final design and bench location are at the discretion of HPC. Designs will be the same or similar to those already in the locality.
35. HPC does not accept responsibility for any damage or loss that may occur if a memorial is harmed, vandalised or stolen.
36. HPC reserves the right to remove a memorial bench at any time. If this is within 10 years of installation, HPC will contact the applicant (provided that contact details are up to date) and attempt to relocate the bench to a suitable location.



37. No additional mementoes, e.g. statues, flowers, wreaths, vases, etc. will be permitted on or around the bench. HPC reserves the right to remove and dispose of any such items. A charge may be levied on the Donor to cover the costs of removal.
38. Scattering of cremated remains and burial of urns with cremated remains around benches is not permitted at any time.
39. HPC will undertake regular assessment of all benches and reserves the right to remove any bench that is no longer considered safe and fit for purpose. In this event, HPC will attempt to contact the named person(s) on the enquiry form. The Donor will be asked to collect the inscribed plaque within 4 weeks. If contact cannot be made plaques will be disposed of within 8 weeks
40. HPC will keep a record of Donors and their contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the responsibility of the Donor to provide HPC with updated details in writing. Failure to do so could lead to plaques or benches being removed without notice to the Donor.

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

41. Commemorative plaques can be affixed to a memorial bench, or placed next to a memorial tree⁵, subject to agreeing a size, wording, and specification with HPC. No plaque may be affixed to a tree itself.
42. Memorial plaques are permitted at the base of the tree. These are to be supplied from a HPC approved supplier. The Parish Clerk will order the plaque on behalf of the applicant to keep all plaques uniform. The applicant will be permitted to suggest the wording on the plaque and will be invoiced for the total cost including installation costs and post (if required). All wording must be approved by HPC. HPC reserves the right to refuse any inscription that is deemed offensive or inappropriate.
43. HPC does not accept responsibility for any damage or loss that may occur if a memorial plaque is harmed, vandalised or stolen. Memorial plaques must not be removed, or inscriptions amended without the written approval of HPC.
44. HPC retains the right to re-site a plaque should this become necessary.

COMMISSIONING

45. Tree planting will usually only be permitted between late autumn and early spring, in line with the tree-planting season.
46. Trees can be planted by donors under supervision by HPC. A member of the HPC staff will mark the site with a stake to ensure that it is planted in the pre-agreed place.



47. The Council would strongly welcome the Donor's participation in watering a memorial tree in the initial stages to ensure it has the best chance of survival.

MAINTENANCE

48. Donors should also be aware that benches or young trees in public areas may be subject to vandalism, and HPC will not be held responsible for any costs in replacing them.
49. HPC shall endeavour to maintain and care for a memorial tree, plaque or bench for as long as possible. However, it reserves the right to re-site or remove any tree, bench or plaque that it deems to be unsafe, unrepairable, or other reasons. A replacement tree, bench or plaque may be considered, at the cost of the Donor.
50. The Donor shall not be permitted to undertake any maintenance of the memorial tree, bench or plaque without the permission of the Council.

MEMORIAL DURATION

51. HPC cannot guarantee a length of time a bench, tree or plaque can remain in situ. Whilst HPC will do its best to preserve a memorial tree, bench or plaque for as long as possible, there will come a time when these reach the end of their lifespan. Once a tree, bench or plaque is deemed unfit, in order to protect the health and safety of the public it will be removed. If the Donor is still local (or can be contacted), they will be offered the opportunity to replace an existing memorial with a new one at that time. This replacement cost would be borne by the Donor.

⁵ In some circumstances, memorial plaques may be placed near or on existing trees and benches. For example, if relatives wished to add a plaque commemorating an additional deceased person, such as husband, wife or child.



APPENDICES

Map of Current and Future memorial Locations

Application Form

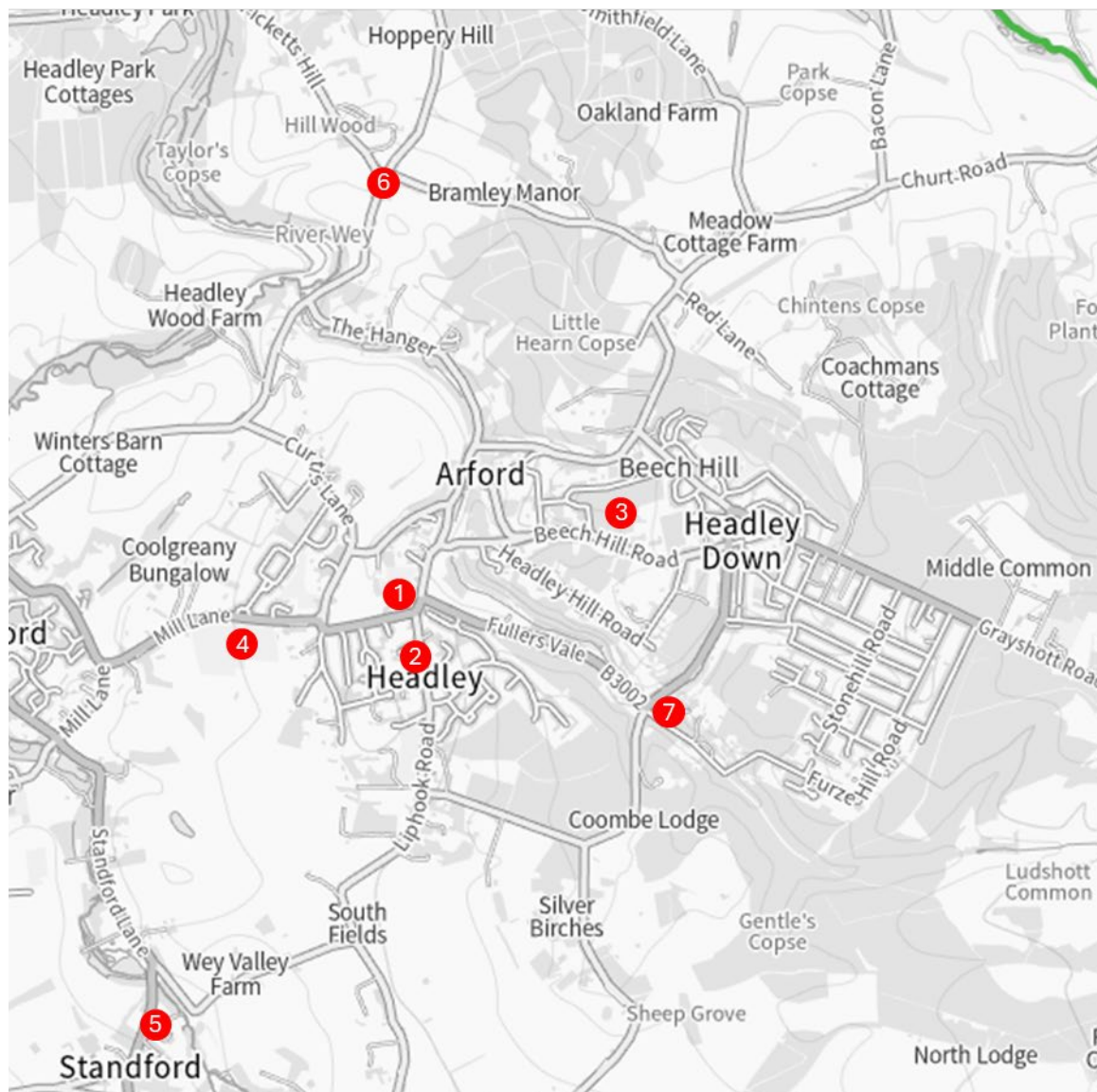


Headley Parish

Including: Headley, Arford, Headley Down, Stanford, Wishanger, Barford

Suitable locations for memorial benches:

1. Headley Village Green
2. The Pound
3. Arford Common
4. Headley Playing Fields
5. Stanford Green
6. Saunders Green
7. Fullers Vale Pond





HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEMORIALS POLICY

MEMORIAL APPLICATION FORM

1. Donor Details

Donor Name:.....

Donor Address:.....

Donor E-Mail:.....

Donor Telephone:.....

Donor Connection to Deceased:.....

2. Person to be Commemorated

Name:.....

Link to Headley:.....

3. Memorial

Tree, Bench or Plaque:.....

Proposed Location:.....

Proposed Species of Tree.....

Proposed Text for Plaque (Max 20 Words):.....

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Signature.....

Date.....