

CLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MEMORIAL BENCH POLICY (DRAFT)

This policy relates to all new applications for memorial benches within the parish of Cley-next-the-Sea.

1. Introduction

Cley Parish Council recognises that dedicating a bench to a loved one is a valued tradition. This policy sets out how requests will be handled, given the finite number of suitable sites and the Council's very limited landholding.

2. Land ownership in the parish

Cley Parish Council owns only a very small amount of land. Most open space, verges and land in the village is owned or managed by other parties — this may include a trust, a national conservation body, a highways authority, or a private landowner, depending on the location. The Council is not normally able to grant permission for a bench itself — in most cases, the applicant must identify the relevant landowner and seek permission directly from them.

3. The Council's role

Where land is not Council-owned, the Council will advise the applicant of this, signpost them to the relevant landowner where known, and record the enquiry — it will not negotiate on the applicant's behalf or accept responsibility for benches on land it does not own. Where the land is Council-owned, the request is considered under Sections 4–6.

4. Applications (Council-owned land only)

- Written applications to the Parish Clerk: applicant's contact details, name of person commemorated, proposed plaque wording, and area requested.
- Considered by the Council at its next convenient meeting; reasonable requests will be accommodated where possible, but may be declined or an alternative offered (e.g. sufficient benches already sited nearby, or site unsuitable). The Council's decision is final.

5. Design and materials

Benches on Council land must be made of recycled plastic (not virgin plastic, wood or metal), in a style and colour agreed with the Council in advance, with a plaque of an agreed size and material.

6. Costs, ownership and maintenance

- The applicant pays the full cost of the bench, plaque and installation.
- Once installed, the bench becomes Council property; the donor retains no right to determine its future siting or management.
- The Council maintains benches on its own land within available resources, and may remove or relocate a bench where repair is not economic or for reasons of safety/maintenance.

7. Register

The Clerk will keep a simple register of enquiries and of any benches sited on Council-owned land, with location, dedication and contact details.

Adopted: [date] — supersedes the Memorial Bench Policy of June 2026

Reviewed September 2026

Next Review September 2030