

Policy regarding seats and benches in St James's Churchyard

The placing or addition of benches in the grounds of St James's Church e.g. as a result of donations, is subject to approval by the PCC. It will not be possible to agree to every request for the installation of such a memorial.

Our church and churchyard are central to our village and community. The installation of a memorial bench is a tangible way to honour and remember a loved one that can provide a legacy and enhance the spiritual atmosphere of the churchyard.

Benches can provide a comforting spot for friends and family to sit and reflect on memories of those who have passed. These seats can provide tranquil places to meditate and enjoy the calm beauty of the churchyard. They will be shared and used by the wider community. Our churchyard has a unique character of its own in a village setting surrounding the church, with views to and from, nearby streets and houses, any items introduced into this important space must be in keeping and harmony with this environment.

The churchyard is in a historic location designated by Wychavon Council as a Conservation Area. The Parochial Church Council follow the Diocesan Rules for the introduction of any memorials.

Factors which the Parochial Church Council (PCC) will consider:

- 1. The reason** for the introduction of a new bench.
- 2. Whether the introduction of a new bench is appropriate or needed.** The PCC may decide on a limit of the number of benches or decide only to introduce one to replace an older bench which has become unsafe or unsightly.
- 3. The proposed location of the bench and its impact.** Benches are often placed in prominent positions within the churchyard and so may impact on the appearance of the church and its setting and character. Please be aware a bench though sited in the churchyard may have an impact on nearby neighbours as those sitting and chatting can be overheard and viewed as a noise nuisance. A bench might also attract gatherings and inappropriate behaviour.
- 4. The material the bench is made of if wood is it from a sustainable source.** Wood is appropriate as it weathers and harmonises with the churchyard setting. English Oak is preferred, or another hardwood will ensure longevity. This should be sourced from an FSC certified forest. Stone or cast or wrought iron benches may also be deemed suitable. Plastic is unlikely to be deemed acceptable for this location.
- 5. The construction, design, and durability.** The design needs to be simple and traditional and blend in with its setting. The construction should be sturdy, safe and require minimal and simple maintenance. The bench should be of a type that will last for at least 10 years. The base and the security of the bench are also a consideration. We are unlikely to allow large areas of poured concrete. The donor should cover the cost of the bench itself, the preparation of the location, any construction of a base for the legs to sit on and any security measures such as ground anchors as well as the future maintenance costs.
- 6. Maintenance** – the donor should make arrangements for an annual sanding and painting with teak oil or something similar in the case of wooden benches or make a

financial arrangement with the PCC to cover the cost. For benches of other materials, a similar maintenance plan should be agreed.

7. **The wording and nature and suitability of any inscription.** Any inscription should be in keeping with the Diocesan Memorial Rules and must be signed off for approval by the Vicar/incumbent or the Archdeacon. A carved inscription in the top rail can make a bench less vulnerable to theft, as plaques are easily removed.
8. **The PCC is with Wychavon Council responsible for the safety and standard of the setting within the village conservation area.** The PCC will regularly inspect benches and may remove any after 10 years or if they have become unsafe or unsightly or detract from the setting. If the donor is contactable, they may be given an option to make repairs. The PCC will not be liable for any damage sustained by a bench in this public setting and the donor is responsible for any repairs, The PCC reserve the right to remove or relocate benches if there is felt a need to do so.

Some examples of our current benches:



Please make you application on the form below:

Name of Applicant	
Address of Applicant	
Mobile Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Reason for introduction of new Memorial Bench	
Who / what does it Commemorate	
Date of death	
Your relationship to the person being remembered.	
Proposed location of new bench	
Bench design, materials, dimensions. Please supply photo or link to brochure/website etc	
Wording and size and design of inscription	

Discussed at PCC Date	
PCC comments	
Approved by (signature and position)	
Refused Application (signature and position)	
Reason for refusal	

Please send this to Vicar/PCC of St James Badsey, The Vicarage, 33 High Street, Badsey, Near Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 7EJ.