



Easingwold Town Council

Seats, Benches, Picnic Tables
& Memorials Management

December 2024



ETC Policy for Seats, Benches, Picnic Tables & Memorials Management

1. Public Seats, Benches & Picnic Tables a. Policy

Easingwold Town Council (ETC) will continuously provide and maintain a range of public seats, benches, and picnic tables across the lands it owns in Easingwold for public use. Whilst these may be donated by members of the public (see below), they will remain the property of ETC and will always be managed according to the policies and management arrangements applicable at any given time.

Thus seats, benches, and picnic tables will be located at a range of sites around Easingwold agreed by the Council. They will all be of a robust and easy to maintain design, as specified by the Council from time to time.

Whilst the seats, benches and picnic tables may have dedication plaques attached to them; they cannot have commemorative or other decorations, including flowers, fastened to them as it makes it difficult for people to use them and for ETC to maintain them.

The siting of individual seats, benches or picnic tables is at the discretion of ETC. They are provided for public convenience and use. They will generally be sited in open spaces away from overhanging branches, vegetation, and other perches so that they do not become excessively soiled. Where it is found that a seat is becoming too soiled in use, then it will be moved to an alternate location where it can provide better service.

The seats, benches, and picnic tables will be routinely maintained by ETC according to its prevailing management arrangements. Any seats, benches, or picnic tables in need of repair may be repaired in situ or removed from site as necessary. Once ETC determines that a seat, bench, or picnic table is beyond economic repair it will be removed and disposed of. Any replacement will be at the discretion of ETC and its assessment of need.

b. Donations

ETC accepts donations for seats, benches and picnic tables made to its specification. Donors may add a plaque with a message or commemorative salutation to personalize their donation. Potential donors will be consulted as to their desired location; but ETC's

decision will be final. Should a selected location prove to be inappropriate in use, then ETC reserve the right to change it, although they will try to consult with the donor in doing so.

When considering donating a seat, bench, or picnic table relatives should also be prepared to bear the cost of fixing the seat in the location selected and of maintaining it.

A donation is considered as being for the entire useable life of the seat, bench, or picnic table. When a seat, bench or picnic table reaches the end of its useful life it will be removed by ETC. Where possible, ETC will contact the original donor or their family to see if they wish to replace their donation. If not, then the location and opportunity will be offered to the next potential donor on any ETC waiting list.

c. Management & Maintenance

ETC will keep an inventory of all its seats, benches, and picnic tables, their locations and any donors. It will review its stock of seats, benches, and picnic tables periodically (and at least annually) to assess:

- The condition of the existing stock and to undertake any necessary cleaning, repairs, changes of location, or removals.
- The broad range of existing locations and whether any new locations could be added that would improve to public seating provision for the town.
- To keep donors informed of any changes or issues regarding their donated item; and whether they wish to continue with their donation as appropriate.

Currently ETC specifies items made in resilient metals and recycled plastics that are much more resistant of weathering, rotting and other forms of wear and tear. Some older seats, benches and picnic tables are made from wood and hence are more susceptible to deterioration. Where appropriate ETC revarnishes seats on a four-yearly rotation.

Where excessive deterioration, accidental damage or vandalism occurs to a seat, bench, or picnic table this should be reported to the Town Clerks as soon as possible and they will arrange for an appropriate solution to be authorised and completed.

2. Memorials

a. Policy

ETC owns and manages a very large area of publicly accessible lands, parks, and recreation areas for the benefit of the town, its people, and our visitors. ETC has an open policy to using this land for memorial purposes. These may be public memorials (for example the War Memorial) or private memorials (for example the dedication of a seat or bench). It will treat each application for a memorial use of its lands in some way on its individual merits and suitability to the ambience of the town.

b. Donations

Often beyond providing a seat, bench or picnic table, donors wish to provide a tree, bush or floral tribute in the town. For example, providing a tree or planting a daffodil bed is a way to mark a memorable event such as a birthday, anniversary, wedding or to commemorate a special person.

- **Tree donations** are especially welcome as they help offset CO₂ production and protect Easingwold's precious tree heritage. Where a donor elects to donate a tree ETC will try to match their preferred location and tree species and assist them with their decision, subject to a minimum donation as decided by ETC from time to time.
- **Tree planting season** is between December and March. Donations received between April and November will allow us to plant in the next planting season. Donations received between December and March will be held over to the following year's buying and planting season.
- **Daffodil donations** add to the vibrancy of the town in spring. When a donor offers daffodils, in consultation with ETC they can specify on which part of the ETC lands they would like us to plant their daffodils. Donors are expected to pay for the bulbs and their planting. Daffodil planting season is between October and November. Requests made after the middle of September will be carried over to the following year's buying and planting season.
- **Other donations** ETC are open to considering any other creative form of commemoration donors would like to provide. Donations must be ethical and suitable for public spaces and will be subject to individual consideration by ETC on an ad hoc basis.

c. Scattering of Ashes

ETC accepts the scattering of the ashes of loved ones or pets in their parks, wetlands, or woodlands (Millfields Park, Memorial Park, Chase Garth Park, Mallison Hill Wood). No notice is necessary provided that:

- The scattering of the ashes is done discretely and without nuisance to other park/woodland users.
- The ashes are scattered widely enough that they will naturalise into their parkland or woodland setting.
- No ashes are scattered onto footpaths (formal or informal), or into the ponds or dykes.

ETC does not allow permanent or non-compostable memorials to be placed where the ashes are scattered without the agreement of ETC.

d. Management

ETC has management plans for its lands, parks, and recreation areas. These will include the management of the existing trees and vegetation. Donated trees, bulbs and other memorials/commemorations will be included within these management plans and their operation is at the discretion of ETC.