

South Ayrshire Council

**Report by Director of Housing, Operations and Development
to Cabinet
of 17 June 2025**

Subject: Memorial Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Members' approval regarding the future management of both existing and new memorial tributes. Additionally, seeking Elected Members' approval of the increased selection of memorials that Neighbourhood Services can offer family and friends wishing to purchase a tribute to commemorate their loved one.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 approves the increased range of tributes, as detailed in [Appendix 1](#), that Neighbourhood Services is able to offer family and friends; and**
- 2.1.2 requests that officers finalise and agree appropriate Terms and Conditions with Legal Services before the tributes identified above are offered to the public.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Currently, the only form of memorial South Ayrshire Council (the Council) provides to family and friends wishing to commemorate a loved one is a bench seat, in a location of their choice. The understanding is that the seat is able to be used by all members of the public and not restricted to the family.
- 3.2 The current process is that the family select either a metal, wooden or recycled plastic seat and a location is agreed between the family and the Council. The family procure the seat, circa £1000, and are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the seat. There is no fee placed on the family for the leasing of the site occupied.
- 3.3 There is significant administration required to manage each application and in the past year officers have received 150 requests. There is no administration fee placed upon families.
- 3.4 In South Ayrshire there are 'hot spots' that are favoured by families such as Belleisle Walled Garden, Rozelle Estate, and our Promenades. Neighbourhood Services is running out of available space to accommodate the ever-increasing demand for memorial benches.

3.5 Currently there are no clear Terms and Conditions, and that includes a lack of guidance relating to the placement of additional mementoes on or around the seat. As such, we have seats that now have significant additional items such as, soft toys, balloons, flower vases, flower troughs. This in turn is inhibiting the use of the seat by non-family members. While Neighbourhood Services do understand that families wish to continue to commemorate their loved one, our public open spaces are not the appropriate locations to do so.

3.6 For the aforementioned reasons the current system is not sustainable and the new proposals have been developed . This is not an issue that is restricted to the Council. Many Authorities are having to manage the request for memorial benches. Inverclyde and North Ayrshire no longer offer memorial benches. Others have paused the provision, and some only offer these benches in specific locations.

4. Proposals

4.1 Neighbourhood Services (the Service) over the past year have paused the provision of memorial benches and have used this time to review what other Authorities offer and how they are managing the demand for memorials. The Service also wanted to offer families a greater affordable range of ways in which family and friends could commemorate their loved one.

4.2 The Service also felt that it was essential going forward that it identified the locations where the memorials were to be located so mitigating against the further development of 'hot spots'.

4.3 The following provides detail on each of the proposed new options:

- **Memorial Seat Plaque** – Rather than one bench only having one plaque, identified memorial seats will accommodate 6 plaques. Locations will be identified by Neighbourhood Services.
- **Memorial Sculpture Hedge** – the sculpture hedge will form the main feature of a landscaped area which will afford family and friends the ability to visit, sit and reflect on the life of their loved one. Families will be able to purchase a memorial leaf which will be attached to the hedge. We propose to develop a site at each of our promenades together with one in Rozelle Estate.
- **Memorial Blossom Tree** – This feature will be located within the walled Garden of Corsehill Park in Ayr. Families will be able to purchase a memorial flower which will be attached to the tree.
- **Memorial Tree** – Should families wish a living memorial; Neighbourhood Services is offering the option to purchase and plant a tree in one of our parks or public open spaces. Though there will be no option for the provision of a plaque.

4.4 The locations of the memorials are focused on where people most often wish a memorial.

4.5 Families will be able purchase memorial plaques for a period of 5 years at a cost of £250 for that 5 year period, a renewal option will be available. The costs of a

memorial tree will vary depending on size, species and location but will be a minimum of £800, though this would be a lifetime period.

4.6 The fee charged is to ensure Neighbourhood Services recover the cost of the initial investment and to make this service cost neutral.

4.7 Terms and Conditions along with a standard letter of agreement will be sent by the Council to the customer to ensure all terms and conditions are clearly understood prior to commencement. An outline of the terms and conditions found on other Council sites is attached at the end of [Appendix 1](#) – ‘Memorials Available from South Ayrshire Council’ which provides the proposed information for the customer.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

5.1 Customers will require to agree to the Terms and Conditions relating to memorials and examples have been provided at the end of [Appendix 1](#). These are not exhaustive and legal will consider and finalise terms and conditions before the service is offered to the public..

5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 As noted in section 4.5 and 4.6 the fees charged are intended so that the provision of the service is cost neutral.

7. Human Resources Implications

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Risk

8.1 Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations

8.1.1 There is a risk that some families will object to Neighbourhood Services implementing the Terms and conditions that relate to additional commemorative tributes.

8.2 Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations

8.2.1 There is a risk that we will continue to accept requests for memorial benches, run out of space and not be able to manage the issue of additional tributes at each seat.

9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)

9.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposals contained in this report, which identifies potential positive and/ or negative impacts and/ or areas that require further consideration. The IIA Summary Report is attached as [Appendix 2](#) which includes information on any mitigating or follow-up action required.

9.2/

9.2 A copy of the fully completed IIA can be accessed here: [Memorial Policy.xlsm](#)

10. Sustainable Development Implications

10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - This report links directly to the Open Space Strategy, approved in August. An SEA will not be required as the actions of the Open Space Strategy aligns with the National Plan and relevant Legislation.

11. Options Appraisal

11.1 Desk top study has been undertaken to discover the range of memorial available.

12. Link to Council Plan

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to the Council Plan, Priority One, Spaces and Places – Moving around and the environment.

13. Link to Shaping Our Future Council Yes ☒ No ☐

13.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to the Council's transformation priority area(s): and will deliver cashable/ qualitative/ quantitative benefits.

14. Results of Consultation

14.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Martin Kilbride, Portfolio Holder for Buildings, Housing and Environment, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Housing, Operations and Development will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

Implementation	Due date	Managed by
First installation autumn 2025 and continue to roll out with completion of installations summer 2026	31 July 2026	Service Lead – Neighbourhood Services/ Co-ordinator – Grounds and Bereavement

Background Papers None

Person to Contact **Fiona Ross, Service Lead – Neighbourhood Services**
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Date: 11 June 2025

Memorials Available from South Ayrshire Council

South Ayrshire Council are now able to provide a range of memorial options for those wishing to commemorate a loved one. This following information will provide detail on each memorial options, locations, and fees.

The Council wish to be able to provide a range of products and locations, to provide families and friends with a selection of memorial options.

We hope that you like the memorial choices and if you wish any further information or to arrange a purchase, please contact Grounds and Bereavement Services via the email address below.

e-mail – grounds.maintenance@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

Terms and Conditions are included at the end of the following information.

Memorial Seat / Bench - Plaque

We have a number of locations where we have memorial bench seating, and each seat will afford up to 6 plaques on each seat. The style and type of seat will be dependent upon the location. Below are images of examples of recycled plastic, metal and wooded.



Memorial Sculpture Hedge / Tree - Plaque

This unique feature provides a special place in which you can commemorate a loved one, with a memorial leaf or leaves. The hedge will form an area where people can come, sit and take time to reflect and share memories of those no longer with us.

Below is a proposed design for Ayr Shorefront. We will also have locations at Troon, Prestwick and Girvan Beaches and also within Rozelle Estate, Ayr.



Memorial Blossom Tree Feature - Plaque

Within the Walled Garden of Corsehill Park, Ayr we can offer Blossom Tree Plaques.

Corsehill Park is the hidden gem of Ayr, in spring it offers a beautiful carpet of spring crocus, the mature trees provide character and the walled garden a quiet sanctuary.



The fee of any of our memorial plaques, leaf or blossom will be granted for a period of 5 years, after the 5 year period has lapsed, there will be an option to extend the time period. The current price for a 5 year period is £250.

Memorial Tree

We also wish to offer a living memorial too, as such we can arrange the purchase and planting of a tree in one of our parks or public open spaces. With this selection to keep as natural as possible there is no option to have a plaque installed.

Planting sites are offered when there is high probability the planted tree will remain undisturbed until maturity, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Should this be a service you are interested in we can discuss options in relation to species selection and location.

The cost of a Memorial Tree will vary depending on species, size and location but will be a minimum of £800 for lifetime.

There will be a Commemorative Tree register in which each tree will be able to be identified using 'What Three Words'. The register will be managed and maintained by South Ayrshire Council.

Example Terms and Conditions

- The location and types of memorials for individuals will be agreed with applicants, subject to the Council's discretion on the location's suitability and capacity.
- A dedication ceremony can be catered for, but the timing and size of such events is at the discretion of South Ayrshire Council. The dedication of a memorial tree will not give the right to determine or influence future management and all commemorative tree positions will be listed for the purpose of maintenance.
- The cost of supply and installation of any memorial will be covered by the applicant and paid for prior to installation.
- South Ayrshire Council will provide, plant, and maintain memorial trees.
- Planting of any commemorative tree will normally take place within the planting season, which is November to February of each year.
- Any young commemorative tree which fails for horticultural reasons in the first year after the initial planting date will be replaced by South Ayrshire Council. Tree damage caused by an act of vandalism will not be replaced by South Ayrshire Council.
- The provision of any memorial plaque, blossom or leaf will be granted for a 5 year period, commencing from the date the plaque, blossom or leaf is fitted after the 5 year period has lapsed there will be the option to extend the period. If the offer of extension is not taken the plaque, blossom or leaf will be removed from the feature.
- The responsibility for the maintenance of any memorial will be that of South Ayrshire Council.
- The Council will accept no responsibility if a memorial is damaged, vandalised, or stolen. The Council reserves the right to remove any damaged memorial (plaque, blossom, leaf or tree) which is deemed to be a hazard or beyond economic repair. The customer will be contacted if this should occur and will be given the option to replace the memorial at full cost or to relinquish.
- While the Council understands the importance of commemorating a loved one, the Council respectfully requests that no wreaths, balloons, flowers, or any other mementoes are placed at a memorial – the memorial plaques are provided to remember the loved one. Any unauthorised mementoes / planting will be removed by the Council.

Integrated Impact Assessment Summary Report

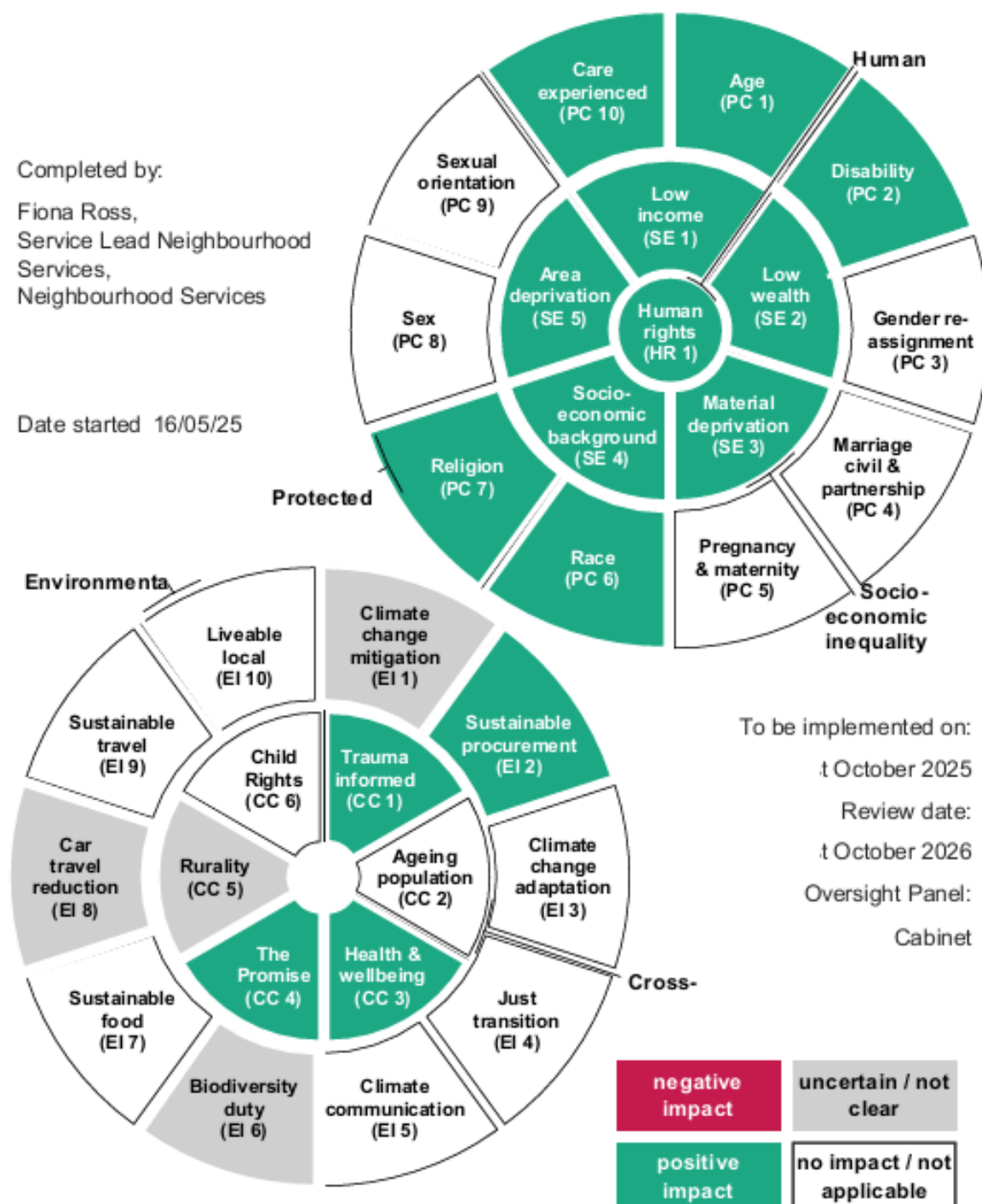
Memorial Policy



Completed by:

Fiona Ross,
Service Lead Neighbourhood
Services,
Neighbourhood Services

Date started 16/05/25



To be implemented on:

t October 2025

Review date:

t October 2026

Oversight Panel:

Cabinet

Public sector equality duty

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation?

This policy / memorials are available to all.

Advancing equality of opportunity?

By providing lower cost memorial options than previous memorial options, it is hoped this provision is a more affordable option for low-income bereaved families and mitigate funeral poverty / funeral debt. Bereavement Services will continue to review services to try and mitigate funeral poverty.

Fostering good relations?

Providing shared dedicated space for bereaved families / friends to visit, can form relationships that assist the grieving process.

Consultation declaration

We confirm consultation has been carried out as part of this process.

Mitigating Actions Required (re negative / unclear

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

EI 1	Climate change mitigation	Potentially less travelling, due to dedicated sites, at present memorial benches have been installed where requested and this covers a large geographical area.
EI 6	Biodiversity duty	Implementation of the policy will measure uptake of memorial options within public open space areas and visitors to these areas.

Mitigating Actions Required (re negative / unclear impacts)

EI 8	Travel less by cars	Unable to determine where family / friends of loved ones would travel from to dedicated memorial sites.
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CROSS-CUTTING IMPACTS

CC 5	Rurality	Review when implemented.
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(CRWIA)?	no
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