



CHESTERFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Commemorations Policy

Owner: Policy and Partnerships

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SECTION 1: Introduction, aim and scope

1.1 Introduction

A review in 2020 - 2021 identified a wealth of commemorative activity across the borough including statues, monuments, plaques, events and exhibitions, all making a valuable contribution to our history, heritage and culture. It is important to current and future generations of Chesterfield residents that there are a range of opportunities to commemorate and celebrate key individuals, organisations and historical events which have helped to shape our great borough.

1.2 Policy aim

The Commemorations Policy seeks to establish the key principles for commemoration activity delivered or supported by Chesterfield Borough Council and to provide a clear route for commemoration proposals to be submitted to the council.

1.3 Policy scope

Within scope:

- Commemorations on land owned by or managed by Chesterfield Borough Council
- Commemorations in or on buildings owned by or managed by Chesterfield Borough Council
- Commemorative activities organised, supported in kind or funded by Chesterfield Borough Council. Examples include civic and ceremonial, museum and theatre programming, equality and diversity forum events programme, percent for art, plaques, commemorative gardens and parks and open spaces improvements, street naming and via regeneration schemes

Out of scope:

- Individual small scale memorials at cemeteries, the crematorium or street furniture for example gravestones, commemorative trees, plaques on park benches etc.
- Commemorations on land and buildings not owned or managed by Chesterfield Borough Council

- Commemorations not organised, supported in kind or funded by Chesterfield Borough Council

While these activities are not within the scope of this policy, we would still recommend using the commemoration principles identified as a guide.

SECTION 2: Commemoration principles

- 2.1 The following principles were developed as part of the 2021 review of commemorations and following stakeholder and community consultation. These will be the guiding principles the Council will use when considering requests for commemorative activity

2.2 **Principle 1: Close connection to the borough**

Commemorations supported or developed by Chesterfield Borough Council should only relate to individuals, organisations or historic events with a close connection to the borough. This could be a prominent individual who was born or lived in Chesterfield borough and/or made a significant contribution to the borough. It could be an organisation based in the borough making a significant contribution, our diverse Chesterfield communities, or a building of intrinsic value to the borough.

2.3 **Principle 2: Research and engagement**

All commemoration proposals require a research and engagement stage. This includes consultation with relevant stakeholders including statutory agencies and appropriate community and voluntary sector groups.

Engagement and checks may be required with the planning authority (Chesterfield Borough Council), highways authority (Derbyshire County Council) and heritage bodies such as Historic England.

2.4 **Principle 3: Permissions**

Where commemorations relate to a named individual, either their permission or in the case of a deceased person – their family or estate administrator's permission should be obtained.

Where commemorations relate to an organisation, they should be consulted and permission obtained.

Where commemoration activity relates to buildings or land, the owner should be consulted and permission obtained.

2.5 Principle 4: Costs

The initial costs and ongoing maintenance of commemorations should be at the expense of the proposer (which may be Chesterfield Borough Council itself) or through external funding.

2.6 Principle 5: Making links and maximising opportunities

Maximising opportunities through Chesterfield Borough Council and partnership activity for commemoration. For example through policy development, street naming schemes, parks and open spaces investment, regeneration schemes, cultural venues programming.

2.7 Principle 6: Communication

Scalable communication plans should be developed for all commemoration activity to maximise opportunities for commemoration, celebration and education.

Section 3: Types of commemoration activity

3.1 Monuments, statues and art installations

There are a large number of monuments and statues across Chesterfield Borough which showcase our rich industrial heritage and culture. There is a particular wealth of commemorations dedicated to the mining industry, early trade unionism and railway engineering. There are also a number of first and second world war memorials.

The council has operated a 'Percent for Art' scheme since 1994 which has seen the completion of over 80 new art schemes located throughout the borough that help to create a sense of place and add character to the built environment. Our previous Local Plan required all development schemes within the borough costing over £1 million to include a work of art to the value of 1% of the total

cost of the project. Smaller schemes were also encouraged to include artworks within their design. During our last Local Plan examination in 2020 the Planning Inspector asked us to ease this requirement. This may impact on our ability to increase the number of art works and commemorations within the borough but we have however made a commitment to continue to encourage developers to commit to the scheme and community involvement.

3.2 **Plaques**

Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Civic Society place Blue plaques to commemorate either the intrinsic worth of a building, or an association with people or historical events of significance to the borough. Information is available on the Chesterfield Civic Society website about current blue plaques and their historical context.

3.3 **Street names**

Derbyshire Building Control Partnership (on behalf of Chesterfield Borough Council) are responsible for all street naming and property numbering within the Chesterfield Borough Council area. The primary objective in naming streets is to facilitate easy identification of premises by, the emergency services, postal / delivery services and general visitors to the area, amongst others. All addresses form part of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which covers the whole of England and Wales.

In the majority of cases the developer will propose names for the new development or request suggestions from the Council. In both cases local ward members for the area will be consulted. A number of street naming conventions are followed including:

- Street names for new developments should not be duplicated within a postal district area
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell
- Names of living or deceased persons will not be allowed, unless agreement of the named person's family or estate administrators has been obtained
- Street names, where possible should reflect the history or geography of the site or area
- Street names construed as advertising will not be allowed
- Street names that could be considered to be offensive will not be allowed
- Dependant street names will not be allowed (eg Mill Close, Park Lane)

- Where a road is in two parts, the use of North, South, East and West in street names should be avoided (eg North Road East and North Road West). It is preferred that two different road names are used
- Phonetically similar names within a postal town area should be avoided
- Historic street naming and Numbering practices have often resulted in many streets in close proximity being assigned the same name but with a differing suffix, eg. Brunel Road, Brunel Avenue, Brunel Close, etc. The Department of Transport advises against this practice. Proposals to name new roads in an area using a differing suffix will normally be refused

In recent years, increased effort has been made to work with developers to create naming schemes which reflect the historical and cultural interest of the site for example wood themed names for the housing development on the former Arnold Laver Timber Company site, we support and encourage this approach.

Street naming for living or deceased people will usually not be permitted as naming permanent features after individuals presents a range of challenges and can be extremely resource intensive. It can be very challenging to undertake background checks around an individual's history and unfortunately sometimes issues of concern emerge long after street naming has taken place. Changing street names is a controversial, lengthy and complicated legal process to complete with significant statutory consultation requirements. In very exceptional circumstances the names of living or deceased people may be used but agreement of the named person or their family or estate administrators must be obtained and a case made for the person making a significant contribution to the borough of Chesterfield or the specific area of Chesterfield where the development is.

3.4 **Civic and ceremonial**

Civic and ceremonial events: The Council in partnership with a range of organisations including the community and voluntary sector develop and deliver a range of civic and ceremonial activities including the annual Remembrance Sunday Service, Armistice 11th hour ceremony and Civic service. There may be additional commemoration activities developed for example World War centenaries, Royal visits, Queen's Jubilee.

Local Democracy: We work with schools to deliver an extensive local democracy programme which can include commemoration activity, recent

examples include women getting the vote and our twinning anniversary with Darmstadt.

Freedom of the Borough: With the passing of the Honorary Freedom of the Boroughs Act 1885 the dignity attached to the Office of Freeman was revived

and enhanced. This Act conferred upon all Municipal Corporations the power to admit as Honorary Freeman of the Borough “persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough”. Granting the Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that the borough can confer and should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Freedom of entry to the Borough: This honour is reserved for military regiments with a strong connection to the borough and usually granted upon return from tours of active duty. The honour allows Regiment members to march through the town with bayonets fixed and regimental standards flying.

Honorary Alderman/ Alderwoman: Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, enables the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Chesterfield to former Chesterfield Borough Council elected members in recognition of eminent service rendered to the council.

Moments of silence: International, national, regional and local moments of silence (one or two minutes) as a period of silent contemplation and reflection as a gesture of respect for periods of mourning or tragic events are organised as appropriate.

Books of condolence: A condolence book or book of condolence is a book in which people may record their condolences after a death or great tragedy. After the death of a leading figure or tragic event, condolence books may be placed in public places such as the Town Hall or Customer Services Centre for members of the public to use. We may also utilise or signpost to electronic books of condolence.

Flag flying: Throughout the year we fly flags from the Town Hall and other prominent Council buildings to symbolise the borough’s support for local, national and international days and events. At the beginning of each calendar year, a list of flag flying days is produced based on the dates outlined in our Flag Flying Policy, guidance from the Government on designated days for flying the Union Flag and advice from the National Association of Civic Officers (NACO) on special events taking place during the year, such as anniversary

events. We also develop a list of additional flag flying days for commemorative and celebratory activities relevant in support of our civic programme and community support. Consideration will be given to additional requests for flag

flying, however a minimum of six weeks' notice is required between a request being submitted and the commemorative day as careful consideration of the commemoration principles and flag flying policy are required and time to order flags.

Illumination of the Town Hall: We do occasionally receive requests to illuminate the Town Hall, normally this will be declined as it does not support our climate change agenda and adds additional resource strain in terms of staff time and equipment.

3.5 **Equality and Diversity Forum events programme**

The Equality and Diversity Forum, supported by Chesterfield Borough Council organise a range of commemorative, educational and celebratory events and activities each year. The Forum hold a planning meeting each year to develop and prioritise themes. In addition to the core Forum programme, the Forum with Chesterfield Borough Council support and promote a range of equality and diversity related activity for example Black History Month projects with the African Caribbean Association and Chesterfield Pride.

3.6 **Cultural services**

Chesterfield Museum: The Council is about to embark on a £15.6m project to remodel and refurbish Chesterfield's 'striking' Stephenson Memorial Hall extending the Pomegranate Theatre, reconfiguring and modernising Chesterfield Museum, and introducing new gallery space, a café bar, education, and community facilities. This new approach offers a significant opportunity to commemorate and display for story of Chesterfield. This will be through a combination of fixed exhibitions and a changing programme of exhibitions that look at Chesterfield in a variety of different ways including the commemoration and celebration of people, organisations and communities. Previous examples include the building a trench to commemorate the end of World War I, hosting exhibitions from local community groups and organisations including the Chinese Big Society, Chesterfield College and Derbyshire LGBT+. In 2016 there was an extensive exhibition looking at the 'Great and the Good' of Chesterfield in portraits. Chesterfield Museum presents a significant opportunity for further commemoration, celebration and education.

Revolution House: The Revolution House in Old Whittington, owned and managed by Chesterfield Borough Council, is in itself a commemoration of an important historical event. Once an alehouse, Revolution House takes its name

from the Revolution of 1688. It was the site of a meeting between three local noblemen who began making plans to raise support in the North and Midlands to remove King James II from the throne and offer the crown to James' daughter Mary and her Dutch husband William.

Chesterfield Theatres: Chesterfield Theatres consists of two Grade II-listed theatres called the Pomegranate Theatre and the Winding Wheel Theatre owned and managed by Chesterfield Borough Council. The theatres host a diverse programme of cinema, drama, dance, music, comedy and community based activities. The theatres can also be hired. On occasions theatre programming may include special events and showings to commemorate significant historical events for example World War I centenary.

- 3.7 Parks, open spaces and cemeteries:** We have worked in partnership to develop a number of memorial and commemorative spaces within our parks, open spaces and cemeteries. For example we have worked in partnership with Chesterfield Sands (the stillbirth and neonatal death charity) to develop three memorial gardens: the Staveley Baby Garden, Boythorpe Baby Garden and the Never Land Garden at Chesterfield Crematorium.
- 3.8 Regeneration and environmental improvement schemes:** Chesterfield Borough Council and partners are developing and delivering a number of significant regeneration and environmental improvement schemes across the borough. As part of these schemes we aim to consider how we can maximise opportunities for appropriate commemoration. This could include planting schemes, interpretation boards, sculptures, street furniture, naming etc.
- 3.9 Communication channels:** Chesterfield Borough Council manages a range of communication channels including Your Chesterfield (the Council's resident magazine), website and staff intranet and social media accounts including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube. These communication channels are a vital part of commemoration proposals but can also be used to commemorate individuals, organisations and significant events or causes as stand alone activities.

Section 4: Commemoration proposals

4.1 Chesterfield Borough Council developed proposals


The commemoration principles identified within section 2 of this policy should be followed for all commemoration activity developed by Chesterfield Borough Council or where Chesterfield Borough Council is a delivery partner. The lead officer should inform the Service Director – Corporate of any new or changed commemoration plans early in the process so that assurances can be made regarding the principles and assistance such as legal advice, governance matters, communications, health and safety and community engagement/consultation can be arranged. Support from other services including ICT, customer services, finance, planning development control and conservation, building control and Human Resources may also be required.

4.2 Other proposals

Members of the public, community and voluntary sector groups, faith organisations, businesses or other public sector agencies may wish to submit proposals for commemoration activity which fall within the scope of this policy (covered at section 1.3) for consideration by the Council. Proposals should be submitted to the Policy and Partnerships Manager for initial consideration and discussions with relevant services, partner agencies, elected members and to confirm decision making arrangements (if required).

E-mail: katy.marshall@chesterfield.gov.uk
Post: Katy Marshall – Policy and Partnerships Manager
Directorate Corporate
Chesterfield Borough Council
Town Hall
Chesterfield
S40 1LP

The following initial information will be required in order to consider your request:

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- Name of the individual, organisation or event you wish to be commemorated and further relevant information such as key dates, locations etc.
 - Their connection and contribution to Chesterfield borough

- Type of commemoration activity requested
- Location of the commemoration
- How the commemoration will be funded including initial costs and ongoing maintenance
- Further information about you are the proposer – are you a member of the public, business, community group etc.
- Your contact information

Please note for some types of commemoration activity there will be a long lead in period due to programming requirements, approval processes, the ordering of materials, permissions etc. so early discussions are vital.

Section 5: Monitoring and review

- 5.1 As this is the first Commemoration Policy developed by Chesterfield Borough Council it will run for two years initially with an annual light touch update and review via the Service Director Corporate and Leader. The policy will be formally reviewed and updated in 2024 once we have more information and experience of using the policy and can evaluate what has worked well and where further improvement may be required.