

**STOCK PARISH COUNCIL
MEMORIAL TREES POLICY
FEBRUARY 2026**

Purpose of this document

To set out policy underpinning the initiative for Stock Parish Council (SPC) to offer a complete service in relation to memorial trees funded by donation to honour the memory of a deceased parishioner.

Context

SPC has been approached by several parishioners who would like the opportunity to plant a tree within the village in remembrance, typically, of a dearly departed family member or (significant other) who was a parishioner of Stock, or for whom, Stock village was a special location to them. Whilst the concept of planting memorial trees is welcomed by SPC, several issues need to be fully considered and priorities balanced to ensure compliance with SPC's role and responsibilities, current legislation, environmental concerns, practice and future implications that may reasonably be foreseen. Restrictions on SPC discretion include:

- Rules and regulations around conservation areas require specific species of tree – for example, trees native to England
- the protocols established in the Village Design Statement to maintain the appearance and ambiance of the village
- the availability of land falling within the stewardship of SPC
- protecting and enhancing bio-diversity and other ecosystem/habitats and their considerations
- offering an equity of opportunity across the village – a fair, simple, comprehensive and transparent criteria for all interested parishioners and parties
- costs and value for money for the donor, parishioners and SPC resources

Background

SPC has recently felled 20 dead/unsafe trees within the village and is required under the conservation area rules, to replace them with native species to protect the environment and ecosystems. Memorial trees, as a concept, is welcomed by SPC and facilitating this initiative was explored. The immediate benefits to the village were recognized. These include an opportunity to:

- provide the comfort of a dedicated, enduring and living monument to a member of our community and their family and friends
- encourage a sense of wider contributions to the community and local connections
- reinforce environmental sustainability and compliance with conservation requirements
- maintain and expand the general rural ambiance and feel of Stock, underpinning proposals established in the Village Design Statement
- provide opportunities for central funds to be directed to other essential village projects.

Costs

To provide a complete package **SPC consider a donation of £500 per tree to be adequate.** The cost to the donor will be on a not-for-profit basis and will be reviewed regularly and updated accordingly. SPC will not charge for facilitating or administering this service. Any

surplus funds will be accounted for and will contribute towards wider village projects. The donation will provide:

- a living memorial tree, congruent with the location and parish
- a tree of an appropriate and complimentary species, cared for and appreciated by our community
- delivery of the tree by the supplier. Typically, it will be containerised rather than bare-root to offer sustainability, flexibility and potential economy-of-scale savings
- all necessary stakes and securing materials which will vary a little according to size and location
- planting, care and maintenance of the tree by a tree surgeon engaged by SPC
- a plaque, engraving and stake to identify the person being remembered

Criteria

After due consideration, research and advice, guidelines have been developed to administer policy issues.

1. Who is eligible for a memorial tree?
 - a. Trees are for parishioners only or people for whom Stock held special significance.
2. When can a memorial tree be applied for?
 - a. anytime. It is not necessary to wait until established trees fail or need to be felled
3. What about the tree?
 - a. SPC must consider the sustainability and environmental impact of the donation trees, within the existing and variable ecosystems in the village, such as the current mix, health and distribution of established trees. Accordingly, the following decisions will be taken by SPC who have the overview of the village as a whole:
 - i. the species of donor tree. It must be a native species and currently there is a choice of six recommended and compliant with the conservation area criteria
 - ii. where, when and by whom the donor tree will be planted?
4. What size will the tree be when it is first planted?
 - a. trees must meet very particular standards of health and size to support their viability so will be purchased by SPC from a credible, local and respected supplier. It will be about 8-10cm girth, about 10 feet (3 meters) tall, and typically containerised to offer flexibility, economy of scale and sustainability
 - b. to secure best value for money for the donor and optimum planting times, trees may be purchased, delivered and planted in various numbers
5. What about caring for the tree after planting?
 - a. the tree will be planted by a reputable and accredited local tree surgeon who will ensure the tree is properly planted, supported and nurtured until it is judged to be well established. Thereafter general maintenance, or replacement of the tree is an SPC responsibility
6. Will the tree be identifiable as a memorial tree?
 - a. the tree may be marked by a plaque placed in the ground next to it. The size, shape, metal, font and engraved wording for any identifying plaque will be specified to ensure the memorial tree and its significance is always identifiable and compatible with wider village aesthetics. SPC will not be responsible for the maintenance of the plaque. To manage wider environmental impacts, any other non-biodegradable materials (such as plastic wrapping on flowers etc) will not be permitted.

Process

- Application by parishioner to SPC for a memorial tree and plaque will be considered based on information submitted by completing the attached form, submitting it to the Parish Council Clerk at clerk@stock-pc.gov.uk or via SPC website
- Application will be acknowledged and donor kept informed of dates, decisions, process etc.
- Once the application is granted, prepayment, by the donor, in full will be required before any further action is taken by SPC
- Applications processed on a “first come first tree” basis
- SPC decide which species of tree, where it is best suited to be planted and when – considering variables such as the time of year, cost implications, ecosystems and biodiversity
- Donor advised and invited to planting if feasible

Preferred suppliers

Available upon request

Application to Stock Parish Council for a memorial tree

Name of donor:

Contact details: email/ phone number/ address

Name and address of the person to be honoured and your relationship to them

Text for plaque. This will be the name they were known by, their date of birth and date of death

Preference of species and location. Decisions will be made by SPC but where it is possible to consider references, if any, this will be done

Payment details

Stock Parish Council
Account number 20515546
Sort code 60-83-01

Signed

I agree to donate £500 to cover the whole process which includes:

- the tree
- delivery
- planting, staking and nurturing
- the plaque

Pictures of the six different trees – established and just as an example, the young memorial tree

Hornbeam (Carpinus Betulus)



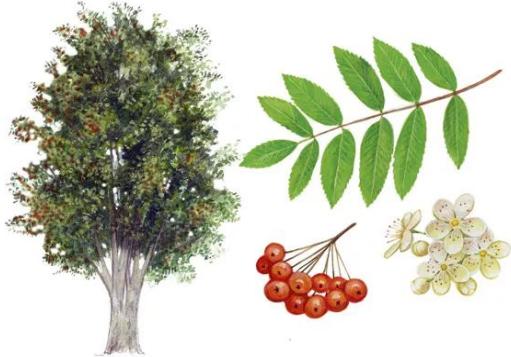
Birch (Betula Pendula)



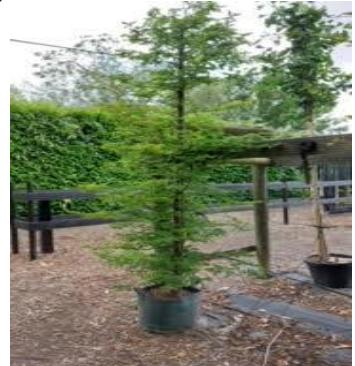
Field Maple (Acer Campestre)



Rowan (*Sorbus Aucuparia*)



Lime (*Tilia Cordata*)



Alder (*Alnus Glutinosa*)



Example of plaque

Made of brass, attached securely to a spike and engraved with a simple message plus the name and year of birth – year of death. This is just an example.

