



**REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE -
Monday 26 September 2022**

REPORT BY: THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR

CREMATORIUM GROUNDS - PROVISION OF MEMORIAL TREE

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to advise members on options for the provision of a form of memorial additional to the Book of Remembrance.

Recommendation

That the option for provision of a Memorial Tree in the area close to the present Book of Remembrance Room be approved, and added to the Capital Programme for 2022/23.

Background

2. At the meeting of the Joint Committee on 9 December 2019 there was a review of the gardens and grounds clearance policy. Following consideration and discussion about possible suggestions for ways of creating a permanent memorial, members agreed that the Book of Remembrance should continue to be promoted as the primary means of memorial, but officers investigate a proposal for an alternative means of memorial in more detail, for the Joint Committee to consider at a future meeting.
3. There has been a delay in looking at this because the pandemic didn't allow the time needed, but we are now able to progress it.
4. As we put a great emphasis on the scattering gardens being shared areas with no individual plots or locations and no one person or family taking ownership of a space we feel it is important to maintain this concept with any memorial options.
5. We are not a formal memorial gardens - people have that option with Portchester Memorial Gardens next to us where plots can be purchased, marked out with individual memorial niches, columbarium memorials, kerb blocks and plaques. We would like to offer something different but also in keeping with the natural beauty of the Gardens of Remembrance that we strive to maintain with the regulations that we have in place.

Options for Consideration

6. We have looked for options that are shared memorials that can appear more in keeping with the natural surroundings as opposed to some of the more formal ornate memorial options such as the large granite sanctums or barbican towers that we feel we should avoid.

Option 1 – A Memorial Tree

7. One option we would like to consider is a memorial tree. The tree concept is in keeping with our natural established gardens and it is a shared memorial that would include 240 leaves to be sold as plaques for engraving. The trees are a low-cost affordable memorial option to generate income with a small 6ft x 6ft footprint. Granite or cor-ten steel trunks. All trees come installed with granite, glass, UK slate or acrylic leaves. The trees could be placed within the grounds in neutral areas, not within any of the areas or borders where we scatter ashes, to avoid people taking ownership of it as an individual memorial at a place where their loved one has been scattered.

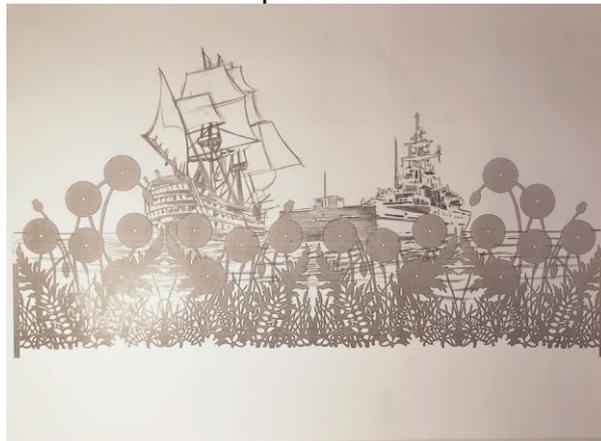
Example of Mulberry Tree – Cor-ten Steel



Option 2 – Metal Wall Art

8. This option is to have metal wall art such as a tree or frieze that is made to hold plaques for engraving and is a shared memorial. They are aluminium or steel and are designed to support ceramic plaques - a perfect material for long-lasting inscriptions. The plaques can feature a design in the background such as a flower, including a poppy. This could be worth considering as we do have a large military community in our area. With this option there is the opportunity to have the frieze designed as a bespoke piece just for Portchester Crematorium. For example, a crematorium in Yorkshire with a history of the railways has a train and after discussing some of the history in our area the company produced the example below as Portchester Frieze showing how ships could be incorporated. It is possible to have more than one design to allow for multiple images.

Example of Frieze



Option 3 – Post Box Memorial

9. This option is a new concept that allows for a post box to be used as a memorial. This allows people to post handwritten notes or letters to lost loved ones that can help people struggling with bereavement and grief to feel that sense of connection and helping to reduce stress, anxiety and depression. The envelopes are designed to be bespoke to Portchester Crematorium and are fully recyclable and contain biodegradable paper so the messages and notes can be composted/recycled to help the environment.

Financial Provision

10. The estimated cost of providing a memorial tree with a steel trunk is £11,000 plus VAT. This expenditure would need to be added to the Capital programme for 2022/23, with the funding being met by the Capital Works Fund. An income budget for this initiative will be assessed and included in the Base Budget for 2023/24, which will be reported to the Joint Committee in December.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. We recommend that the option for a memorial tree could be incorporated satisfactorily into the grounds close to the present Book of Remembrance Room, whilst still maintaining the regulations that do not permit any personal or memorial items within the areas where ashes are scattered. Plaques purchased by families would be for a lease period with an option to renew. If not renewed the applicant would have the option to take the plaque away and keep it at the end of the agreed lease period, with the space then being used by another applicant purchasing a new plaque.

*Victoria Hatton
Manager and Registrar*

*Background List of Documents –
Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 –*

Memorial Tree - more information and pictures are available on the website on the following link <https://www.columbaria.co.uk/our-products/memorial-trees/>

Metal Wall Art - Picture examples of the standard rose gardens, plaques and trees can be seen on the following link <https://www.columbaria.co.uk/latest-products/#plaques>

Post Box Memorial - more information can be seen on the website on the following link <https://www.columbaria.co.uk/latest-products/>

VH/ September 2022