

Lowestoft Town Council

Heritage Plaques Policy

1.0 Overview

1.1 Heritage plaques are important. They reinforce pride in the town by acknowledging its history and people. They educate and remind the community of places, people and events and attract heritage tourists to Lowestoft. Plaques introduce the wider history and attractions in the town and form an important and interesting heritage trail through the town.

1.2 The Policy refers to Working Group. This will consist of Events and Communications Sub Committee members, and Communications Officer who will work in conjunction with external historians who will support the Town Council in liaising with builder owners, writing text etc. Responsibility of any formal planning consents will be with the Town Council.

2.0 What Heritage Should the Plaques Celebrate?

2.1 Existing plaques celebrate places, people and events. The majority of Lowestoft's plaques have traditionally been about places, with people secondary and events running last. Buildings are convenient homes for plaques.

2.2 Some areas of the town have many plaques owing to their historic nature and fine architecture. However, other areas also have buildings which are important to the identity of the town and would be fitting homes for plaques. The Town Council believes heritage plaques should celebrate older buildings as well as original, iconic, or otherwise significant newer buildings..

2.3 The Town Council would like to increase the number of individuals honoured by plaques.. There needs to be careful consideration of when an individual merits a heritage plaque, i.e. whether heritage plaques should be created within an individual's lifetime.

2.4 Events can be difficult to tie to a particular location. However, a broad range of significant events from tragedies to celebrations will be considered.

3.0 The Design

3.1 Shape & Colour

The design will normally follow tradition, which is a 300mm round disc in a grey/green tone. Exceptionally this might be varied only insofar as is necessary, e.g. where there is a lot of information required. However, the Town Council will maximise the use of online supporting material on its website to reduce the need for variation and to provide a useful resource. This will be achieved in liaison with the Heritage Centre where appropriate.

3.2 Image

Three images are used on the traditional plaques, generally, and this tradition will continue, subject to only necessary variation.

The reason for the original concept has been set out by David Butcher - The Thinking Behind the Designer:

The green plaques placed around various parts of the town (concentrated particularly in the High Street area) resulted from a collaboration between me and Celia Webber, a member of the WDC Planning Dept. at the time. I was engaged upon a study of Lowestoft in the Pre-Industrial Era at the Centre of East Anglian Studies, UEA, during the mid-late 1980s, and Celia

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and I combined our skills (she had art training) to produce a series of plaques giving information on various aspects of the town's past in terms of buildings, people and events.

We came up with the idea of three basic categories, with a defining symbol for each: a cross for anything with a religious connotation, a nineteenth century herring lugger for anything connected with fishing, maritime activity or mercantile trade, and a reduced form of the old town badge showing the symbolic crown and rose (but without the figure of St. Margaret of Antioch, the town's patron saint) for things of general interest outside of the other two classifications.

I would advise against a generalised use of Lowestoft's armorial bearings on its plaques. The town wasn't made a borough until 29 August 1885 and the great majority of plaques both present and future will commemorate people and events well before that date. There will be occasions when display of the borough arms is appropriate, but careful thought needs to be applied to deciding when and in what context.

Although some alternative images have been used occasionally, such as the train on the Lowestoft Railway Station Plaques, the consistency of the traditional approach will be applied.

3.3 Font

At present there is a mixture of fonts which have been used. In future, this will be standardised to a font which maximises accessibility. Key information may be displayed in a larger font. The font will be white on the dark green background.

4.0 Review of Plaques

4.1 Residents will be asked to nominate places, people and events for new plaques and information about how to do this will be held on the Town Council's website. Residents will be able to nominate all year round.

4.2 The Events and Communications Sub-Committee will oversee the administration of, and additions to, the Town Council's portfolio of plaques.

4.3 Each year the Town Council will budget for a maximum of ten plaques. However, plaques will only be issued in cases of genuine merit.

4.4 The Working Group will decide which plaques it is recommending and the related wording and image for consideration at the next suitable AID meeting, which will make a recommendation to the next suitable Town Council meeting.

4.5 Following agreement by the Town Council, the owners of the buildings/locations concerned will be contacted for permission to place a plaque.

5.0 Insurance and Agreements

5.1 The Town Council will ensure that the plaques are covered by insurance and that necessary permission/agreements are held.

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Revisions	
Date	Amendment
February 2021	Wording amended throughout to keep the policy succinct and factual and relevant to Lowestoft Town Council specifically. Applications for plaques will be considered at the next available AID Committee meeting, rather than specifically at the AID Committee meeting in January.
November 2021	Amended typographical errors.
November 2021	Amended point 4.2 to reflect that administration of plaques is being handled by the Events and Communications Sub-Committee, rather than a Working Group.
November 2021	Removed sentence from point 4.5 that an offer of installing a plaque will be removed if no response from building owner received within two months.
December 2022	Para 1.2 added