

Harrogate Heritage Plaques – guidance / selection criteria - Version 1

Introduction

The Heritage Plaques of Harrogate were first introduced in 1975, jointly between the then Harrogate Society and Harrogate Borough Council. A large number were installed in 1983, just 100 years since Harrogate became a Borough. Since then, additional plaques have been added regularly. Plaques are currently being added at a rate of 2 or 3 each year.

Unlike most Heritage plaques which are blue and circular, Harrogate Heritage Plaques are usually brown and mainly rectangular in shape.

The plaques tell a history of Harrogate, through its Spa heritage and the people and buildings associated with that history by commemorating people, institutions or places that have played a significant role in the town's history.

This guidance provides clarity on the process of proposing and installing a plaque.

Criteria for selection

The following criteria will apply to the assessment of plaque proposals:

- 1) Priority will be given to commemorations that relate to current themes or areas of interest that may be selected, from time to time, by the Harrogate Civic Society.
- 2) In order to avoid a proliferation of plaques in the town, the number of plaques added per year will be kept to approximately 3 in number.
- 3) Buildings with many personal associations, such as churches, schools and theatres, are not normally considered for plaques.
- 4) For all plaques, the commemoration must meet the following criteria:

	Requirement
Person	Local dignitary or person who made a significant contribution to the development of Harrogate.
	Local person who made a significant contribution to charity / artistic work.
	Local person who made a significant contribution to retail / entertainment / invention / technology.
	National or international person of eminence in their field, who had a strong connection with Harrogate, such as living in the town.
	In all cases shown above, the person to have a strong link to a particular building or location within the town.
Place / building	Building or place of significant interest (for example, the site of a former building or place) to the history of Harrogate where the revealing of the history will be of benefit to a greater understanding of the town's history and development.
Institution / organisation	Institution or organisation that has made a significant contribution to the development of Harrogate and where there is a strong link to a particular building or location within the town.
Event	Event of significant historical interest where there is still a clear link to a location or place within the town.

Application process

A plaques application form will be submitted to North Yorkshire Council (FAO Anne Sims, Principal Conservation Officer) and the Harrogate Civic Society, using the form which is accessible on both the HCS website and the Harrogate Plaques website.

The detail of the submission should be supplemented with information and research with regard to the selection criteria. Harrogate Civic Society can assist with research - please make contact via the HCS or Harrogate plaques website - for more information on how the Society can help. The Society can also assist with the text content of the plaque.

Once submitted, the council will consider the application (consulting with the Civic Society where beneficial to do so) and provide either confirmation that the plaque is agreed and can be installed, that it has been rejected and the reasons for this, or where the principle is acceptable but amendment is required to factors such as location/design/text.

The plaque shall not be installed until confirmation is provided by the council.

If the plaque is to be fixed to a listed building, the council will advise if listed building consent is required.

If a plaque is rejected, there may be cases where the council considers that a different form of commemoration would be more suited to the situation. For example, the placement of a plaque inside a building instead of external or the installation of an interpretation board, such as within a public open space.

Planning consents

Plaques can usually be installed without the need for planning permission, however the council will also check this.

Listed building consent is likely to be required for those installed on listed buildings or associated structures. The council can advise on the need for consent.

Plaque design and location

The design and location of plaques is required to meet the following guidance:

Plaques will usually be:

Style

- Cast aluminium in brown coated finish (in RAL colour - 06 C 39).
- White border.
- White text.

Size / shape

- Rectangular in shape.
- Text should be sized so that the size of the plaque can be kept to a modest scale.
- The exact dimensions may need to be adjusted to suit the particular position on a building.
- The of coat of arms is usually incorporated.
- Where the Harrogate Civic Society have been involved they will be credited.

Location

- The plaque will be located so that the public can read the plaque without entering onto private land or causing a nuisance to privacy.
- The plaque should be accessible (i.e. not too low or too high).
- If located on the front wall of a building, the plaque will be appropriately placed, taking into account the position of openings and features.
- The plaque shall not be positioned so as to disfigure architectural detailing.
- The plaque should be fixed so that mortar joints are used as fixing points rather than direct into stone, wherever possible.
- Where it is not possible to fix to a building, or if the plaque is within a garden or other open space, it may be possible to fix to a free-standing, specially designed mount.

Content

- Clear and concise.
- Relevant to the subject or person being commemorated and the link to Harrogate.
- A word count of between 100 and 150 is a good guide.

Other plaque designs may be considered in special circumstances.