Honours Board Design Guide

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Honours Boards

Before You Begin...

As with the rest of life, successful honours board design depends to a large extent on thorough planning. It may sound obvious but start by gathering as much information as you can. By their very nature honours boards have an inherent longevity so time invested in making sound decisions at the outset will avoid years of ever-accumulating problems in the future. This guide is intended to take you through that process, in 6, easy to follow steps but remember that, if you need help, at any stage, just call us on 01280 701093. We're here to help.

Terminology: The anatomy of an honours board

Throughout the following guide we will be making frequent use of a number of terms specific to honours boards, some of which may be which may be unfamiliar to some readers, so rather than run the risk of confusion, we explain these in **Figure 1**: Terminology.

Step 1 - Scope of The Project

This may well be a simple undertaking if you are starting with a clean sheet and are just looking to establish a single new honours board. If, on the other hand you have been given the job of tidying up, updating and increasing the provision for future inscriptions at your local golf club and they just happen to have 24 separate awards, some with 50-plus years of data, it is going to take more effort to formulate a plan.

Step 2 - Key Decisions - Style and Size

The first things to be decided in determining the design of an honours board are its style and size.

Determining the style of your board

The first question is of one of style. Successful boards should fit harmoniously into their surroundings, whether this is a traditional wood-panelled club room or a bright and contemporary modern environment. The two most common types of board are timber (generally a hardwood such as oak, beech or maple) (**Fig. 2**) and acrylic which can be clear or green-tinted to give the appearance of glass (**Fig. 3**).

Whilst acrylic boards invariably impart a contemporary feel, timber boards can be either traditional or contemporary depending upon a number of factors including the detail design of the board itself, the finish used and the style of lettering.

Determining the size your board

The next matter to be resolved is that of size. This, in turn is decided by, on one hand, the information that needs to be included and on the other, the space that will be available to display the board. As will be readily appreciated, the first of these frequently pushes the board size upwards and outwards whilst the second acts in the opposite direction, meaning that, in many instances, the final solution is, of necessity, a compromise between the these two constraints. See **Figure 4**.

Whilst it is generally fairly straightforward to ascertain the amount of wall space available to you, the question of how to calculate the size of board that you will need and whether this will fit the space available is altogether more complex, not least because there may be several variable factors, any of which, when changed, can have an effect on the others.

It is therefore impossible to give a completely prescriptive answer to the question of how to tackle this conundrum, but do not despair! As a starting point, each board available on our website is shown with a sample layout which is designed to give an "at a glance" feeling of the amount of information that might be accommodated. To see this, scroll down to and click on the "Adding text to this board" information tab. See **Figure 5**.

To explore the possibilities in more detail, please see the next section on Layouts, where we guide you through the process of laying out a board in more detail.
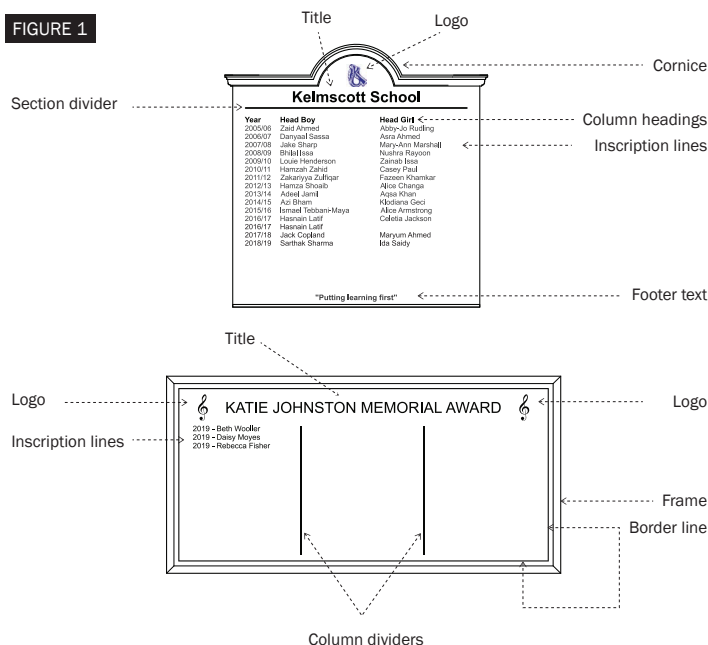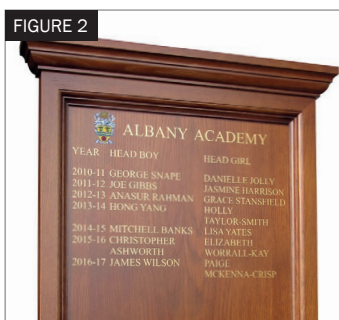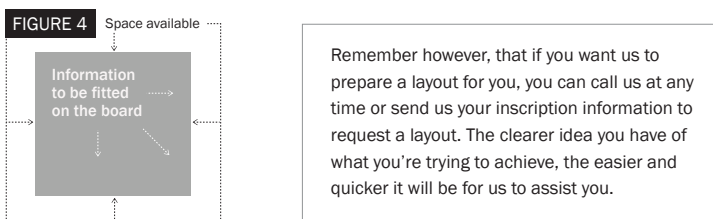

FIGURE 1
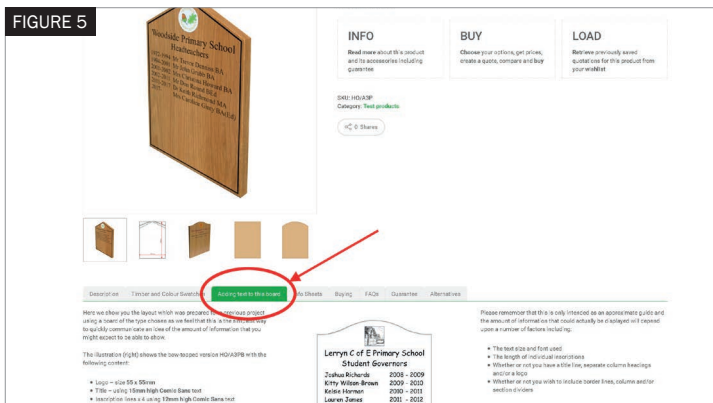
Title · Logo · Cornice · Section divider · Column headings · Inscription lines · Footer text

Kelmscott School

Title · Logo · Logo · Inscription lines · Frame · Border line · Column dividers

KATIE JOHNSTON MEMORIAL AWARD

FIGURE 2

ALBANY ACADEMY

FIGURE 3

Head Girl   Year

FIGURE 4   Space available

Information to be fitted on the board

Remember however, that if you want us to prepare a layout for you, you can call us at any time or send us your inscription information to request a layout. The clearer idea you have of what you're trying to achieve, the easier and quicker it will be for us to assist you.

FIGURE 5

INFO · BUY · LOAD

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Honours Boards

Step 3 - Layout: Where Do I Start?

The number of inscriptions that will fit into the space available will depend upon the size of text used, so a good starting point is to establish what size that text needs to be.

This will depend upon the distance from which it is likely to be read; a board positioned high up on a wall will, for example, need to use larger text than one placed at eye level. As a general rule of thumb, we have found from experience that a capital height of 15 – 18mm (40 – 50pt) works well in most circumstances but as with everything in life, there are caveats! This generalisation is based upon the following assumptions:

- That user has **good eyesight**
- That board is **well illuminated**
- That there is **good contrast** between the lettering and the background of the board
- That a **legible font** has been used

If one of more of these conditions is not met, then font size may need to be increased. Please also be aware that smallest practical text size that we can cut in vinyl is 10mm.

Perhaps the simplest and most foolproof way to be sure on the question of font size is to print out samples of text of different sizes using Word or a similar programme and stick them on the wall where the board will be hung. Again however, don't forget that you are likely to be looking at black text on a plain white background and that coloured text against wood grain is likely to have less contrast. See **Figure 6**.

Step 4 - Will It Fit On The Board?

Having established the ideal text size for individual inscriptions, you are now in a position to start looking at how your proposed content might fit onto a board and how much space you can expect to have left for subsequent, new additions. Again, this isn't a precise science as there is no shortcut to gauging what the end result will look like without actually doing a layout, but there are rules of thumb that will at least give you a fairly accurate idea of how things are likely to pan out. **Figure 7** sets out some of these "rules" in a simple graphic format but, for a more detailed discussion, read on.

In order for the board to be easily read, it is important to establish a hierarchy of information, with the most important elements being most prominent. Hence any column headings will typically use a larger font than individual inscriptions and the overall title of the board will be bigger still. Other ways to differentiate this information include the use of different fonts and/or text colour not to mention bold or italic type but whilst all these techniques have their place, we would urge restraint in using them as too liberal use tends to lead to a muddled-looking end result.

If you have subtitles or column headings the size of this should logically lie between that of the inscription text and the title text. **Generally it tends to be approximately between 1.25 & 1.33 times the size of inscription text.** An alternative solution used occasionally employs the same typeface and font size as the inscriptions, but in bold.

Unless you are producing a continuation of an existing board, you are likely to have title text, in which case you need to establish the text height for this. Again there are no hard and fast rules but title text is generally between **1.5 and 3 times the height of the inscriptions** depending upon the amount of emphasis required.

Having established the likely text height for title and column headings, you will now be in a position to estimate how much room these elements will take up and hence, by deducting this from the overall height of the board, the space left for inscription lines. See **Figure 8**. Don't forget to allow space around the various elements to avoid the end result becoming cramped and difficult to read. Also, if there are to be logos, a footer line, dedication plate or any dividing lines, remember to allow space for these too.
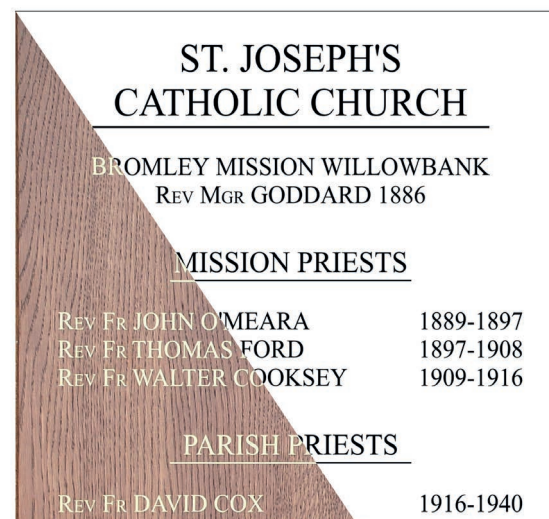
FIGURE 6

ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH

BROMLEY MISSION WILLOWBANK
REV MGR GODDARD 1886

MISSION PRIESTS

REV FR JOHN O'MEARA	1889-1897
REV FR THOMAS FORD	1897-1908
REV FR WALTER COOKSEY	1909-1916

PARISH PRIESTS

| REV FR DAVID COX | 1916-1940 |

FIGURE 7

Text height = **h**

Title text
typically 1.5 - 3 x **h**

Column heading
typically 1.25 - 1.33 x **h**

Line spacing = **h** x 1.65

Kelms

Year	Head Boy
2005/06	Zaid Ahmed
2006/07	Danyaal Sassa
2007/08	Jake Sharp
2008/09	Bhilal Issa
2009/10	Louie Henderson

Inscription line length typically **h** x 20

FIGURE 8

Title - - - - - - - - ->

Column Heading - - - - - - ->

Space for inscription lines - - - ->

Footer - - - - - - ->

ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH

BROMLEY MISSION WILLOWBANK
REV MGR GODDARD 1886

MISSION PRIESTS

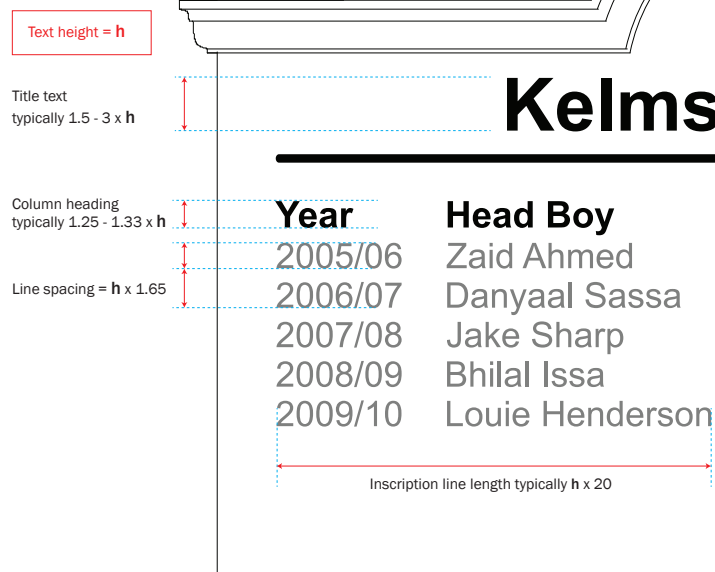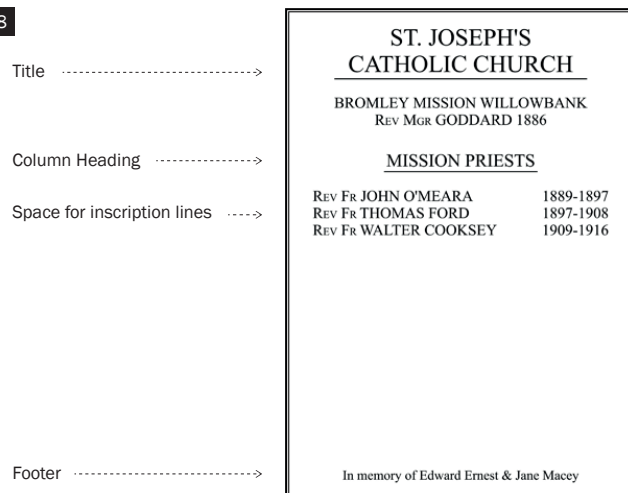| REV FR JOHN O'MEARA | 1889-1897 |
| REV FR THOMAS FORD | 1897-1908 |
| REV FR WALTER COOKSEY | 1909-1916 |

In memory of Edward Ernest & Jane Macey

Will It Fit The Board? (continued...)

To arrive at the number of lines that you are likely to be able to fit in any given space, you need to account not just for the space taken by the text itself but also by the space between the lines. A workable approximation of the height of text plus space is 1.65 x the height of the text alone (**see Fig: 4 on the previous page**), so to arrive at the likely number of inscription lines, multiply the text height by 1.65 and divide the height of the space available for inscriptions by the result.

Having worked out what fits vertically, you will also need to consider how things fit in terms of width. You will not be surprised to learn that, as with all other aspects of the process, this isn't an entirely scientific calculation but again, rules of thumb can be applied. A typical length of inscription line (dates plus name) is approximately 20 x the cap height of the text, to which should be added a further 25% to allow for space either side in order to arrive at the likely column width. Again, if there are to be column dividers, a little extra should be allowed for these, see **Figure 7**. Honours board text ratios.

Step 5 - Other Considerations

A Word About Fonts

The font that you choose for an honours board will affect not just the character of the board but also its legibility. Fonts are divided into two groups, Serif and Sans Serif. Serifs are the small features at the ends of strokes (see **Figure 9**).

There are advantages to using both Serif & Sans Serif fonts in different designs. At its simplest, Serif fonts are easily readable at small body copy sizes, and Sans Serif fonts really stand out in large titles. This is an over-simplified view but generally holds true in most situations.

> Don't use too many different fonts on one board. One for the title and column headings and one for the inscriptions is what we would suggest as the limit. It is recommended to use only one font but take advantage of the bold and normal font variables to highlight titles and body text (along with font size).

Setting the Mood

Think about the "mood" of the fonts you choose. This is often a key difference between Serif and Sans Serif fonts. Serif fonts can be classic or formal and sometimes you hear them referred to as elegant. Sans Serif fonts are often described as modern, friendly and minimal because they have a stylish simplicity about them, without the decorative strokes. Our default fonts are Times Roman as a serif font and Arial as a sans serif as these are good, solid and legible examples of their kind and will tend to suit most applications. You are certainly not restricted to these however; we have access to a large library of alternative fonts so, when building your board on our website, if you have a particular favourite or one that is used as part of your corporate identity, just tick "Other" when asked to choose a font and add the details in the final "Special Instructions" section. In exceptional circumstances, if the chosen font is not available as part of our library, we may have to buy it, in which case an extra charge will apply.

All That Glitters – The Perils of Gold Lettering

Gold is a traditional colour for honours board lettering and continues to be popular, no doubt due to the connotations of quality that it brings with it. There are many circumstances however, where the use of gold should be avoided due to its variable legibility in different lighting conditions.

In our experience, gold should certainly not be used on light coloured boards (light oak, ash or beech for example) where a lack of contrast with the background will render lettering all but invisible. **Even on darker coloured boards however, there are circumstances where lighting conditions the same board may render the use of gold text inadvisable.** Consider **Figures 10 & 11**, (2 images of gold text in contrasting light) which shows the same board viewed under the same lighting conditions but from different angles. Now you see it, now you don't! Our advice would be, if in doubt, avoid gold and use something with higher contrast.

FIGURE 9

FIGURE 10

FIGURE 11

Other Considerations (continued...)

Crests and Logos

Crests and logos are other frequent additions to the design of an honours board. The main point to keep in mind when providing us with artwork, is that files used on websites have generally been reduced to the minimum size and quality, in order to achieve the fastest possible display time. This is diametrically opposed to what is required of a file intended for print output where, the greater the amount of information contained (and the bigger the file), generally the better the quality of the final image. Therefore lifting a file directly from your website will generally not produce acceptable results.

For detailed advice on preparation of artwork see our separate **Artwork Guide**.

Format of Inscription Lines

Inscription lines typically contain a name and a date (or date range) but may include more than one name per year, if for example, they record president, Chairman and Captain for a given year. One thing worth remembering when setting out a new board is that it is generally better to keep dates or date ranges (which will generally be consistent in length) in the left-hand column. Putting content such as names (which will vary in length) in the left-hand column can result in a ragged edge against which it can be difficult to read across subsequent columns. (see **Figure 12**)

Commemoration

Honours boards are frequently donated in memory of someone and there are two commonly used ways of acknowledging this. The first is in text at the foot of the board (a footer line) (see **Figure 13**) and the second is to use a dedication plate, typically of brass, which can be engraved with the required text (see **Figure 14**). This option is listed in the third "Accessories" section when building a board on our website.

Alternative, traditional lettering methods

Today, the vast majority of honours boards use computer-cut vinyl lettering but this was not always the case. Originally boards would have been completed with hand-painted lettering using traditional signwriting techniques and occasionally, we still get asked if we can do hand-painted lettering and crests (see **Figures 15 & 16**).

The answer is yes we can, although nowadays we do so mainly to add new inscriptions to existing boards where the original signwriter or artist has vanished without trace, as the costs involved generally rule out this approach for all but the most prestigious of projects . If you have a project that requires hand-painting, please give us a call to discuss it or send us the details for a quotation. Factors to consider when thinking of opting for hand-painted lettering include:
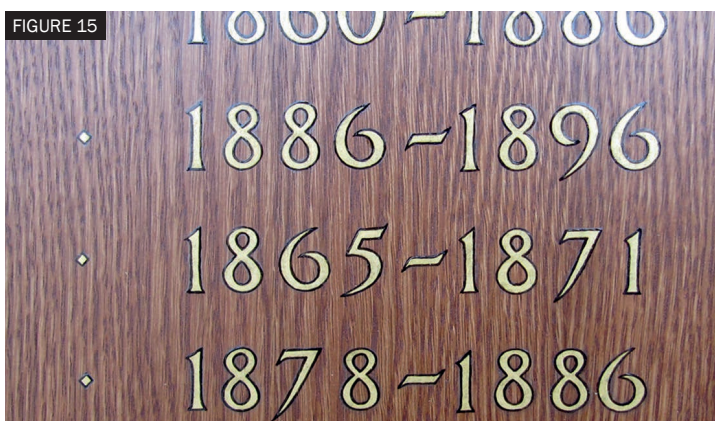
- **Cost** – this is many times that of the equivalent in vinyl – you pay per letter as there are no short cuts to be had. Each character has to be individually drawn, laid out, spaced and painted.

- **Consistency** – vinyl lettering guarantees consistency of lettering style and size year on year. Hand-painted lettering is, on the other hand, inclined by its very nature to vary particularly if added by a different artist.

- **Transport** – Unlike updating with vinyl lettering, the addition of hand-painted letters will inevitably require the board to be returned to us with the associated costs and risks of damage in transit. It also means that you will be without the board for a while.

- **Timescale** – certain to be slower than producing updates in vinyl.
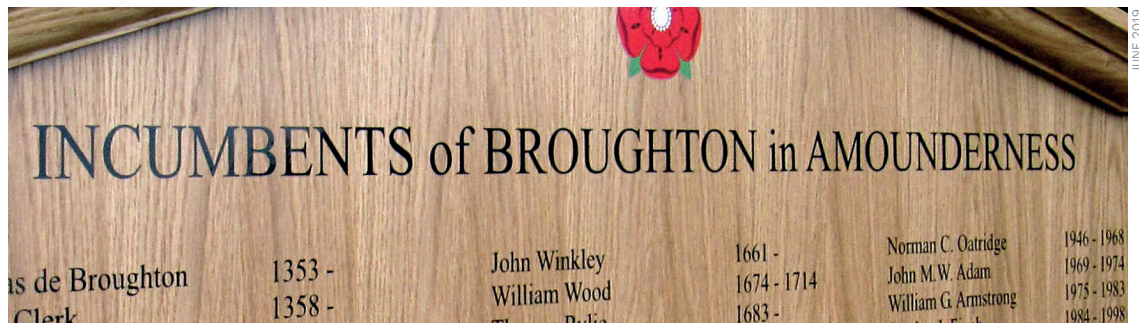
Bespoke Boards

Our website gives full details of each of our wide range of standard designs. If, however, you can't find exactly what you are looking for, we do also offer a "bespoke" service and can tailor-make boards to order. Please call us to discuss your requirements on 01280 701093.

FIGURE 12

FIGURE 13

FIGURE 14

FIGURE 15

FIGURE 16

INCUMBENTS of BROUGHTON in AMOUNDERNESS

...as de Broughton   1353 -
...Clerk   1358 -

John Winkley   1661 -
William Wood   1674 - 1714
                 1683 -

Norman C. Oatridge   1946 - 1968
John M.W. Adam   1969 - 1974
William G Armstrong   1975 - 1983
                      1984 - 1998

Step 6 - The Production Process

Sending us your inscription information

You can send us details of the information to be included on your board either by typing it directly into the appropriate dialogue boxes when building a board on our website, or by sending us a separate text document. This can be uploaded when building a board or sent subsequently by email. Word or Excel are the preferred formats. For others, please check that we can accept them before sending.

Layout proofing process

Once we have received the information from you, we will prepare a layout proof (see **Figure 17**) for approval. This will need to be checked and signed off before we begin production of the text. If you or we have made any errors, or things just need to be tweaked slightly, respond to this to let us know and we will make the appropriate changes and resend the layout for approval. The cost of producing the layout proof and making any necessary amendments to it are included in the cost of the board. We reserve the right however, to charge for any further amendments, other than those arising as a result of our failure to correctly interpret your original instructions.

Future updates

Adding new inscriptions to an existing board

We believe that keeping your honours board updated should be an easy task and, to this end, we do everything that we can to keep the whole process as simple as possible. Most importantly, there is generally no need to return the board to us with all the work and risk of loss and damage that this entails.

For existing boards (with vinyl text) that we have manufactured just send us the details of what needs to be added. If you have more than one board, be sure to tell us which board the additions are for. We will respond promptly with a quotation for the work required. Once this is accepted the new text lines are cut and posted out to you, usually within 5 working days and often sooner, for you to add to the board. The process is straightforward (see **Figure 18**) and full instructions are included.

We keep records of all the boards that we have made and details of text size, colour and font so you can be assured that the additions will be a perfect match. For instructions on how to apply additional text to an existing board please see our separate instruction sheet or watch our helpful video.
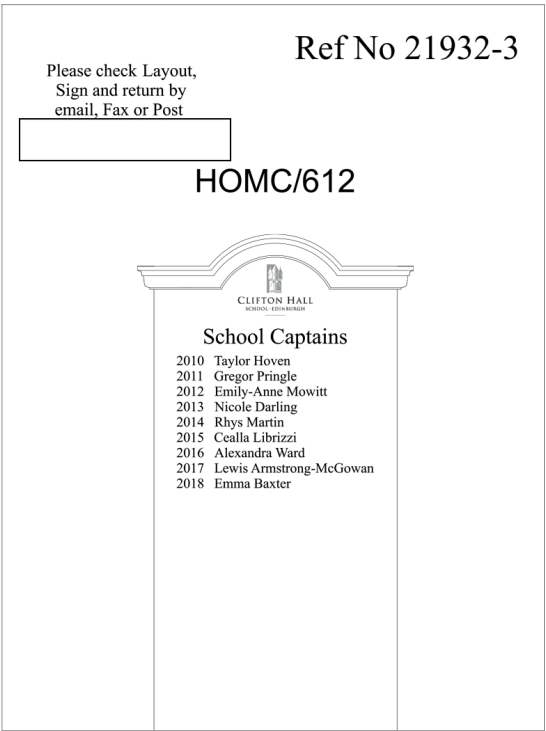
FIGURE 17

Ref No 21932-3

Please check Layout,
Sign and return by
email, Fax or Post

HOMC/612

CLIFTON HALL
SCHOOL · EDINBURGH

School Captains

2010   Taylor Hoven
2011   Gregor Pringle
2012   Emily-Anne Mowitt
2013   Nicole Darling
2014   Rhys Martin
2015   Cealla Librizzi
2016   Alexandra Ward
2017   Lewis Armstrong-McGowan
2018   Emma Baxter

FIGURE 18

Contact Greenbarnes now on 01280 701093, visit our website at www.greenbarnes.co.uk or email sales@greenbarnes.co.uk

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