



Your ref	Community Partnership Benches
Our ref	Community Partnership Benches
Date	02/12/2021
Please ask for	Zoe Botten
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Community Partnership – Talking Benches proposal

I am writing with an update from your local Community Partnership, for Leiston, Saxmundham, Aldeburgh and surrounding villages. The partnerships launched in late 2019 to provide practical solutions to local priorities, being: -

1. Reduce social isolation, loneliness – particularly carers, older people and men over the age of 40.
2. Encourage and enable everyone to be more physically active and healthy.
3. Education, opportunities and aspirations.

In early December 2021 the Partnership met to agree funding proposals, I am pleased to announce that one of the successful proposals was the provision of 'Talking Benches' across our area. I would like to offer you the opportunity to 'adopt' one.

Talking Benches encourage people to start new conversations with people. They remove the awkwardness that may come from meeting someone new in a public space. With this barrier removed the opportunity for tackling isolation/loneliness increases. Talking Benches are already used across the world. Using our data and local insight we know there to be a benefit in providing these within our local area.

We are offering the purchase and delivery of a bench, free of charge, to you. In line with our commitment to the environment, they will be constructed of recycled materials. This also gives the benefit of minimal maintenance and a long life. The bench would also come with a sign indicating it is a 'Talking Bench' and demonstrating it is part of a growing network.

In the spirit of Community Partnerships, we would ask for some contribution from yourselves. This would be as follows;

- The receiving group funds and arranges the installation of the bench as they see fit.
- The bench becomes the property and responsibility of the Group/Parish Council upon delivery.
- The receiving Group/Parish Council will agree and contribute to the promotion of the bench in line with local resources.

If you wish to take part in this exciting project, please submit an expression of interest to myself no later than Friday 14th January 2022. Please confirm where the bench would be situated. Applications will be considered using a number of criteria and are not based on first come, first served.

East Suffolk Council

East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge,
IP12 1RT Tel: 01394 383789 DX 41400 Woodbridge

I am happy to discuss potential sites and any other questions you may have before submitting an expression of interest

Yours sincerely

Zoe Botten

Communities Officer
East Suffolk Council