

Brandon in Bloom CIC

Helping our town grow together.

The Triangle

Brandon in Bloom adopted the area called The Triangle, on Bury Road in 2017. The site is next to one of the towns car parks, Doctor's surgery, library, primary school and pre-school and leading directly to the market place. The close proximity to many of the towns key services makes the triangle the ideal place for 'The Friendly Bench'.



The Friendly Bench

a place for you to meet

The bench so important

How will the bench be used

Brandon is one of the most deprived places in Suffolk.
"Even though we live in a world where connecting with each other should be easy through technology, many people, especially some elderly and those on a low income can struggle to access social media and online resources.

Brandon in Bloom CIC are committed to holding regular events at the bench. All being well our first planned event will take place on 19th July "Freedom Day". Various community groups are interested in holding events at the bench including "Knit & Natter" and a book club.

The pandemic has obviously brought many new challenges of isolation with it. Community groups and activities have had to close and Lockdown has meant many people have been cut off from their family, friends and even basic human contact through shopping and walking around their areas.

Statement from Amba Keeble (Brandon Lifelink)
"As a social prescriber, I think a friendly bench will bring so many benefits to Brandon. I will definitely encourage my participants to engage with the project. Being outside, walking to the bench, meeting new people and feeling a part of the community all have massive benefits on a person's wellbeing. I have young and old participants who would really enjoy a focal point to meet at and spend some time at. I can see it being used as an 'organised' meet up and also by those feeling a little lonely and passing by just to see who's there."

Even before Lockdown, despite great efforts to advertise, there were still people who were 'unreached' in terms of social connection" Amba Keeble (Brandon Lifelink)

- Data from Suffolk Observatory:*
- 24.1% of the population of Brandon East are aged 65 – 85+
 - 47.6% of the population of Brandon East are a one-person or lone parent household.
 - 26.5% of the population of Brandon West are aged 65 – 85+
 - 46.3% of the population of Brandon West are a one-person or lone parent household



About Brandon in Bloom

Brandon in Bloom CIC was founded in 2014 and is an entirely self-funded community interest company which aims to tidy and brighten the town of Brandon, Suffolk.

Our hard-working volunteers are a diverse team of all ages who are dedicated to bringing the community together through horticulture.

By working together with members of the wider community, including residents, businesses and organisations, our team of volunteers look after the town's green spaces and maintain new planting areas. Connected with our main goal of brightening up the town, our work also helps to tackle anti-social issues such as litter, dog fouling and graffiti.

What is The Friendly Bench®?

The Friendly Bench® is a safe, easily accessible community parklet with integrated seating and sensory planting which is situated within communities for people to meet, chat, connect with nature, build friendships and a sense of belonging.

Connecting people - An accessible social space, The Friendly Bench® helps grow and strengthen people's social networks with their wider community and improves wellbeing through friendship and is the focus for regular community events and activities.

Connecting places - Purposely designed, The Friendly Bench® provides a convenient and comfortable place for those with limited mobility to rest, helping them to connect with local services and public places, whilst also encouraging independence and opportunities to participate in the wider community on their terms.

Connecting with nature - The Friendly Bench® enables easily accessible interactions with nature, wildlife and the outdoors to help improve people's physical health, mental well-being, social behaviour, self-esteem and life satisfaction.

Brandon in Bloom CIC



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