



# WEST BERGHOLT PARISH COUNCIL



## INFORMATION PAPER 26th January 2021

### Health & Wellbeing 'talking benches' (roadside seating) and village walks in West Bergholt.

#### Introduction

Brian, Norma, Phil and Chris have had preliminary and separate discussions in respect of taking forward the Council's Health & Wellbeing Plan and **providing talking benches** (being both emotional and functional) on a circular route around the Village (internal) for use as lockdown eases and coincides with the better weather in the **Spring**, and of course for years to come!

Indeed, it is not intended that this be a one-off action but the start, combining in the **future** perhaps with walks in the countryside (external), extending to other areas of the Village including perhaps down to the 'blue bridge', etc.

There are a number of benches around the village but not enough, and indeed the intention would be to make the talking benches distinct with the 'top' painted in bluebell blue.

There are decisions to be made in due as to whether the new benches should be all timber, coloured recycled plastic or metal framed with 'wooden' slats and the budget (a N P project/micro grant/local sponsorship). They will need to be fixed down and the final material based on ensuring the minimum of maintenance! There will be a need to consult and also potentially involve the Co-op, ECC and CBC.

Also, decisions will need to be made/agreement reached on whether there should be a map posted near each bench showing the route between each bench or perhaps a small plaque fixed to each bench.

**One future idea** is also to link with the 'old' village walks leaflets, which both Chris and Laura trying to track down, and which could hopefully also see the History Group being asked to help with. Linking with cycling routes in the future could be done.





## W E S T B E R G H O L T P A R I S H C O U N C I L

### Potential locations

1. Village sign at Colchester Road/Chapel Road junction **EXISTING** P C land
2. Poor's Land at Colchester Road/School Lane junction **PROPOSED now** (there is a bench halfway along the Colchester Road boundary but no hard pavement to it, the proposed location would be near the proposed zebra crossing location and the birch copse on the land) P C land
3. Lexden Road/Colchester Road junction **DEBATABLE/future position** (this is an exposed location at present and thus not desirable, but if such were to be protected by a crescent of new hedging, strategically positioned so as not to restrict sight lines, a bench could be positioned here) ECC land?
4. Scout hut/Village Green Lexden Road **PROPOSED now** P C land
5. Orpen Hall/Lexden Road **EXISTING** (the bench next to the play equipment is currently not accessible by hard paving but will be shortly of course - this is not on a circular route though and so perhaps a **new** bench next to the car park?)
6. Lexden Road Pond **DEBATABLE/future position** (any bench could be linked to the proposed pond dipping platform, and undoubtedly providing a bench here would be desirable, but clearly to access requires crossing what is known to be a busy road and there is no pavement on the pond side) P C land
7. Lexden Road/Chapel Road junction **PROPOSED now** ECC land?
8. Chapel Road/Queens Road pond **EXISTING** (using the bench that is most easily accessible) P C land
9. Donard Drive/Chapel Road **PROPOSED** ECC land
10. Mumford Road/Chapel Road opposite the chapel **EXISTING** ECC land?
11. Chapel Road/Co-op **PROPOSED now** (next to the post box) Co-op land?
12. Colchester Road/Armoury Road **PROPOSED/future position** ECC land?
13. Lorkin Way/pocket park **EXISTING** or **new** part way round if CBC say no (there are two benches, that next to the footpath to Armoury Road being proposed to be used) CBC land?
14. Other ideas for the location of **NEW** benches are the triangle at the Queens Road/Bourne Road junction, the Brewery's war memorial, the Pirie Road/Erle Harvard oak and the Mumford Road oak.



## W E S T B E R G H O L T P A R I S H C O U N C I L

Exactly where on any parcel of land though has to be discussed in due course, and not all locations have to be adopted.

### The question and next step

Is there **any objection** to the principle? If there is no fundamental objection to the principle for health and wellbeing talking benches in the village **the next step** is for Norma as our H&WB champion to put the idea on the Hub and ask for thoughts on new bench locations to be put forward for consideration, with maybe a map of the village to assist! The results of the Hub consultation will set the direction as to how this idea proceeds, or maybe does not!