

On Thu, 14 Nov 2019 at 17:40, Debbie Wood wrote:

Dear Russell

Thank you for your email regarding the "Happy to Chat" bench that you are proposing. This is not a new concept to me and one that I would fully support.

"Happy to chat" benches seem to be popping up nationally and indeed globally. If Avon and Somerset Police are prepared to devote valuable resources to setting up "Happy to Chat" benches then surely that gives weight to their value. A study by the University of Sheffield in 2015, found sitting on benches allows people to spend longer outside, which is beneficial for mental health and connects them with others in their community. This is particularly important for people in the community who find popular social venues like cafes too expensive.

It has occurred to me that as the Steyning and District Community Connector I could, when time allows, spend time at this bench as a place to engage with people in the community.

I wish the project well and please keep me up to date with developments.

Kindest regards

Debbie

Debbie Wood | Community Seniors Worker |

NB My normal working days are Mon - Thurs 9am - 4pm

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