

Amenities and Leisure Committee Meeting – 5th July 2023

Agenda Item 12 – TELEPHONE KIOSK – SILVERDALE ROAD

In 2022, Earley Town Council adopted two decommissioned red telephone boxes from BT for a nominal charge of £1 each. The telephone boxes are located in Wychwood Crescent and Silverdale Road.

The adoption of telephone boxes has been something that town and parish councils have been doing across the country and the boxes are being repurposed for various uses such as houses for defibrillators, book exchanges and flower planters, there are even some unusual uses such as a showers and cocktail bars.

As the telephone kiosk in Wychwood Crescent was in better condition and in a suitable location, the Town Council repurposed this kiosk into a house for a defibrillator. The Senior Operations Support Officer oversaw the project, liaising with Community Heartbeat Trust who work with BT to help local communities install defibrillators into converted telephone boxes. The Town Council's maintenance team gave the box some much needed attention, replacing the glass, repainting inside and out and office staff created a colourful tiled mosaic for the floor. This project has now been completed.

The telephone kiosk in Silverdale Road is in poor condition and is often subject to vandalism, so Council agreed that further discussion would be needed to agree a way forward.

Some possible uses to consider:

- Defibrillator
- Book exchange
- Toy Swap
- Art Gallery
- Information Kiosk
- Planter

Further points:

- Kiosk located at the side of the parade of shops, very close to the exit of maiden Erleigh School, and somewhat tucked away from the main thoroughfare
- There are 2 defibrillators currently listed in the area, one at Tesco Express and one at Aldryngton School

Should no suitable purpose be found for this red telephone box, it may be possible to move it. This could be costly as a specialist company has to be used. Consideration should also be given to the fact that moving it would lose its connection to the electricity supply (therefore some uses may no longer be feasible) and that, if it were moved to non-ETC land, permission for the landowner would need to be obtained.

Members are requested to discuss the telephone box in Silverdale Road and to decide how they wish to proceed with the project.