

Amenities & Leisure Committee – 17th January 2024

Agenda Item 9 – BENCH REQUEST

Background

A resident contacted WBC in 2021 and again in 2023, initially asking for a bench to be installed around Wokingham Rd, around Earley or Winnersh Showcase. WBC asked them to identify potential areas, the resident suggested Laurel Park, MENR or Sol Joel Park, adding they would like 2 benches in the same park. WBC, Cleaner and Greener, refused Laurel Park, citing antisocial behaviour issues at the site and referred the resident to ETC, the owner of the other 2 sites.

The resident (Meadow Road, RG6) has now specifically asked for 2 benches to be installed at SJP, adding that one is for their loved ones, the other for their husband’s parents, and that SJP is close to where they live.

Operations Manager’s Assessment

Site visit conducted and advice sought from ETC grounds team. There are already several benches at the site, the recommendation would be that only one bench be installed. Below is a map of possible locations:



Yellow- Existing Bench Locations

Blue- Possible Bench Locations

Red- possible tree locations

Constraints include:

- Mays Lane side - noise etc affecting residents
- Wokingham Road side & garden area -
 - Antisocial behaviour
 - Potential for extra littering in hedges
 - Current bench outside garden makes it difficult to swing tractor around when cutting grass, more would make this worse

The resident has been informed that, if agreed by Council, only one bench could be installed (perhaps with two plaques?) and it has been suggested to them that they could consider a memorial tree instead. It has been made clear to them that, should ETC agree to their request, the bench/tree will be obtained by ETC and they will be invoiced for the cost.

The resident has responded that they would like one bench and one memorial tree at Sol Joel Park.