

Abergele Western Gateway - Autumn Update

We are excited to announce the successful completion of the first phase of the 'Meanwhile Use' project, led by sculptor Ben Dearnley. Over the past seven weeks, Ben has been actively engaging with the community through four interactive sessions, exploring the local area, and crafting stone elements for our new temporary public open space.



Two significant pieces have been created so far. The first, a *Friendship Bench*, has been meticulously crafted from upcycled materials found on-site, giving them a fresh purpose and adding character to the space.



The second, a *Poet's Stone*, was developed in collaboration with poet Tegwen Bruce-Deans and funded by Arts and Business Cymru CultureStep. The stone is beautifully inscribed with a line from a poem written specifically for this project, adding a literary touch to the space.



Additionally, several smaller pieces have been designed to enhance a children's play area, including the 'Three Sisters' and 'Guardian Perches'—a set of stone spires and stepping stones that encourage imaginative exploration.



The pieces created during these community events will be displayed within stone gabion benches, awaiting discovery by visitors to the space.



What's Next?

The next phase of the project is already underway, focusing on the construction of three pavilions designed to offer shelter while maintaining the project's 'reduce, reuse, recycle' ethos. These structures will also incorporate upcycled materials sourced from the site.

As part of this next step, the hoardings covering the former Slater's Showroom will be repainted with recycled paint, providing a vibrant backdrop for poems created during the community sessions. These poems will gradually appear on the hoardings as the project progresses.

The Abergele Western Gateway project is set to officially open during the week commencing 28th October 2024.

Farewell and Thanks to Ben Dearnley

As we bring this phase of the project to a close, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Ben Dearnley for his outstanding contributions. Not only has Ben demonstrated incredible artistic talent, but his warm personality and commitment to fostering connections within the Abergele community have made a lasting impression on all of us.

Through his work with Team Rock, Ben has inspired both residents and collaborators with his passion and dedication. His presence has enriched our community, and we are grateful for the time we've spent working alongside him. We wish Ben every success in his future endeavours.