

Alignment Proposal 1

Funding Source	Neighbourhood Investment Capital Fund
Name of Project	Time to Talk
Lead Organisation	SCC
ALIGN	£2,000

Background

Following a presentation to the July meeting of the Neighbourhood and Communities Board, a proposal to roll out a project across the city which allocates a number of our park and open spaces' benches/seating areas, to become 'time to talk' benches/seating areas, linked with our walking routes and heritage trails, wider volunteer programmes and which will support our aspirations to become an Ageing Well City, was agreed.

'Time to Talk' benches would feature a simple sign which reads 'Sit here if you don't mind someone stopping to say hello' and would be designed to help combat loneliness and encourage community interaction. The benches may also be painted a different colour and communities may wish to link with local art groups / projects. The benches would be located within our 1-2-3 walking routes and our heritage walking trails, which would potentially encourage residents to walk and talk together, leading to further inaction and physical activities. The benches could be promoted on social media, via the Step-Up app and Area Committees may wish to commission our voluntary and community sector to deliver wrap-around projects linked to the launch of the benches and walking routes. Currently the team is mapping options - and the first area being looked is the Coalfields. Washington Area Committee is requested to consider aligning funds to implement a similar scheme across Washington once the Coalfields pilot is confirmed. Any funds not allocated will be returned to the budget

Recommendation – Align £2,000

The Neighbourhood and Community Board recommend alignment of this project, which delivers to the Washington Area Investment Delivery Plan priorities of Love Where You Live and Health & Wellbeing