

Press Release.

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INEXETER ANNOUNCES PARKLET INITIATIVE TO ENHANCE PUBLIC SPACE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

InExeter, the business improvement district for the city, is thrilled to unveil plans for the installation of two new 'parklets' for the city centre. The Parklets have received £50,000 from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and are being commissioned by InExeter.

Scheduled for installation in early February and located on Fore Street and Musgrave Row, these repurposed parking spaces will enrich the public space experience for residents and visitors to the city.

What is a Parklet?

Parklets, a growing urban trend, address challenges in areas where narrow or congested pavements limit outdoor seating or where there is a need to expand seating and public space. They contribute to creating vibrant, planted, seating areas and provide space for people to enjoy and foster community engagement.

The InExeter area comprises approximately 650 businesses, ranging from national brands to independent shops and a diverse array of food and drink establishments. InExeter plays a crucial role in supporting businesses, promoting the local community, and promoting positive change in the city.

Nicola Wheeler, the CEO of InExeter, explains: *"There is a growing demand for more spaces for people to dwell in our city which complements the introduction of green infrastructure, such as parklets, which provide a much-needed resting space from the hustle and bustle of the urban environment supporting our member businesses as well as benefitting the local community and visitors."*



An example of a Parklet courtesy of Putney BID

The parklets are being implemented following £50,000 in funding from Exeter City Council through the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, an initiative dedicated to improving public spaces and building local pride in place. The project aligns with key post-pandemic themes, including support for the local food and drink scene, the city's Net Zero Carbon goals and initiatives promoting health, wellbeing, and public space.

Councillor Laura Wright, Deputy Leader of Exeter City Council and Portfolio

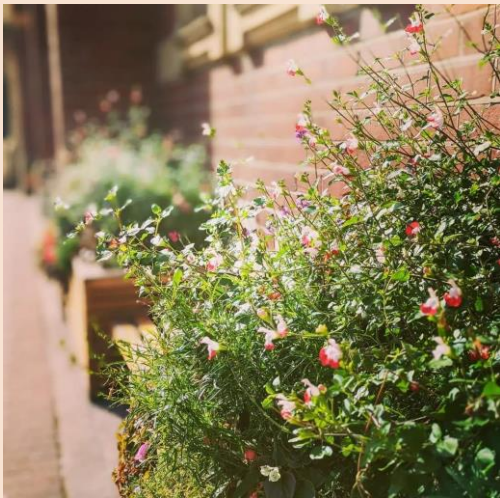
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Holder for Culture and City Centre Strategy comments: *"These two parklets are poised to make a significant impact on the city, representing a positive step in cultivating communal spaces. Serving as free, accessible hubs for relaxation and socialising, parklets encourage people to connect and spend extended periods in the city."*

Enhancing the Cityscape

The parklet project aims to elevate the quality of the city's streetscape and encourage community and business engagement. Fore Street, known for its creative and independent spirit, will benefit from a parklet that reflects the area's identity and sustainability goals. Musgrave Row, an underused area in the centre will be revitalised, contributing to a more vibrant and connected city centre.



Design Priorities and Features

The parklets, designed with careful consideration for planting, landscaping, weather resilience, and maintenance costs, and incorporate sustainable materials. These spaces will provide seating, inviting visitors to linger and enjoy the surroundings, for coffee and outdoor dining. A local business has been commissioned to fabricate and install both Parklets and South West artist, Paul Monster, will be bringing them to life with bright colours.



Callum Elliott-Archer from Exeter Library expressed enthusiasm for the initiative, stating, *"It is great to see this being installed on Musgrave Row next to the library. There is a real opportunity to improve this space so that people can sit, have lunch, read books, play games and enjoy the area outside. There is definitely an appetite for this."*

Previous projects at InExeter include the bench seating on Sidwell Street as part of Welcome & Attractive Streets.

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The installation of the parklets is scheduled to commence on February 5, 2024.

InExeter will update via our social media platforms with updates on the construction progress and unveiling the completed installations in the coming weeks.



A planter and wayfinding was installed last year outside Exeter Central Station by InExeter thanks to a fund from Real Food Exeter.

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The UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.

For more information, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

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