

(TB/2019/6)

A UK EXCLUSIVE - ALL URBAN INSTALL FIRST SMART BENCHES IN RURAL WALES

All Urban and Conwy Cynhaliol, the Rural Development Department programme for Conwy, celebrate the exclusive installation of 3 Include Steora SMART benches in Llanfairtalhaiarn, Llangernyw and the town of Conwy, North Wales.

The innovative product supplier specialises in working with UK councils by supplying products which support Government initiatives aimed at using innovative technology to help improve the quality of life in public spaces.

The innovative LEADER trial was funded by the Welsh Government and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, which has been designed to improve the environment, increase productivity and stimulate growth within the rural economy. LEADER funding is all about trialling and piloting innovative ideas.

Meira Woosnam, Rural Enabling Officer at Conwy Cynhaliol, first came across the benches whilst on holiday in Croatia where the benches are manufactured and supplied world-wide by Include. After some research, she developed the idea and presented to the Local Action Group who approved the project as it met the LEADER themes for funding - exploit digital technology, adding value to local identity, natural and cultural resources and to provide renewable energy at community level.

An open call was then issued to rural town and community councils to express an interest, with Llanfairtalhaiarn Community Council, Llangernyw Community Council and Conwy Town Council all expressing an interest.

The benches were paid for with the LEADER funding and installation costs covered by the Community Councils.

The Community Councils installed the Steora Hybrid bench which includes both solar panels, a battery pack and AC grid connector. They provide free Wi-Fi supplied by an integrated Sim Card to ensure there is 4G connectivity at all locations. A wireless charging point is featured to charge smart phones and USB charging points are also integrated for other smart devices. Ambient lighting allow councils to add further place making value at night, and benches also feature a set of sensors which collect data which can be monitored on a dashboard, helping councils monitor digital usage and the outside environment.

As part of the trial, Conwy Cynhalio! will be monitoring how much power has been generated, how much has then been used by the public, how much Wi-Fi data has been used and will also be collecting feedback from the Town & Community Councils. This knowledge will then be applied to further digital infrastructure projects which will improve the quality of life for locals and enhance the visitor's experience. The aim is to encourage people to stay for longer periods of time in rural attractions and taking advantage of renewable energy".

Paul Collings, Director of All Urban concludes, "We are delighted to celebrate our first UK install of our Steora SMART bench in Wales. All Urban are passionate about improving digital infrastructure in public spaces as we believe technology has the potential to completely revolutionise engagement in public spaces. We urge UK councils who are interested in SMART technology to register their interest with us and we will visit you to explain the features and benefits of these innovative products."

Ends.

For further details with regards to the Steora smart benches, please contact Theresa Bruno, Marketing Executive, All Urban Ltd, on 0114 282 3095 or at theresabruno@allurban.co.uk.

For more information with regards to the work of the Local Action Group in Conwy and the LEADER programme – visit www.ruralconwy.org.uk or contact us on 01492 576673 or conwylocalactiongroup@conwy.gov.uk.

Note to Editors

An accompanying high resolution image for print and digital media is attached. Caption: The Include Steora SMART bench installed in Conwy, Wales.

Based in Sheffield, All Urban is part of Create Partnerships, a unique portfolio of high quality brands for the outdoor environment. All Urban supply the highest quality urban furniture, lighting and innovative products to the landscape industry. They work with landscape architects, lighting designers, architects and contractors as well as the education and leisure sectors, offering carefully sourced ranges for high quality developments around the UK.

They are the exclusive suppliers for Christie, Concrete Rudolph, FinBin, Handspring Design, Include, LAB23, moveart, Santa & Cole Urbidermis, and Short Edition

More information on the Steora SMART bench including a full technical specification can be viewed here at <http://bit.ly/2V4sOrz>