

Next week, Park Farm residents will welcome the installation of a colourful new picnic bench in one of the playgrounds. The Mayor, Callum Knowles will be celebrating with the children, who were the inspiration for the bench, at 11 a.m. on Saturday 29th January by Park Farm Moat. The picnic bench is extremely special and unusual in that its creation has a story of great community spirit and hard work by the children in the area during Lockdown last summer 2020.

With the children needing activities to keep them occupied during such a difficult time, a resident with a real flair and artistic talent, Mrs. Toni Bowe, encouraged the children from the area to collect and paint stones laying them in the pattern of a dragon on the path along the moat running parallel with the playground. Stones of varying shapes, sizes, colours and patterns were added every day and it became known as the Park Farm Dragon.

Toni and Councillor Trish Cornish felt that it would be a great idea, having spent so much time on the Dragon Stone Project, if the children could have something to remember the fun they had during what is arguably the most difficult period since World War II. Trish decided to award a proportion of her annual councillor ward grant to fund the project.

Having explored the possibility of how the stones could be displayed David Hartley from Aspire came up with a perfect solution to set the stones in the top of a picnic bench protected by layers of resin. "We are grateful to Aspire for donating the bench for this project."

The stones were collected and the children were asked to repaint them. They were varnished and then Toni Bowe created an impressive wooden dragon head to act as the focal point of the stones. After giving up much of his valuable personal time, David revealed the final masterpiece.

This is a perfect example of everyone working together during an extremely arduous chapter of our history and children who participated in the dragon stone project from both of the local primary schools, Furley Park Primary Academy and Kingsnorth Church of England Primary School have been invited to come along with their parents on Saturday 29 January at 11 a.m. to admire their stones and meet Mayor Callum Knowles.

Families may want to take advantage of the fish and chip van being on site between 1100 and 1400 .



