



PRESS RELEASE

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B_Tween Bench Inclusive Seating

The Minister for Equality, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, MP, was proud to join representatives of the International Commercial Centre (I.C.C.) and GAMMA Architects at the unveiling of the first 'wheelchair inclusive' public bench last Thursday 5th March outside the I.C.C.

The B_Tween Bench, designed by local company Gamma Architects, took third place at the Street Seats international design challenge in 2018 and the Department of Equality and the I.C.C. were two of the sponsors of this design at the competition stage.

This particular bench has been purchased by the I.C.C. The Department of Equality has also already purchased another bench, which will be revealed in coming weeks at another location.

Furthermore the Minister for Equality has arranged for Government to purchase further benches to be installed throughout Gibraltar going forward. B_Tween Benches will soon be seen in the new park at Governor's Parade

Ruth Massias Greenberg, Director at Gamma Architects, said: "We hope our bench will positively impact the lives of those with disabilities who live within our communities - but we feel that the positive impact is in both directions - both for the disabled person and anyone else sitting on the bench around them. The bench embraces those who may sometimes sit on the margins of society - we no longer want people to be on the side but rather in our epicentres - the bench is an expression of this. We are also delighted to launch our website where people can find out more: www.btweenbench.com

"We believe that it is not people who are disabled but rather buildings and places that are not equipped or inclusively designed to be able to accommodate. We are delighted to be able to use design as a mechanism for positive change.

"We are really grateful to all the sponsors who helped us get here; Hyperion, ITEK, Eroski, Montagu Group and AmCham. We are really grateful to the Department of Equality for their support, sponsorship and encouragement. We are also delighted that the ICC as primary sponsor has also



invested in placing a bench in a primary spot where we hope the exposure will help raise awareness of important issues of inclusivity.”

A representative for the ICC said: “We are very proud to be invited to join this amazing initiative that we hope will make a difference to people using the benches. As part of our ongoing development we are always eager to explore new approaches to accessibility for all. Our aim and goal is for the ICC, with our planned improvements, is to be a champion and example of inclusivity for everyone. The B_Tween Bench is an expression of this and we are delighted to be a part of it.”

Minister for Equality, the Hon. Samantha Sacramento, MP, said: “Projects like this are fundamental in an inclusive society. This bench is truly inclusive, not only because the wheelchair user is not on the fringes, but also because, as an end user, a wheelchair user has been fully consulted at the concept and design stage. The importance of this cannot be stressed enough. I look forward to see more of these benches appear around Gibraltar.”