

### Target Hardening in Prescott Parks

A spate of arson attacks during the summer months at Eaton Street Park saw the systematic destruction of all the picnic benches on site. These appalling and determined acts have vandalism have ultimately cost the Town around £3,000. The Town Council together with local residents have forged close links with Merseyside Police to try and address the issue, however the nature of Public Open Spaces means they are very difficult to protect from those who are intent on ruining the infrastructure in place for the benefit of all, through acts of vandalism.

The loss of such infrastructure has prompted the Town Council to rethink the way in which it provides furniture within its parks. Clearly continuing to replace damaged items in a like for like fashion was nonsensical and given the financial pressures faced by the public sector also unsustainable. The Town Councils solution has been to develop a replacement strategy whereby it invests in target hardened products. The first example of this is the new picnic bench at Eaton Street Park pictured below.



This type of bench is extremely uncommon in the UK but very prevalent on the continent. Being made of cast concrete, the bench is non-combustible, extremely heavy and easy to clean with regard to graffiti. Although considerably more expensive than its wooden or plastic counterparts, the Town Council hope that this type of park furniture will stand the test of time and will be well used over many years.