

24. July 2023

Social

New! Special bicycles for people with mobility impairments

"Duo-Tandems" are now available in the border area Bocholt (D)-Dinxperlo (NL) // Volunteer drivers wanted

So-called duo tandems are now on the road in the border region of Bocholt / Aalten. These special bicycles make it possible for people whose mobility is limited by age or disability to ride. The realisation of the project is the result of a cross-border initiative consisting of voluntary work, sponsoring and municipal support.

Rosi Tuente, Ingrid Rappers and Jens Bollwerk were responsible for the organisation. It took a year from the idea to the implementation. The presentation of the new and two other tandem bicycles for senior citizens and people with limited mobility now took place in front of St. Michael's Church in Suderwick.

The idea

For a Suderwick pilgrimage during the Corona pandemic, the pilgrimage group borrowed a tandem of the same type as an escort vehicle from a senior citizens' home in Dingden. Afterwards, the senior citizens were allowed to continue using the bicycle by arrangement. Due to the positive response, the project was launched to purchase a parallel tandem for use in "Dinxperwick" (a made-up word from SuderWICK (D) and DINXPERlo (NL), symbolising the close cross-border cooperation) and the surrounding area.

For more than a year, an organising team worked on the realisation. Numerous sponsors such as Lebenshilfe Bocholt-Rhede-Isselburg e.V., the city of Bocholt, the municipality of Aalten as well as companies, banks, church congregations and private individuals provided financial support.

The bicycle

It is a newly developed parallel tandem "Fun-2-go" from a Dutch manufacturer in Varsseveld. The vehicle has a rotating passenger seat, seats that can be adjusted in length, armrests and other amenities that make it easier for people with impairments to use. It was purchased from a bicycle dealer in Dinxperlo, who also takes care of maintenance and repairs.

Other vehicles for use

Lebenshilfe Bocholt-Rhede-Isselburg e.V. provides two more vehicles for cross-border use. These bicycles are located at a site near the border in Suderwick and are configured differently. In one model, the passenger sits in a detachable wheelchair that belongs to the bicycle. The second model allows the passenger to remain seated in their own wheelchair. Both bicycles offer optimal visibility and communication possibilities.

Volunteer drivers needed

The organising team is planning to expand the circle of volunteer drivers. These people make themselves available as escorts for excursions or shopping trips with senior citizens. If you are interested, please contact Ingrid Rappers or Rosi Tuente ([tuente\(at\)freenet\(dot\)de](mailto:tuente(at)freenet(dot)de)) and you will receive a detailed briefing before your first assignment.

Costs and booking

Those who wish to use the bicycles pay a flat fee of 50 Euros per year, which includes 6 daily rides. Bookings can be made by e-mail [tuente\(at\)freenet\(dot\)de](mailto:tuente(at)freenet(dot)de) and by phone, WhatsApp and SMS on +49 176 4655 51 27. Any surpluses will be used to maintain and expand the project.

Supporters

The project is supported by Lebenshilfe Bocholt-Rhede-Isselburg e.V., the city of Bocholt, the municipality of Aalten, banks, savings banks, companies, church congregations and private individuals.



Representatives of some of the main sponsors of Lebenshilfe Bocholt-Rhede-Isselburg e.V., Martin Wilms (Volksbank Bocholt eG), Joop Wikkerink (municipality of Aalten, Sonja Wießmeier (city of Bocholt), bicycle dealer Harm Takke and other local sponsors as well as the initiators of the project Ingrid Rappers, Rosi Tunte (Suderwick), Regina Wilke and Jens Bollwerk (Lebenshilfe e.V.) toast the first test ride.

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