# Discarded sofa sparks unexpected community portrait project in Lydbrook



In the village of Lydbrook, Gloucestershire, a discarded cream-coloured two-seater sofa, originally fly-tipped on a patch of waste ground by the roadside near the woods, has become the centrepiece of an unexpected community project. The sofa first appeared several weeks ago, and its whimsical placement quickly captured the imagination of local resident Alex Elton-Wall, a 49-year-old office worker and amateur photographer.

Elton-Wall, struck by the humorous sight of the sofa in such an unusual setting, posted a message on the village Facebook group at the start of April inviting locals to come and pose for portraits on the sofa. What began as a spontaneous idea grew rapidly, turning into day-long photo sessions where villagers of all ages participated. “I ended up taking pictures from 10 in the morning until eight o’clock that night. People were just having so much fun, and it was so bizarre what we were doing,” Elton-Wall told the Guardian.

Over time, the project expanded considerably. Elton-Wall has taken photographs of more than 170 residents, as well as a few animals, including a tortoise, a chicken, and a horse. The arrangement around the sofa evolved too, with additional items mysteriously appearing. These included a side table with a plant pot, a hat stand, lampshades, rugs, a coffee table, and a magazine rack. Elton-Wall speculated that the additions might be the work of a local artist known as Tumpsy, linked previously to the placement of googly eyes around the village.

The sofa photoshoots have attracted attention beyond the immediate locality, elevating the abandoned furniture to a tourist attraction and earning it the position of the second-best thing to do in Lydbrook on Tripadvisor, behind only an alpaca farm. The sofa even has its own Facebook page, named “Lydbrook Lounge,” where visitors share their photographs. Elton-Wall described the project as “a real community and feelgood thing,” adding, “You know, life’s tough, the world’s pretty crazy at the moment, but people have really embraced this.”

Among the many photo subjects are a local children’s football team, café staff serving afternoon tea, and the owner of a nearby timber yard posing with chainsaws, all featuring the sofa. Elton-Wall recalls some amusing moments, including “kids jumping up and down on the sofa” and “a couple of blokes drinking pints, who were kidnapped from the local pub.”

Having lived in Lydbrook for nearly two decades, Elton-Wall plans to create a photo book documenting the spontaneous community event, with proceeds to be sold at the village fete this summer to fund playground equipment. “It was just this amazing opportunity to capture a snapshot in time of the community,” he said.

The project came to an unexpected end recently when the sofa and its accompanying items were removed without prior notice. Elton-Wall does not know who took them and admitted to having mixed feelings about the disappearance. “At the end of the day, fly-tipping is not to be condoned. People in the village were always clear that it would be disposed of properly,” he said. Reflecting on the community’s reaction online, he cited a comment that resonated with him: “Don’t be sad it’s over, be glad it happened.”

The Guardian is reporting that this unusual event has left a lasting impression on the village of Lydbrook, demonstrating how a discarded object, through community spirit and creativity, briefly brought the village together in an unexpected way.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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