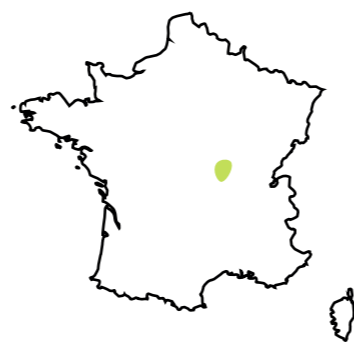


## Agora Bench

Le banc à palabres

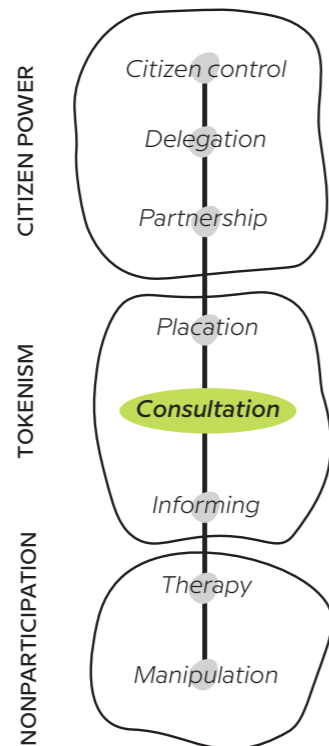
LOCATION  
**Unieux, France**

TIME PERIOD  
**Since 2014**



### THE PROJECT

The Agora Bench was part of the creation of the new Nelson Mandela park in the town. This project simply consists of the installation of a **monumental circular nine meter bench** in the middle of the park, where several footpaths and cycling ways cross. The aim of this project was to **create an inter-generational meeting point in the town**, where people can gather in a pleasant environment.



**people was organised for the design part.** This project being public, the overall budget was managed by Saint-Etienne Métropole and co-funded by the municipality of Unieux.

### RESULT

The park and its furniture have been much used since they were created. The Agora Bench is showing signs of wear on the seats, proof of **intense use**. Since the installation of the bench, new equipment has also been installed in the Nelson Mandela Park. The main beneficiaries were the local population in all diversity, because they are the main users of this facility, from the youngest to the older. Moreover, the Agora Bench project has been the subject of several publications.



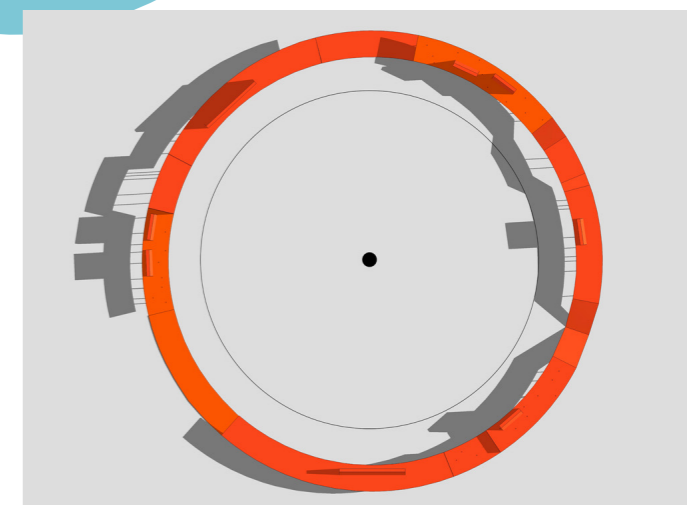
Parc Nelson Mandela in Map (Big Bang Paysage). The agora bench is in the centre of the park.



Unieux banc a palabres ©Sara de.Gouy



Unieux banc à palabres ©Sara de.Gouy



Unieux banc à palabres ©Sara de.Gouy

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SPACE

Unieux is not a geographical remote town but the place could be defined as remote by **its poor transportation links**. Indeed, the town is located in the suburbs of Saint-Etienne and this fact led to more commuter-type travel, increasing the use of cars as daily transport. However, **residents feel this isolation to a lesser degree**. Also, the settlement suffers from a **lack of public spaces** and especially places where people can gather in a natural setting. In response to this problem, the municipality has reacted.

### WHAT MAKES THE SPECIFICITY OF THE PROJECT

The project was **initiated by the municipality of Unieux** and coordinated by the Saint-Etienne Métropole, which were in charge

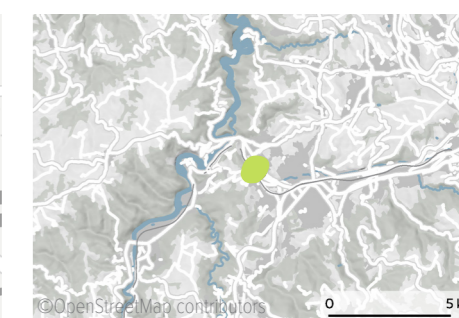
of the project. They were helped by a multidisciplinary team for the landscaping, for the lighting, for the signage and for the design.

### ROLE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY & METHODS USED

The project summarizes the aspirations behind the park: it translates the **multiple usages** driving the diversification of practices and postures with the public space. It also **symbolises the diversity of its users** and the wishes of the town to open new possibilities. Moreover, the location of the bench acts as an invitation to stop and pause a while. The local community was involved through various consultation meetings and workshops. The aim of these sessions were held to refine the landscaping project and the planned uses. Moreover, a specific consultation process for young



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Unieux, Auvergne Rhone- Alpes, France

more about this project

