

Littlehampton East Bank Tidal Wall: Coastal defences as placemaker

Littlehampton is a quintessential English seaside town. But like much of the UK's coastline, many of its residents faced fears of flooding. For years, the River Arun had regularly breached its defences, threatening 2,500 homes and businesses. Urgent action was needed.

The Environment Agency and Arun District Council developed plans for a £14.5 million investment in new tidal walls along the river.. The Council recognised the potential to not only deliver flood defence but also create a better water's edge environment for people to enjoy, commissioning LDA Design to transform the public realm.

LDA Design kicked off with a community workshop to establish a shared vision for Littlehampton's waterfront. The team developed designs for a robust, spacious, cohesive and easy-to-maintain public realm, establishing strong connections between existing streets and the waterfront. Chunky timber bleachers provide the perfect place to lunch and linger. The change in level required by the new wall provides shelter for informal planting.

The revamp has been well received, and footfall and local are revenue up. The scheme demonstrates how major new infrastructure has the power to deliver better places.



Client
CH2M Hill, Environment Agency

Location
Littlehampton, West Sussex

Partners
Arun District Council

Services Used
Landscape Architecture

Area
6 Reaches along 2.5km of the River Arun
(primary public realm improvements made within
Reaches 1 & 2, along a 450m length)

¹ Bleachers disguise the new flood defence wall

²⁻³ Pebble seats

³ A transformed public realm

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¹ Enjoying an ice cream on Littlehampton's new bleachers

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