

**Project Profile: Weymouth Seafront**

**Client: Weymouth & Portland Council / Arts Council and Partners**

**Value: Programme - £2M**

**Services - Strategy, Research, Consultation, Strategy Development, Policy, Commissioning Plan and Implementation support.**

**Duration: September 2007 – 2012**

### Project Aims

To develop the image and facilities of Weymouth including the Seafront in preparation for the 2012 Olympics when Weymouth will host the sailing events. The Client partnership commissioned our team to develop a Public Art Commissioning Plan and to develop the ensuing series of art integrated architectural and landscape projects. Alongside the permanent projects there is a temporary programme of art based commissions and projects to lead into 2012.

### Objectives

- To consult with stakeholders and key partners over the scope of the potential projects
- To explore with developers and landowners the scope for projects on a wide range of sites
- To explore the scope for co funding from potential partners
- To establish precedents and demonstrate the impact of similarly ambitious projects
- To propose a delivery strategy and outline the resources that the City Council would need to deliver each project
- To support the delivery strategy through to launch
- To monitor the project's achievements on behalf of the Arts Council



Aerial view of the town and harbour. Richard Harris's 'Jurassic Stones' on the relief road.

### Outcomes

- A thorough, well considered plan detailing priority commissions, temporary programmes and outline budgets
- Council and Partners endorsement for the Commissioning Plan
- Funding offers from ACE ( £720K and SWERDA £2M )
- A design commissioning programme and recruitment process to appoint outstanding Artists, Architects, Landscape Architects, Lighting Artists
- Full integration with infrastructure proposals for the Weymouth Relief Road, and other Dorset County Council and ODA initiatives
- A strategy for bidding for other funds including from CABE (Sea Change) and English Heritage
- Appointment of artists Paul de Monchaux, Richard Harris, Atopia and architect Jason Flanagan of Hamiltons ( now BFLS )

### Project Overview

Weymouth was one of the very first 'resorts' and its patronage by King George III was instrumental in its subsequent prosperity. Sadly, the rise of overseas holidays has seen a decline in the traditional English seaside resort and Weymouth has suffered heavily from lack of investment and from not updating its offer. The 2012 Olympic Sailing Events offer an opportunity for the town to secure new investment and to transform itself. The Art Programme has been a key driver in promoting the highest standards of design and artistic excellence for the future of the town.

Whilst the project funding went through some turmoil due to Central Government cuts and budget reductions at the RDAs, the project remained a priority for the Weymouth and Portland Council, Dorset County Council and the Arts Council. A budget of over £2m has been preserved and priority projects have proceeded including Richard Harris's 'Jurassic Stones' on the Relief Road, the Laser 'Light Veils', projections and towers on the Sea Front by Atopia, Vong Phaophanit and Claire Oboussier. There is also an extensive community based deckchair project for the sea front. Atopia's 'Light Veils'.



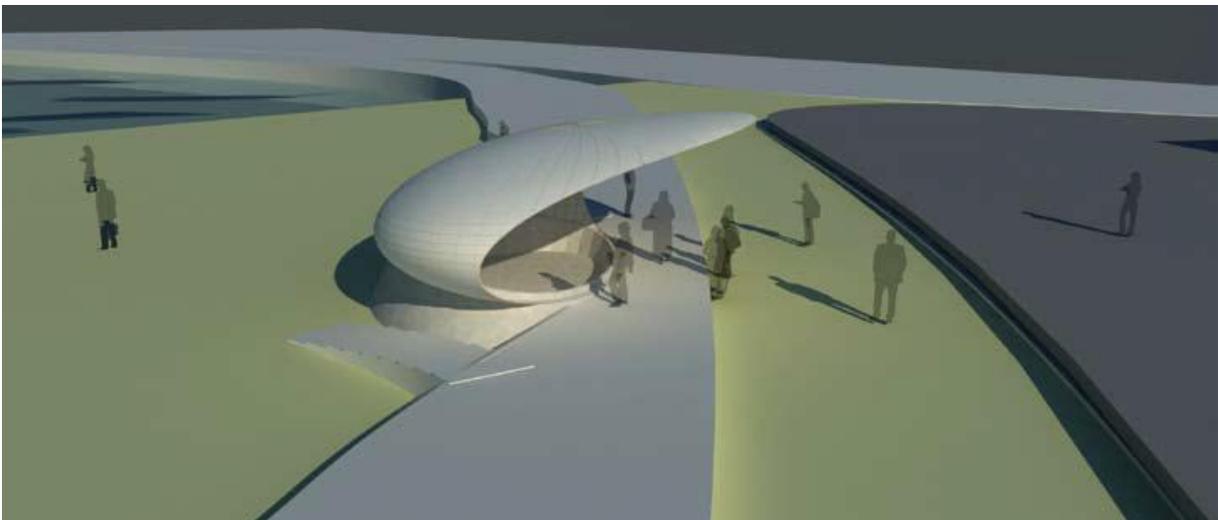
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art & the public realm

The Light Veils reveal all the weather and atmospheric conditions and are different almost every day. They are deep and dramatic and make a visit to the water's edge and Esplanade a totally new experience.

Richard Harris's odd shaped boulders are examples of what geologists call 'concretions'. They come from a layer of sandstone known as the Bencliff Grit that formed about 155 million years ago during the Jurassic period. The mostly very soft sandstone that makes up the Southdown ridge crumbles easily in your hands but contained within the layers of soft sandstone are these very hard concretions of various shapes and sizes and that is what Richard has revealed, as if hanging where the soft sand once surrounded them..

There has been extensive project development including some very exciting but ultimately unbuilt designs for new buildings on the Esplanade, including a new TIC building, a new Beach Rescue Centre and a new location for the sand sculptor who works on the beach.



Hamiltons' (now BFLS) Sand Sculpture building.