WELCOME

Welcome to this public exhibition. We would like your thoughts on our emerging vision, principles and design plan for publicly owned existing town centre streets and spaces including Terminus Road, Surrey Street, Beach Road and the High Street. Arun District Council has identified, through previous studies the apparent disconnect between The Seafront, East Bank Riverside Walkway and Town Centre.

By way of explanation, public realm is a term used to describe 'the spaces between buildings' amongst other things, this includes the pavements we walk on, the streets we drive down, the seats we sit on and art we look at.

LDA Design has been appointed to recommend practical methods for enhancing the town's pedestrian connectivity through a holistic approach and high quality design. The proposals intend to improve the arrival experience into the town and reinvent the public realm as a welcoming and enjoyable place that is comfortable and encourages visitors and locals to spend more time within the town centre. The plan below highlights the study area for the work.
2. OBSERVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Delivery of public realm proposals are subject to detailed design, testing and project funding.

- Poor arrival experiences
- Over-sized junctions

- Independent shops
- Distinctive historic architecture
- A cluttered street scene

- A mix of poor quality materials
- Outdated maritime theme but cherished sense of identity
- A culture of world class architecture and design

- Duplicated signage
- Negative messages
- Fast and wide one way roads, apparent vehicle priority

A rich and varied townscape
The community of Littlehampton is proud of its maritime identity and history. This is currently portrayed in the town through street furniture. However, initial discussions with stakeholders felt that this is now outdated. Indeed, the ship’s wheel icon is visible in a number of other seaside towns throughout the country and is not unique to Littlehampton. It was also felt that the often cluttered arrangement of planters, signs, telephone boxes and street furniture detracts from attractive historic buildings.

The new proposals for public realm aim to reflect the materials, colours and textures which characterise Littlehampton's fishing and boat building heritage and coastal environment in a well-crafted, subtle and contemporary way. This builds on the successful approach adopted at the recently completed East Bank riverside walkway, tailored to the town centre environment. This will offer cues to the pedestrian that the town centre forms a tangible link with the river and coast.

It is important that the way Littlehampton 'brands' itself is not too literal which can become outdated quickly. Therefore, the arrangement and use of trees, furniture, lighting and paving materials will be unique to Littlehampton, as well as being well-crafted and high quality. This collective identity will draw visitors through the town and can be appreciated from a distance as well as offering a richness in the detail. Importantly, this identity should help local businesses by encouraging people to spend longer in the town and move easily through the different areas.
Creating a Sequential Experience

- A crucial strand of the overarching design proposal is to improve legibility and to stitch the town centre together with a consistent and unified design language.
- Currently, as a pedestrian, the town centre provides confusing messages of how to get from one part to the next. Views are blocked and physical barriers obstruct the most obvious and direct routes.
- The design proposal aims to provide a series of ‘punctuation’ spaces, drawing the public through the town. Each space will be clearly visible and routes between them unhindered providing a sequence of well linked orientation points.

Less is More

- The public realm should not visually compete with the wealth of distinctive and varied architecture found within Littlehampton. It should provide an appropriate setting for historic buildings.
- The collection of elements within the street scene should provide a simple uncluttered arrangement that do not impede pedestrian movement.
- There should be a purposeful yet restrained use of colour accents from a carefully selected palette to reinforce character and to put emphasis on key locations or elements.

Creating Spaces

- Re-assigning under utilised space to create new public spaces for sitting in comfort, outside dining and town centre events.
- Encouraging people to spend longer in the town by creating attractive and comfortable spaces for both day and night.
- Spaces should have a clear role and consistent identity.
5. OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

5 Celebrating the Arrival Experience

- First impressions count; the town’s arrival points by road, rail and on foot need to perform better and work harder in setting the scene and improving the initial perception of Littlehampton.

- Arrival spaces should play a gateway role and welcome people in, creating a strong message of what to expect from the rest of the town.

- Use of clear and unified signage to orientate visitors and direct them into town.

6 Slowing Traffic

- Our proposals provide messages to vehicle users that they are entering a pedestrian priority environment. Subtle cues such as narrowed vehicular space, raised tables/flush surfaces and pedestrian type materials on carriageways will encourage vehicle users to slow down and be more cautious.

- The design proposal will however provide clarity between pedestrian only areas and places where vehicles are allowed ensuring the town is safe for all.

7 A Special Shopping and Dining Experience

- Cafe, restaurant, pub and shop frontages should comprise a coordinated colour palette and a brand identity that allows for individuality but stitches the street scene together as a united family.

- Simple improvements such as painting and lighting could be made to the existing arcade to improve quality and reinforce this unique place as an attractive destination.

- There is an existing legacy of ‘ghost signs’ on blank facades and gable ends within the town, these depict the faded paintwork of old shop signs. This enduring identity could be strengthened by introducing new signs as part of a coordinated art strategy.

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6. EMERGING ILLUSTRATIVE DESIGN PLAN

1. **Littlehampton Train Station**: New identity to arrival at Littlehampton. Taxi rank moved westwards to create a new arrival space with seating, lighting and tree planting.

2. **Arundel Road Roundabout**: New raised and paved crossings to infer pedestrian priority. Parking rationalised and pavements widened to create new pocket plaza outside the United Church. New seating, lighting and tree planting.

3. **The High Street**: A beautifully simple street at the heart of Littlehampton, with a decluttered street scene and new high quality materials and furniture. New clusters of special seating and tamarisk trees provide shoppers a place to stop and sit. Historic sight lines along the High Street to St. Mary’s Church are reinstated to draw people into the town.

4. **The Arcade**: Refurbished to its former glory. Outside new seating and tamarisk trees provide an improved and more visible setting for the Arcade. New raised and paved crossings to infer pedestrian priority along with widened pavements.

5. **Beach Road Roundabout**: New raised and paved crossings to infer pedestrian priority. Pavement space is maximised and sight lines to the War Memorial and along Beach Road are improved. New pocket plaza with seating and planting.

**EXISTING**

1. Utilitarian lighting (poor quality)
2. Attractive trees
3. Planters, railings, posts and bins block pedestrian movement on main pavement and add visual clutter
4. Painted chevrons visually detract
5. CCTV posts and drink awareness signage infers a negative impression of the town and blocks pedestrians
6. Clock tower blocks key views down the high street to welcome the visitor
7. Blank façade
8. Attractive historic building at the Dolphin Hotel
9. Pedestrian guardrail outdated mode of traffic/pedestrian management. Infers vehicular not pedestrian priority

**PROPOSED**

1. New identity achieved through specially designed seats, tree grilles, paving, tamarisk trees and timber lighting columns. Subtle coastal theme.
2. Existing street clutter removed
3. Pavements widened and roadway reduced in width and paved; guardrails removed to infer pedestrian priority.
4. CCTV relocated to buildings (if possible)
5. Clock tower removed to reinstate historic sight lines along High Street to St. Mary’s Church and draw people into the town.
6. ‘Ghost sign’ artwork on blank façade
7. Monolith and finger post signs to aid orientation

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PROPOSED MATERIALS & STREET FURNITURE

What Happens Next?
Following consultation all feedback will be collated and the design proposals amended to reflect the comments made. The revised design plans will be presented to the Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee on 6th July 2016 (a committee of Arun District Council, Elected Members). This will enable the committee to consider the proposals and agree recommendations. These recommendations will then be considered further by Arun’s ‘Full Council’ before a final decision can be made on the project. Should the detailed designs be supported by the Council it will then assist Officers when applying for external funding to help deliver the scheme.

When Will The Project Be Delivered?
The delivery of the project is dependent on whether the Council can secure external funding. Without detailed designs in place, opportunities to secure external funding to deliver the project may not be possible.

DELIVERY OF PUBLIC REALM PROPOSALS ARE SUBJECT TO DETAILED DESIGN, TESTING AND PROJECT FUNDING.