

WINNER HOME ZONES

PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

North Portsea Environmental Improvements

SUBMITTED BY The Terra Firma Consultancy
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COST £742,100

Although many residents are usually unhappy about some aspects of their community, those living in North Portsea in Portsmouth actually felt compelled to do something about the problem.

A *Planning for Real* Community exercise, organised by Portsmouth City Council Housing Service, was the catalyst for change. Through a

series of workshops, questionnaires and meetings, the Council found out that residents wanted to improve security and safety of the area, improve the outside environment, and create more activities for young people.

Following the consultation, a series of works was developed including the creation of a Home Zone to calm traffic, enhance the image of the area and give priority to the pedestrian. There were also proposals for additional environmental improvements such as improved parking and soft landscaping. They also wanted to enhance lighting and security and create a central square outside the existing Community Project shop.

Cumberland Street had a number of traffic problems, and it was hoped that the Home Zone would tackle these issues. One of its main problems was speeding because it is a long, wide, straight street. The scheme has introduced a 20mph speed limit alongside other traffic calming measures such as ramped areas, pinch points, chicanes and a reduction



Above and below: The award-winning Home Zone in North Portsea, Portsmouth.

in road width. Parked cars also lined both sides of the street making it difficult for pedestrians to cross the road safely. This was solved by the creation of marked parking bays and a number of crossing points at intervals along the street with tactile paving approaches and contrasting materials on the road surface. On top of this, there is now new signage in place, improved lighting and the entrance ramps

have been resurfaced. Some of the existing trees have been removed as well and replaced with smaller tree species and shrubs.

At the beginning of the project, it was proposed that the area outside the Cumberland Street Area Project Shop should be used on a regular basis for



community meetings, forming Cumberland Square. Subsequently, ram raid barriers have been removed and replaced with raised planters.

The Square was constructed as a raised table, bringing the road to the same level as the pavement and blurring the distinction between the pedestrian and vehicular areas. The block paving materials run throughout this area and connect into the central pedestrian area of Privett Courtyard. Around the edges of the Square, raised beds were planted with trees and shrubs, with their walls doubling as informal seats.

Privett House Courtyard was also renovated under this scheme. The majority of trees in the area have been removed to open up the space and make it look safer and more attractive. A few more appropriately sized trees have been replanted.

The Courtyard now has a central paved area with seats and a raised planter, and vehicular access around the area has been re-opened with 12 new car park spaces at the residents' request. There is also a new children's play area which has new fencing, safety surfacing, bench and play equipment.

At the rear of Privett House, an existing ball court was shaded, under-used and unlit, so a larger, floodlit facility has now been installed. A new Youth Shelter has also been constructed next to the ball court. There is also a new secure entry system with gates and fixed grilles on the arched entrances to Privett House.

In terms of lighting and security, the area did have considerable trouble with antisocial behaviour and petty crime. Three additional CCTV cameras have been included in the scheme and the lighting across the whole site has been upgraded. Planting to the majority of the scheme has been confined to low shrubs and groundcover to ensure increased visibility.

To ensure that the improvements incorporated the needs of the whole community, proposals were made to provide facilities for teenagers and access for the disabled. Teenagers now have the new ball court and youth shelter, which was designed in



Above: Cllr Margaret Foster, Graham Moyse and Robyn Butcher accepting the award. Below, left-right: 'Before' and 'after' shots of the area.

consultation with Hampshire Police. It is hoped that the ball court will be used on a regular basis by the Portsea Youth Project for organised activities in the evenings. The play area for younger children is overlooked by many of the flats, and the reduction in tree cover means that small children can be watched from the existing balconies and rear gardens for safety reasons.

To improve disabled access, two designated parking bays have been created, and the council's Disabled Access Officer was consulted over the

design and layout of the scheme.

Now that this project has been completed, it is hoped that the image of the area will be raised, increasing the sense of ownership and improving accessibility and use of the area for all ages. It will also improve community spirit and the quality of the built environment as a whole. [L51](#)

