

A NEW GARDEN PROVIDES INSPIRATION FOR
REGENERATION IN A CONSERVATION AREA

PROJECT

Hunstanton, Norfolk
Boston Square
Sensory Park

CLIENT

Borough Council of King's Lynn
& West Norfolk

CONTRACT VALUE

£0.3 million

ARCHITECT

Jeremy Stacey Architects

Sculpted walls made
of gabions of flint



The works of art
extend the tactile
nature of the garden

**THE SITE**

Although forming a prominent part of the Hunstanton Conservation Area, the centre of Boston Square had fallen into a sad state of neglect, being used as a car park. Its condition reflected the dilapidation of some of the large Victorian properties, which form the three-sided square that looks west to The Wash.

THE BRIEF

The architects' brief was to create a stimulating garden environment, giving special emphasis to the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities. It was set within the Government's Capital Challenge initiative and the Council's Local Agenda 21 objectives for sustainability. The brief drew attention to the site's natural slope towards the sea, existing trees, and proximity to the seafront, public walks and residential area. Emphasis was placed on public consultation and the inclusion of works of art.

THE ARCHITECTS' RESPONSE

Central to the architects' approach was consultation with potential users, including special needs groups, local authority members and officers. An extensive analysis of the half-hectare site – its geology, history and landscape context – formed the basis of discussions with local people. The architects deliberately kept an open mind and allowed these meetings to shape and refine the plans. This helped develop a sense of community involvement and, subsequently, local ownership of the new park.

SHAPING THE SITE

The scheme divided the park into three main areas, reflecting the geology and soils of Hunstanton. At the highest part of the site a 'cliff top' area mirrors Hunstanton's chalk meadow grassland while the area nearest to the sea represents the shingle beach; in between a lawn in the form of waves reflects the unique