

See potential in our seafront

Response to the Seafront Enhancement Project



This response has been produced by a collaboration of organisations who have a shared commitment to the importance of physical activity, sport and well-being for all islanders.

The seafront enhancement could provide a significant opportunity to embed physical activity, accessible to everyone, as a key principle in all decisions about developing the island. The organisations who have produced this response are: The Youth Commission of Guernsey and Alderney; the Guernsey Sports Commission; the Guernsey Sailing trust and the Health Improvement Commission for Guernsey & Alderney and the Guernsey Island Games 2021

The Seafront enhancement project provides Guernsey with a unique opportunity to reshape one of the most significant sections of the island's landscape. The seafront enhancement steering group is to be congratulated for its willingness to engage with all sectors of the community. We particularly welcome the creativity, imagination and openness to new ideas that has been generated by the consultation. Based on a meeting of the groups above on 7th December 2018, this document outlines a set of core principles that we would strongly advocate are taken into account in the seafront enhancement project.

Being Active as a response to climate change

The focus of our response is to highlight the importance of physical activity, sport and well-being. However closely aligned to the spirit of well-being is that any future planning must take into consideration the impact of climate change and in particular sea level rise and storm surges. Some of these considerations will be significant engineering projects that seek to protect the coastline however the principle of mitigating the effects of global warming must also be addressed by small step changes when advancing change. Sustainability in future planning should be a given a priority.

Using the harbour development to encourage people to be more active and engage more in the natural world would have the added benefit of lowering Guernsey's carbon emissions. It is important that any building work that is undertaken, especially a large scale operation that we hope to stand for many years to come, are built with the environment in mind and as sustainably as possible. Buildings and spaces can also be used to educate and encourage people to live and travel sustainably and it would be great to see this being a key part of new developments in Guernsey.

6 KEY PRINCIPLES

1

Sport and physical activity should be a prominent feature of any future provision

2

The resultant built environment and services provided within it should support healthy living by encouraging, incentivising and promoting healthy behaviours.

3

Adherence to the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI)

4

Let's celebrate the Sea

5

Let's learn from elsewhere

6

An opportunity for sports tourism

1

Key Principle 1

Sport and physical activity should be a prominent feature of any future provision

There is a global necessity to enable future generations to be physically active. This was recognised in the recent publication of the World Health Organisation's Global action plan on physical activity and health 2018-2030: "More active people for a healthier world." The opening statement explains the importance of activity:

"Being active is critical for health. But in our modern world, this is becoming more and more of a challenge, largely because our cities and communities aren't designed in the right ways. We need leaders at all levels to help people to take the healthier step. This works best at city level, where most responsibility lies for creating healthier spaces."

Guernsey is similar to other highly developed countries in recording a small proportion of children and youth meeting physical activity guidelines on a daily basis (as documented in the 2018 Active Healthy Kids Report Card, alongside 49 other countries). Equally the levels of sedentary behaviour are of concern especially amongst older children and few young people (especially of secondary school age) undertake active transportation to and from school. Adult physical activity levels are also persistently low, whilst over half of adults are overweight or obese.

Building physical activity into the fabric of Guernsey's built and social environments in addition to keeping sport and interaction with the sea (or Blue Gym) at the heart of Guernsey's identity are essential parts of its coordinated and collaborative community response to increasing physical activity at a population level. The seafront enhancement project can, if planned well, be at the centre of this.

2

Key Principle 2

The resultant built environment and services provided within it should support healthy living by encouraging, incentivising and promoting healthy behaviours.

The built environment can be hostile to or can facilitate healthy living. As such, the seafront enhancement could pose a threat or create an opportunity to enhance physical activity, healthy eating and well-being:

Physical Activity - this does not have to be structured, planned exercise; indeed building activity into daily life is the best way to help most people get active. The seafront enhancement could support this by:

- Creating safe and attractive walking (or wheeling) infrastructure for transport or recreation
- Ensuring safe and convenient cycling infrastructure and create opportunities for recreational cycling
- Ensuring pedestrians are prioritised over cars or other vehicles
- Locating central car-parks far enough out of the centre to allow people who drive to work to also walk as part of their commute (e.g. Salarie car park).
- Enhance restorative green space, parks, community gardens, play grounds and coastal access – prioritising contact with nature.
- Increasing accessibility to safe places to swim and undertake sea-based activities

Food environment - Our eating behaviours are strongly influenced by the "out of home" eating environment. To be consistent with a built environment which supports activity, the developments (e.g., new bars, cafes, restaurants, vendors) within the seafront enhancement should not "privatise the profit and socialise the risk" through their food offer. Rather the project provides an opportunity to form part of Guernsey's response to high levels of overweight and obesity, by supporting balanced healthy eating and creating the Guernsey seafront as a food destination which is attractive to tourists and supportive of families.

3

Key Principle 3

Adhere to the Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) led by UNICEF

The initiative was launched in 1996 by UNICEF and UN-Habitat to act on the resolution passed during the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) to make cities liveable places for all. The UN Conference declared that the wellbeing of children is the ultimate indicator of a healthy habitat, a democratic society and of good governance.

The key determinant is that: 'every child and young person has opportunities to enjoy family life, play and leisure (this includes social and cultural activities, and safe places to meet their friends and play)'.

Worldwide, the CFCI is adapted to suit different cultures and contexts. Various recurrent themes have emerged internationally. These include:

- Child-friendly design
- Natural environment
- Independent mobility
- Health and well-being
- Open spaces and recreation
- Children's participation
- Educational outcomes

An excellent example of this approach is the website below that highlights fourteen ways to design child-friendly cities: www.arup.com/perspectives/cities-alive-urban-childhood

A particular feature of the initiative is that any plans reflect respect for the views of the child:

'Children have the right to voice their opinions and have these be taken into account in decisions that affect them'

4

Key Principle 4

Let's celebrate the Sea

An essential element of the seafront enhancement programme is to create civic pride. This is a worthy aim and presents an opportunity to celebrate Guernsey's historic and important relationship with the sea.

As we live on an island we tend to take for granted the sea and its significance to our island (and the planet generally). It is therefore especially important that young people have access to and an understanding of what the sea means for Guernsey. In particular, future developments must build on the informal activities provided around the iconic Valette bathing pools and Havelet bay which enable young people and their families to swim, sail and generally enjoy acquainting themselves with coastal environments.

The opportunities for enhancing the area are endless. With minimal expenditure, facilities that are often self-managed, can be developed to encourage access and activity. A few examples include – increased opportunities for open water swimming, rock climbing, increased opportunities for fishing, protected areas for stand-up paddle boarding, launch for kayaking. An important point here is to ensure that there are facilities for introducing people to the sea and supporting beginners to build new skills and hobbies.

5

Key Principle 5

Let's learn from elsewhere

Across the Globe communities are relishing the opportunity to embed activity in the ways that seafronts can be developed. That may be small scale developments such as enhanced Boardwalks (for example as at Hayling Island or Airlie Beach in Australia) or plans to introduce walking treasure trails (for example at Lyme Regis). Alternatively we could think big – in the tradition of Victorians who built the original harbour 150 years ago and look at creating our own version of a 50m safe swimming pool area – see the Case Study overleaf.

In particular we can look elsewhere for innovative responses for managing cars and their omnipresence on the seafront. We recognise the importance of cars as one form of transport. However a car-free esplanade and harbour area - achievable in other ports such as the old town of Dubrovnik, Croatia, Capri in Italy, Charlotte Town, Prince Edward Island in Canada, and Catalina Island in California - would enable increased activity alongside making the area more attractive.

6

Key principle 6

An opportunity for sports tourism

Havelet Bay, La Valette pools and the seafront are a hive of activity especially during the summer months. The sports that can be accommodated are numerous. We will see the seafront at its best as it hosts windsurfing and sailing and cycling during the Guernsey Island Games 2021.

However with a little enhancement it can position itself as an attractive location for numerous other sports – for example St Peter Port could become a RYA centre of excellence which has the capability hosting accredited sailing world championships.

Similarly the sheltered areas of Havelet and La Valette could be considered as accredited environments for open water swimming training and competition for visitors and locals alike, also attracting tourism companies to run holidays from Guernsey e.g. Swim Trek, who run similar holidays in Cornwall and the Scilly Isles.

CASE STUDY

Making Havelet Bay, the Bathing Pools and La Valette safe and accessible

The Guernsey Sailing Trust has been teaching people how to sail, windsurf and powerboat for thirty years. More than 2000 young people access training per year. The Sailing Trust is located at the Castle Emplacement - beside the Guernsey Yacht Club. Of particular importance has been that the Trust can use safe, protected areas of water; the Model Yacht Pond and via slipways into the Harbour and Havelet Bay. These sheltered areas enable younger, less experienced children to sail in a safe, protected environment. Without access to these areas, new sailors would have to venture out straight away into open water, strong tides and busy traffic areas. Access to these areas is not always straightforward and the Trust shares Castle Emplacement with commercial activities and numerous car parks. A redesign of this area should prioritise physical activity with better access to the water for sailors, rowers and others.

To take this principle further, a new 'accessible area' could be created in Havelet bay, by building a breakwater from the Cow Horn to the rock 'Moulinet' and a second breakwater out from Castle Cornet to give a protected body of water. In the short term, the breakwater would dramatically improve access to sheltered water for sailors, SUPs, kayaks, sea swimmers, jet ski training, rowing, etc., as well as protecting Havelet slipway and providing safe launching. A longer term project would be to develop the Bathing Pools and La Valette this area to create a centre for sea activities in Guernsey, both for locals and tourists. The diagram opposite shows what the area could look like in the future.

1. Potential marina for visiting yachts. Octopus and The Slaughterhouse would be a great draw for visiting sailors. The Vivier bunker stores could be changed into Marina facilities.
2. Sheltered safe water for sailing, windsurfing, kayaking, swimming etc. Mooring space could be made available for local boats. Other companies, such as Outdoor Guernsey, JP Jet skis or Go Guernsey could make use of the sheltered water. This could also provide an area to hold national and international events such as sailing competitions or triathlons.
3. Reclaimed land to house a new Sailing Centre and model yacht pond. This site would sit next to the original bathing pools and not affect access to or use of the pools.
4. The breakwater could provide access for fishermen out to sea, steps leading south could provide access into the open water.

Similar areas of water have been created in Weymouth and Plymouth, on a larger scale, and successfully created sheltered areas of water for sea users.



CASE STUDY

The Andrew (Boy) Charlton swimming pool in Sydney Australia

Located on Woolloomooloo Bay near the Royal Botanic Garden, the pool offers patrons breathtaking views of Sydney Harbour. The pool is heated for part of the year and filled with chemically treated salt water.

Closer to home, the Clifton Lido and Thames Lido – both represent examples of breathing new life into Victorian architecture which focusses on health and well-being.

Visit: <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/explore/facilities/swimming-pools/andrew-boy-charlton-pool>



CASE STUDY

Jersey Waterfront Interactive Water Feature

As part of the Guernsey 2021 Island Games, we need to include a water ceremony during the opening event and a tree planting ceremony during the week. As part of the legacy of the Games, we have discussed the option of some sort of permanent water feature for the Island. Although we are surrounded by water, there is no public fountain or water feature as there are in many other towns and cities. In Jersey, they have incorporated a 'dancing fountains' display as part of their developments. This is particularly popular with younger families and during the summer, children love running in and out of the fountains.



CASE STUDY

Guernsey 2021 Island Games

As mentioned above, we would like to investigate the opportunities of some sort of lasting legacy for the Games. As well as this, the seafront and Town area will feature heavily during Games week.

- **Opening ceremony and closing ceremony** - we will need a procession for both of these events with representation of all 24 visiting Islands. The obvious location is along the seafront, as in 2003. However, because of the larger numbers (we are anticipating up to 3,500 visiting athletes and teams) we will probably need to look at ending at North Beach rather than the Albert Pier.
- **Events** - the programme of sporting events is still being worked on, but several sports such as the sailing, windsurfing and some cycling events, will be focused on the seafront area.
- **Games Square** - we want to make St Peter Port a central hub for visitors and supporting locals and will be looking at having large screens and al fresco dining. A key area for this will be Market Square, but areas of the Seafront could also be utilised.

We have the opportunity to show the Island and the seafront area in its best light in July 2021 to a captive audience, most of whom will not have visited Guernsey before. Therefore, we must ensure any potential developments do not cause too much disruption on events at this time.



ORGANISATION REPRESENTATIVES

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Guernsey Sports Commission - Graham Chester

Guernsey Sailing Trust - Sarah Creasey
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