

**Art & the Travelling Landscape - Water Rail Way  
Lincoln to Boston - National Cycle Network Route 1**

# **Hi-Views: Final Report**

December 2007





# ART & THE TRAVELLING LANDSCAPE

## Water Rail Way

Lincoln to Boston - National Cycle Network - Route 1

## Hi-Views: Final Report

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## INTRODUCTION

Art & the Travelling Landscape is an art project focused on the National Cycle Network, a sustainable transport infrastructure with 12,000 miles of safe cycling and walking routes, linking the main cities, towns and villages across the UK. It is coordinated by Sustrans, a transport charity whose principal aims are to create conditions to walk and cycle in safety so people can choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment.

Alongside the development of routes, Sustrans commissions site specific, environmental artworks to enhance the paths, to work with local people to explore and illuminate local characteristics, provide meeting and resting-places and create memorable and uplifting journeys. Art & the Travelling Landscape is an important aspect of the network and every effort is made to work with artists to develop sequential work that reflects the experience of travelling through a constantly changing landscape.

### **Art & the Travelling Landscape aims to:**

- To attract and reward non-users to try walking and cycling by developing high quality ambient environments along the National Cycle Network and other infrastructure developed by Sustrans.
- To maximise the contribution of the arts programme alongside Sustrans' other projects, in delivering Sustrans' overall vision and mission.

### **Contribution to Sustrans vision and mission:**

#### **Our Vision:**

A world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment.

#### **Our Mission:**

Sustrans develops practical and imaginative solutions to transport challenges to improve the health of the nation and the environment.

- Journey ambience is key for encouraging people to walk and cycle, so creating a pleasant environment that takes into account the whole travelling experience including design of public space is crucial.
- Artwork on Sustrans' walking and cycling routes helps to interpret and reflect aspects of the surrounding area, creating a strong sense of location that adds unique benefit to travelling from place to place by bike or by foot.
- The use the arts provide an imaginative and inspiring way to explore wider aspects of human experience such as transport, health and the environment with local communities and schools.
- The process of commissioning and installing public art provides a practical focus for local community participation that helps to nurture a sense of care and ownership for the environment and serves to encourage people to take pride in their local area.

## **THE WATER RAIL WAY**

### **Lincoln to Boston - National Cycle Network - route 1**

The Water Rail Way is a long distance walking and cycling path that lies along parts of the former Lincoln to Boston railway line, between Washingborough, Bardney and Kirkstead Bridge, and Langrick Bridge to Anton's Gowt. The path runs alongside the River Witham and the large watercourse called Sincil Drain between Lincoln and Bardney. These water features dominate both the railway and access available to the future path. It supports a wide variety of flora and fauna, and particularly the *Water Rail*, a small bird whose special habitat is along the banks of the River Witham.

A feature of the path is the vast, open landscapes and the long-distance views. At the northern end Lincoln cathedral sits above the "Lincoln Gap", the valley created from river erosion, and at the southern terminus St Botolph's church, known as the "Stump" can be seen from many miles.

The flat landscape is low lying with drains and water courses built over the centuries in land reclamation schemes. The presence of enormous, dramatic, and changing skies seems to radiate an intense quality of light often reflected in the abundant water channels. The distinct land use includes arable and livestock farming, large scale nursery gardening and some bulb growing especially tulips and daffodils.

This project involved in new work to explore and celebrate this unique landscape of Lincolnshire around the concept of elevation.



## HI-VIEWS: Art & the Travelling Landscape:

This project started in 2001 with a committed partnership between Lincolnshire Public Art Network [LPAN], and Sustrans' staff at a local and national level. The path traverses six of the LPAN local authorities; Lincoln City, Boston Borough, North Kesteven, East Lindsey, West Lindsey, and Lincolnshire County Council. They funded the selection and appointment of artist Martyn Barratt, to work on conceptual proposals for artworks along the route.

In response to the landscape Barrett produced a report 'Time, Distance and Memory' recommending a way of working and outlining opportunities where local people could be involved. The core proposal was the creation of a series of prospect towers to be spaced along the route between Lincoln Cathedral and Boston Stump. These towers would act as focus points where visitors could rise above the path and gain a different perspective on the surrounding area and long distance views. The report included working with a poet as well as the creation of gateways, resting-places and 'interventions' in the surface and fabric of the route itself.

The partnership prioritised elements of the report and focused on the concept of elevating the traveller to give a different view of the immediate surroundings with long distance views of the *Travelling Landscape*. To be interpreted physically as a series of towers or lookout points, which could, in some cases, coincide with boundary markers or gateways between different Districts. This became the central pivot for the educational participatory work.

Six of the partner authorities were already working together on local cycle routes as part of the environmental regeneration of the area. This included the development of this long distance walking and cycle path now called the Water Rail Way. Hence, with construction work at an early stage, the intention was that the process of commissioning artists would occur in parallel with the construction of the whole route.

### Partnership

Once the main funding was in place, Sustrans set up a project steering group consisting of LPAN members and Arts Council England – East Midlands. The steering group advertised regionally for an experienced curator/coordinator that would bring high quality artists/architects to work on the route with the aim;

- For the partners to aspire to and set new architectural ambitions for their authorities: the designs to excel, to be innovative and daring. In the case of Boston, the planners backed the project for its ability to lay down benchmarks for the towns' regeneration plans, with no contemporary architecture in the town, commissioning the architect held great significance.
- For Sustrans it represented a new opportunity to work in ways previously untested i.e. with architecture and an internationally renowned architect.



**Boston Pendulum by Paul Robbrecht**

The project consisted of three main interconnected strands; the commissioning of a renowned architect, setting up an inventive consultation process and the implementation of a marketing strategy which would raise the profile of the Water Rail Way.

### **Curator / Coordinator**

Anna Douglas was appointed in 2003. She refocused and strengthened the initial project vision to take the audience to a physically different or higher place, nearer the sky, to give views of the landscape from a different perspective and angle. The intention was to commission a series of artist / architect / engineer designed towers, platforms, large scale structures, lookout points or elevated entrances, which focused on links between the inhabited and uninhabited landscape from where the traveller could gain another view of the landscape. They would create aerial views over the watery man-made moor-lands, and give close and long distance orientation of landmarks such as the Boston Stump and Lincoln Cathedral. The surrounding farmland and the effects humans have had in shaping and reshaping this landscape over the millennia would be seen from a different perspective. The traveller would also be able to see their path, where they had come from and where they were going.

Anna felt that there was much greater potential for the Hi-Views project than at first described. She proposed the expansion of the project and the delivery of Hi-Views over two phases;



**Phase One: to deliver two viewing platforms, each a 'gateway' marking the start / finish of the long distance walking and cycling route,**

*'Both 'towers' to be designed by an European architect, invited through the Visible Cities project, coordinated by John Cairn, Lincoln City Council. Visible Cities is an opportunity to share thinking and knowledge exchange: exploring different ways of working between continental Europe and the region of Lincolnshire. Hi-Views, phase one, will include opportunities for planning with European counterparts, and local consultation, establishing new models for the future commissioning of public art and design, as well as informing the development of Phase 2, in which two additional towers are constructed from UK architects.*

*Each 'tower' to be located with attention to opening up long views: at Lincoln, the viewers' attention is directed to the Cathedral, whilst at Boston, the marvelous sight of The Stump, opens up. These two perspectives, captured over centuries by artists, link the two cities. Hi-Views focus is on contemporary architecture as a means to take a long view out to the past. For the viewer, a conceptual trail is defined out beyond the path to the other great tower-landmarks of Lincolnshire.*

*Consultation in phase one will be delivered in partnership with the architect, and, if time permits, the School of Architecture, Lincolnshire University. It is an opportunity to explore new ideas about participation, integrating a continental perspective.*

*Following discussions with Lincolnshire Enterprise, we consider that Hi-Views is well placed to become a key component in Lincolnshire Enterprises' Waterways Project, an ERDF cultural tourism and regeneration initiative, designed to increase leisure traffic to the river.*

**Phase two:** *will deliver two 'towers' on, or around, the newly constructed path in between Fiskerton – Tattershall, and a participatory soundscape work, leading to the development of a 'Sounding Lincolnshire Tower'.*

*Each 'tower' will provide the public with new views of the surrounding countryside. The site of the towers will take full advantage of local and regional initiatives, such as the Waterways Project, ensuring their lasting promotion and upkeep.*

*The 'towers' will be commissioned either through open competition, or through an invited long-list*

*Consultation activity in phase two will be delivered in partnership with the School of Architecture, Lincolnshire University, the commissioned architects, and the composer/sound artist John Drever. It will be an opportunity to explore new ideas about consultation and participation in two villages with little experience of artistic or design activity, which will have national significance.*

*Commissioning John Drever to engage communities along the route in a comprehensive soundscape project has enormous potential for county and national publicity. Research to date suggests that the project could contribute to an artist/architect collaboration; a regional archive project, an installation at Lincoln's City Art gallery, and possible broadcast through regional BBC Radio.*

*In phase two, Hi-Views will become a 'vehicle' for knowledge transfer between regional regeneration bodies and locals. In this sense, it will become a conduit for local people to explore the changes that are taking place in and around their communities and to make preparation for their role in this change. It is not the intention, however, that Hi-Views delivers to other agencies' agendas; nevertheless, it may be seen as symbolic of the changes in culture and economy which are facing the area'.*

*Anna Douglas, 2003*

Anna's revised proposal suggested a much bigger scope for the project and despite greater risks involved in the delivery of the whole project, after much discussion it was eventually adopted by the Steering Group and she was asked to go ahead with implementation. Anna brought in arts consultant Sue Ball to assist with management and fund raising for the larger programme.

## Artist selection

The curator undertook short listing for the creative team including the architect, artist and design company. She put together a selection group consisting of the key partners including Derek Cotterell, Head of Architecture at Lincoln University, and Steven Palmer from Place Architects who agreed to assist as necessary with planning permissions etc from his UK base.

Paul Robbrecht from Robbrecht en Daem Architects was selected through an invited short list of architects from North Europe, this was to make a loose link with Lincoln's Liveable Cities project. The Hi-Views brief was discussed with each architect to assess their level of interest: From Odense JAKA, Nina Saunders [JAKA@tdcspace.dk](mailto:JAKA@tdcspace.dk), from Trondheim Pir2, [www.pir2.no](http://www.pir2.no) - Nero, [www.nero.be](http://www.nero.be) and from Ghent Robbrecht en Daem, [www.robbrechtendaem.com](http://www.robbrechtendaem.com)



Lincoln Stump by Paul Robbrecht

## Community Consultation

The curator coordinator made contact with local groups exploring issues of relevance, interest and concern to them. A range of key individuals and local groups were consulted on an ongoing basis. The project aimed to provide lifelong learning opportunities to explore the arts and creative skills in an unusual setting and way.

## Marketing and Publicity

Anna proposed a dedicated website for Hi-Views, which would give details of the walking and cycling route plus access points and the progress of construction of the path itself. It would also lay out the Hi-Views concepts and become a diary for the architect as the designs and architectural detail developed. It would also become an education tool for students to keep track the project.

Flyers and invitations were used to advertise different stages of the project and press coverage at key project stages, launch events were publicised through the local press and radio. National interest in this new commission was triggered amongst the architectural press with the appointment of Robbrecht, a named international architect who had not worked in the UK before. His reputation in UK also increased after being commissioned to undertake the extensions to Whitechapel Gallery the year after Hi-Views was commissioned.



Lincoln Stump by Paul Robbrecht

## THE ARTWORK

### Lincoln Stump and Boston Pendulum Paul Robbrecht

Robbrecht is renowned for his architectural collaborative work with artists, not only as an inventive creator himself but also in recent projects such as the Antwerp City Square where he worked with an artist and water engineers to create a vast 'breathing' bronze reed bed with water levels constantly changing.

*The Hi-Views commission consisted of the design of two public 'prospect' viewing platforms which will afford the visitors the opportunity to gain height and views over the culturally distinctive landscape. Both viewing platforms are also places to rest during a journey.*

**'Concept:** *The key for the viewing platforms concept can be found in the two cities between which the cycling path is situated.*

*The vaulting of Lincoln cathedral nave, the so-called crazy vault, was the direct motif for the viewing platform design in Boston. Likewise, the prominent Stump (a parish church in Boston) with its hollow tower was at the origin of the design for the viewing platform in Lincoln.*

*We have named the two viewing platforms respectively 'the Pendulum' and 'the Stump'. In summary, we have designed a stump for Lincoln and a Pendulum for Boston. Both cities will be linked; specific naming from one city is at the origin for the viewing platforms design in the other.*

**Material:** *Stump in Lincoln; on a reinforced concrete wall three steel cages are anchored on top of each other. Within these cages the stairs are situated. The stairs steps consist of folded steel plate with a larch covering. The cages will be covered with an open larch slat work.*

*Pendulum in Boston; on a triangular reinforced concrete core, five steel beams are anchored. These beams support the stairs. The stairs made of fold steel plate with a larch covering. The balustrade is made of fine larch strips.*

**Colour;** *In both viewing platforms colour is introduced in a modest way. Some slats on the cages of the Stump in Lincoln will be coloured. The Pendulum's balustrade will also have some coloured slats. In both cases, the colours are based on Lincolnshire bird life.'*

*"The project is situated on the two architectural poles, the starting point and the end point of the Lincoln-Boston cycling route. The naming of inspiring elements such as 'crazy vault' and 'stump' gave rise to a number of architectural gestures. The two viewing platforms are places where people can stay or meet each other while enjoying the Lincolnshire landscape."*

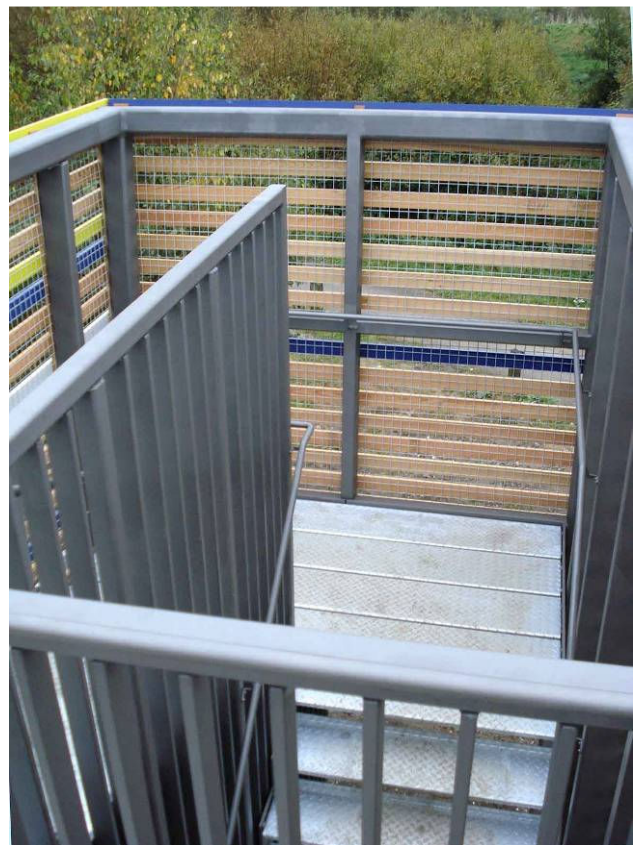
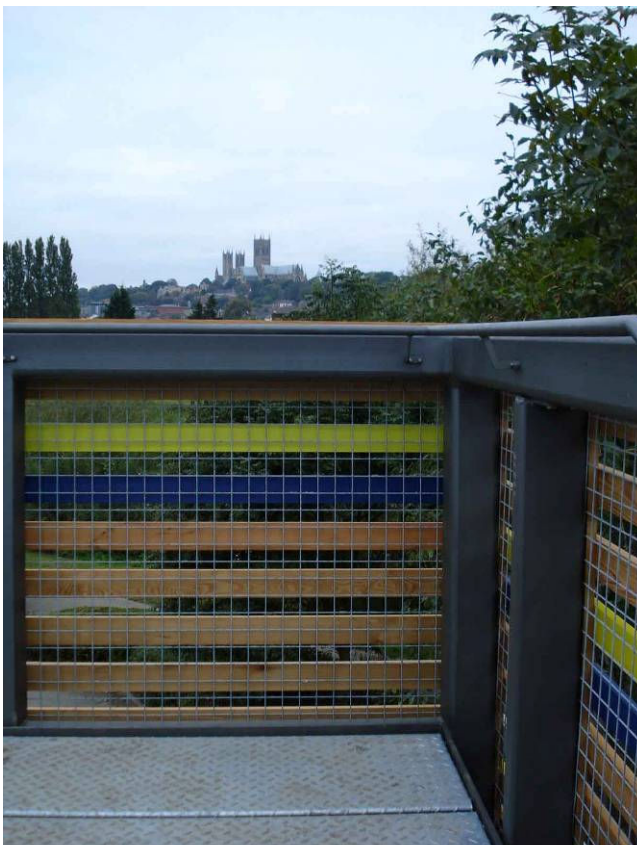
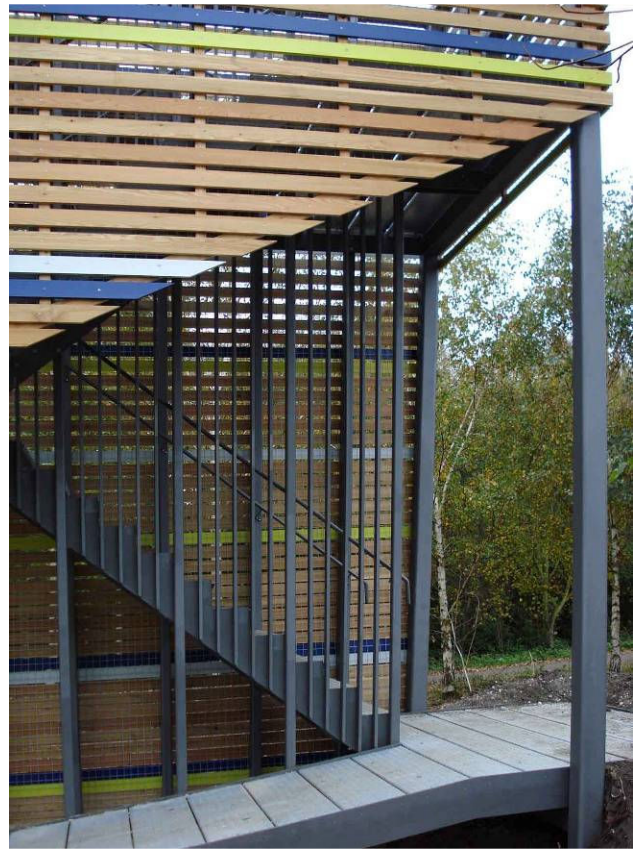
*Paul Robbrecht*



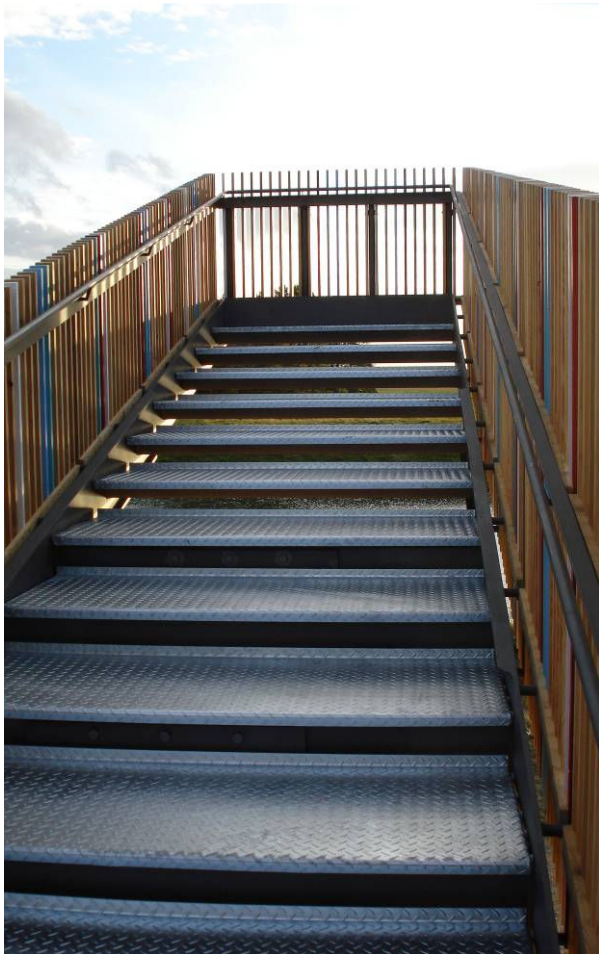
**Hi-Views - Boston Pendulum Collage - initial design concept**

**Hi-Views - Lincoln Stump collage - initial design concept**





**Lincoln Stump by Paul Robbrecht**



**Boston Pendulum by Paul Robbrecht**

## Conversation Piece with Deborah Jones

Deborah spent several days on the path with Polaroid cameras, engaging people in conversation. Some were arranged meetings with local people others were random users. As they conversed, she made notes and diagrams— trying to avoid an intrusion into the quality of conversation; just enough to remind her of what was said and stories told. She asked about their familiarity with the river and the path and any particular associations it has for them; asked them to describe its atmosphere and how it is at different times of the year; she inquired about social aspects of the place and discussed the emotional or mental impact walking has on peoples' lives.

Subsequently at two separate sites and as part of Architecture Week 2004 Deborah erected a temporary, 2.2 m, aluminum tower with platform and railings alongside the river both at the intersection access point of two paths. With an assistant, she again engaged people in conversation – this time inviting them to come up onto the viewing platform.

These conversations specifically referred to the future plans for the viewing platform to be built near Anton's Gowt and Lincoln. Deborah asked if they had heard about the viewing platforms and whether they would like to try out the temporary tower to see what a built one might offer. Once again, she invited people to take a photograph, adding words or phrases onto it. These were attached to the tower, accumulating throughout the day, to make a temporary exhibition of the event.





The conversations were shorter, and more 'outward' or extrovert, compared to conversations on the first visit which were, more reflective and perhaps personal. With the temporary tower she offered an event which places the image and experience (of climbing up and looking down) into some peoples' conversations and expectations about the place.

### **Promotional flyers produced in 2004:**

*"The Witham Way Country Park is going to be a conversation piece for the day on Saturday 3rd April, as artists Deborah Jones and Tomos Williams will be inviting people to tell them about views and memories along the river Witham".*

*"A viewing platform is being proposed by Sustrans, to go alongside the river in winter 2004, and the ideas given to the artists this Saturday 19 June will respond to that possibility'.*

*Monday 21 June: Paul Robbrecht to talk at Lincoln Business Park. In the evening at Ushers Gallery/University Tuesday 22 Jun: Paul Robbrecht to talk at Boston, Witham Country Park'.*

*Deborah says 'We'll have a temporary viewing platform, giving everyone a chance to see the river from another angle. If anyone is curious to see what it's like, or tell us about the river they're very welcome to join us between 10am and 4pm.'*

*Members of the public who use the park regularly or who know that stretch of river are invited to climb the towers and see and express what they feel about their relationship with the landscape."*

### **Mew Media**

Local graphic web designers Mew Media were selected through an invited short list to develop the website. The development of the project was publicised through the press with regular press releases at key stages and updates in the news letter with progress reports. Flyers and leaflets were produced for the launch of the web-site [www.hi-views.com](http://www.hi-views.com) which aimed to track the development of the designs as they evolved, to explain the background of the work and to let people know where it is. The project has a dedicated page on Sustrans' web site [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) Sustrans Projects / Art & the Travelling Landscape / Collections / Hi-Views - with links to other sites.



## ASSESSMENT

The following sections reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the project considering the achievement of aims and objectives

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To produce a new collection of artworks on the Water Rail Way which amplify and interpret the special and unique characteristics of this part of the Lincolnshire landscape.
- To aspire to and set new architectural ambitions for the local authorities through the commissioning of artist/architects engaged with innovative contemporary arts practice
- To change people's lives through opportunities to take part in, and experience high quality contemporary design and nurture a deeper understanding and interest in art and architecture.
- For Sustrans it represented a new opportunity for Sustrans to work in ways previously untested.
- To bring added significance to this area for local people and visitors, improve the ambience of the route thereby increasing the number of journeys on it.
- To publicise the project to let people know where and what it is.

All the above aims have all been achieved. The structures were installed in September 2007. The winter months see less use of the path thus greater awareness and full use of the structures will occur in spring and summer 2008.

### **To produce a new collection of artworks on the Water Rail Way which amplify and interpret the special and unique characteristics of this part of the Lincolnshire landscape.**

Hi-Views, the name and the physical staircases themselves set up an immediate tension with the flat landscape, stimulating a desire to mount the stairs and take time to see everyday things from a different perspective. The proportions, detailing and fabrication of the structures express care and attention for small things as well as to the whole. They have inspired the commissioning of additional artwork thoughtfully sited along the route, to compliment the landscape, sometimes referential and evocative concerning local myth, poetry and place. By 2008, when the full length of the Water Rail Way path opens the artworks will be an important element in the marketing and advertising of this long distance path.

During the life of the project the Lincolnshire Soundscape by John Drever was lost in the budget squeeze. Also lost were the two further viewing structures proposed for phase two and the collaboration with the Lincolnshire wide poetry project. However, the Tennyson project on this path and the long awaited 'Alchemic Garden' has taken their place.

**To aspire to and set new architectural ambitions for the local authorities through the commissioning of artists/architects engaged with innovative contemporary arts practice**

The towers have been sensitively designed by Robbrecht to relate to the unique Lincolnshire landscape and to incorporate the designs of the 'crazy' gothic vaulting in Lincoln Cathedral and the hollow tower of the Stump in Boston, and yet, they are uncompromisingly contemporary, thus illustrating the opportunities and relevance of contemporary design within such heritage contexts. The latter is a particular challenge for the outlying regions of the UK, where suspicion of contemporary design, architecture and art is higher than urban contexts, and contemporary architecture fights to get planning permission.

The designs excel, they are innovative and daring. In the case of Boston, the planners backed the project for its ability to lay down benchmarks for the towns regeneration plans, with no contemporary architecture in the town, commissioning Paul Robbrecht held great significance.

**For Sustrans, Hi-Views represented a new opportunity for Sustrans to work in ways previously untested**

This project has fed into Sustrans' New Art Programme. Sustrans is currently working with curator managers to discuss research based commissions directly with artists. The intention is to select artists with particular or established reputations and to work on fewer in depth projects where the physical content of the work produced has potentially deeper significance in context of the research and to the site.

Hi-Views represented the first time Sustrans worked with a dedicated curator who recommended short-listed artists and architects rather than tendering the commissions publicly. It was the first arts project to expand in to a second phase and more clearly define the capacity of the arts to draw from a much larger funding base, that in this instance it was unsuccessful reflects the climate, location and ambition of the project which were in fact the core aims of the project at the outset.

**To bring added significance to this area for local people and visitors, improve the ambience of the route thereby increasing the number of journeys on it.**

Both Hi-Views structures are inspirational and have transformed the sites by their presence and through the interactivity they command. Through evaluation elsewhere, Sustrans knows that the ambience of a route is a significant factor in the public's choice of a path. Since the structures have only recently been installed any increase in path usage will only become evident over the next months and years. To date the Hi-Views project has enhanced the Water Rail Way, shaping a specific character for the path.

**To change peoples' lives through opportunities to take part in, and experience high quality contemporary design and nurture a deeper understanding and interest in art and architecture.**

The integrated community participatory programme created opportunities for local people and path users to meet with the artist/architect. It encouraged people to record personal feelings about their landscape. This enabled first hand contact and interaction between the public the architect and artists. Since the structures have been installed many people have stopped to talk about them, hundreds of people have delighted in using them. The designs are distinctively non English, and have triggered discussions and further comments about design particularly in the light of so much urban development taking place currently across the UK.

**To publicise the project to let people know where and what it is.**

The Architecture Week 'Conversation Piece' was an excellent way to publicise the project. The website was also a good strategy to disseminate information about the development of the work. Press coverage is the single most effective way to advertise to the widest audience and to this end Sustrans will promote the project to journals and magazine articles in the spring. Sustrans will also work with Lincolnshire County Council to produce a comprehensive leaflet about the Water Rail Way to market the whole route once it is completed in autumn 2008. Sustrans has a dedicated page for Hi-Views on their website; [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) Sustrans Projects / art & the travelling landscape / Collections / Hi-Views with links to the LPAN website.



## OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The following are observations about the project and reflections on how it evolved in these areas;

- Planning and project management
- Funding
- Communication
- Timescale
- Selection of Artists
- The artworks
- Community consultation

### Planning and project management

The project was well planned from the outset. Sustrans had presented ideas to LPAN in 2001 Lincoln City Council, Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council became the key partners since the two structures in the first phase of the project were within their boundaries plus they had secured the bulk of the funding here.

### Funding

At the outset the project was well funded, there were unknowns about progress with the construction of the path itself and how much in-kind installation assistance would be available at the right time, plus optimism about securing local business sponsorship which in the event was unsuccessful.

With agreements to implement a much more ambitious project the existing budget was revised. Petitions were made to Henry Moore Foundation, Lincolnshire Enterprise (a sub-region of EMDA), and Landfill Tax with enthusiastic reception leading to formal applications for substantial funds. To the surprise of all those involved, the Landfill Tax application was finally refused, due to the 'experimental *artiness* of the project', despite working extremely closely with the officer in charge over three months. And, in the final stages, Lincolnshire Enterprise was unable to include Hi-Views in their large scale European bid for the Lincolnshire Waterways Project, due to its pioneering and untested stage. They agreed to reconsider the project for a phase two Waterways bid in 2006 if the structures were successful. In the event, installation of the structures was so delayed that this bid went ahead without reference to further viewing platforms. It did however include funding for other artworks which are now on the path – see Appendices.

The costs of ground work and installation for two structures were greater than estimated; at Anton's Gowt access for the prefabricated structure up a narrow overgrown footpath bounded on both sides by water was difficult plus the structure was tracked along the path for over a kilometer using specialist haulage equipment. At Lincoln the site was heavily over grown, once the vegetation had been cleared and foundations dug it was obvious the site had been a tip and all excavated material had to be removed from site rather than

'loosing' the top soil on site. Here installing a new path to the structure, planting and reinstatement of the landscape were more extensive than originally estimated.

The increased ambition of the structures, the complexity of installation, the extended ground work and the funding refusals put the project at risk. The Curator approached Arts Council England – East Midlands to consider a funding application for the additional costs of the two substantial structures, thankfully they agreed and awarded the project a G4A award in 2005. This ensured that the work could be completed.

## **Communication**

Communication between the partners was very good. At the start of the project the partners, other key players, the curator/manager and Sustrans' staff met regularly and kept each other well informed. However with the revised budget, new funding applications, time delays and with local authority personnel changes it became more difficult to maintain cohesion within the project. Eventually fees for the dedicated curator and manager were spent; Sustrans completed the project with continued support from Boston Borough and nominal support from the initial partners.

## **Consultation**

Conversation Piece was an experimental event and pioneered new working processes involving Paul Robbrecht '*in Conversation*' with artist Deborah Jones and local people for the first time. The project benefited the work of the architect, secured public interest, and ideas from locals were fed into the design process. The scope for each viewing platform to have flexible use has been proposed through the project work with prospective users, i.e. as an open air classroom for nature studies; as a bird hide; an exercise course; a landmark to the route, etc.

## **Planning Permission**

This was granted in Boston with the condition that work was undertaken outside nesting season March – August, plus a site visit was required to ensure that the structure was not sited opposite any of the outlying houses.

The complication of planning permission in Lincoln was due to police expressing their concern that the structure would attract anti-social behaviour from estates on the other side of the river. Alternative sites further away from the city were considered but the Lincoln spine road and bypass will in the future cross the path and since the exact position is still under negotiation any new site here might be blighted by this new road. The structure was finally sited at the end of Witham Business Park and is now the gateway to the Water Rail Way.

## The Artwork

The Lincoln Stump and the Boston Pendulum are excellent new additions to the Water Rail Way. The high quality of design and finish have created a resounding sense of place to both sites, raising them both from quite different aspects; Lincoln an overgrown corridor onto a much used path - to a landmark signalling the start of a new and special route to Boston. At Anton's Gowt the Boston Pendulum glimpsed from a distance, over-hangs the path, inviting people to ascend and admire the landscape. Both create social spaces which encourage conversation and reflection in most memorable and unique positions.

Mew Media website was delightful and imaginative; it brought many people into the project and was fun and easy to use. Once the funding became tight and timescales were extended it became impractical to keep it updated and it is now a fixed pager. Sustrans has a dedicated page to Hi-Views on their website; [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) projects / art and the travelling landscape / collections / Hi-Views

Additional artwork along the route has been included as the construction of the path developed; Lincolnshire Red Cattle near Washingborough and Longwool Sheep near Stixwould both made from scrap metal by Sally Matthews. There are several bespoke seats by Steve Elderkin, Jim Partridge and Liz Walmsley and Yumiko Aoyagi plus many sections of 'Paw Prints' stencilled onto the surface of the path between Bardney and Stixwould by Nicola Jones. Further commissions are being planned including Alchemic Garden by Sally and David Ashton-Hill plus a poetry collection to celebrate Tennyson with text inscribed onto boulders and a new 'Lady of Shallott Gateway' under construction by Anwick Forge. [See Appendices]

## Timescale

At the start, the project moved very fast since committing to a more ambitious proposition new funding applications had to be made within tight deadlines. Robbrecht made several visits to Lincolnshire and submitted preliminary sketches which were exciting but substantially over budget. There followed several uncomfortable months as he reduced the scale of the designs, the engineers worked on the structural requirements and the project managers sought regional fabricators. The project took another dip as Lincoln planning permission was withdrawn and recent funding applications were all refused.

Robbrecht proposed that Wuyts in Antwerp, whom he had previously worked with, could fabricate the structures and deliver and erect them in Lincolnshire at much less cost than the quotes received by the project manager. [Remember steel prices have almost doubled over the past five years.] Wuyts was contracted at a fixed price to complete the work by November 2005.

These extended time delays meant that the budget for management was spent before the project was completed; the design development, installation and final stages of the project have been undertaken by Sustrans. Ultimately a

more pragmatic solution as Sustrans has much civil engineering experience and was better placed to arrange construction and installation without the need for external professionals. This was only possible as other arts projects had been completed and time was available however at an in-kind cost to Sustrans.

There followed a long period of delays and difficult communications between Robbrecht, Wuyts and Sustrans. The asymmetrical structures needed new CAD engineering details. Sustrans Art Director visited the Antwerp factory in spring 2007, 12 months after the agreed completion date; a new date for installation was set for September 07 which was finally achieved with a launch event in November 07.



**The Belgium Design and Fabrication team at Wuyts Factory, Antwerp**

Alain  
Designer/engineer, CAD operation

Yves  
Senior Fabricator

Wim Walshap  
Robbrecht's assistant

Johan Stokbroekx  
Director and Owner of Wuyts Factory

Paul Robbrecht  
Robbrecht en Daem Architects



## CONCLUSIONS

The installation of the two Hi-Views structures has been an arduous road well worth travelling. They created a momentum which affected all aspects of the delivery of the project and the future ambition of Hi-Views in its entirety.

Once the ambition of the project had been raised and the vision for the viewing platforms was expanded into mini-architectural commissions, the development of the project slowed down to include more complex engineering, fabrication and site work plus further fund raising.

The unusual and ambitious contemporary designs did deter some potential funders from investing in the project and in the case of RDA, they wanted to see the first phase structures completed before they backed the second two proposed structures for the middle section of the route.

However, since the finished works were over the agreed date for completion, they were not available for assessment to apply for funding, thus Hi-Views phase two could not be included in the final EU funding package. The final stage to complete the Lincolnshire Waterways project went ahead with safer artwork components delivered within the Waterways project team.

The funding deadline expired several times, Sustrans had to request extension dates for completion and are immensely thankful to Arts Council England that they were willing to agree to them. We would urge ACE to maintain this flexibility with untried and ambitious projects the unknown will always present certain risks.

The web-site was designed and opened at an early stage to provide space for the architect's diary. Once the project budget became stretched there was no further funding to keep the web-site updated. This is disappointing as it was an imaginative and very accessible site. Building the website should have been postponed until the project was more secure.

The day long launch event in November 2007 was delightful; the weather, unpredictable but it held, consequently fewer guests than anticipated attended. The Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Lincolnshire and Deputy Mayor of Lincoln both spoke eloquently and fully endorsed the project. The Vice Lord-Lieutenant accompanied us for the whole day cycling to see the Lincolnshire Longwool Sheep: He unveiled the Boston Pendulum and was positive and enthusiastic about the whole project, Sustrans' work to create walking and cycling paths of such quality and the urgent message to improve conditions nationally for walking and cycling.

The articles in Building Design by Ellis Woodman and the Telegraph [see Appendices] have raised much interest in the project. Sustrans is planning to canvas other arts/architecture magazines and the national press in the spring 2008.

Sustrans is delighted and proud of this work, Hi-Views marks a new direction for the commissioning programme and the structures are exciting additions to the Art & the Travelling Landscape artwork collection.

In hind sight would Sustrans manage this project differently? Probably not. Sustrans and the partners took a risk appointing Anna Douglas; she came with the recommendation of being inspired and ambitious. Sustrans and the partners took a risk adopting her recommendation to significantly expand the scope of the project.

Did the risks pay off? Yes, Robbrecht has been an inspired artist/architect, he has loved the project, it is a unique commission in his portfolio and, as distinctive contemporary architecture, Hi-Views is unique in Lincolnshire. The finished work itself elevates the stature and character of the path; it is memorable and inspired as well as being freely available to the people of Lincolnshire and beyond.

Katy Hallett,  
Director - Art & the Travelling Landscape  
December 2007



**Lincolnshire Landscape by Adam O'Meara**



The construction team from Belgium