

MERTHYR TYDFIL LOWER HIGH STREET, MERTHYR TYDFIL



"We are seeing an increased footfall, and this has done an awful lot to help us weather the recession and protect the town from its worst effects."

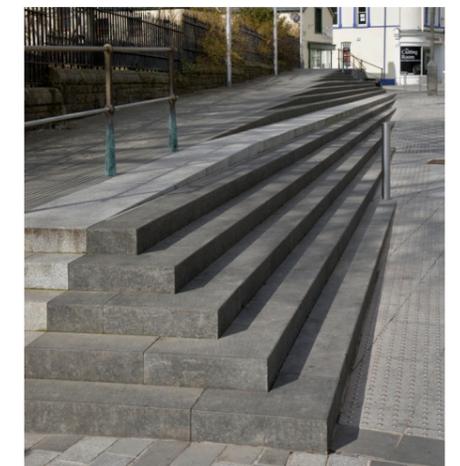
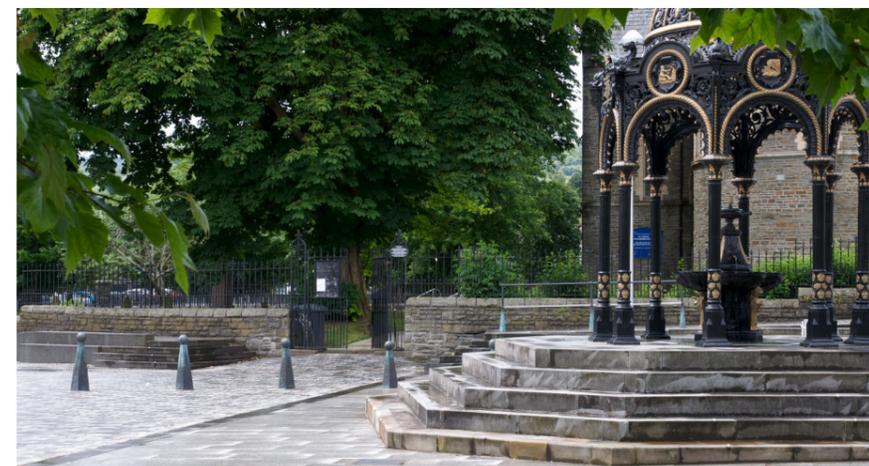
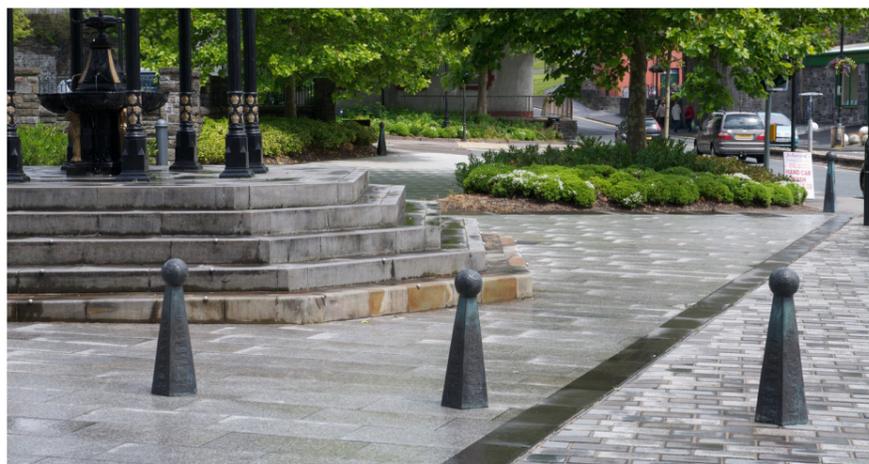
Rhian Prosser
Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Manager

LOCATION: GLAMORGAN
CLIENT: MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
VALUE: £1.8M
SIZE: 4000M²
COMPLETION: 2010
SERVICE: LANDSCAPE, URBAN DESIGN, MASTERPLANNING
SECTOR: URBAN REGENERATION
CONTRACTOR: DYER AND BUTLER
LANDSCAPE: AUSTIN-SMITH:LORD
STRUCTURES: AECOM
SERVICES: AECOM
COST CONSULTANT: GLEEDS

AWARDS:
 2009: BCSC TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENT GOLD AWARD
 2009: LGN STREET DESIGN AWARD- RUNNER UP IN PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT CATEGORY
 2009: RTP1 REGENERATION NETWORK AWARD

Austin-Smith:Lord was commissioned to explore the feasibility and concept design for the regeneration of the Lower High Street area of the town and the potential creation of a café quarter.

The scheme involved the creation of a new square to the frontage of the St Tydfil Church, at the southern entrance to the High Street, and the careful integration of artwork. Consultation with existing businesses, local community groups and other stakeholders was a crucial element of the project.



Beautiful granite flags and setts have been used throughout the scheme, complemented by pennant steps and walls. The stunning paving layout has a contemporary edge with contrasting bands of smooth ground flags cutting across tumbled mixed setts and striking through steps, just as coal seams through the local rock strata.

Design development was a collaborative process between Landscape Architect and Artist, to create a fully integrated design that is unique to place. Following a competitive tender Midas Art were appointed to produce bronze bollards, seats, pavement panels and railings.

These elements have imprints of bracken to their base, in recognition of the vegetation which decayed to form coal measures, grading upward to deciduous leaves found in the leafy square today. Wax models were produced for approval, prior to manufacture.

The much vandalised Robert and Lucy Thomas fountain and associated canopy, which pays tribute to the pioneers of the Welsh steam coal industry, has been relocated and refurbished. Adaptation of the Grade II listed fountain and associated lighting scheme has been necessary to safeguard this monument against further abuse.

Public consultation was carried out over a three year period. Initially design concepts, ideas and options were displayed for public consideration, followed by a presentation dedicated to traffic and access issues.

Prior to Tender of the Works details of the designed response to public queries and concerns, construction programme, access requirements and artwork proposals were presented. In addition to Public Consultation, regular presentations were made to the Town Partnership Committee which consisted of representatives from the Police Force, local dignitaries, shop owners and public bodies.