



DORSET

Local Enterprise Partnership

**Swanage Pier
Foundations for the
Future**

End of Project Report

December 2019

Project Summary

Dorset LEP allocated £56,250 of Dorset Growth Deal funding to fund essential and urgent repair works to the pier structure to unlock the economic potential of Swanage Pier and enabling the Swanage Pier Trust to build a more robust and sustainable financial future.

The aim of the Swanage Pier Foundations for the Future project is "To conserve, maintain and enhance the iconic Victorian Pier for the benefit of visitors and the local community".

Whilst the Swanage Pier - Foundations for the Future project was delivered by the Swanage Pier Trust, it has an important impact for the area. The Dorset County Council Economic Impact Assessment estimates that the Pier accounts for 12% of the total branding and image value of Swanage. The report also states that the loss of Swanage Pier would result in an estimated loss of 42 FTE jobs and a total loss to the local economy of £1.5 million in GVA.

Project Objectives

- To undertake the repair and replacement of critical structural elements of the Pier
- To renovate Marine Villas and maximise its use for Pier management, learning, interpretation, catering and retail
- To develop opportunities for earned income from the Pier
- To interpret the Pier and its history and the wider links to include the town, marine environment, local industry, diving and the Jurassic Coast
- To develop new learning and engagement opportunities for schools, visitors, and specialist groups
- To improve disabled access to the Pier, facilities and resources
- To work with the businesses operating on the Pier to help maximise their operation for the benefit of the Pier
- To provide benefit for the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of the town, maritime and coastal environment

Project start date	1 August 2017
Project construction start date	Marine Villas – December 2017 Swanage Pier – February 2018
Project completion date	Practical Completion for Marine Villas was achieved on 3 rd August 2019. Substantial Completion for Swanage Pier was achieved on 29 th January 2019. (The above dates are relevant to the capital parts of the Project, which is where the funding from Dorset LEP was allocated)

Review of Business Case

A proposal was submitted in the call for projects for Growth Deal 3. In accordance with the paper presented to the Dorset LEP board in May 2017, £56,250 was allocated to the Swanage Pier project.

The main funders were:

- Dorset LEP allocated £56,250 of Dorset Growth Deal funding
- the Heritage Lottery Fund, who formally advised the Trust that the application had been assessed and awarded a grant on 15th March 2017.
- Department for Communities and Local Government, Coastal Communities Fund. A Funding Agreement dated 19th April 2017 was signed by the Trust.

Governance

This project was overseen directly by a programme manager, and Dorset LEP Board as required.

The two areas of capital works were both highly specialised:

- Marine Villas is a Georgian Grade II listed building that required specialist construction knowledge to sympathetically refurbish it whilst also keeping it relevant to modern day visitors.
- Swanage Pier is a Grade II listed wooden Pier that extends out over the seas for over 600ft. It therefore needed a specialist maritime construction company who were experts in working in these conditions.

The Project had a formal management structure led by the Swanage Pier Trust Board and the General Manager. Trustees and staff with specific project knowledge formed a Steering Group to provide regular updates to the Trust.

The Trust contracted a number of professional services to design and then monitor the performance of the construction contractors. Examples of these were Architects, a Project Manager, Structural Engineers and a Cost Consultant.

During the construction there were regular progress meetings between the contractors, the Trust and our professional advisors. The contractors were required to produce progress reports which were discussed in detail. The meeting would also cover any issues arising and proposed solutions.

Planned Outputs and Outcomes

- Secure the future of the Grade II listed Pier and unlock it's economic, tourism and community potential

- Maximise the use of Swanage Pier as a heritage asset and enable it to become a more sustainable and competitive tourism business.
- Use Marine Villas to create a year-round education and interpretation spaces, retail and catering facilities.
- Provide new employment, training, volunteering and business development opportunities.
- Creating opportunities for people of all ages, particularly young people, to learn about and engage with local heritage, the natural and marine environment
- Support the operations, profitability and expansion of existing small business reliant on the Pier, including angling, diving, watersports and cruise boat companies

Achievement of Outputs

The project has currently finished the capital phase and has met the outputs for:

- o Securing the future of the Grade II listed Pier. The Pier is currently listed as #6 of 26 'things to do in Swanage' on Tripadvisor.
- o Refurbishing Marine Villas to provide enhanced interpretation, catering and retail facilities. The café is currently rated as #1 of 62 'restaurants in Swanage' on Tripadvisor.

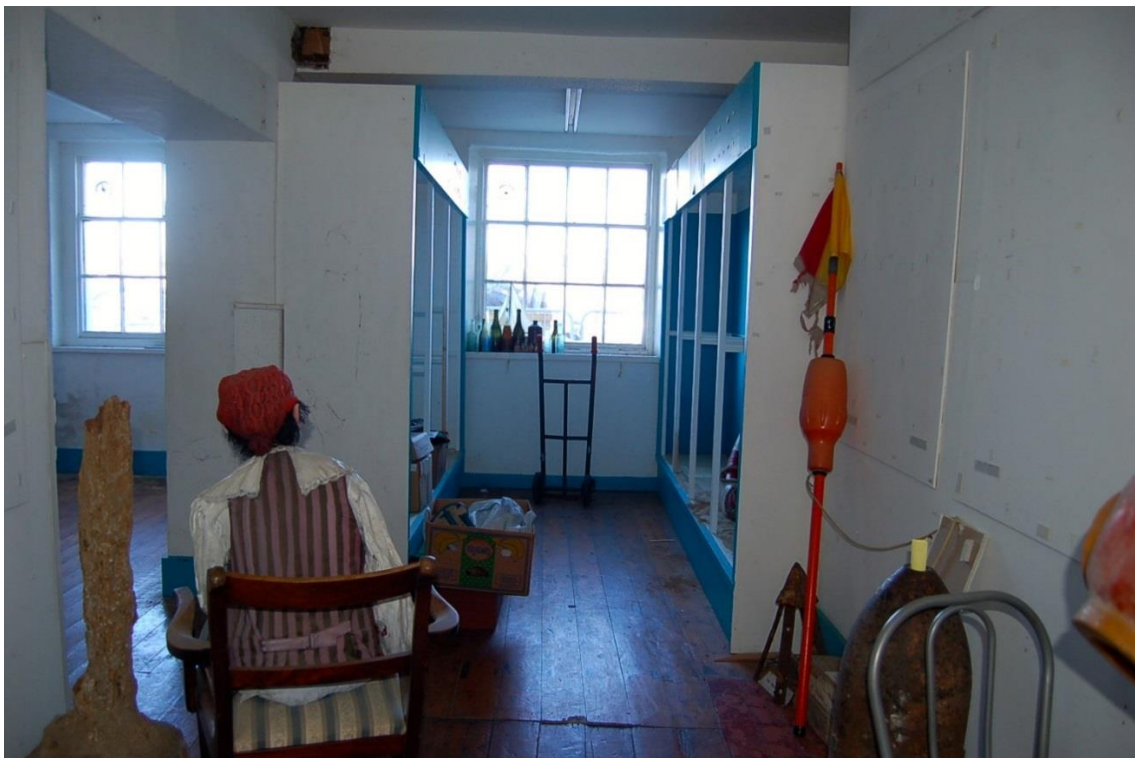
PICUTRES – BEFORE



Marine Villas ready for renovation work to start



Café seating area



Museum area before



Pier contractor setting up site prior to Pier repair works



Marine Villas external – renovation complete

PICTURES – AFTER



Café counter after renovation



Café seating in the new extension



Part of the new museum. Themed to feel “under the pier”



A new pile being driven into the seabed



Completed lower decking – this area has not been in use for several years.

Associated press releases:

There have been a number local press releases, both in conjunction with the contractors and by the Trust. These were approved by the major funders and carried the appropriate branding.

Some of this exposure was picked up by the national news services:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-47799330>

Outcomes

The capital outcomes of the project have been achieved. However, the majority of the outcome metrics are based on the activity program, rather than capital elements, of the project. This is a three year plan which runs until August 2021.

Outcomes	Total (as of April 2020)
Jobs Created (FTE)	22.5
Apprenticeships	2
Commercial Floorspace Created	445.2

An initial review of year one took place by the end of 2019. The final review will take place in autumn 2021.