



Long Sand Beach

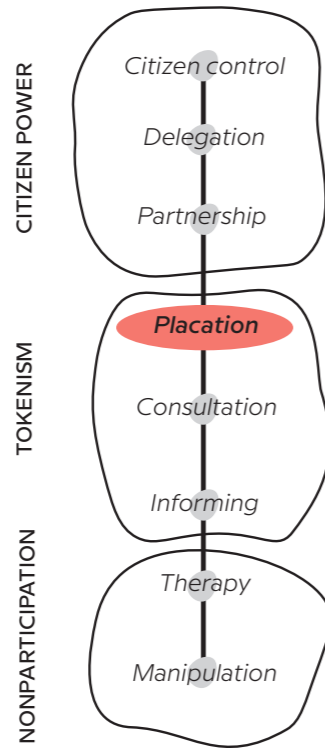
Langisandur

LOCATION

Akranes municipality, Iceland

TIME PERIOD

Since 1990



THE PROJECT

The Long Sand Beach project takes place in the main beach of the municipality of Akranes. Started in the early 1990s, this ongoing project has been developed to promote outdoor activities, for reasons of physical and mental health and also to attract more people to the beach and to Akranes. Numerous facilities have been built here: a walking and cycling path, exercise equipment, children's playgrounds and even a geothermal pool.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SPACE

Akranes is a 7.697 inhabitant municipality located 20 km north of the capital of Iceland on the Skaginn peninsula. Before 1998, the town was 2 hours from the capital (by car) but with the opening of a tunnel which crosses the fjord, it now takes only 40 minutes to reach Reykjavík. This tunnel has led to a feeling of economic inferiority, as Akranes lost influence over the capital. Moreover, it suffers from a lack of public transportation and poor-quality public spaces. However, the inhabitants, when asked, do not have a feeling of remoteness (1 out of 5).

INITIATION AND ACTORS

Two major actors have been involved in this project. The first one is the municipality which has always wanted to improve the place in

the interest of the inhabitants. The second one are the sea-swimmers members who worked in particular on the hot pools.

ROLE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY & METHODS USED

Langisandur is not an "actual" project, but rather an ongoing project with constructions and changes over the past 30 years. The implementation of new equipments is directly linked with the needs of the local community that has expressed what it wanted to local authorities. That is the case for the installation of 10 benches requested by the elderly that live next to the beach or for the creation of the geothermal baths requested by the sea-swimmer group. Consequently, this project would not have been possible without the involvement of the local community. We also need to highlight the role

of the Guðlaug Gunnlaugsdóttir & Jón Gunnlaugsson Memorial Foundation and the Ferdamalastofa-Icelandic Tourist Board for their financial and tactical support.

RESULT

The project reached its two main targets. In fact, this public space has become a landmark in Akranes for outdoor activities and the municipality has attracted more and more tourists. This is particularly striking since the implementation of the pool Guðlaug which attracted 30.000 visitors in 2018. With this reinforced touristic attraction and these new public facilities, it seems obvious that the local community is the main beneficiary of the project. As written in the papers Akranes.is and Skessuhorn.is, locals are generally happy with it (especially the geothermal pool) and some are fascinated by Langisandur and think of it as one of Akranes' pearls.

Seaside walkpath
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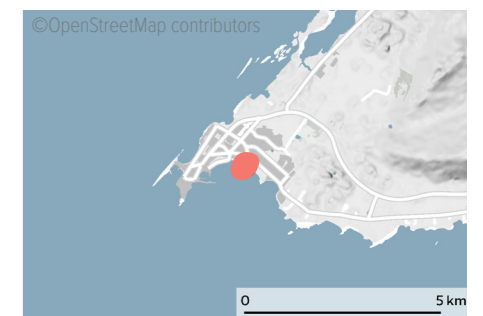
Artificial beach pools
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Long Beach Sand, Akranes municipality, Iceland

more about
this project

