



Beach Access Team, Brighton & Hove  
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To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Beach Access Team, Brighton & Hove (BAT) to offer our support for Brighton & Hove City Council's "Kingsway to the Sea" application to the Levelling Up Fund.

Beach Access Team, Brighton & Hove is a constituted community group of disabled people and unpaid carers. There are over 14 million disabled people in the UK (8-46% of the population, depending on age). BAT is absolutely committed to making Brighton & Hove's beaches fully accessible to all, residents and visitors alike.

We have been supported by Scope's Local People and Active Communities programmes since 2017, and working directly with Brighton and Hove City Council since 2018, after receiving all-party support to progress our objectives after a successfully received petition and community research paper produced with New Economics Foundation. It was clear from the offset that there was a real appetite for change, with a common understanding of the need to dramatically improve appropriate access for all those that need it.

In March 2020 BAT was established by the council as a key consultee for all seafront infrastructure and redevelopment projects. This cements our role within the city, as we work with stakeholders of all types to bring about improvement and change. Our work is always user-led, utilising our evidence-base of lived experience, plus extensive and ongoing community research and engagement, to ensure improvement work always develops from the actual barriers currently experienced by disabled people and those with access issues.

We hold regular meetings with Seafront Officers, B&HCC officials, and elected councillors. We work particularly closely with the Seafront Development Manager. Robust community input has informed our recommendations, which include improvements to the infrastructure of the area (including improved transport facilities and increased Blue Badge parking spaces, dropped kerbs, accessible ground surfacing, Changing Places facilities and better toilets) as well as specific beach structures, such as new viewing platforms to enable people to spend time on the shingle alongside friends and family, and ramped access into the sea. We have also been working to improve beach wheelchair provision for children and adults, signage and lighting, and to introduce more accessible maps and other information along the seafront, as well as disability and D/deaf awareness training for seafront traders and staff.

The area of planned improvement in the “Kingsway to the Sea” project represents a key target area for our work. It is an area hugely in need of investment and regeneration, but it is also an area rich with opportunities to bring about real and meaningful improvements for those with disabilities. It is an area with space for development and provision, and offers many advantages from an access perspective over some of the more central and heavily-developed areas. As part of the improved facilities, we would look to include a dedicated access hub, which would provide a central focus for much of our access provision. This hub would be a safe space for many, with reduced sensory input and dedicated provision and services. The planned regeneration of this area offers a real opportunity for meaningful change that disabled people in Brighton & Hove so desperately deserve.

The seafront of West Hove has been sadly overlooked in recent years, yet this bid and the regeneration plan offers a real opportunity to make a meaningful and significant change for the better for both local people and visitors. This project and development scheme is a opportunity to breathe new life into this incredible area of seafront, to enable everyone to enjoy the wellbeing benefits of this incredible asset, with equality of access right at the core.

We strongly support “Kingsway to the Sea”, and the opportunities it will afford to all those affected by disability.

If you have any questions about our support for this application, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

Hannah Loach

Vice-Chair  
Beach Access Team, Brighton and Hove

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