



## Ancoats Square Interactive Lighting

Year of Completion: 2008

Architect/Designer: Graham Festenstein Lighting Design

A new square in Manchester's Ancoats area features hidden ground lighting which traces the movement of people walking across the square. The control system, which is supplied by Architen Lighting, incorporates sensors underground which pick up people's movements causing the lights to come on and change colour.

Ancoats is an inner-city area of Manchester; historically it was one of the cradles of the Industrial Revolution, and has been called "the world's first industrial suburb". It has one of the largest concentrations of Grade II and Grade II listed buildings in Manchester. Since 2000, a 250 million regeneration programme has seen many of these historic mills restored and turned into modern yet sympathetic apartments and commercial space. The new public square which features Architen's interactive lights is at the core of what is now known as the Ancoats Urban Village - a mixture of residential and commercial properties surrounding the square with the historic St Peter's Church adjacent to it.

The focal point of the square is a sculpture by renowned urban artist Dan Dubowitz. Working closely with the artist, Graham Festenstein Lighting Design (GFLD) were commissioned to design the lighting within the square. GFLD have worked with Architen Lighting in the past on the Princes Dock Bridge in Liverpool with other interactive lighting installations.

Graham Festenstein explains his idea behind the interactive lights:

We wanted to add an element of play to the square. Something fun. It's a real café culture at the heart of the redevelopment, so had to be usable at night. We knew Architen Lighting had the expertise to deal with this scale of project. Festenstein continues, Our idea was unique and slightly out of the ordinary. They have the skills and technical understanding to apply to our unusual design without too many custom components. They get the balance right.

Thirty sensors are buried under the pebbles in a random pattern and connected back to a Pharos LPC control system. When a particular sensor is triggered the controller will switch on the corresponding surrounding lights.

...see <http://www.architen.com> for more information.

**Location:**

Manchester, UK

**Market Sector:**

Public Buildings

**Scope Of Works:**

Engineering  
Manufacture  
Project Management  
Install

**Function:**

Interactive