

ACO helps Itzehoe catch its cultural identity

ACO Freestyle bespoke gratings help deliver an aesthetic surface water drainage solution for a town centre upgrade



Seamlessly balancing the old with the new is always a tricky job for any architect. However, thanks to ACO Water Management's new Freestyle grating design service, one German town was able to use much-needed municipal infrastructure upgrades to freshen up its principal shopping street, and create a bespoke aesthetic drainage solution intrinsically linked to its cultural identity.

Tucked away in the north of Germany, on the banks of the River Stör, is the town of Itzehoe.

Despite being one of the oldest towns in the region, Itzehoe is actually a hotbed of activity for start-up businesses. Boosted by a thriving retail and commercial scene, the town is home to a number of Germany's leading tech firms.

One of Itzehoe's highlights is the "Feldschmiede" – a pedestrianised area which is lined with a

number of shops, bars and restaurants. As part of ongoing works to improve the town's aesthetic, the local authority decided to replace the aging 1970s wastewater and storm water infrastructure underneath the Feldschmiede and combine it with essential upgrades to the area's broadband cable network. However, rather than a like-for-like replacement they decided to give it a modern – and personal – twist.

Project:

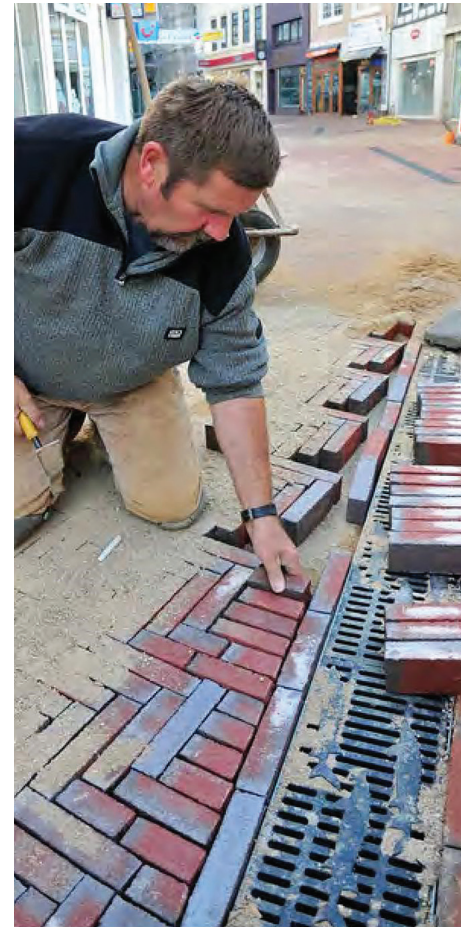
Itzehoe town centre renovation.

Objective:

Upgrade the wastewater and storm water infrastructure in the pedestrianised area and improve the town's aesthetics and identity.

Solution:

ACO Freestyle bespoke grating solution on top of ACO MultiDrain Channels provide surface water drainage solutions while reinforcing Itzehoe's unique identity.



As part of the remedial work, Hamburg-based consultants Kontor Freiraumplanung, worked with the town's civil engineering department to create an unmistakable water management grating that reaffirmed Itzehoe's proud identity. The design honours the River Stör, which flows through the town, and features three sturgeon motifs 'swimming' along the channel's grating. It was created using ACO Freestyle, a design service which enables end-users or architects to create bespoke grating designs, which ACO then manufactures from coated or uncoated ductile iron to sit on ACO drainage channels.

The bespoke ACO Freestyle channels formed part of a new 'castle street' style paving along the Feldschmiede, which paid homage to Itzehoe's twin town of Cirencester in the UK. The design comprised of natural clinker bricks laid in a traditional herringbone pattern, interspersed with sleek ACO MultiDrain channels, topped with the town's ACO Freestyle 'sturgeon' grating. The grating

was fitted to the ACO MultiDrain channel using ACO's Drainlock boltless locking system, which is built into the Freestyle grating.

All work was undertaken with minimal disruption to local residents, and well within the six-month time frame. While the new technical infrastructure has provided a welcome modern boost to Itzehoe's functionality, the surrounding surface design innovation has allowed the town to honour its cultural identity.

Commenting on the project, Bodo Schmedtje, Head of Itzehoe's Civil Engineering department, said: *"To accommodate both the water management systems and wider electrical work we decided to lay the water pipes first, followed by the broadband cables and surface design elements. This enabled us to keep the project on track with minimal disruption to those living and working locally."*

Bettina Bühse, Head of Itzehoe's Building Control Department, added: *"The redesign of the*

Feldschmiede between La-Couronne-Platz and Kirchenstraße has really enhanced the centre of Itzehoe. We've already had brilliant feedback on this new feature of our wonderful town from both residents and visitors alike."

Freestyle gratings are available in 100mm to 200mm widths and are built to D 400 load classification. The gratings are also compatible with the new Multiline Sealin channels, which has an integrated seal for easy installation, as well as a being a tested solution for groundwater protection.

ACO Freestyle is perfect for projects where customers want to add a truly individual finish, which can be integrated into the overall design of the building envelope, or in the case of Itzehoe, a whole pedestrianised area. As a result, designers can give places like Itzehoe, a lasting final touch that is totally unique to a given project.

For more information on ACO Freestyle, please visit www.ACO.co.uk/freestyle

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