

## Nottingham short listed for 'Best Education Project' national award

Nottingham City Council's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme has been shortlisted for the Public Private Finance Awards 2009 which promote best practice and recognise innovation and excellence.

Some of the most respected and experienced professionals from the public and private sectors have selected Nottingham's BSF programme to compete for 'the 'Best Education Project' award - a category which acknowledges the big programmes in the education sector.

Nottingham's BSF programme is being delivered by the Local Education Partnership (LEP) which is a partnership between Nottingham City Council, *inspiredspaces* and Buildings Schools for the Future Investments and will be assessed against a number of criteria such as innovation, the quality and sustainability of designs and its performance against targets.

The hallmark of Nottingham's BSF programme is its creative visioning processes with the whole school community to help scope the potential for the BSF funding to act as a catalyst to create redefined, 21st century community facilities. Pupils have been involved throughout the programme and have had the opportunity at every stage to check that their contributions have influenced the design of their new school. Pupils have also been given the opportunity to comment on the input from 'adults' including staff, parents, governors and members of the local community. As a result of pupils having an equal say to adult groups and feeling able to influence the final design, they have a strong sense of belonging and ownership for their new school. The visioning process includes some highly innovative ways to get pupils engaged with design problems and has offered some pupils the opportunity to share their ideas at local and national conferences, giving them valuable real-life experience.

The designs of the new schools are a true reflection of the extensive visioning process and will be a major contributor to 'Transforming Nottingham's Neighbourhoods' which is one of the City Council's highest priorities. Schools are being designed at the 'centre of the community' and will be used to bring a range of services to local residents including: adult education, leisure and sports, parenting skills courses, out of school study support, opportunities for volunteering, as well as family support, community and, health and social care services.

Sustainability is also a key feature of the designs to ensure that new schools contribute to the City Council's ambition to become a carbon-neutral council by 2016 and a carbon neutral city by 2100. *inspiredspaces* has signed up to ensuring that they achieve BREEAM (environmental assessment method) 'excellent' for new builds and 'very good' for refurbishments. In addition, bio-diesel combined heat and power technology at new build schools will enable up to 70% of their energy requirements to be generated on site from renewable sources.

In a relatively short operational period, Nottingham's BSF programme has achieved some considerable successes. *inspiredspaces* has been set targets for creating jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities and is committed to economic re-spend in the city. Currently approximately 40% of site workers are local and there is over £10 million re-spend to local companies.

Councillor David Mellen, Nottingham City Council's Portfolio holder for Children's Services, said: "I am delighted that we have been shortlisted for this national award. It represents the truly innovative approach being taken to deliver excellence for children and young people in Nottingham, through our exciting BSF programme. All the partners working to deliver BSF in Nottingham have a mutual commitment to a shared vision of transforming education and regenerating neighbourhoods. As a result, the LEP has established itself as the first choicer partner on all City Council capital projects. We have already achieved a great so far during the life of the programme and I would like to take the opportunity to offer everyone involved my best wishes for success."

The council and its partners look forward to challenging for national recognition in the Public Private Finance Awards to be presented in London on 19 May.

