

# Media Release

27 August 2009

## **Scarborough Renaissance wins top international award for public participation**

Scarborough is celebrating once again after winning the Project of the Year category in the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Core Values Awards 2009.

Scarborough's entry based on 'Scarborough's Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance', beat off stiff competition in its category from 12 other projects from across the globe to take home the prestigious accolade.

The project was recognised for the high value it places on, and long-term commitment it gives to, all areas of public participation throughout the different phases of urban renaissance. This includes the public being involved in, and being able to influence the decision-making processes that have helped to shape the town in the last few years, and will continue to do so in the future. The project was also rewarded for achieving a highly definable outcome, with many phases of the project already completed or progressing well.

For Nick Taylor, Scarborough's Urban Renaissance Manager, this is probably the award that best demonstrates how much the community of Scarborough is at the heart of the whole renaissance process. He said:



“We are immensely proud of this award and it is well deserved recognition for all the members of the community that have been actively involved in the renaissance process since 2002. Our forward thinking approach in being committed to public participation at all levels has been the biggest part of our success, and it has meant that the community has been at the very forefront of the decisions that have shaped Scarborough into the diverse, cultural, and entrepreneurial town it is today; one in which people are rightly proud to live, work and play.”

Cllr Derek Bastiman, Cabinet member for Regeneration, Strategic Planning and Community Development added:

“I am delighted that Scarborough has won yet another award that recognises the best practice we have achieved through renaissance. Coming on the back on both the Enterprising Britain and European Enterprise awards, this is fantastic recognition for all the dedication that the community has given to the process in the last few years. The award is richly deserved and I would like to express my personal thanks to all those who have helped to make it happen.”

John Thompson & Partners (JTP), consultant architects and community planners, nominated Scarborough for the IAP2 Awards. The practice has been involved in Scarborough’s success story since they started to lead the Renaissance community planning process in 2002. JTP’s central ethos is that, “sustainable development is most effectively achieved if it engages stakeholder knowledge and commitment at every stage of the process”.

Charles Campion of John Thompson & Partners (JTP) said:

"John Thompson and Partners are very pleased to be part of the success of Scarborough Renaissance through our initial participatory planning work with all sections of the community. Together we created a consensus vision for the town and established a Town Team, which has been so important in steering the process and driving through the delivery



of Renaissance projects. The people of Scarborough can be justifiably proud of all that has been achieved and the IAP2 Project of the Year Award is a well deserved seal on this success."

Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency, which has backed Scarborough through every stage of its renaissance journey, encouraged the town to start the process of public participation, including supporting the creation of a 'Town Team' to play a key role in the delivery of the vision for Scarborough.

David Custance, Assistant Director of Environment at Yorkshire Forward commented:

"Throughout the whole process of Scarborough's Renaissance teamwork has been key, utilising the people of Scarborough's passion to transform their town into a place they can be truly proud of, which ultimately led to the success of the project."

- ENDS -

### Notes

IAP2 is an international association of members who seek to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, and other entities that affect the public interest in nations throughout the world. Currently, IAP2 has over 1,500 active members in 26 countries. The Core Values Awards is an annual competition that usually coincides with IAP2's international conference. For more information about the International Association for Public Participation and IAP2's Core Values, please visit the website: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

IAP2's core values for the practice of public participation are listed below in bold and underneath each one are the details that were included in Scarborough's competition entry.

In some of the answers, reference is made to a 'charrette' – *a charrette is an intensive planning session where members of the public, community planners, and others, collaborate to create a shared vision for development for the future. It provides a forum for*



*ideas, and allows everyone who participates to be mutual authors of a plan. Ultimately, the purpose of the charrette is to give all participants enough information to make good decisions during the planning process.*

**1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process**

Experience has shown that sustainable regeneration is best achieved by engaging fully with the community to develop and deliver projects through consensus and ownership. Scarborough Renaissance was set up to achieve the widest possible participation in developing and delivering a new vision for the town. This was underpinned by the insistence from the funding body Yorkshire Forward for an audit trail of public participation and support

**2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision**

Following the promise that the community charrette would create a vision that would form the basis of the Renaissance Strategy, a Town Team was established with a constituted Executive, a key part of the project approval process for the funding body Yorkshire Forward. In addition, Scarborough Borough Council consults with the Town Team on Renaissance issues and investments

**3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers**

Significant work was undertaken to reach all sectors of the community prior to the charrette in 2002. As a result there was wide-ranging involvement from all sectors, whose needs and interests are highlighted through the Town Team process. Project proposals are brought to and developed by the Town Team or an appropriate action group and the results are communicated through the monthly newsletter and website

**4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision**



Everyone who lives, works in, or visits Scarborough, is affected by the Renaissance. The community animation process, run by JTP, sought out all special interest groups, including visitors, to understand their issues and encourage participation in the process. This work continued through the Town Team and as the major projects have now been delivered, this success has acted to facilitate ever-growing involvement

**5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate**

The initial charrette was designed to be flexible and respond to the needs and wishes of participants. This approach has continued through the Town Team process, which seeks out input and reacts and shapes itself according to the topics and agendas brought to it by participants

**6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way**

In the build up to the initial charrette participants were informed about how the process would operate and what the outcomes would be. Facilitated workshops and hands-on planning groups were held to act as a focus for information exchange and to raise participants' capacity, whilst ensuring that participants' own areas of expertise and knowledge were captured into the process. Since the creation of the Town Team, training has been given, including formal courses and specific events. Feedback has been sought which has informed the process throughout, and allowed activities to be shaped over the last 5 years

**7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision**

The charrette concluded with a feedback presentation and written report showing how the participants' input had shaped the outcomes. This was presented as an illustrated vision and action plan for the town. Since then continued participation has shaped the Renaissance programme and the effect of participants' input is communicated regularly through a monthly newsletter, media releases, the website and through word of mouth.



This latter method is probably the most valuable as it demonstrates a much more networked and cohesive town

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