

COMMENDATIONS AND PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL AWARD



COMMENDATION FOR PLANNING CONSULTANCY Turley Associates

Turley Associates is an employee-owned practice with 120 chartered planners and 50 other experts across ten offices. The company seeks to lead, innovate and adapt across its private sector-led portfolio. Projects include the massive Wirral Waters scheme in Birkenhead and St David's 2 in Cardiff, as well as quirkier commissions such as the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre in Northern Ireland (above). "We deliver better prospects of success and value for money and clients enjoy working with us," says chief executive Rob Lucas.

Judges' comment: "Clients benefit from teams with skill sets responding to challenging briefs. They are working to secure positive outcomes."

COMMENDATION FOR SMALL PLANNING CONSULTANCY Brooke Smith Planning

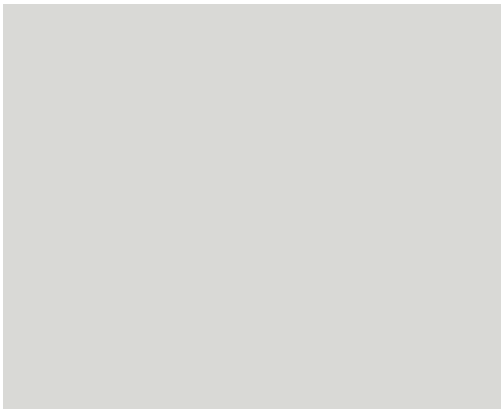
Birmingham-based Brooke Smith Planning, formerly CSJ Brooke Smith, has ten staff, including five chartered planners. They bring professionalism, understanding and dedication to projects ranging from housing renewal to energy from waste, listed building conversions and retail park redevelopment. Problem-solving, commercial realism and a clear appreciation of sustainability issues are hallmarks of their approach. "A lot of practices try to do everything. We know what we're good at and stick to it," says principal Louise Brooke Smith.

Judges' comment: "A commercial view enhances this passionate and organised consultancy's advice to clients in the projects presented."

PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL AWARD Commonwealth Association of Planners

From acting as a focal point supporting planners in countries where small numbers would not justify the formation of a professional organisation to influencing governments around the world at the prestigious World Urban Forum, the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) captures the very essence of planning. For 40 years, CAP has promoted planning through events, research and sharing information and has recently launched a young planners network in addition to its women in planning network. It demonstrates what can be achieved through co-operation, determination and goodwill.

President's comment: "CAP has an immensely valuable role in ensuring that planning is at the heart of providing sustainable human settlements."



COMMENDATION FOR EMPLOYER COMMITMENT TO LIFELONG LEARNING DPP

Consultancy DPP's corporate values statement cites a commitment to "nurturing and developing individual talent and maintaining a culture of learning and continuous improvement". DPP's learning programmes are geared towards developing fully rounded planners who provide excellent client services and raising professional standards more widely. The company offers training initiatives at induction, foundation, management and team leadership levels, a performance appraisal process, professional and technical development support and "lunch and learn" update sessions.

Judges' comment: "DPP takes a holistic approach. A rigorous package of courses follows induction, with appraisals and a 360-degree process."

COMMENDATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN PLANNING EDUCATION Virtual Built Environment Library

The University of Ulster's Virtual Built Environment Library (VIBEL) receives around 11,000 visits a year from students and staff seeking to make most efficient use of the plethora of information resources available electronically. VIBEL covers all the subjects taught in the university's school of the built environment and provides access through generic and supplementary portals covering law, statistics and sustainability. Professional librarians provide support for users. "It is brilliantly simple to use but totally comprehensive in its coverage," maintains school head Professor Greg Lloyd.

Judges' comment: "The VIBEL information portal is a creative and transferable model, supporting the students' teaching and learning experience."

COMMENDATION FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT Lorna Shand, Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt University graduate Lorna Shand impressed tutors on her MSc in urban and regional planning course with her ability to apply spatial planning theories to working practice, developing creative and practical solutions. Shand scored highly for a literature review requiring a critical understanding and discussion of urban design theory and principles in an exercise which highlighted transferable communication skills. Her new employers at the TAYplan Stragic Development Authority have been delighted with her performance.

Judges' comment: "A clearly written, interesting project. Shand met the criteria to a good standard, reflected on her practice and engaged colleagues."