

# The North East Regional Planning Achievement Award

2007 Winners of the Award



Engaging Communities in Planning



Young people have traditionally not been encouraged to take part in the Plan-making System, but they can play a significant role in the future of local areas and long term sustainability.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a much greater responsibility on Local Authorities to involve communities in the new Plan-making System.

Planning Aid North has already placed education at the heart of its Community Planning programme. Their **Planning Education for Young People** programme is rapidly being recognised as a national leading initiative.

The RTPI North East Regional Planning Achievement Award 2007 has been presented to Planning Aid North for this forward-thinking programme.

This sheet reviews the background to the Award.

## Planning Aid North is Tops for Planning Achievement in North East of England

### Background to the RTPI NE Regional Awards 2007

Since 1986, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) North East and its predecessor, the RTPI Northern Branch, have organised annual awards schemes to recognise and celebrate planning achievements in the region.

Distinguished winners over the period include the Coast to Coast Cycle Route, Newcastle East Quayside, Grainger Town, Amble Regeneration, Middlesbrough Town Centre, and the Greenhouse Eco Business Centre in Derwentside.

The 2007 RTPI NE Regional Awards were organised in association with IGNITE, the Regional Centre for Sustainable Communities in North East England.

### The RTPI NE Award Winner 2007

The 2007 Regional Award Winner is different to its predecessors, in that it does not compromise a physical planning scheme or a planning document. Nevertheless, the **Planning Education for Young People** programme, led by Planning Aid North, is in some senses even more ambitious and fundamental than previous award winners, and has already involved 18,000 young people.

Delivered by our staff and volunteers, working in partnership with local authority planners and supporting teachers, the programme has already involved schools and young people in North Tyneside, Newcastle, South Tyneside and County Durham. Excellent documentation will benefit projects in other areas.

Further details of the project can be found overleaf.

### The Award Ceremonies

The award was presented to Kevin Lillie, PAN Regional Co-ordinator and team on Friday, 26 October 2007 at the Awards Dinner in Newcastle upon Tyne, by Jim Claydon, RTPI National President.

It was fitting that on Monday, 29 October 2007 a special assembly was held at Shiremoor Primary School, where this forward-thinking programme was launched in 2004. Nearly 400 youngsters helped Planning Aid North to celebrate. John Sturzaker, the RTPI NE Chairman was also present when two pupils re-presented the Award to Kevin Lillie.

#### Planning Aid North

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## Planning innovation at heart of education

### Planning Education for Young People

The **Planning Education for Young People** programme is geared towards raising awareness and encouraging young people, who have often not been engaged in the past, to make a positive contribution to future neighbourhoods, through the planning system. We have developed an extensive portfolio of Schemes of Work for primary and secondary schools on a wide range of planning and regeneration themes. These specially designed studies support the curriculum in subjects, such as Art & Design, Citizenship, Design & Technology, Geography, History and ICT. All of our resources are linked to the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Schemes and Units of Work to ensure that studies are relevant.

We have worked very closely in partnership with North Tyneside Council as we have evolved our programme, which is now benefiting many young people throughout the North of England. This work has been extended to funded projects in County Durham and the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, and activities in other parts of the region. Over the last 3 years, approximately 18,000 young people in the region have benefited from our work. Through our partnership with North Tyneside Council, we have pioneered "Community Planning Forums for Young People", which is harnessing youth democracy to contribute to the planning system. A great opportunity now exists to support the delivery of the Council's Children and Young People's Plan through curriculum support and active participation.

The "Planning Education for Young People" programme is not just supporting the application of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 but also supports the Children's Act, through the Every Child Matters Agenda by encouraging young people to "Make a Positive Contribution". The evolution of the Local Development Frameworks by local authorities, and major conservation, development and regeneration schemes provide great opportunities for young people to actively contribute to local and regional neighbourhoods, and ensure that an often ignored group of the community has a voice in the future.

### Planning Aid North Information Leaflets

We have a range of information leaflets on our advice service, communications, community planning, education initiatives, progress and resources, good practice, planning knowledge, seminars, topical task sheets and volunteers.

## Positive feedback from National and Regional Planners

### Feedback from Planners

Feedback from both National and Regional Planners include:

#### Jim Claydon, RTPI National President 2007

"To combat climate change and inequalities in society we must interest even the youngest in the contribution that good planning can make. The Planning Education for Young People initiative is a brilliant example of what can be achieved by approaching the subject in an accessible and exciting way. It is a worthy winner of the RTPI North East's Regional Award."

#### The RTPI NE Award Scheme Judges

"The judges felt that this entry demonstrated best practice regionally, nationally and even beyond. The work contained many innovative elements, and should bring lasting benefits in community participation. The effort put in to documenting and disseminating the lessons learned was also particularly impressive. A very worthy winner of this year's regional award, which should surely be put forward for national consideration next year."

### Supporting New Learning Agendas

Our work is also supporting many new educational agendas, such as careers, enterprise, extended schools, sustainability and potentially the new vocational diplomas. In certain parts of the region, we are actively supporting "Building Schools for the Future" programmes by delivering studies and supporting young people to actively contribute to new learning zones and schools. A key element of our work is to highlight and encourage community participation. It is interesting that recently the Education Select Committee questioned the Minister over the "Building Schools for the Future" programme and highlighted teachers and pupils should be given more influence and that participation is vital. Our work with "Community Planning Forums" could support the new initiative of "Citizens juries" and ensure that young people are recognised. This education programme can also potentially support the new Local Government and Planning White Papers, the Housing Green Paper, and PSA Delivery Agreement 21, by ensuring that young people have a voice in the future.