

**RTPI EAST OF ENGLAND
REGIONAL PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2008**

“RESTORATION OF THE WEST FRONT”



Photo courtesy of St Edmundsbury Borough Council

The RTPI East of England Regional Planning Achievement Award is judged by an Awards Panel using seven criteria, as follows:

- Enhancement of the physical environment;
- Achieving sustainable development;
- The originality of the project or approach;
- The key issues and problems which have been overcome;
- The quality of the professional work involved in the project design, the development of planning concepts or the development of planning techniques;
- The extent to which the achievement may serve as a model for work elsewhere;
- The role of the planner when working in partnership with other professions, agencies and disciplines.

The restoration of the West Front of the Abbey of St Edmunds, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, has most definitely secured an enhancement of the physical environment and is an excellent example of sustainability in practice.

The building was not only restored and safeguarded, it was developed to the true conservation concept of having a viable use after restoration was complete. The high degree of partnership working required to bring the project to fruition, with all the differing goals and priorities that encompasses, demonstrated an achievement of flexibility and understanding of all aspects of restoration and conservation in a high quality environment.



Photo courtesy of St Edmundsbury Borough Council

The judges considered that the outcome of the project was an outstanding achievement due to:

- The poor state of the building when work started;
- The complicated development history of the centuries old building;
- The need to maintain historical integrity in the repairs;
- The requirement for a modern standard of internal design and fittings for residential use.

The techniques used to achieve this balance were rated highly by the Panel and the result is a building which has achieved a balance between historical accuracy, modern living requirements and maintaining the historical setting of the last substantial remains of the Abbey alongside the Cathedral and Norman Tower.

The development serves an example of best practice and sets a standard for other restoration projects across the East of England.

**Statement by the RTPI East of England
30 April 2009**