

**16 HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Andrew Smith, director for property, business and regulatory Public



Hampshire County Council is a major local authority spender with an annual capital programme of £80m. It employs its own team of more than 60 architects.

Under county architect Sir Colin Stansfield Smith, who stepped down in 1992, the council forged an enduring reputation for high quality education buildings.

Within the constraints of public finance the council pushes the boundaries. Andrew Smith encourages the design team to get the most out of the brief. It has followed Tower Hamlets' Ideas Store as a more modest way, reconceiving public libraries as 'discovery centres' and working on schemes to sensitively modularise care homes.

The Lanterns Children's Centre proves it has an imaginative response to designing for children with special needs (*RIBA*, Sept 06). Perhaps its most high profile project is the £7.25m Winchester Cultural Centre (above), restoration of a grade II\* listed corn exchange as part of an art gallery, museum and reference library.

Hampshire sometimes employs other practices on major projects - Bennetts Associates is rebuilding the council's 1960s Winchester offices - and drafts in local architects to help with small works.

The judges felt the council still represented a 'very rare major public body which values architecture'. It was important not just for the buildings it procured directly but for raising the level of design by a ripple effect in the county and beyond.



**17 LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING & DAGENHAM**

Roger Luxton, corporate director of children's services Education

The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham has used the expansion of its nursery provision to procure a series of excellent buildings. The most visible is DSDHA's £1.2m John Perry Nursery with its dramatic cantilevered canopy (above), which won an RIBA Award this year.

An ex-teacher who has an OBE for his services to education, Roger Luxton knows what he wants. 'Function precedes form,' he insists. He does not want architects to rethink educational requirements. That doesn't mean following Department for Education & Skills guidelines slavishly. At the Jo Richardson Community School by Architecture plb, Luxton insisted on larger spaces than DfES standards.

The school epitomises Barking's challenges: procured under PFI with Bouygues, it sits in the major area of expansion of Barking Reach, part of the Thames Gateway. For a borough that already has to cope with pupil poverty and under-achievement, this is something to gear up for. The next round of projects should be through Building Schools for the Future; the borough awaits a decision on the £150m bid.

Architects appointed through the *OJEU* include Cottrell and Vermeulen and Cazenove Architects. It is important designers understand the continental way of schooling that has so influenced Luxton. 'We have used some untested architects,' he says. 'We are looking for those who will respond and negotiate a brief.'

Of all the education clients, including universities, the judges said Barking & Dagenham was the most interesting, and rare as a borough in its bold attitude towards commissioning lively buildings.

**18 TATE**

Alan Froud, senior client project manager Culture

With the unveiling of designs for a £165m addition that will increase late Modern's capacity by 60%, the museum is relaunching itself as a major arts client. If anyone can pull off Herzog & de Meuron's striking design - this 70m-high stack of crystalline boxes - Tate can.

Tate director Nicholas Serota is bullish about the building: 'It would be a sad city if the only new buildings representing this age were commercial ones,' he said at the press conference to launch the scheme. 'I believe people will respond positively to this structure. We have the chance to do something really remarkable here.'

But the scheme's physical similarity to Studio Libeskind's Spiral extension to the V&A inevitably leads one to wonder whether the Swiss team will run into the same kind of money problems that finally sank the west Kensington project. London major Ken Livingstone has promised £7m but the fundraising challenge is a big one.

Tate's building programme has been beset by setbacks recently. It has had to rethink its proposal to extend its St Ives branch after objections from locals to plans drawn up by Jamie Fobert Architects. The £12.5m scheme is now just one of 10 options, which include building on a site outside St Ives, or doing nothing at all.

Nevertheless, Tate continues to be an impressive client. Tate Liverpool is getting a makeover by Arca in preparation for its role in the 2008 City of Culture. Grimshaw is working on a new £35m building in Southwark to house the conservation collection. And Tate Britain is shortlisting architects to carry out a number of medium size but significant improvements to its public facilities over the next five to seven years.

Architecture is central to the institution's mission, says senior client project manager Alan Froud: 'An art gallery must inevitably acknowledge that the closeness of art and architecture requires careful and sensitive consideration and Tate does this by a combination of continuity and innovation in its choice of architects... Tate is willing



to provide opportunities to smaller and less experienced practices who can share our own knowledge and expertise within the sector to provide buildings and spaces of high design quality within the constraints of budget and programme.'

The judges particularly wanted to highlight the Tate's contribution to the regeneration of the borough of Southwark: this will be further enhanced by its new scheme which sends out landscape tendrils into the area. The relationship with Herzog & de Meuron seems to demonstrate that as a client Tate can build successful partnerships over time.