

ASTUDIO'S SCHOOL IN TOWER HAMLETS WINS LONDON MAYOR'S PRIZE



St Paul's Way Trust School in Bow, Tower Hamlets, East London, has won Best Built Project – Community Scale Scheme in the Mayor's London Planning Awards.

The school was rebuilt as part of Tower Hamlets' Building Schools of the Future Programme. Funded predominately by Tower Hamlets council, the £36 million project also received £1 million from the London Thames Gateway Corporation. The development was led and managed by the council, and designed by Astudio Architecture in conjunction with the students, staff and wider community. It was built by contractor Bouygues.

The London Planning Awards, now in its 9th year, is organised in partnership with the Mayor of London, London First, Royal Town Planning Institute and London Councils, to recognise and reward best practice in planning in the Capital. The Best Built Project – Community Scale Scheme award is sponsored by Land Securities.

St Paul's Way Trust School is a landmark new secondary school which knits together a diverse local community to unprecedented degree and sits within the wider St Paul's Way regeneration scheme. The building and school grounds have been designed to be uplifting and inspiring for those that use it, with public functions carefully combined to offer a grand scale civic facility to the neighbourhood.

The school provides secure access between the public and private realm, allowing the community easy access to a library, sports complex and theatre from the street. Clever internal planning allows both pupils and the community to benefit from these functions in tandem and the school is free of the all too common unsightly fences and gates that form barriers between schools and their surroundings.

Designed to be both engaging and practical for pupils and teachers, the building comprises three floors offering a range of learning environments. These range from corridor-free spaces allowing passive supervision to classroom spaces that can be expanded easily into larger or smaller open plan spaces to encourage a variety of teaching styles to flourish.

Four centres of excellence known as "houses" are the basis of the school. Each house creates a unique, dynamic social and educational experience with a "feature classroom", where the achievements of the house are showcased. Each house is centred around a threestorey atrium linking it to the library, dining hall and specialist teaching facilities.

The building has reached an exceptional level of sustainability, achieving a BREEAM excellent rating with an expected annual consumption of just 22kg/CO₂ m². Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, said: "Once again we have seen yet another stunning crop of entries that showcase the best in urban planning, architecture and design. From shopping centres and schools, to new homes, parks and museums, all of this year's shortlisted entries demonstrate a wonderful ambition to make our city an even better place to live, work and study."

Mayor Lutfur Rahman, Tower Hamlets Council, who officially opened the new building last year, said: "St Paul's Way Trust School boasts some of the best learning facilities in the country, whilst providing an unprecedented amount of new facilities for the local community. Winning a London Planning Award shows that the borough's Building Schools for the Future programme is setting the bar for teaching facilities of the future."

"The school engages confidently with the community it serves and the community facilities have made a huge impact locally, helping us win back trust from our residents. It is a powerful expression of how the school is engaging with and uniting the community," added Grahame Price, St Paul's Way Trust School Headteacher.

<http://www.astudio.co.uk>