



RESEARCH PROJECTS

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE

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TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY DESIGN

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FOR two decades there has been growing worldwide interest in involving communities in planning and designing their own surroundings. H.R.H. The Prince of Wales has been an important champion of the approach, and The Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture is keen to support and promote this area of research.

Considerable experience of participatory planning and design exists at local level, but few attempts have been made to analyse and disseminate the lessons learnt – meanwhile, scarce resources are being wasted 'reinventing the wheel'. However, there remains a tremendous potential for improving policies to help create more civilised and sustainable human settlements.

As part of the Institute's research programme, a project is being established to produce participatory planning and design tools. It will be undertaken by Building Communities (an independent organisation specialising in community-based development) with support from the Institute. There will be close collaboration with other organisations involved in related work, both in the UK and overseas.

The objectives are: *a)* to gain better understanding of participatory design; *b)* to identify the most effective tools and techniques; *c)* to improve access to good practice information.

The project will be product and service oriented. Output will include fact sheets, publications, films, catalogues, training materials and involvement in live pilot projects. With seed funding and research facilities provided by the Institute, a prospectus for further fund-raising has been produced. The core costs of the project, estimated at around £80,000 per annum, are being sought from public and private sponsors and from charitable foundations. It is anticipated that, after three years, sufficient income should be generated from sales and fees to ensure the project's long-term sustainability.