



Artists impression of Jarrow School, the first school to open as part of STaG's BSF project.

## partnerships for schools

This case study looks at the journey of South Tyneside and Gateshead's award-winning Local Education Partnership (LEP) and how it is successfully delivering projects within and beyond the BSF programme.

*inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd won the 'Buildings Beyond Schools Award' in the Excellence in BSF Awards 2009.

### Key project information

**Name of Local Authorities:** South Tyneside and Gateshead (STaG)

**Project lead:** *inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd

**No. of Pupils:** 10,000+

**Project Type:** Joint LEP

**Project Cost:** c£250m

**Project Timescales:** LEP established December 2007

# STaG's award-winning Local Education Partnership - *inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd

## Project description

In 2004, STaG submitted a joint Readiness to Deliver (RtD) application to join the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. STaG were successful and included in Wave 1 of the national programme, and so began the journey of the first joint local authority BSF partnership.

In the beginning, STaG's BSF project was managed and procured by a small dedicated team working on behalf of both councils. An agreed Memorandum of Understanding endorsed by both councils, confirmed to the market and to the wider community, that this partnership was serious about selecting a private sector partner (PSP) to deliver not only the BSF project, but also projects over and above this, such as health and leisure facilities.

The journey was not without challenges, which is to be expected when procuring such a large and complex project across two councils. However, the strong partnership between South Tyneside and Gateshead and the close working relationship of the BSF team resulted in the procurement period being kept to a minimum. STaG reached Financial Close (FC) in December 2007, enabling the formation of the Local Education Partnership (LEP), *inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd,

which then moved seamlessly into full operation, launching its sample projects and moving through to deliver its next stage ahead of timetable.

The STaG LEP vision and objectives are founded on an ethos of educational transformation coupled with delivery of a sustainable long-term capital solution, fully maintained to the highest standards; a programme that creates a learning and enterprise culture to give people a choice of learning in the right environment.

A key feature of STaG's project is the drive to challenge educational approach by ensuring that school design supports the shift towards personalised learning.

*inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd directly invests in and support change management both within schools and across other South Tyneside and Gateshead Council's regeneration projects, for example promoting personalised learning, the use of mobile technology and raising the aspirations of young people throughout both boroughs. Schools have particularly commented on the benefit of links created by the LEP working across two local authority areas in developing their educational vision.

# STaG's award-winning Local Education Partnership - *inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd

STaG strives to ensure that community and pupil engagement is at the heart of each scheme, this is a key factor not only in the BSF schools but also the additional schools projects being delivered through the LEP (see projects overview). This process has allowed both primary and secondary age pupils from across South Tyneside and Gateshead to gain a wider understanding of the processes and opportunities of the schools projects which have increased their aspirations and helped them to realise that it's them that will directly benefit. As a result of this pupils are being offered increased workplace opportunities.

*inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd has evolved into a 'model' LEP, resourced adequately to deliver its objectives within the contractual timetable, with the ability to expand and absorb further work in order that the local authorities can deliver its increasing capital programme in a timely, efficient and effective manner. It has a shared vision, true partnership, trust and efficient use of resources at its heart, with an integrated project team located in one office.

To date the LEP has achieved two operational BSF schools, Mortimer Community College and Jarrow School, amongst many other projects which are either complete or underway (see projects overview), has been successful in winning a variety of awards (see awards overview) and is now working towards its next phase of BSF.

Additionally, both Mortimer Community College and Jarrow School have been awarded BREEAM excellent standard, which is significant as Mortimer Community College is part refurbishment and part new build.

Martin Townsend, Director at BREEAM, said: "Mortimer Community College demonstrates the importance of ensuring the open and honest conversation between the client and the design team. It was great to see a real pride from everyone involved in the process, from design professional to headteacher to pupil. All with the common goal to build the best school possible for current and future pupils. It is a true legacy for sustainable building design."

Currently work is underway with a consultancy company, FSquared, to identify additional sources of funding for the BSF programme. Primarily the LEP is considering both football and rugby all weather pitches that are not able to be funded through the BSF funding allocation. Consideration is being given to the LEP's social enterprise model, Today's Green, which investigates the potential of extended community use of the school and its sporting facilities and how these can be run as a commercial venture.

The LEP has also made provision for £500k over its 10 year contractual term to support educational transformation. This will be managed by the transformation manager and used to support a large number of initiatives within the schools.

In March 2010, Gateshead Council was given the green light to join the BSF programme to begin its first follow on BSF project to rebuild and refurbish four more schools in the area, building upon the success of its first phase. Gateshead Council is passing all of its new build schemes through the LEP.

## Projects overview

### Building Schools for the Future

Two schools open, six in construction and one due to start on site, plus the delivery of the BSF ICT Managed Service in three additional schools.

### Primary Capital Programme

Four schools in construction, two in design and one due to start on site.

### Co-location Fund

One project currently in design.

### Additional projects

Delivery of a Primary Care Centre currently in construction, three school refurbishment schemes which are complete, delivery of a catering service, temporary accommodation hire and the replacement of a school's post-16 block.

## Awards overview

PfS Excellence in BSF Awards 2009 – Buildings Beyond Schools Award

Public Private Finance Awards 2009 – Best Public Sector Project Team Award

Public Private Finance Awards 2009 – Best Educational Project Award

4Ps Awards 2008 – Joint Public Sector Partnership Award

PfS Excellence in BSF Awards 2008 – Best Community Integration

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## Top tips

**Partnerships working:** The essence of effective project and programme management is teamwork and good supply chain management.

*inspiredspaces* STaG and its tier 1 supply chain are co-located in one office in South Tyneside. This gives a one-team approach ensuring efficiencies and value for money as time isn't wasted travelling to and from meetings, daily face to face contact ensures prompt discussion making and problem solving before escalation.

**Maintain on site presence:** A regular presence of the client representatives on site also means that a true partnership ethos is maintained.

**Hold inductions:** STaG has an induction process which highlights the educational aims and objectives of the project. This is passed down through all levels of the supply chain. This induction programme is being regularly updated to ensure that all new and existing staff are well informed and hence are able to pass on this information to anyone they come in contact with *inspiredspaces*. STaG are also working closely with the local authorities on the employment and training of the local labour force and collaborating with the local authority's direct labour organisations. Collective Partnership Targets and Key Performance Indicators ensure that these recruitment and training targets are continually monitored and every effort is made to ensure they are achieved.

## Key contact

Stanley Johnson, LEP General Manager  
*inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd, Unit 13/14, Blue Sky Way, Monkton Business Park South, NE31 2EQ  
Tel: 01914955948  
Email: [Stanley.johnson@inspiredspaces.co.uk](mailto:Stanley.johnson@inspiredspaces.co.uk)

## Further information

*inspiredspaces* STaG Ltd  
[www.inspiredspacesstag.co.uk](http://www.inspiredspacesstag.co.uk)