

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

AREA INITIATIVES

Hastings Urban Conservation Project

A50

December 1989 / January 1990

DEVELOPMENT DATA

Partners:

Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, English Heritage.

Aims and objectives:

To promote investment in the repair and reuse of buildings; to encourage active conservation and enhancement initiatives; to provide information and advice on conservation and environmental matters; to involve the townspeople in environmental improvements.

Management:

Day to day management is the responsibility of a Director supported by a personal assistant and a team of employment trainees, volunteers and consultants.

Structure:

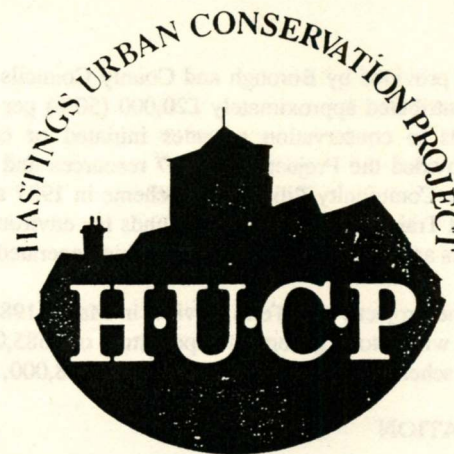
Project overseen by a Joint Committee with four members from both the Borough and County Councils and one member co-opted from English Heritage.

Funding:

Core funding from County and Borough Councils. English Heritage contributes to Town Scheme and individual conservation schemes. Training Agency support for staff and running costs. Increasing income from sale of merchandise and consultancy.

Timescale:

Initially 1986-1989, extended to July 1992.



The Hastings Urban Conservation Project (HUCP) was established in August 1986 by Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and English Heritage. The project's principle aim is to improve the appearance of the town by stimulating a process of community-based, conservation-led regeneration. The project was initially funded for three years, but this has recently been extended to July 1992. The project runs several grants schemes, initiates environmental improvements and runs environmental education programmes. It has received a UK 2000 Kitemark.

SOURCE

Edited by the Planning Exchange from information provided by Nick Wates, Director, Hastings Urban Conservation Project

NOTES

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ADDRESS

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CROSS REFERENCE

UDIS : A25, A49, C13,
D30, D31

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FINANCE

Core funding is provided by Borough and County Councils which have contributed £50,000 each per year. English Heritage has contributed approximately £20,000 (50%) per annum towards a Town Scheme as well as contributing substantial funds to conservation schemes initiated or co-ordinated by the Project. The Manpower Services Commission provided the Project with staff resources and running costs to a value of approximately £50,000 per annum under the Community Programme Scheme in 1987 and 1988. This support continues, at a lower level, under the Employment Training Scheme. Some funds for environmental schemes are assembled from both the private and charitable sectors and income is increasingly being generated by the sale of merchandise and consultancy.

At the time of the Project's Mid Term Review in March 1988 it was calculated that grant expenditure of £42,000 had been associated with a total generated expenditure of £585,000, representing a leverage ratio of almost 14:1. Of this, HUCP initiated schemes had generated more than £238,000, a lower but very respectable leverage ratio of 6:1.

IMPLEMENTATION

The following schemes have been undertaken to date:

Pedestrianisation of George Street - the main shopping street in the Old Town, in August 1987.

Shop front scheme - Grants of up to 40% are available for repair and enhancement of shop fronts. To date, 10 of the 21 projects receiving offers of assistance have been completed.

Over the shop vacancies - An Over The Shop grant scheme covering 40% of costs of conversion works started in 1988. Two schemes have so far been supported.

Town Scheme - the Project was able to negotiate a Town Scheme agreement with English Heritage covering Burtons' St Leonards and Pelham Crescent. Response to the scheme has been excellent. 35 properties have received an offer of grant, 28 of which have been completed.

Enhancement Scheme - covers 40% of the costs of decoration and reinstatement of architectural features in strategically located properties was established in 1988. 23 properties have received offers of grant of which 14 have been completed.

Environmental Projects - a small projects grant scheme enables HUCP to initiate and co-ordinate landscaping, heritage and conservation projects, normally by combining forces with local authority departments, voluntary bodies and the private sector. 12 projects have been completed and several others are in progress.

Environmental Studies - HUCP has commissioned environmental studies from consultants which can be used as a basis for targeting grant schemes. One major study on the Old Town called "Opportunities for Action" has been completed by landscape architects Terra Firma and several others are in progress.

Environmental education - HUCP operates two conservation shops, has produced a range of reports and handbooks and has organised study days, ideas and exhibitions.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

A consultancy firm, Partnership Ltd. of Brighton, has recently been engaged with the assistance of UK 2000 to convert the project into a development trust. This will enable it to buy and manage property and make it easier to attract private and charitable finance thereby reducing reliance on public funds in the long term.