

BEACH HUT SEARCH NARROWED DOWN

EASTBOURNE BEACH HUTS COMPETITION INTERNATIONAL LONGLIST ANNOUNCED

Eastbourne Borough Council today announced the longlist for its Iconic Beach Huts Competition, narrowing down over 50 entries to the architects' category to just twelve. The competition, which was launched in September, has attracted attention from all over the world and is seen as a prestigious opportunity for leading architects to become involved in a major regeneration scheme and demonstrate their most creative talents.

As part of the Driving Devonshire Forward initiative, the iconic beach huts will become landmark symbols of the town's Devonshire ward by creating new visitor attractions and enhancing Eastbourne's reputation as a town embracing culture and design.

The architects' longlist, which includes proposals from as far and wide as Melbourne, Sarajevo, Madrid and Dublin, comprises Alvaro Fernandez from specialists in public library, automotive retailing workplace and higher education design - **Bissett Adams**; Pol Gallagher from the winner of the 2012 competition to design the sculptural entrance to Dublin City University - **ZAP Architecture**; Stephen Foley from Dublin and Madrid based architectural studio **SFA** whose previous work includes Avondale Park Pavilion and the award winning Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies; Jacob Low from **Jak Studio**, based in London and Sarajevo, whose recent projects include the Listening Project Booth for BBC Radio 4, Villa Brash in Saint Tropez, and London's first 'Invisible House', Alpa Depani and James Marrinan from London based **Romp Designs**, Peter Noel from **Studio 2FLA** - an emerging practice specialising in architecture, design and 3D visualisation; Christopher Rainsford from **Calford Seaden** whose work includes schools, retirement villages and distribution centres; James Hampton from the London based architectural and landscape design practice **Periscope**; Tanya Griffiths from the Ipswich architects **Concertus**; George King from London and Melbourne based **George King Architects** who created the beach hut House of Mirrors on Bondi Beach; Ewen Miller and Kim Smith from the RIBA Award winning **Calder Peel**; and Sean Redmond from Bristol based **PH3 Designs**.

The competition consists of two separate categories. In addition to inviting submissions from practicing, registered architects, there is a separate category for community members to work with the project's consultant architect, and submit designs for a community arts project hut by January 15th 2016

The outcome of the competition will be five bespoke designed iconic huts which will be sited at key locations in Devonshire ward, to the east of the pier, forming part of the route of the Coastal Culture Trail linking three award winning galleries: Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne, De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill and Jerwood Gallery in Hastings. The beach huts will be key landmarks along the seafront, harnessing the resurgence of interest in coastal communities, attracting new visitors to Eastbourne and becoming symbols of

Eastbourne; matching high quality design, visual flair and function.

The shortlist designs will be announced at the end of January 2016 and will be exhibited for public consideration from March 9 - 14 2016. The final decision will be made by a combination of the public vote and a panel of expert judges and the winners will be announced just before Easter

Christine Harmar Brown Project Manager says

“The breadth and quality of the proposals we have had is astounding and is a real endorsement of the scope and ambition of the competition itself. It was a difficult process to narrow the selection down to a longlist but in these twelve, we have the very best of some very strong proposals We are very much looking forward to the next stage and unveiling the designs for the shortlist in the New Year.”

The judging panel will comprise **Martin Jones**, Senior Programme Manager – Regeneration, HEDP, **Annie Wills** Head of Tourism, Eastbourne Borough Council, **Cllr Margaret Bannister** Driving Devonshire Forward Steering Group representative, **Jane Montague** Architect and special guest judge, ground-breaking sculptor **Alex Chinneck**. Alex has been the mastermind behind a succession of major public artworks that have captured international admiration and attention. These include: sliding the entire brick facade from a house into the front garden of the property; completely inverting two four-storey commercial buildings; constructing a full-size house from 7500 wax bricks that proceeded to melt over thirty days; and creating the illusion that a stone building on London’s iconic Covent Garden Piazza had miraculously levitated into the air. Alex has recently completed a landmark project for the London Design Festival 2015; his biggest undertaking to date.

Martin Jones from Eastbourne’s Housing and Economic Development Partnership (Eastbourne Borough Council and Eastbourne Homes) says: I’ve been blown away by the quality and design ideas that architects have submitted, it was really tough to select just 12 for longlisting from over 50 entries. My thanks to all those architects which entered and I’m looking forward to the designs the community submit and to the next, exciting phase of this innovative project, selecting the shortlist in January.

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Notes to editors

Background information

Eastbourne is the largest coastal town in East Sussex. It offers an increasingly attractive

and popular environment for people to live and work; high quality facilities, proximity to the South Downs National Park and employment opportunities alongside its more traditional role as a holiday destination for 4.1m day visitors per year and 2.04m staying night trips.

The Housing and Economic Development Partnership (HEDP) is a partnership between Eastbourne Borough Council and Eastbourne Homes Ltd. HEDP's role is to provide new homes, bring empty homes back into use, neighbourhood regeneration and economic development across the borough, with a focus on Devonshire ward. Devonshire ward lies to the east of the town centre; it includes the seafront from the pier east to Sovereign Leisure Centre. The ward contains all land uses typical of a resort town centre, from shopping and venues for nightlife, large hotels, small hotels and guest houses, family homes and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). As such it reflects the diversity of Eastbourne and has many of the factors both positive and negative that often characterise town centres of seaside resorts.

Driving Devonshire Forward (DDF)

In 2013 HEDP commissioned an urban design study of the ward to formulate and develop a vision for the social and physical regeneration of the ward. The community were at the heart of this project, which resulted in Driving Devonshire Forward (DDF). The DDF is the community's strategic vision and plans for the ward, the regeneration 'branding' and sets the guiding principles for all projects.

Eastbourne's Seafront

The seafront is a strategic regional attraction, fulfilling its potential through cultural and sporting activity and use by the community as a local amenity. The emerging EBC seafront local plan will shape and define the tourist offer.□

The tourist industry is an important part of a diversified economic portfolio. It is important to note one of the most encouraging trends in recent years has been the recovery in the British seaside industry. This has been driven in part by the progress some seaside towns have made in carving out a niche offer, and the success of schemes to promote England as a destination.

Several seaside towns have successfully been re-branded on a coherent cultural programme. The ward's specific context justifies a bespoke approach. New landmarks in key public spaces, for example at key junctions or on the beach, with an extraordinary design brief, can act as catalysts to regenerate a local area.

Beach huts

Eastbourne, like many other coastal towns, provides beach huts as part of its visitor offer. Currently there are 87 huts and 69 brick built chalets at six locations, all west of the pier. There are currently no beach huts east of the pier. However, there are key visitor seafront attractions: Redoubt Museum, Treasure Island, Spray Watersports Centre, Fort Fun and

Princes Park. The council are installing 20 traditional huts to the east of Spray Watersports in addition to the 5 iconic huts.

Competition Managers

B&R Productions Ltd has been appointed by EBC to manage the competition on their behalf up until the announcement of the winning designs. B&R Productions has appointed Simon Barker of Barker Shorten LLP as Project Architect to work with the community on developing their ideas. EBC will thereafter contract him to realise the selected scheme for the Community Project Hut.