

Building Schools for the Future

On March 15th 2008 pupils from Robert clack school were invited by C.A.B.E. (The Commission for the Built Environment) to meet with MP Margret Hodge, the commissions chairman Sir John Sorrell and Suzi Legood an architect from the practice responsible for the new Barking central building.



C.A.B.E. are the government advisors on all public buildings. Without C.A.B.E.'s approval on design local authorities find it difficult to get planning permission for projects in the U.K.



Sir John Sorrell having just returned from New York had heard of the great interest shown by Robert Clack students in new architecture from his wife Francis Sorrell who leads the Sorrell foundation in Somerset house. The borough's schools have been working closely with the foundation as part of the Buildings Schools for the Future project where in 4 years time, all of the secondary schools in Barking and Dagenham be will be re-built or re-furbished.

Robert Clack students were recently chosen to represent the boroughs schools input into this multi - million pound project and recently featured in a lengthy article in the Guardian newspaper.

19 pupils from year 9 to year 12 were asked by Margret Hodge how they felt about the new building which is opposite the town hall in Barking.

They then listened to Ms Legood who took the students through the entire design process from the earliest sketches through to the scale model and final plans.



The students then went on a tour of the site and had the special features of the building explained to them including the sedum roof which forms part of the buildings sustainability profile.

The pupils will now develop artwork in response to their visit. This work will then be exhibited in the gallery space in the building itself.

All of the pupils have been invited to visit the architects Old Street offices and now several students who want follow into the profession have now been giving the opportunity to have their work experience with the practice.

Chris Poole the head of Art at Robert Clack said that she was very proud of the students' achievement in being invited to visit and she is confident that the exhibition will be a great success!