



PRESS RELEASE – 17 December 2009

## Ed Balls, MP, launches pioneering toolkit

### Spaceshaper 9-14: giving young people a voice



A pioneering toolkit was launched on Friday 11 December by Ed Balls MP, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, at Beam.

The activity-based toolkit has been developed to capture the views of young people aged 9-14, who are often left out of decisions that affect their lives. Developed by CABE and Beam, with The Architecture Centre, Bristol and Kent Architecture Centre, it explores what young people think about how local places are used and how they can be improved.

Rt Hon Ed Balls MP, said: 'I hope the Spaceshaper 9-14 toolkit will help capture the ideas of young people when new public spaces are being planned. When I'm visiting different areas I often meet our young designers, architects and town planners of the future who tell me how they've contributed to key decisions for their school, youth centre or play area. I want to encourage even more young people to get involved in the development of public spaces and I hope this toolkit will help local authorities to facilitate this.'

Year 5 pupils (aged 8-10) from St Mary's Church of England Primary School in Wakefield, who are using Spaceshaper 9-14 to help them improve a park a few hundred yards from their school, will be taking part in the launch event. The park on Berners Street, Wakefield is part of Wakefield Council's 'Playbuilder' improvement programme.

Richard Simmons, CABE Chief Executive said: 'Young people have opinions about their local parks, squares and streets, but too often they go unheard. Their views matter. Spaceshaper 9-14 is an imaginative new way of getting young people involved and giving them a chance to have their say.'

**Do you want to become a trained facilitator?**

The training and toolkit will support you to engage young people in activities and facilitate a discussion about a local space to help raise aspirations and encourage young people to demand more for their local spaces. For more information visit the Architecture Centre website:

<http://www.architecturecentre.co.uk/events-spaceshaper-facilitator-training>