

DERBY COLLEGE TEAM VISITS RIYADH FOR INNOVATIVE PROJECT



A team from the UK-based Derby College visited Riyadh recently as part of an innovative British Council-sponsored project also involving the Riyadh College of Technology.

The project, brain child of Dr Fahd Al-Juhaimi in Riyadh and Rafeeq Gandoura in Derby, involves two groups of students, one from each college, designing an environmentally friendly house using the traditional building techniques of their own distinct environments, and putting the design together using CAD technology.

What makes the project challenging is the fact that there is a striking difference between the traditional architectures of Derby and Dirayah. Various aspects of design such as insulation, cooling, water retention or water proofing

have affected the appearance of houses in the two towns over generations.

Both the Saudi and British teams presented their designs to a gathering of architects and construction company managers who had been invited along to judge their work. The audience was impressed, not only at the technical skills of the young men but the enthusiasm both teams displayed for the building techniques of their own countries and the research they had done to learn about the other.

"The highlight of our week was the two Eco-House Presentations," said Bill Chaplin, Governor of Derby College. "Both sets of students did a great job. They are our future."

Al-Juhaimi was equally impressed. "We are really proud of these

young men. Their designs are very professional. The essence of competitiveness between the colleges has encouraged them to excel," he said.

The next stage of the project involves a visit by the Saudi team to the UK where they will take part in a scheme in which Derby College and a local construction company are renovating a street of Victorian town houses in the centre of the city to strict environmental standards. The Saudi lads are looking forward to sampling life on a British building site.

"The initiative, taken by both our governments, to increase vocational skills in our countries, is an excellent one," said Chaplin. "To visit each other's countries and enjoy the friendship and culture leaves a lasting impression on our students."