

Staircase House Press Release

WOOD YOU BELIEVE IT Staircase House is a winner !

Staircase House, Stockport town centre's newest - and oldest - visitor attraction, has achieved national recognition for the quality of work that went into its restoration and construction.

The Council's star attraction has notched up top prizes at the National Wood Awards and the Greater Manchester Chamber Construction and Development Sector Awards.

On 5 October, more than 400 guests from the north west's building and development sector attended the Greater Manchester Chamber Construction and Development Sector Awards at the Midland Hotel, Manchester. Staircase House took away the prize of Special Project of the Year, fighting off stiff competition.

Introduced last year to recognise construction projects that raise industry standards, the competition promotes the region as a centre excellence in construction.

Then on 19 October, at the Carpenters' Hall in London, Staircase House was highly commended in the category of Construction and Restoration at the 2005 Wood Awards. Sir Michael Latham, Chairman of CITB-Construction Skills, presented the award in front of an audience of more than 200 entrants, sponsors and judges.

The judges praised the 'great effort' made to retain the original fabric of the building and conserve material as found, saying: "The extent of works is heroic and represents a great achievement for Stockport and all involved."

The restoration of Staircase House in Stockport's historic market place was a painstaking 10-year project, running from 1995 through to the opening in August this year. The first five years were spent applying for funding and fighting off demolition attempts, while the latter five years were dedicated to restoration work.

Staircase House suffered almost complete devastation in 1995 when a fire destroyed much of the house. The parts of the medieval house that survived were salvaged and pieced together with faithful replicas.

Frank Galvin, Curatorial Project Manager, comments: "We wanted to restore Staircase House to its former glory, and for house guests to be able to make the clear distinction between the original parts and restored areas."

The superb quality of the restoration of Staircase house is thanks to a number of local contractors. Architects Donald Insall Associates of Chester undertook the initial stages of planning, whilst the joinery and building work was carried out by Staffordshire based firm Linford Bridgeman Ltd.

Ian Robertson, Joinery Manager at Linford Group was in charge of the complicated and intricate restoration and conservation work. He said: "This was an extremely challenging and rewarding project and truly deserves this prestigious recognition. Everyone at Linford is extremely proud to have been involved with such a magnificent and historically significant project."

Councillor Pam King, Stockport Council's Executive Member for Leisure and Culture, said: "Staircase house is fascinating, not only in the way it brings to life the history of the town, but also in the superb craftsmanship used in its restoration. It truly deserves the recognition of these two awards. If you haven't already visited, I would urge you to do so."

End