

By James Hore

A DEFINING landmark for the East of England could be built off the coast of Essex by 2010, helping to raise the profile of the region and bring in millions of pounds from tourists.

That was the message from the architects who created Lost Town, an ambitious multi-million pound modern artwork representing the medieval Church of All Saints which fell into the sea in the late 18th Century.

Lost Town's aim is also to highlight the devastating impact of coastal erosion while drawing national and international attention to the region.

An exhibition in Germany opened this week and features, for the first time, full-scale models of the shiny stainless steel poles which will be used to create the striking structure less than a kilometre from Walton-on-the-Naze, where the church originally stood.

The exhibition was backed by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) which is keen to build on the popularity of the region with German tourists who currently are the second biggest overseas visitors after Americans.

Feasibility studies have proved the Lost Town is achievable and now the Munich-based architects, Anne Niemann and Johannes Ingrisch, are beginning the search for grants and funds which would see their dream become a reality.

Having held a meeting in Walton last month they are aware Lost Town splits opinions but speaking at Architekturgalerie in Munich, they

**'Hopefully it will become part of the identity of Walton'**

remain confident the project will do for the east what the Angel of the North has done at Gateshead.

Miss Niemann said: "We are aware it is a controversial piece of art - it should be because art is there to make people think also about bad things like coastal erosion and land loss.

"Not everyone likes modern art but we hope people in the area will accept it will bring benefits to the region."

Local people will not pay for Lost Town - its success will depend on money from sponsors, private benefactors, lottery funding and other grants, but ultimately a positive response from the public is key.

"If people like the project and want to have it here, it will make it much easier to get the money for it and we feel now that the majority of people are in favour," Miss Niemann added.

With tourists due to flood into Harwich International Port headed for the 2012 Olympics, Mr Ingrisch also hopes Lost Town will help the region benefit from the sporting event.

He said: "It is a fantastic feeling to have the exhibition because we have worked so hard on the project.

"Hopefully it will become part of the identity of Walton and there is no limit to how long it would be there."

The architects knew nothing of the region when they started their research for the competition but have now fallen for its charms.

Mr Ingrisch said: "We had no idea that it existed and that is part of the problem, that not everybody knows



MASTERMINDS: Architects Johannes Ingrisch and Anne Niemann with one of the models from the Lost Town project planned for Walton on the Naze. An exhibition is being staged in Munich, Germany

Photographs: CONTRIBUTED

# Lost Town finds way to Germany

East coast project seeks approval in continental Europe

about it - we did our research about the history of the East of England and discovered more about how interesting it is.

"We have been there many, many times now and the more often we go there the more we like it and we have really fallen in love with this nice quiet town of Walton."

Rachel Bosworth, EEDA's director of communications, said: "Tourism is big business. It's worth £5billion to the region every year and Germany is an important market for us.

"Globally, tourism is highly competitive and this means cities, regions and countries increasingly need to distinguish themselves as a means of strengthening identity and attracting inward investment which

leads in turn to jobs and long-term economic prosperity."

EEDA launched its landmark east international ideas competition in October 2003, calling for visionary ideas for a landmark to put the East of England on the map.

Also featuring at the Munich exhibition, which runs until February 18, are the three other winners awarded EEDA funding for feasibility studies: projects at Jaywick, Cambridge and another location, yet to be decided.

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LOOKING: A member of the public, right, views part of the project intended to highlight land loss along East Anglia's coastline



## Measles outbreak on wards contained

PARENTS of children treated at Ipswich Hospital are being contacted following a small outbreak of measles.

Seven suspected cases of the bug have been reported since December 28, with patients, staff and relatives all struck down.

Four instances have been confirmed among people who have had contact with paediatric wards of the hospital, in Heath Road.

It is believed about 50 people could have unwittingly been exposed to the

bug. A hospital spokeswoman said: "We are actively managing this situation.

"We are contacting parents of children who were on the ward when the measles cases appeared.

"Those contacted have been offered the MMR vaccine if they haven't had one already.

"We would like to reassure people using the hospital that, following the advice of the Health Protection Agency, we have every reason to believe the infection is contained and that control

measures are in place to stop the potential for further cases."

The spokeswoman added the outbreak highlights the importance of taking preventative steps against the bug. She said: "This situation underlines the importance of children having the MMR vaccine. The greater the number of children that have the vaccine reduces the potential for spread within the community."

Measles, which results in a rash, is a viral infection that is now rare in the

UK because of the high levels of immunisation.

The first sign of measles are irritability, a runny nose, conjunctivitis (red eyes), a hacking cough and an increasing fever that comes and goes. These symptoms may last up to eight days.

Anyone who is concerned they may have caught measles should call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or their GP.

Internet link: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk