

improving living in scotland



HOMES FOR SCOTLAND

JUDGES' REPORT 2014

**DRIVING RECOVERY
DELIVERING RESULTS**

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INTRODUCTION

Now in its 12th year, our annual awards scheme aims to demonstrate the industry's commitment to raise standards throughout the sector by recognising and promoting best practice.

It also underpins the wide-ranging work Homes for Scotland undertakes on behalf of its members, directly addressing the challenges which hamper the industry's ability to deliver the many thousands of homes of all tenures that are needed across the country.

The following categories for 2014 were therefore highly relevant in this regard, reflecting the areas of greatest industry importance:

Best Employer	Best Development – large (26+ units)
Employee of the Year	Best Development – medium (11-25 units)
Best Customer Service Initiative	Best Development – small (up to ten units)
Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery	Best Supporting Company
Best Home Design	

We also continued our prestigious Home Builder of the Year award which was decided by the independent judging panel based on the entries received for the above. The recipient of this year's Lifetime Achievement award was decided by the Homes for Scotland Executive Committee.

With the exception of these two awards, submissions in all categories were open to home builder, Registered Social Landlord and associate members.

Entries for Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery were also welcomed from Local Authority Planning and/or Housing departments.

THE JUDGING PANEL

The independent judging panel comprised a cross-section of individuals with a keen interest in Scotland's home building industry.



Sir Muir Russell (Chair)
Chairman, NHBC Scottish Committee



Tom Barclay
Chair, RICS Scotland



Colin Donald
Business Editor, Sunday Herald



Ken Gibb
Professor in Housing Economics,
University of Glasgow



Ian Gilzean
Chief Architect, Scottish Government



Malcolm MacLeod
Chair, Heads of Planning Scotland



Susan Napier
Residential Property Consultant



David Sivewright
Chair of Residential Investment
Management Committee, Scottish
Property Federation



Keith Winter
Society of Local Authority Chief
Executives

THE JUDGING PROCESS

The first meeting of the judging panel took place on Tuesday 17th December 2013, with the Homes for Scotland Awards 2014 officially launched on Monday 20th January 2014. The closing date for all entries was Friday 28th February 2014.

A record number of 91 entries was received in total, with each judge assessing entries across several categories.

The judging process was by single stage assessment based on the quality and content of submissions received. It was further supported by the use of scoring matrices to increase consistency in assessment. The judges completed the shortlisting process on Friday 28th March, with awards and commendations agreed on Thursday 10th April.

Details were announced at the Homes for Scotland Annual Lunch & Awards ceremony on Friday 16th May.



Details of our 2014 Award winners were announced in front of a record audience of more than 800 guests at the EICC on Friday 16th May

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

It has been a privilege to chair the judging panel for this year's awards. My fellow judges and I found the task hugely stimulating and enjoyable. At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to their professionalism and expertise which ensured the panel was well-equipped to address the key criteria in the main elements of the scheme.

Of course, we have been fortunate to be doing this at a time when there are clear grounds for cautious optimism about the fortunes of the home building industry in Scotland, with entries including a range of projects that are letting and selling well, and some with later phases that were on hold now coming through.

Shining through all the entries was a demonstration that this is an industry that employs good people, motivates and develops them well and helps them provide excellent service to customers in every aspect of the business. We were also very impressed by the quality of the work that the whole body of applications showed, from home builders and supporting companies alike.

Housing supply in Scotland falls well short of demand, so new provision across all sectors is vital; but it is equally important that demand is met in ways that contribute to a range of objectives, of which I would pick out for comment:

- affordability - across the sectors, including public/private partnerships
- quality of design and build, including energy efficiency
- contributing to place and community, along with sound planning in both urban and rural contexts

As well as highlighting the positive, as judges we also had the responsibility to identify weaker aspects.

In a strong field we saw a range of ways of addressing affordability in Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery. What stood out for us in a number of entries was the imagination that had gone into the various forms of partnership, with sensible sharing of risks and returns, successful attraction of private funds, and the delivery of a range of tenures - often "invisibly" - within many of the projects. We also looked for imagination in the sense of community that projects were creating, and how they contributed where appropriate to regeneration.

Turning to Best Home Design, the good news is that, across the board, we saw attention to detail, quality of construction and respect for energy efficiency. But there were sharp contrasts between the entries in aspects such as sheer imagination, use of materials and adaptability of the space to the user's needs. Whilst some were, to put it simply, good standard stuff, as judges we wanted to see better than that!

"People and place" was, for us, one of the key things in all three categories of Best Development, and once again there was a wide range. We shortlisted projects that seemed to us to integrate well with or complement existing communities or that seemed to have layout, design and other features that would work well for those living there. In a world where there is pressure for more home building of all tenures, we felt it important to send a signal about the sort of developments likely to have the most effective impact. The winners and the projects we commended are intended to do that.

This is certainly the case for the special award given to The Athletes' Village, Dalmarnock, reflecting the extent to which we felt that this project, one of the most significant urban developments in the UK, represented so much of what we wanted to advocate. It is an exemplar of place-making, revitalising the local area with the best of master-planning and urban design principles.

With signs of a brighter future ahead, all in all, we believe this is a set of awards of which the industry can be proud.



Sir Muir Russell
Chair, NHBC Scottish Committee

SHORTLIST

The following shortlist was announced on 4th April, with the winners of Lifetime Achievement and Home Builder of the Year announced at the ceremony of Friday 16th May:

1. Best Employer

- Mactaggart & Mickel Homes
- Springfield Properties

2. Employee of the Year

- Glen Thomson (Scotia Homes)
- Ann Wojcik (Springfield Properties)

3. Best Customer Service Initiative

- Barratt Homes
- Springfield Properties

4. Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery

- Cruden Homes East & Places for People
Choice, Craigmillar
- Hillcrest Housing Association and
City of Edinburgh Council
Q10, Quartermile
- Home Scotland and AS Homes
Cathcart Road, Glasgow
- Mactaggart & Mickel, CCG &
Cruden Homes
Athletes' Village, Dalmarnock
- Wheatley Group
Ibroxholm Oval, Glasgow

5. Best Home Design

- Link Group
Tannahill Crescent, Johnstone
- Mactaggart & Mickel, CCG &
Cruden Homes
*The Hibiscus at the Athletes' Village,
Glasgow*
- Miller Homes
*The Leader, Orchardfield Gardens,
East Linton*
- Robertson Homes
Azure Grand II, King's Park, Ayr
- Springfield Properties
The Dallachy, Letterfourie, Buckie

6. Best Development – large (26+ units)

- EMA Architecture + Design &
Port of Leith Housing Association
72-92 Great Junction Street, Edinburgh
- Hillcrest Housing Association
Q10, Quartermile
- Kirkwood Homes
Cowdray Fields, Echt
- Link Group
Gulliver Street, Edinburgh
- Mactaggart & Mickel Group, CCG &
Cruden Homes
Athletes' Village, Glasgow
- Miller Homes
Dalmore Mill, Auchendinny
- Places for People
Lighthouse Court, Granton
- Robertson Homes
King's Park, Ayr
- Scotia Homes
Drumrossie, Inch
- Stewart Milne Homes (Central)
Sunnymead, Uddingston
- Wheatley Group
Ibroxholm Oval, Glasgow

7. Best Development – medium (11-25 units)

- Cruden Homes (East)
The Orchard, Mauricewood
- Eildon Housing Association
Crofts Road, Lauder
- Kirkwood Homes
St Leonards, Stonehaven
- Mactaggart & Mickel
Polnoon, Eaglesham
- Springfield Properties
Dunkinty, Elgin

8. Best Development – small (up to ten units)

- Bancon Homes
City Walk, Aberdeen
- Kirkwood Homes
Westburn Crescent, Aberdeen

9. Best Supporting Company

- Geddes Consulting
- Link Housing Association
- Oregon Timber Frame
- Rettie & Co

AWARDS and COMMENDATIONS



BEST EMPLOYER

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This award sought to acknowledge stand-out organisations operating within the Scottish home building industry able to provide a clear evidence base demonstrating the successful management of their workforce in terms of leadership, engagement, motivation, retention, development, organisational transformation or some other such measure.

Winner: Springfield Properties

This closely-contended category saw Springfield's approach to employee motivation clinch it for the judges. They were especially impressed by the policy of empowering employees as decision-makers, the emphasis on training opportunities as well as demonstrations of well-developed reward systems.

Further stand out features of this enlightened work culture included high staff retention levels and an explicit connection between customer service and staff development, all of which contributed to a "virtuous circle" of business benefits.



EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

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This new category enabled the judges to assess employees of all skills, qualifications, ages and functions at any stage of their careers. A range of attributes were considered including exceptional commitment, going above and beyond regular role and responsibility, showcasing outstanding initiative, making a stand-out contribution, exhibiting exemplary service, achieving remarkable results, displaying top leadership and problem solving skills.

**Winner: Ann Wojcik,
Springfield Properties**

The judges were hugely impressed with Ann's 'can do' attitude which was demonstrated in a submission which ticked all of the boxes in this category.

Over the last eight years in her role as After Sales Manager, Ann has delivered on Springfield's aim to provide a more customer focused after sales service, evidenced by a significant rise in satisfaction ratings and improved company reputation.

With innovation and dedication at the forefront of everything she does, among Ann's many successes are the instigation of the direct employment of a number of after sales contractors and improved time based response management systems.



**Commendation: Glen Thomson,
Scotia Homes**

An apprentice bricklayer in his third year of training, Glen's outstanding work ethic immediately set him apart.

Having faced a number of challenges which could have affected his career progression, Glen has been described as an exemplar student at Aberdeen College, achieving both Student Achievement and Apprentice of the Year awards. The Construction Industry Training Board has also recognised Glen as an exceptional talent, selecting him as a member of its schools and colleges Ambassador Team.



BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE INITIATIVE

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With the customer lying at the heart of everything those in the home building industry do, entries in this category were asked to demonstrate excellence and imagination in introducing new, measurable initiatives designed to make the home buying or after sales experience as positive and satisfying as possible.

Winner: Springfield Properties

Faced with two stand-out submissions warranting merit, the judges agreed that Springfield's shared vision of customer care gave it the edge.

With flexibility a key feature of the overall customer care package, the introduction of Springfield Choices allows the buyer to modify various aspects of their new home to suit individual needs and tastes, and all with guaranteed handover dates early in the process.

By identifying threats to delivery of service and turning them into initiatives which are having a positive impact across the business, Springfield has successfully sustained its brand promise of excellent customer service during a period of increased sales volumes.



Commendation: Barratt Homes

The judges were impressed with Barratt's 10 point Customer Care Charter. Founded on empathy for the client, it clearly defines how the organisation will serve customers through every step of the buying process, with various added value features and quality assurances.

A thorough inspection routine culminates in director-level sign-off ensuring properties are truly in move-in condition.



BEST PARTNERSHIP IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY

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Entries in this category were asked to describe their approach to the delivery of affordable housing, demonstrating new funding arrangements or new partnerships or consortia arrangements. Judges were particularly keen to see entries where the delivery of affordable homes has made a contribution to regeneration.

Winner: Cruden Homes East and Places for People Scotland for "Choice", Craigmillar

The judges were hugely impressed with this development which is part of the Craigmillar regeneration project and provides real flexibility of tenure choice and overall mix.

An innovative and replicable partnership based on risk and reward, the first phase of 48 units has seen a number of challenges tackled head-on in order to meet local housing need.

Further benefits associated with the partnership included bespoke purchase or rental options and the ability to maintain the momentum of regeneration whilst creating much needed employment.



Commendation: Hillcrest Housing Association and City of Edinburgh Council for Q10, Quatermile

The judges commended this large scale tenure mix project of 174 homes for the way in which it exploits the scale of the wider development whilst securing cost savings and section 75 benefits to address affordability problems in the Capital.

Creativity in its partnership working and its approach to financial management resulted in a competitive advantage which was key to delivering these much needed quality homes.



• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL


Hillcrest
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

BEST HOME DESIGN

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In this category, judges considered function and form whilst recognising the difference between housing size, type and value. They also looked to recognise and highlight innovative ideas wherever they were found.

Winner: Mactaggart & Mickel, CCG and Cruden Homes for The Hibiscus at the Athletes' Village, Dalmarnock

Offering flexible family living, the distinctly different Hibiscus design benefits from generous glazing, spacious living areas and ample garden space. Its impressive green credentials include high quality thermal insulation and solar panels.

Set in a village environment yet only three miles from the city centre, the Hibiscus contributes to a real sense of place.



BEST DEVELOPMENT: LARGE (26+ UNITS)

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With a consensus that successful places:

- have a strong sense of character and identity
- form safe and pleasant spaces to be in
- are easy to move around in
- are welcoming to all
- can adapt to changing community needs
- use resources efficiently, addressing the low carbon and sustainability agenda entries for the Best Development categories

were asked to demonstrate how each of these policy challenges have been addressed to create high quality environments for people to live.

Winner: Miller Homes for Dalmore Mill, Auchendinny

This development drew an array of favourable comments from the judges. The respect for the tranquillity of the setting has been achieved through careful design with the project bringing new life into a derelict site and contributing to the local economy.

The development is well connected to existing walking and cycling routes, with the brick apartments drawing inspiration from the original mill buildings and contrasted with well detailed and rendered three to five bedroom homes.



millershomes

Commendation: Places for People for Lighthouse Court, Granton

The judges praised this development for its strong urban form, a well thought-out approach to building on a steep site and a design solution which reinforces the existing streetscape whilst also providing a wide diversity of apartment types and a terrace of housing.



Commendation: Hillcrest Housing Association for Q10, Quatermile

Also recognised in the Affordable Housing category, the judges also commended this development for its unique architectural approach and the amenity value created for residents as demonstrated by the maximisation of daylight and the offering of private balconies and terraces to 89 of the flats.



Commendation: Scotia Homes for Drumrossie, Inch

This development of 37 properties stood out for its provision of well-connected and recognisable streets. The form, choice of materials and characteristics of the buildings also draw specific inspiration from the historic core of the town and the vernacular traditions of the North East.



Commendation: Robertson Homes for King's Park, Ayr

This entry demonstrated simplicity within its site layout, providing a well ordered streetscape. The importance attached to greenspace and the design of the individual housing units have resulted in the creation of an attractive new housing neighbourhood.



Robertson
Homes

BEST DEVELOPMENT: MEDIUM (11-25 UNITS)

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Winner: Mactaggart & Mickel for Polnoon, Eaglesham (1st phase)

Fully embracing the Scottish Government's Designing Streets agenda, this forward-thinking development was singled out by the judges for its impressive design approach, as demonstrated by the hierarchy of connected streets and interconnected shared areas.

The central square, lanes and courts are designed to meet the needs of pedestrians rather than vehicles, encouraging walking and cycling.

Polnoon also addresses the low carbon and sustainability agenda, showcasing what can be achieved by looking at development design differently, and offering a fresh perspective on community.



Commendation: Eildon Housing Association for Crofts Road, Lauder

This urban infill scheme comprising 12 two storey houses on the site of a former primary school was praised for the way that the homes have been aligned along Crofts Road to create a strong edge to the development.

With all of the homes designed to meet housing for varying needs, the judges were impressed with the reuse of materials, renewables and integration with surroundings, resulting in an infill of appropriate scale delivering a quality living environment.



Commendation: Kirkwood Homes for St Leonards, Stonehaven

A restoration and conversion of a former hotel providing 14 apartments and six townhouses within an outstanding conservation area, the judges were taken by the considerable attention given to the scale and appearance of the development to ensure that the homes sit well within the townscape and skyline. The entry was commended for the architectural cues which were taken from the existing hotel, as well as its ability to adapt to changing community needs.



BEST DEVELOPMENT: SMALL (UP TO 10 UNITS)

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Winner: Kirkwood Homes for Westburn Crescent, Aberdeen

The judges all agreed that the development outcome of these six townhouses and three apartments located within a conservation area is of a very high quality and makes a positive contribution to the appearance and character of its surroundings.

Careful attention to detail reflecting the local vernacular has delivered a striking development which has been commercially successful. The development sits well in the streetscape and reflects the status of the conservation area through the use of natural materials in a traditional design approach.



BEST SUPPORTING COMPANY

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**Registers
of Scotland**

The contribution associate members play in the work of Homes for Scotland is highly valued, facilitating and increasing the organisation's strength and credibility as it seeks the industry's growth and success. This award has been specifically designed to celebrate that support.

Winner: Link Housing Association for its Help to Buy (Scotland) team.

The judges were unanimous in finding Link's role in the delivery of the Scottish Government's Help to Buy shared equity initiative worthy of the accolade of Best Supporting Company.

As an administering agent, Link's work has been vital in making the scheme a success. Not only has its dedicated team assisted and guided builders through implementation, committed to a quick turnaround of applications it achieved an impressive 160 sales in the first twelve weeks alone.



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

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This award recognises individuals who have made a special contribution to championing the aims of the home building industry in Scotland.

Awarded to Stewart Milne

Stewart Milne is a self made man who has built his business on solid teamwork and personal development of his staff combined with his own vision and drive to succeed.

Stewart Milne's home building business was founded in 1975 and has grown to deliver a combination of mainstream and affordable homes in Scotland. The organisation also includes a leading timber frame company which supplies a wide range of home builders throughout Scotland and across the UK.

Having successfully steered his company through two downturns and expanded his company, Stewart has also been a strong supporter of Homes for Scotland and has regularly released Directors and key senior members of staff to participate in Homes for Scotland Committees and events over a number of years.

Stewart has made an outstanding contribution to the home building industry in Scotland, and it is for that reason he is awarded this year's prestigious Lifetime Achievement award.



JUDGES' SPECIAL AWARD

Presented to Mactaggart & Mickel, Cruden Homes & CCG for the Athletes' Village, Dalmarnock

As one of the most significant urban developments in the UK, the Athletes' Village is an exemplar of place-making in the judges' view, revitalising the local area with the best of master-planning and urban design principles.

Transforming after the 2014 Commonwealth Games into a community of 700 homes, of which 400 are rental properties and 300 for private sale, the success of the project is demonstrated by the phenomenal response for the properties, with almost 200 of the 300 private homes reserved within the space of just three weeks.

Achieving a real sense of community living, the range of house types available means that residents can select from 12 different designs, and all with strong green credentials.



HOMES FOR SCOTLAND HOME BUILDER OF THE YEAR 2014

The judges were unanimous in awarding this prestigious title to **Mactaggart & Mickel** for the second year running.

With principles of quality, innovation and commitment reinforced throughout the company's submissions, it was clear to the judges that Mactaggart & Mickel is clearly focused on effecting positive outcomes.

This is evident from its top spot in the Best Development – medium category and the two awards it received for its collaborative work in relation to the Athletes' Village. It also had its standing as one of the industry's leading companies to work for confirmed with its shortlisting for Best Employer.



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