



**JUDGES'**  
**REPORT**

 HOMES FOR SCOTLAND  
**QUALITY 20**  
**AWARDS 10**

# The Judging Panel

The independent panel of judges represented a variety of interests in relation to new home building. Chaired by **Brian Frater** <sup>(1)</sup>, Head of Planning & Building Standards at Scottish Borders Council and Chair of Heads of Planning Scotland, the panel also included:

- **Jane Clark**, Head of Sustainable Land Use, Scottish Natural Heritage <sup>(2)</sup>
- **Andrew Field**, Deputy Chief Executive, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations <sup>(3)</sup>
- **Phil Ford**, Skills Strategy Manager, Construction Skills <sup>(4)</sup>
- **Trisha McAuley**, Head of Services and Advocacy, Consumer Focus Scotland <sup>(5)</sup>
- **Isabelle Martin**, Inspector, Health and Safety Executive <sup>(6)</sup>
- **Hayley Millar**, BBC Scotland business correspondent <sup>(7)</sup> and
- **Lynne Sullivan**, Sustainable BY Design, Chair of Panel for “Low Carbon Building Standards Strategy for Scotland” <sup>(8)</sup>



# The Judging Process

Homes for Scotland invited entries to be submitted by 19 March 2010. Entries were invited under the following categories:

- **Affordable Housing**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Customer Care**
- **Environment and Sustainability**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Key Agency Working and**
- **Skills and Training**

The judges were very pleased with the number of entries received, 53 in all. The panel was also pleased with the variety of entries from across urban and rural Scotland. It was encouraging to see a range of home builders continuing to participate in the awards scheme and it was particularly pleasing to see local authorities participating for the first time.

The judging was undertaken in two stages with short-listing being carried out from the information submitted in the initial entries at a meeting of the judges on 30 March. Following the short-listing, clarification and additional information was sought from a number of entrants in early April. This allowed the judges to examine entries in greater detail, prior to agreeing awards and commendations on 27 April.



## Chair's Foreword

**I was delighted to be invited by Homes for Scotland to chair the judging panel for its 2010 Quality Awards. It is indeed rare for a home building organisation to ask a local authority planner to comment and make a decision on their work. It's even rarer that he has managed to do so within an agreed timescale! Times are a-changing and changing for the better.**

This year, awards were invited in seven categories: Affordable Housing, Community Engagement, Customer Care, Environment and Sustainability, Health and Safety, Key Agency Working and Skills and Training.

I was particularly pleased to see categories recognising the importance of joint public/private sector working and the value of community engagement. Both are key elements of the planning modernisation programme

and it was heartening to see so many examples of good practice and effective partnership working between home builders, local authorities, key agencies and communities.

It is testament to the commitment and resilience of everyone involved in the home building industry that we received such a large number of high quality submissions (53) in what has been another difficult year. Of course, that large field of entries also made the task of the judging panel all the more challenging but I'm pleased to say my fellow judges more than rose to the occasion. It was a pleasure to work with them and with the Homes for Scotland staff and I would like to record my thanks to them all for their patience, guidance and assistance throughout the judging process.

There is much to be learned and many examples of good practice to be shared in this year's Quality Awards submissions. The submissions should provide reassurance that innovation and quality are alive and kicking in the home building industry in Scotland, that communities are willing and able to engage positively with home builders and that partners in the public sector are more than up for the challenge of working with colleagues in the home building industry to deliver a modernised planning system to ensure quality homes in quality places.

**Brian Frater (Chair of Judging Panel)**  
Head of Planning & Building Standards,  
Scottish Borders Council  
Chair, Heads of Planning Scotland

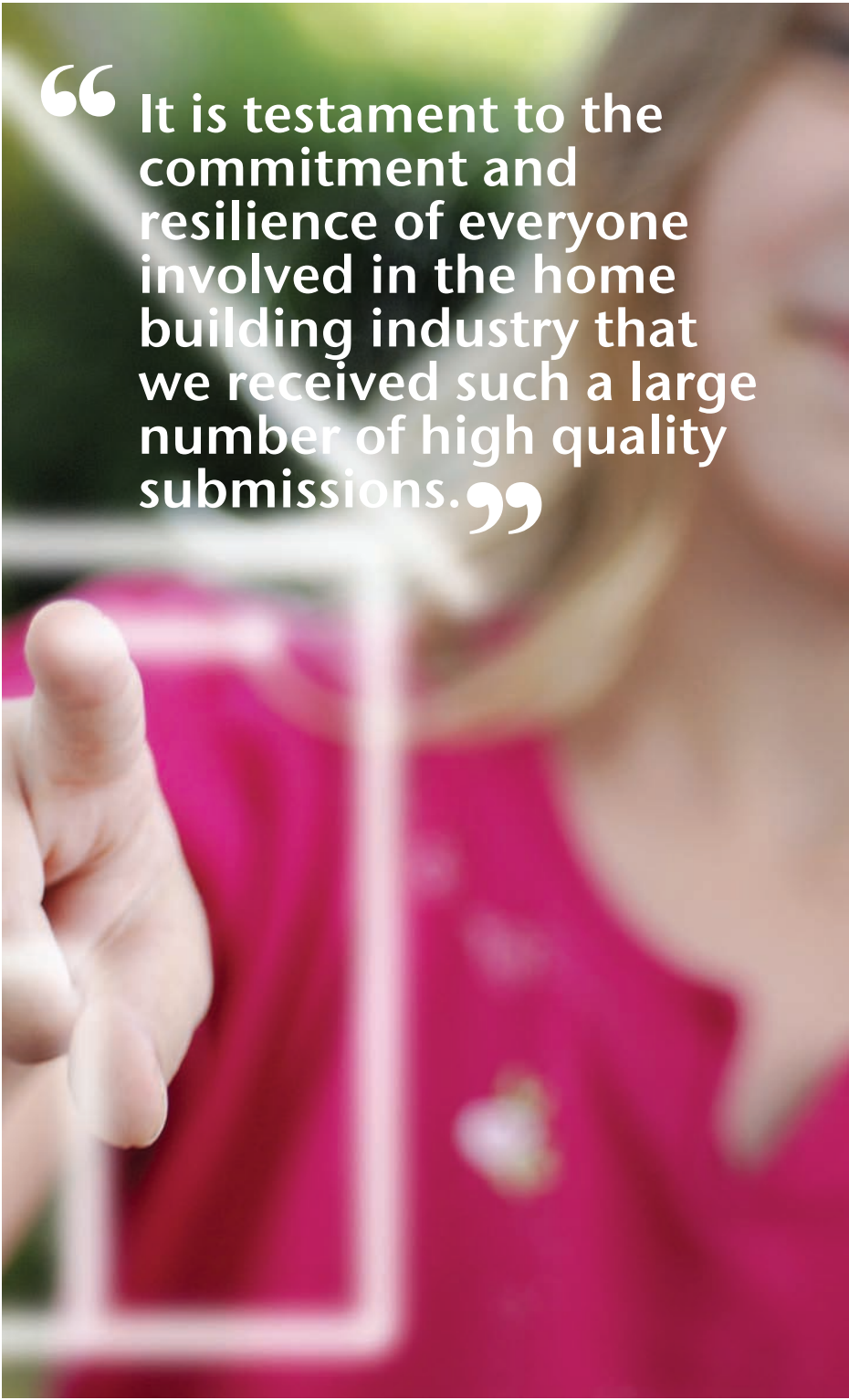
## General Observations and **Comments**

As judges, we were impressed by the level of detail provided by most entrants and with the rigour and enthusiasm with which entrants responded to requests for additional information. We found testimonials from independent parties particularly helpful in reinforcing entries and in confirming that projects had had a positive outcome on the ground.

While impressed by the depth of information, level of detail and quality of the graphics in many of the productions, we would encourage future entrants to focus on submitting information which best supports their case, rather than large volumes of contextual material which in some cases was of limited relevance to the awards category.

We acknowledge that in some categories clearer guidance could have been provided on what was being sought and we would encourage Homes for Scotland to refine the criteria for future awards. We would also strongly support and encourage Homes for Scotland to continue to develop awards categories which acknowledge the value of joint working with local authorities, key agencies and communities. We were disappointed not to receive any submissions from key agencies and suggest that a particular effort should be made to engage key agencies, where appropriate, in future awards.

Finally, we would like to congratulate Homes for Scotland for its continued promotion of the awards scheme and to thank those companies which sponsored individual awards. We believe the process plays a positive part in driving good practice in both the public and private sector. We are very grateful to Homes for Scotland and, in particular, Jonathan Fair, Allan Lundmark, Karen Trouten and Kathryn McMickan for their guidance and support.



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# Awards and Commendations

## Affordable Housing

### Winner: Stewart Milne Construction

Excellent partnership working and cost-effective delivery make this entry for the second of a three-phase regeneration project in the Muirton area of Perth a winner.

Delivering 69 new homes, the inclusion of a community resource centre added value to the development making it stand out as a strong example of a 'housing plus' initiative.

The client, Perthshire Housing Association, is part of the Larach Group of Housing Associations and Stewart Milne Construction used the PPC 2000 Partnering contract throughout the project.

A highly effective 'team' approach delivered a number of benefits for the customer including continuous cost management. The pain/gain mechanism used allowed savings from build cost to be diverted into landscaping and environmental works.

The end result is an exciting development with a strong sense of place and happy customers.



## Commendation: Link Homes

Link Homes has been commended for its provision of 73 homes in Wood Street, Grangemouth. Link worked with Falkirk Council to involve local residents in consultation about the design and availability of the new homes. The judges were impressed by the partnership and the marketing approaches deployed in this project.



## Commendation: Springfield Properties

Springfield Properties has been commended for its innovative approach to dealing with the downturn in the market and drop in land values. Its volume procurement and rolling programme of development ensured greater efficiencies for its client over the course of the build, delivering a high volume of homes in a rural area, which would not normally benefit from a 'volume delivery' approach.





# Community Engagement

## Winner: Cruden Homes / Taylor Wimpey

The judges felt this was a first class entry which stood head and shoulders above the others in demonstrating early, meaningful and continuous involvement with a community.

A joint initiative to build 900 homes over 10 years for Raploch Urban Regeneration Company, the approach taken exemplified the difference between consultation and actual engagement.

An astute understanding of the local community and innovative methods of engagement generated an impressive level of interest and participation, which must be the envy of anyone trying to engage with communities.

The judges were also impressed by the fact that sustainability was embedded in all aspects of engagement – including an innovative approach to waste management, the creation of local jobs and the transformation of Raploch's image both from the community's perspective and those outside it.

Because of the high standard of this entry, the judges have decided to make no commendations.



# Customer Care

## Winner: Stewart Milne Homes

The judges were impressed by the evidence that Stewart Milne was going the extra mile to tailor products to customer needs, particularly in response to the credit crunch and the tighter mortgage lending criteria facing First Time Buyers.

Investing in market research to understand the effects of the current conditions allowed the company to tailor products for their target market groups.

It identified common customer needs such as affordability, product relevance and effective two-way communication and, as a result, is offering products such as insurance cover which are of longer term, tangible benefit to customers.

This was followed up by an exciting and innovative marketing strategy which appealed to its target customers and by clear quantitative examples of the success of its campaigns.

Finally, Stewart Milne has achieved an outstanding 100% endorsement from customers willing to recommend the company to others which demonstrates full commitment to customer care at all stages. As we embark on the rollout of the Consumer Code for Home Builders, Stewart Milne has set the bar high in terms of industry best practice.



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## Commendation: Cala Homes

Cala's entry demonstrated corporate leadership in prioritising customer care and embedding it in the ethos of the organisation. This ensured a high level of customer care delivery to a consistently high standard, before, during and after the sale.

The judges were particularly impressed by the Customer Charter and its clear link into the staff training and development agenda. Customer feedback from comprehensive market research was used to improve the service offered. The success of Cala's strategy was highlighted by positive customer testimonials and high levels of satisfaction and recommendations.



# Environment and Sustainability

## Winner: Dawn Homes

Dawn Homes' entry for its "Aurora House" was exceptional in delivering a zero-carbon (operational energy) Code 5 house as a partnership with South Lanarkshire College.

The judges would have liked to have seen a broader sustainability context for the house but recognised that the project addressed the difficult issues of supply chain, partnership working and skills development which are necessary to ensure that such exemplars can be delivered at community scale in the future.

This project focused on optimising and improving current construction practice to deliver exceptional energy efficiency in building fabric, using a range of technologies currently being monitored by Glasgow Caledonian University.

Dawn Homes should be congratulated for its comprehensive approach to delivering an exciting and contemporary housing product which will allow the company to apply 2013 energy and resource standards to community developments, two years early.



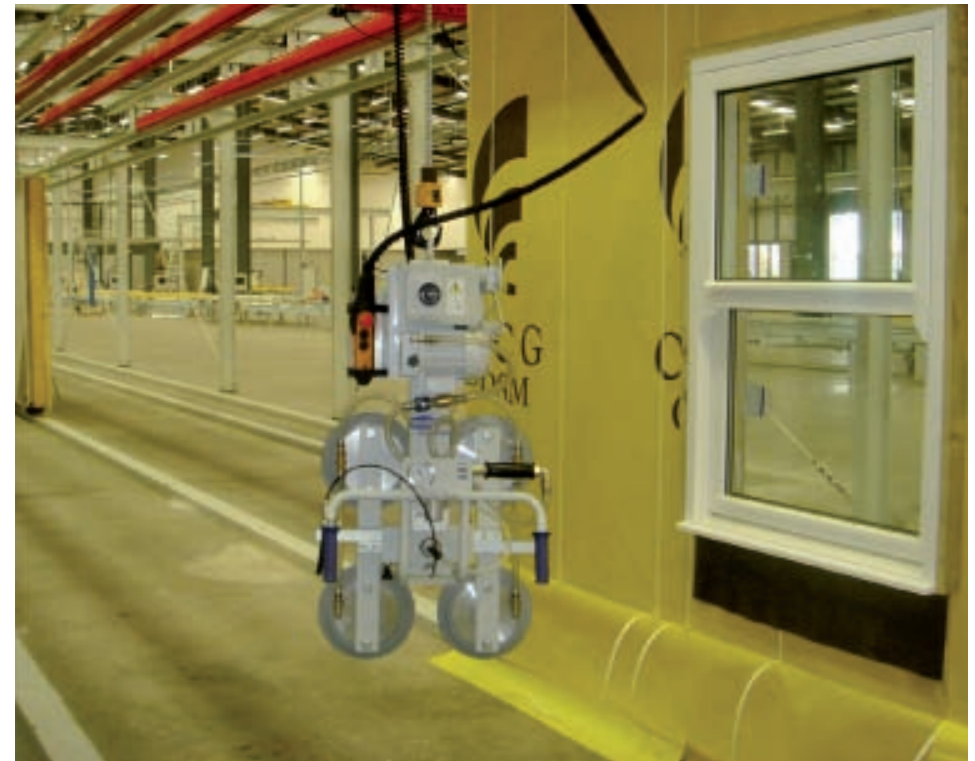
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## Commendation: CCG Homes

The judges would like to recognise CCG's innovative approach to developing higher performance timber frame products at its Glasgow factory with its "IQ System" which provides a range of options for increasing prefabrication and energy efficiency.

They would also like to congratulate the partnership approach to research with various centres at Napier University and the flexible approach to delivery which takes accounts of differing requirements for on-site and off-site installations as well as standardized and customized components and finishes.



## Commendation: Lomond Homes

The judges would like to commend Lomond Homes' "Dynamic Breathing Wall" – an innovation in insulating panels applicable to open panel timber frame. Developed with the help of a new spin-out company from Aberdeen University, it is now being trialled with Kingdom Housing Association on a development in Fife.

Dynamic insulation is an exciting concept. It has the potential to increase energy efficiency by up to a third by pre-warming ventilation air by drawing it through building fabric. The judges look forward to hearing more about actual savings in heating bills from the first pilots.



# Health and Safety

## Winner: Bett Homes

Bett Homes developed a three-year “Stay Safe” campaign after identifying a need to enhance safety awareness among employees, subcontractors and suppliers.

This entry demonstrated strong leadership and the judges were impressed with the way it targeted the whole workforce right through the supply chain.

The approach has been consistent each year, with visual aids providing strong safety messages - in particular, the need for individuals to consider their own behaviour and actions. Continued and expanded upon in each consecutive year, this year will focus on the challenging topic of behavioural safety.

An innovative programme concentrating on areas where accidents and ill health incident rate are high, the judges also welcomed the work on occupational health, a particularly difficult area to tackle within the construction industry.

Engaging effectively with employees will be crucial to changing behaviours and achieving long term improvements within the industry and the “Stay Safe” campaign demonstrates great success on this front.



# Key Agency Working

## Winner: Highland Council

The judges were impressed by the pioneering approach taken by Highland Council in its pre-application advice service. It has introduced a project management approach with its system and truly engages all key agencies early in the planning process.

It appears to be providing a valuable customer-focused service which has been rolled out across a large geographical area.

In particular, the judges were impressed by the level of inclusiveness between all key agencies and integration of council departments.



Ample opportunities for agencies to identify suitable mitigation solutions and an innovative use of modern technology, such as video conferencing and websites, to share information, made this entry stand out. These methods maximised the opportunities for involvement whilst minimising the cost to partners.

This entry embraces the ethos and ambition of planning reform and the model is one which other planning authorities and key agencies could use to shape their future engagement in pre-application discussions.

## Commendation: Charles Church

This was a good example of key agency working which took a "solution-based" approach to partnership in order to build homes and a golf course in a designed landscape. Despite potential problems, the outcome produced sympathetic consideration of listed historical buildings, enhanced landscape setting and careful consideration of particular issues including drainage, habitats and European protected species.



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# Skills and Training

## Winner: Cruden Homes / Taylor Wimpey

This project stood out to the judges as a strong example of partnership working and best practice between the developers, the Sustainable Community Enterprise and Stirling Council.

A joint initiative to build 900 homes over the next 10 years on behalf of Raploch Urban Regeneration Company, it aims to guarantee 225 training places within the local community. The entry focused on the first phase of housing at Stirling Bridge.



By providing 46 training placements to young people, 17 jobs and 11 apprenticeships, this project demonstrated a clear benefit to the local community within a relatively short timescale. Its success was demonstrated by extremely positive feedback from those involved.

The judges were particularly impressed by the investment in a local resource centre at Raploch which placed training and employment at the heart of the community. This project was a great example of how the provision of skills and training can help deliver wider economic and social objectives of regeneration.

## Commendation: Forster Roofing

The judges would like to commend this entry on its success in using an innovative approach to learning to raise awareness of the career and apprenticeship opportunities within the construction industry.

Forster Roofing's unique model delivered the roofing unit of a vocational qualification at the company's custom built training centre. Positive feedback demonstrated the success of combining education with a commercial environment and the judges felt that this was a model of best practice which could be replicated in other areas.





## Judges' Special Award

This year's submissions have highlighted a wealth of quality, commitment, good practice and innovation across the home building industry in Scotland. Every company and organisation that participated in the awards should be congratulated on their efforts.

However, on this occasion, the judges would like to make a special award in recognition of the contribution which one company has made to home building in Scotland, not just this year, but consistently over a number of years.

This company made excellent submissions in each of the seven awards categories this year and was short-listed in most. It's a progressive company which has built a reputation for quality, innovation, environmental sustainability and customer care.

It has embraced the challenges of modernising the planning system, shown a commitment to meaningful community engagement and has demonstrated a willingness to pursue challenging, innovative place-making initiatives, most notably in the acclaimed Polnoon project. It is, coincidentally, celebrating its 85th anniversary. In recognition of its achievements and contribution to home building and home making in Scotland, the judges would like to make a special industry award to Mactaggart & Mickel.



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Construction  
Commendation:  
Link Homes  
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- 2 Community Engagement**  
Winner:  
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- 3 Customer Care**  
Winner:  
Stewart Milne Homes  
Commendation:  
Cala Homes
- 4 Environment and Sustainability**  
Winner:  
Dawn Homes  
Commendation:  
CCG Homes  
Commendation:  
Lomond Homes
- 5 Health and Safety**  
Winner:  
Bett Homes
- 6 Key Agency Working**  
Winner:  
Highland Council  
Commendation:  
Charles Church
- 7 Skills and Training**  
Winner:  
Cruden Homes /  
Taylor Wimpey  
Commendation:  
Forster Roofing
- 8 Judges' Special Award**  
Mactaggart and Mickel



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