

Mid Sussex Design Awards 2018

The Chair of the Judging Panel's Report 17th September 2018

Category A - Residential Extensions and Small Works

Winner - Sussex Bungalow, Munnion Rd, Ardingly

Who would have thought that tucked away behind an unassuming bungalow in Ardingly is a small piece of Architecture by the late Will Alsop (the overly wide front door giving a hint of something different behind it). This low budget small rear extension, roofed with a dramatic barrel-vaulted glulam structure and clad with industrial type metal roofing panels with circular roof lights has transformed the mundane into a unique functional home for a young family. The judges left with a smile on their faces.

Commendation - Old Pest House, 52 Dorset Avenue, East Grinstead

A clever contemporary extension to an 18th Century Grade II Listed cottage. The single storey open roofed contemporary space is angled back up towards the exposed external wall of the cottage, separated by a glazed slot, showing how good modern design can balance with and respect the old. A bright new space that engages with and benefits its host. A considered solution.

Category B - Small Residential Schemes (Less than 10 houses and single houses)

Winner – Tobias Green houses, East Grinstead

A gently curving terrace of 5 two storey houses set within the grounds of an established community, and in the context of expansive mature gardens and buildings designed by the Danish architect Erik Asmussen. The new houses complete the concept of a village green. The internal spaces are well planned, every bit of available volume has been used, achieving a cosy and homely feel, where quality of materials and attention to detail is clearly evident. Each house has a small courtyard facing towards the open green communal space, however a sense of privacy for each of the occupying families has been achieved. A fantastic model for future rural housing schemes.

Commendation - Danny Lodge, Hurstpierpoint

This large 3 storey contemporary house connected to a Victorian gatehouse in the South Downs National Park was extensively debated by the judges. Designed by the Architect owner for his young family, it has a number of unique features, from revolving bookcases, secret stairs, a fireman's pole and a pull-out stage - a great place to grow up as a child. There are also a number of exciting spaces just for the parents as well. The detailing, both inside and out is clever and robust and the materials appropriately chosen for longevity and textural qualities.

Commendation – 10-11 Brown Twins Road, Hurst

These two contemporary detached houses sit within the back garden of a Grade II listed building within Hurstpierpoint Conservation area. The sites are laid out well to respect existing trees and work with the difficult topography, which has led to two differing plan forms. The play in levels both internally and externally and consequential double height volumes create exciting spaces and differing views through and out into the gardens and terraces. Contextually, the scheme worked really well.

Category C - Large Residential Schemes - Greenfield (10 or more dwellings on previously undeveloped sites)

Winner – Woodside, Parcel Y, St Francis, Haywards Heath

Mid Sussex has many new and recently consented large-scale housing schemes, a vast majority of which, in the judge's opinion, are ubiquitous and fail in creating a unique 'sense of place'. This residential scheme of houses and apartments however, proves that with considered building and landscape design a really lovely environment can be created for families to inhabit and build a community. The contours of the site have been utilised to create split level houses and create glimpses through, up and down into public spaces. A series of mews type courtyard houses, town houses and apartments, with a controlled palette of external facing materials contribute to a series of rich and distinct urban spaces. A wonderful scheme that really impressed the judges.

Commendation – St Margaret's, East Grinstead

Reminiscent of historic almshouses fronting a tree-lined avenue leading to The Old Convent, a converted Grade 1 Listed residential property, this development has clearly benefited from a planning brief and the collaborative approach between the developer and the council. By providing separation between building frontages on the main approach, the views to the listed building are framed and enhanced by the gable fronted houses and the use of materials are sympathetic to that of The Old Convent. A great contextual housing scheme.

Category D - Large Residential Schemes - Brownfield (10 or more dwellings on previously undeveloped sites)

Winner - Beacon Heights, Church Road, Haywards Heath

This scheme consists of a 4-storey corner block of 24 apartments, each with their own inset balconies. What impressed the judges was the use of high quality and well detailed external materials, buff coloured brickwork laid over brass cladding with a rich patina. Even the treatment of the car parking surface and landscaping was noted. The colours and hue of this development pick up on the qualities of the neighbouring historic buildings allowing it to sit very comfortably within its urban context. A wonderful apartment building.

(No commendations)

Category E - Non-Residential schemes

Winner - Gravetye Manor, Vowels Lane, West Hoathly

This is an exceptional scheme consisting of a new restaurant dining room, an understated and elegant glazed courtyard infill with a floating flat roof, to a Grade I Listed Jacobean manor house. Sitting down to eat, diners feel as they are eating out amongst the beautiful planted garden, their focus. Although appearing simply conceived, the architect has worked hard in concealing the necessary clutter associated with servicing these types of spaces within the elegant support structure. The 'back of house' hidden away in a newly created basement. To complete quality works such as this within 4 months is amazing and meant that the basement had to be prefabricated and the glazing and structural system 'pre-ordered' before site dimensions could be taken. Traditional lead roofing work and battened maple ceiling is a fine example of good craftsmanship. The judges thought this scheme was perfect, truly inspiring and at one with its spectacular setting.

Commendation – Haywards Heath Gateway, Perrymount Road

This scheme includes a new supermarket, railway station alterations, forecourt and new parking facilities. A contemporary scheme, with the built form reminiscent of railway shed saw-tooth structures giving interest to the street scene, wrapping around the corner and breaking down the mass normally associated with large retail developments. The use of crisp detailing and a mixture of external materials adds interest. The public forecourt space, providing a refurbished entrance to the station, the supermarket entry and the café terrace together with the all-glazed façade on Market Place brings the area alive. A great scheme, overcoming what must have been a challenging brief.

Category F - Conservation and Heritage

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Praised with its 'Commendation' in an earlier award, this scheme not only proposed an extension to the cottage, but also the restoration of the cottage. The whole scheme creates a beautiful home of two halves.... quiet, cosy, intimate spaces in the old cottage and wonderful bright and airy living spaces in the new, where you can cook, eat and relax, always visually connected back to the enhanced historic structure of the Grade II Listed 18th Century cottage. A perfect example of a contemporary solution to bring a neglected historic building back into use.

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Awarded earlier, this restaurant extension to a Grade I Listed Jacobean manor house has been undertaken very delicately, so that the existing building is conserved. The former external walls and windows now appreciated and brought to life as they form the backdrop to the newly created dining room. Not only a great piece of contemporary architecture, but also an enhancement to the original building and landscape.

Category G - Sustainability

Winner – Strawdust, Scarp Side, Bolney

A single storey circular home, made from lime rendered straw bales within a locally sourced timber frame structure supporting a relatively large overhanging roof that provides a generous veranda. This was a self-build project, inspired by the owner's character and influences from living in Africa. Many of the features and finishes are from upcycled and local materials, these together with large shaded south facing glazing, dug in and

hunkered-down structure on the north, with low thermal values, make this a text book sustainable design solution.

Although hard to achieve successfully in a round building, the internal spaces are well laid out, with the largest an open plan living area to the sunny side and the bedroom and bathroom to the rear. The judges felt this was a wonderful, affordable new small home, utilising natural materials and ecological construction principles.

Commendation – Tobias Green houses, , East Grinstead

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Previously awarded, the design for this scheme was driven by ecological considerations from the start. The use of responsibly sourced materials and the consideration of long term maintenance and running costs is key to this projects success. The houses are connected to the recently installed communal biomass boiler (installed in an earlier phase) for provision of space heating, have solar thermal panels for hot water, highly insulated clay block external walls and pre-insulated timber roof panels. Shouldn't all new houses be built like this?

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