NEW LONDON 2016/2017

A selection of the best newly completed and upcoming projects in the capital, chosen for their architectural quality and wider contribution to London’s built environment.

The selection process

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The selection process

The New London Awards were launched six years ago by New London Architecture (NLA) to celebrate the capital’s best new projects, and are the only London-wide awards to recognise both recently completed projects and those on the drawing board across all sectors of the built environment.

A team of London-based expert assessors advised our international jury on each sector, selecting projects that were of the highest architectural and design quality, and that also had a positive impact on their surroundings and London as a whole.

This year, three additional accolades have been drawn from submissions across all categories: the Mayor’s Prize, celebrating the project that best creatively contributes to the capital’s economy; the Ashden Prize, recognising the best in efficient energy use; and the People’s Choice, an award voted for by Londoners.

The idea of inviting international jurors, supported by expert local colleagues, was not only to obtain an objective viewpoint but also to ensure that the projects presented compared well with overseas standards. In spite of their very different experiences, the members of the jury were more often than not unanimous in their selection of winning projects. The panel’s ability to comment from their experiences in Paris, New York, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Edinburgh, as well as London, provided a fascinating discussion around the delivery of high-quality, sustainable architecture and urban environment.
The NLA Awards are about design, but they are not just about what the end product looks like, and it’s not just about the architecture. It is also about how a new plan or building impacts its environment and how it delivers something positive for London.

This is one of the reasons why our Overall Winner this year is Peter Barber’s Micro Homes for Homeless People at Holmes Road, providing high quality residential accommodation together with training and counseling facilities all laid out around a delightful new courtyard garden in the way of the traditional alms house. The innovative typology responds to a real need in London and is a delightful piece of architecture. It highlights one of NLA’s mantras that we need to investigate new models of housing if we are to have any impact on the shortage of affordable accommodation in the capital.

The NLA shortlist provides an excellent cross section through the work carried out in London in the past year by our members, and others. While the Awards pick out pieces of particular excellence, everyone is a winner in the quest to create a better looking and better functioning city.

Foreword by Peter Murray, NLA Chairman

Special Prizes

Tony Pidgley as New Londoner of the Year seems a very natural one. What is London’s biggest problem? The delivery of ample quantities of new housing. Who has delivered more housing than anyone else? Tony Pidgley.

Working through his various sainted companies: St James, St Edward, St George, St William and Berkeley, Pidgley is delivering 1,250 homes at Woolwich Arsenal, 4,000 homes at Kidbrooke Village, 5,000 homes at Woodberry Down, 1,617 new homes in Southwark, over 17,000 homes in partnership with the National Grid, and numerous other developments across the capital.

These figures give an idea of the scale of Pidgley’s contribution to London’s housing and why he is 2016’s New Londoner of the Year. In addition to acting as Chairman of the Berkeley Group, Tony sits on the Prime Minister’s Estate Regeneration Advisory Panel and the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission, has advised the Mayor on the Outer London Commission and the Government on the disposal of public sector land, and is President of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

“I am very humbled and honoured to receive this magnificent award. London is truly a world class city and I have been very proud and fortunate to build 40,000 homes here over the last 20 years, for people from all walks of life.

Our biggest challenge is undoubtedly housing. There’s never one answer. Politicians, planners, and housebuilders must work together in a spirit of partnership and benefit the people of London. We have to embrace fresh ideas at the same time as maintaining our sense of character and the quality of architecture and placemaking.

There’s a lot for our city and industry to celebrate and be proud of. Now we must find a way of providing everybody with an affordable home and creating wonderful and interesting places, while generating jobs and growth.”
OVERALL WINNER

Holmes Road Studios
41-43 Holmes Road, Camden, NW4

This year’s overall winner was applauded for its creation of 59 micro-houses for homeless people, giving its inhabitants a real sense of belonging, empowerment and self-worth to enable them to find their feet. ‘It’s a hostel, but they’ve humanised it’, said judge Riccardo Marini – ‘it’s investing in people’. Fellow judge Monica von Schm Alanee praised the initiative as one of the best and most innovative projects she had seen. Awards chairman Peter Murray agreed, stating that the homeless facility ‘stands out ahead of the rest’.

ASHDEN PRIZE

Supported by Ashden

New Studios, Wimbledon College of Arts
Merton Hall Road, Wimbledon, Merton, SW19

Making more efficient use of the main campus, this zinc-clad building has replaced a series of temporary structures to provide flexible high-quality spaces designed to take best advantage of orientation, with maximised daylight, natural ventilation and night-time cooling. Developed with sustainability as a prerequisite, the detailed design used passive design analysis and dynamic modeling, further developed using passivhaus techniques of high performance insulation and tight permeability to reduce heating requirements. The BREEAM Outstanding scheme has achieved below Zero Carbon and an A+ EPC rating, with energy-efficient measures including a timber structure, rainwater recycling, low energy LED lighting, and roof-mounted photovoltaics.

‘The scheme was praised by the Ashden judging panel for “cutting no corners”, with the jury “hugely impressed with the attention that had been paid to every aspect of sustainability” that has ultimately “resulted in a building which is not only efficient but also looks good”.

See page 126 for full project information

See page 38 for full project information

Four projects were commended for this prize:

7 Air Street by Bar Gazettas for The Crown Estate (pages 16 and 85)
Crouch End Picturehouse by Panter Hudspith for Picturehouse Cinemas Ltd (page 27)
Maurice Wohl Clinical Neuroscience Institute by Allies and Morrison for King’s College London (page 129)
Wilton’s Music Hall by Tim Ronalds Architects for Wilton’s Music Hall Trust (page 14)
Utilising previously vacant Council-owned land while a long-term regeneration strategy is planned, this project uses a volumetric construction method to create high-quality temporary accommodation. The upper floors will house 24 social rent families, allowing them the stability they need to contribute to the local economy, whilst the ground floor will host an enterprise hub combining affordable office space with bespoke business support, creative maker spaces, flexible indoor market space, a community café and a film screening room. Together, these uses aim to create an economically active environment to drive regeneration in Lewisham.

The Mayor of London praised the scheme as ‘inspirational’, with ‘an imaginative borough using innovative design to build affordable homes for Londoners that really need them, as well as affordable workspace for creative start-ups, and community space for use by local people. It shows how excellent architecture can create more social value, for less cost.’

The inaugural People’s Choice winner celebrates the will of two communities to have a link across the river. Receiving an overwhelming number of votes from these two neighbourhoods and those further afield, this new bridge would become one of the first bridges east of Tower Bridge. The energy-efficient design spans the considerable width of the Thames with wishbone-like mast structures that can pivot to enable the bridge to lift at its centre to allow large ships to pass. The scheme was praised by voters for its green credentials and innovation, with ‘references to London’s heritage as a 21st century Tower Bridge’ whilst being ‘highly functional; enhancing communications, and facilitating work and community links’.
The conservation and retrofit section this year, presented by category assessors John Robertson, director of John Robertson Architects; and Jeremy Foster, director of Ramboll, ranged from a tower in the Barbican being converted into luxury housing, to a private members’ club created from a building destroyed by fire in 2009.

The unbuilt winner, Fairfield Halls and College Green, returns the building to the community and represents the aspiration for the entire area, with judge David Burney remarking that ‘you can see [the project] spinning off into a lot of secondary benefits with people going there and the economic benefits that will result’. Fellow judge Peter Murray added that the scheme will transform a building which ‘desperately needs to come back into decent use’.

The built winner, Mount Pleasant Studios in Clerkenwell, was, said the category assessors, ‘completely different from almost everything we’ve seen’. Praised for its conspicuous renovation, the jury admired the architect ‘seamlessly linking the three buildings, providing inhabitants with their own apartments, and designing a courtyard which is full of ‘incidents’, and cleverly designed interventions’.

This year, the jury felt the projects within this category should form two separate prizes, with the introduction of a Restoration winner to celebrate the project that showed both London’s wealth of historic fabric and its consultants’ expertise in bringing it back to life. The inaugural winner – Wilton’s Music Hall – was judged to be ‘charming’, having exercised admirable restraint, with the director in charge of the building’s trust Frances Mayhew instructing its architects to do no more than was essential to keep it going whilst preserving its charisma.

Across the category, the judges made three commendations. In the unbuilt section, 55 Broadway was praised for recognising the original vision by architect Charles Holden. The project – branded ‘very impressive’ by Dominique Alba – reworks the neglected building on top of St James’ Park tube station, improves the public realm and removes the 1970’s 100 Petty France building; ‘righting a wrong and re-expressing something that deserves to be re-expressed’. East Dulwich Picturehouse and Café was commended for its ‘robust yet sensitive transformation’, preserving the best of the old Victorian church and schoolhouse, while the third commendation went to 184 Shepherd’s Bush Road, for the way its new roof has transformed the formerly squat building.
This heritage-led regeneration scheme is the result of extensive consultations with the local community to transform and give new life to these landmark buildings. Underpinning the large-scale change of central Croydon, the conservation project seeks to sympathetically upgrade the celebrated but declining Grade II listed Fairfield Halls, returning many features of the 1962 building and modernising it for future performances. The wider scheme includes the transformation of College Green to provide an improved public amenity space, a contemporary gallery and a centralised energy centre.

Sited within a peaceful suntrap courtyard near High Holborn, this sheltered housing project provides ensuite accommodation for 52 homeless people. Reinstating 18th century routes, the project has formed a more coherent courtyard by demolishing a section of the existing scheme and patching in the long facades with London Vernacular buildings. The project provides direct access to a laundry, shared kitchens, a consulting room alongside a variety of apartment types – from self-contained, to shared-living, to disabled access – and seeks to encourage social interaction and engagement.