

"Full House" as Housing Design Awards enter decade no. 8

This year's Housing Design Awards are supported for the first time by RICS, the housing industry's largest professional body. It means the awards are now officially partnered by the industry's three key professional institutions, architects through RIBA, planners through RTPI and surveyors through the RICS.

Another major new partner, the Department of Health, is reunited with the programme which health secretary Nye Bevan launched in 1948 while setting up the NHS to emphasise good housing's benefit to health.

Communities and Local Government and the Department of Health will introduce a new award in response to the recent HAPPI report into better design for housing for older people. The award will be made to the best "Homes for an Ageing Population" and will be awarded to the best scheme from a range of options, from co-operative self-builds by empty nesters to extra-care facilities for the more dependent.

The Awards are also delighted to announce the support of the London Development Agency and its team at Design for London. The RICS, LDA and the Department of Health will join the core partnership of Communities and Local Government, supported by standards body NHBC and the Homes and Communities Agency. They will be aided by CABE.

The Housing Design Awards are due shortly to announce a new chair to replace Graham Pye who died in 2009 after 14 years of steering the process. In recent years Graham had directed the awards to engage with local authorities' planning and housing departments, resulting in a clutch of high-quality winners that came out of local authority initiatives.

Awards will be made both to schemes which have received planning permission by 15 March 2010 but which are not yet complete, as well as to developments which are built out within the last two years and partly or wholly occupied. Up to 20 winners will be unveiled by government ministers and institutional presidents at the Banqueting House in Whitehall at a lunchtime function on Thursday 8 July. For the first time entrants will be able to both file their entry and pay the entry fee online (from 5 February 2010). **The closing date for entries is Friday 5 March 2010.** For more information or images please contact info@hdawards.org or ring **0870 890 288**.

For detailed questions contact Housing Design Awards awards judge and rapporteur David Birkbeck on **07968 731991** or david@designforhomes.org