

Portsmouth Society Design Awards 2016

Best New Building

Winner - Land Rover BAR Building in Old Portsmouth

Commended - Dual use extension to the New Theatre Royal; St. George's Beneficial School in Portsea

Best Reuse

Winner - Boathouse 4, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Commended - The Parade Tearooms in Western Parade, "Old Loo" for Brewers Estate Agents Drayton

Best Restoration

Winner - The Clocktower in Castle Road Southsea

Commended - Lynx House, Northern Road Cosham, Buckland United Reformed Church

Best Landscaping

Winner - New gates to St. Edmund's School, Arundel Street

Commended - North Somerstown play area.

The 2016 Portsmouth Society Design Awards were announced by Society Chair Sue McClory to a packed audience at the Society's Awards Evening in Southsea's Royal Beach Hotel on Thursday 10 November.

The judges - architects Julian Boswell and Jane Lock-Smith, Paul Ramshaw, Head of Regeneration and Planning Policy at Eastleigh Borough Council and Dr Clark - had a very rich collection of entries this year to the Portsmouth Society's annual Design Awards.

In two intensive days organised by Society member David Baynes, they saw outstanding new buildings, ingenious reuses of existing buildings, exemplary restorations and new landscaping that is a work of art.

Best New Building



Winner of the Best New Building Award is the Land Rover BAR Building in Old Portsmouth where the Americas Cup yachts are designed, built and tested and the crews trained. "The city should be very proud to host such a concentration of talent and purpose" said judge Julian Boswell. Designed by Matthew Williams of HGP Architects its wrapped exterior form expresses the of mystery and privacy of the complex inward-looking functions within. The interior - workshop, design studio, offices, canteen, gym and glorious rooftop entertainment space - is functional and well detailed for such a swiftly executed programme.

There are two commended new buildings. The first is the dual use extension to the New Theatre Royal: the new 22m flytower, Minghella Studio Theatre, green room for the theatre; and studios, practice rooms and TV studio for the university. The multi-functional Minghella Studio is lit by elegant tall windows.

Also commended is the extension of the St. George's Beneficial School in Portsea by the city architects, a clever linking of the disparate parts of the school to create a new heart to the school. The use of multiple roof lights in these central spaces together with imaginative and decorative internal lighting combines well with the clear circulation and bold use of glazing and colour inside.

The judges also enjoyed architect Mick Morris's five sided house in Warren Avenue, the Southdown View flats for First Wessex Housing Association.

Best Reuse Award



Boathouse 4, reimagined by architect Michal Cohen of Walters & Cohen for the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust to house its small boat collection on the new mezzanine, above the workshop space for the International Boatbuilding Training College, is the outstanding winner of the Society's Best Reuse Award. It is also deservedly in line for a Civic Trust award and a WAF (World Architecture Festival) award.

This 'cathedral to small boat building' designed by four engineers, erected in the rearmament run-up to WW2 to house small boat building and repair, was built around four Dorman Long cranes, one of which was used in the recent construction. With its saw-tooth roof and horizontal Modern Movement glazing it is a distinctive C20 survivor facing Portsmouth Harbour in the naval base heritage area. Threatened in the 1980s with demolition and a replacement by John Winter who designed the ticketing entrance, the PNBPT used Boathouse 4 for storage and events - until discussions with the ICTB in Lowestoft began eight years ago, and preparation of the HLF bid to house the new complex mix of uses began four years ago. At a total cost of £5.5m, the HLF gave £3.75m and the EU Regional Growth Fund £479,000. Reversion to the original use: small boat building and craft training is not only a gratifying return to the boathouse's original function, but the new facility addresses the continuing loss of traditional dockyard trade skills.

Cutting a window into the temporary wall to reveal the boatbuilders at work - lit in the evenings - is a masterstroke. The existing mezzanine was extended reached by a new staircase and lift and a new westward range added, filling three sides of the tall volume of space. Here the trust's small boat collection is displayed - including boats hung over the entrance and suspended on cradles over the busy workshop

space below. The first floor also has a classroom, meeting room, toilets, and children's facilities including a popular climbing mast. A film projection room is tucked into the northeast corner. The kitchen, bar and very popular restaurant complete the harbour ward side, with offices and workshops on three sides underneath. A glazed acoustic screen shields the restaurant, with its unique-level view of the harbour, from the activity of the boat restoration and construction below. Its rope partitions and woodwork details were made by the trust's in-house conservation team; timber from Beaulieu in the New Forest, where timber-framing still continues, was used for the cabinets. The harbourside workshops below the restaurant are light, airy and functional.

Three of the sets of steel columns supporting the roof are painted a vibrant yellow. Detailing throughout is plain, robust and industrial - entirely appropriate for what is still mainly an industrial building. Materials are recycled as far as possible - setting an example now followed by the surrounding active naval base. Heating the 2,700m² was not feasible, so only the enclosed spaces are heated, and timber stores season in the main space under cover. The colleges offer participation in education at many levels - family, school and college and adult - makes an excellent and unmatched contribution to technical education locally and in the sub-region.

There were also two Commended buildings in the Reuse category: The Parade Tearooms in Western Parade which ingeniously opened up an electricity substation, and the "Old Loo" for Brewers Estate Agents Drayton, where offices were cleverly inserted on top of a rebuilt public toilet.

Best Restoration



The extraordinary Clocktower in Castle Road Southsea, lovingly restored by hairdresser Tony Wood and artist/craftsman Peter Codling wins the Best Restoration award. The evident care spent on this restoration, combining small scale interventions with a buzzing set of imaginative interiors make it a notable example for both building enthusiasts and entrepreneurs. Built for an antique dealer whose initials are in the clock face, it has a traditional barber and, ladies' hairdressers on the ground floor and basement, and upstairs are several companies. Peter Codling, whose studio is in Castle Road carefully treated the decorative timber framing, and was also brave enough to reach and repair the castle weathervane on the top. Purpose made railings enclosed the repaired Gog and Magog figures flanking the main entrance.

Invisible repairs to the external glazing of the listed Modern Movement Lynx House, Cosham by Mick Morris are also commended in the Restoration category. Historical and technical research into the original fixings for the glazing and a specially designed tool preserved the building's original appearance.

The other Restoration commendation is to Buckland United Reformed Church, which presents a welcoming face to the street with a new café and meeting room. A new mezzanine above the café offers more space for the church's popular work in the community. The gallery in the main church was removed, revealing the glory of the full height stained glass windows. A church member has restored the old clock mechanism.

Best Landscaping



Winner of the Best Landscaping Award are Peter Codling's beautiful new gates to St. Edmund's School, Arundel Street. He is a former pupil of the school, and his design arises from the life of St. Edmund, the English saint and martyr. It is full of entrancing detail - whether it's rain showers or saints' feet!

The judges enjoyed the new North Somerstown play area designed by the City Council Landscape Group. Commended is the group's redesign of Fernhurst Junior School's extensive and enjoyable wildlife garden.

Dr Celia Clark