

**St Albans Civic Society Awards Evening
5 October 2017 at The Maltings Arts Theatre**

The St Albans Civic Society held its annual awards evening at the Maltings Arts Theatre on 5 October 2017.

After a careful selection process, from thirty nominations, one project was given the Society's Annual Award and plaque, and two projects were commended. In addition, two projects were awarded the Trevelyan Prize; all received certificates. Certificates and plaques were presented by the Mayor of the City and District of St Albans, Councillor Mohammad Iqbal Zia, who said:

"We live in a beautiful and historic City with many fascinating buildings, so it is very important to encourage high design standards in development projects, both large and small.

"St Albans Civic Society, with around 500 members, plays an invaluable role in helping to preserve our City's buildings, heritage and character. Its coveted awards help highlight development projects where the design standards complement and enhance the architecture and heritage of St Albans. I want to thank the Society's members for their efforts in helping to ensure our City remains an attractive and special place to live."

Details of the Award winner, the Trevelyan Prize winners, and commended projects are given below. High resolution photographs of the five projects can be provided if requested.

The Mayor with representatives of the winners



The Society's Award 2016:



Newsom Place (Oaklands) Housing - Hatfield Road

Instigator: Fairview New Homes succeeded by:
Nicholas King Homes

Architects: John Pardey Architects
Wakelin Associates Architects
MGM Associates
Peter Taylor Associates Limited

Contractor: Nicholas King Homes

The development of the site of the former college, close to the city centre, containing seven Grade II Listed buildings and over two hundred mature trees has been achieved in commendable style thanks to a sensitive masterplan by the architects and careful stewardship by the developer and contractor.

Judicious restoration and adaptation of the listed buildings, respecting their orthogonal layout and materials palette in the new blocks, which have been set out as a series of well designed, modern pavilions of varied heights around open courtyards, has enabled the parkland setting to be maintained, despite the relatively high density of the scheme.

A fine architectural response and a worthy companion to its auspicious forbears.

Commendation:



Sweet Briar Mews Housing - Victoria Street

Instigator: Shortgrove Developments Ltd

Architect: HuT Architecture

Contractor: Shortgrove Developments Ltd

Built on a highly constrained, L-shaped, brownfield site this scheme manages to provide five stylish modern houses and a first-floor gatehouse flat over the entrance from Victoria Street.

By retaining the existing high perimeter walls, building two, four-bedroom courtyard houses along the south boundary, and three, three-bedroom, three-storey, single aspect houses to the west the architects have maximised the potential of the site without compromising privacy for the residents or their neighbours.

Through good architecture the scheme succeeds not only in revitalising a dilapidated area but also in sensitively creating the continuity formerly lacking in the historic street frontage. Deservedly commendable.

Commendation:



Beaumont School - New Sports Hall, Administration and Classroom Block
- Oakwood Drive

Instigator: Beaumont School

Architect: Designcubed

Contractor: Ashe Construction

Thanks to the acquisition of land to the east of the school for playing fields, part of those to the south were able to be sold for housing including provision of a new link from Hatfield Road, thereby resolving the school's historic problem of poor access between the houses of Oakwood Road.

In the new building the architect has exploited this re-orientation with considerable flair to provide reception, administration, new sports hall and eleven classrooms, with communal facilities and an amphitheatre in a well-planned, compact composition adjoining a landscaped car park.

Sensitive use of good quality materials and the adroit arrangement of pitched roofs gives coherence to the scheme over the more recent, disparate, buildings on this side of the campus, while providing a distinguished modern addition to the original school.

Trevelyan Prize 2016



Spencer House - 76 Holywell Hill

Instigator: Mr and Mrs Robert Waterhouse

Designers: Mr and Mrs Robert Waterhouse

Contractor: E J Waterhouse and Sons Ltd.

This Locally Listed, early Victorian house, at the lower end of Holywell Hill, was in a sad state when acquired by the present owners in 2014. They have painstakingly renovated and sensitively added to it inside and out.

Fitting conservation standard, double glazed sashes to the existing frames, restoring window shutters and plaster cornices throughout, reinstating the arched glazed screen in the entrance hall and the simple, elegant staircase. Externally a new glazed canopy, in sympathy with the style of the house, has been added over the glazed doors between the revitalised dining kitchen and the re-planned and replanted rear garden, one corner of which houses the new double garage, designed in sympathy with the house.

The front garden areas have been similarly refurbished and new low garden walls, with railings, added to provide an appropriate street setting to the restored building. Altogether a most noteworthy initiative by the owners.

Trevelyan Prize 2016



The Prae Wood Arms – Redbourn Road

Instigator: Bunning and Price Limited

Designer: Bunning and Price Limited

Contractor: I B Construction Limited

This splendid, early nineteenth century building, formerly the Prae Wood Hotel and most recently the Garden Room Carvery, is situated beside the river Ver, in the verdant perimeter of the Gorhambury estate off the Redbourn Road.

It had fallen into a parlous state under its previous management, and the new tenants, realising its great potential, immediately began removing gratuitous additions, uncovering original features and repairing and restoring its fine architectural details lost under years of neglect.

The subsequent sensitive re-decoration and fitting out, which fully exploits the wide variety of spaces in the building, has completely rejuvenated it. The same careful attention to detail has also been given to the wooded external areas which now provide an appropriate, child friendly setting to this, admirably refurbished, family pub-diner.

Notes for Editors:

The main features of the St Albans Civic Society award scheme are:

- it started in 1986
- it relies on nominations from members of the Society
- it is retrospective, and projects must have been completed during the previous calendar year
- the Awards Panel visits, judges and reveals the winner at an Awards Evening
- A plaque is awarded to a building or project, which:
 - **contributes most to the preservation and enhancement of the character of St Albans**
 - **achieves the highest standards of architecture, planning, landscaping and civic design**

The Trevelyan Prize is:

- an annual award, instituted in 2014
- it recognises and commemorates the contribution the Trevelyan family (Geoffrey, and Peter) have made to the work of St Albans Civic Society.

The prize is an annual award to recognise a project, completed in the previous year, that has achieved the finest quality in terms of conservation / restoration.

This year, the members of the Society's Awards Panel were Peter Denney Brian Holmes, Jill Singer, Alan Smith, Peter Trevelyan; all members of the Society.

Requests for high resolution copies of the photographs should be addressed to:

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For other information contact the Chairman of the Society:

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