



ESSEX HOUSING AWARDS 2025

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

HOUSING ESSEX
A VOICE FOR HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS IN ESSEX



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

birketts
Next Level Law



GUIDE FOR ENTRANTS



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WELCOME

Dear Partner,

We would like to welcome you to **the 2025 Essex Housing Awards**; building on the success of the 2019, 2022, 2023 and 2024 awards programme. We do hope you will be able to find time to make a submission under one or more of our 12 categories.

By making a submission you will help promote the excellent work of your organisation in supporting housing in Essex.

Applying is simple via our online web page:

<https://essexhousingawards2025.awardstage.com> If successfully shortlisted, you will be invited to a prestigious evening award ceremony on Thursday 16 October 2025.

May we wish you every success in your application!

If you don't intend to make an application yourself, please help our publicity campaign by forwarding the message on...

Many thanks,

Mark Curle – Chair EDG & Mime Consultancy
Helen McCabe – Chair SEHG, Thurrock Regeneration Ltd
Tim Clarke – Chair EHOG, Tendring District Council

ESSEX HOUSING AWARDS 2025

KEY STEPS

- 1. Read the relevant sections of this guide carefully and check the entry criteria for your award category.** You may wish to type your submission details in a Word document before pasting it into the form so that you can save your progress. However, please bear in mind that the form does not accept formatting.
- 2. Visit the Essex Housing Awards web <https://www.housingessex.org/essex-housing-awards-2025> and click the apply button.**
- 3. First register your account, then view and / or enter the categories, by clicking 'Add new' and begin the process by filling the two-part form. Importantly, you must scroll down and press either 'save & continue' later or 'save & submit' otherwise you will lose your work.**
- 4. Submit each entry you wish to make separately through the web page (you can submit as many as you wish to).**

TOP TIP: Do include / attach supporting evidence such as photos, YouTube clips, PowerPoint slides, PDFs and testimonials where possible.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Building on the previous success of the 2019, 2022, 2023 and 2024 Awards, the Essex Housing Awards 2025 aims to reward and promote the high-quality work of our housing partners in Essex. The Awards are intended to:

- Recognise the best housing (schemes, services or individuals) in Essex
- Highlight best practice and promote housing, particularly in relation to meeting housing need.
- Support good design and place making especially where it meets national or local design guidance such as the [Essex Design Guide](#).
- Support the [Essex Climate Action Commission](#) and their Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral Report and Action Plan.

Award categories

There are 12 categories up for consideration this year:

1. Small Housing Schemes (1-24 homes)
2. Medium Housing Schemes (25-100 homes)
3. Large Housing Schemes (101+ homes)
4. Excellence in Design and Placemaking
5. Excellence in Construction Skills
6. Climate Action - Decarbonisation / Retrofit
7. Climate Action - Low or Zero Carbon in New Build
8. Meeting Housing Need - Specialist Housing
9. Meeting Housing Need - Homelessness
10. Smart Working
11. Housing and Development Professional of the Year
12. The Mo Slade Rising Star Award

Who can apply?

Nominations are sought from house builders, housing associations, local authorities, contractors, agents and voluntary sector delivering housing and related services in Essex. Nominations that won in the last year are excluded from entering again in the same category, however, those that were highly commended or runners-up can still enter.

Why enter?

By entering the awards, applicants have the opportunity to enhance their profile and gain recognition for their contributions to housing in Essex.

Finalist will be invited to attend a prestigious award ceremony on 16 October where the award winners will be announced at the event.

By entering you will be able to:

- Gain invaluable media exposure and free promotion which will raise your organisation's profile and demonstrate your organisation's commitment to housing excellence
- Promote your work, share best practice and encourage collaboration and innovation in the housing sector



- Have the high-quality work of your staff, their skills and commitment recognised
- Network with other EDG, SEHG and EHOG partners at the awards ceremony
- Potentially receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

How to enter?

Entries should be submitted via the Essex Housing Awards website page at: <https://essexhousingawards2025.awardstage.com> before the closing date on Friday 27 June 2025.

You are welcome to submit more than one entry, whether to one or multiple categories. Each entry should be submitted separately through the web page.

Entries will then be judged by an expert panel of assessors.

If you would like to know more about the Essex Housing Awards, please email awards@housing.org or call Alastair Pollock on 01268 882270 or Natasha Miller on 07741 659615.

Deadline

The deadline for entries is Friday 27 June 2025.

CATEGORIES & JUDGING CRITERIA

1. Small Housing Schemes (1-24 homes)

Eligibility

Any development located in Greater Essex less than 25 homes in size

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

This award recognises the development of homes (new or refurbished) which make a significant contribution to meeting housing need and placemaking and improving the image and perception of housing in Essex. 100% affordable housing and community led housing schemes are encouraged to enter. To be successful in the small scheme entry, we are looking for schemes that not only meet housing need and but also delights residents and the wider local community through excellence in design, construction or public realm.

Key judging criteria for small developments:

- 1-24 homes located in Greater Essex with at least 25% completed
- High quality design, construction and or public realm
- Resident / community satisfaction / post-occupancy evaluation / awards / media feedback

2. Medium Housing Schemes (25-100 homes)

Eligibility

Any development located in Greater Essex between 25-100 homes in size

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

This award recognises the development of homes (new or refurbished) which make a significant contribution to meeting housing needs and placemaking and improving the image and perception of housing in Essex. Again, 100% affordable housing and community led housing schemes are encouraged to enter. To be successful in the medium scheme entry, we are looking for schemes that not only meet housing need and but also delights residents and the wider local community through excellence in design, construction or public realm.

Key judging criteria for medium developments:

- Between 25-100 homes in Greater Essex with at least 25% completed
- High quality design, construction and or public realm
- Resident/community satisfaction / post-occupancy evaluation / awards / media feedback

3. Large Housing Schemes (101+ homes)

Eligibility

Any development located in Greater Essex over 100 homes in size

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

This award recognises the development of homes (new or refurbished) which make a significant contribution to meeting housing needs and placemaking and improving the image and perception of housing in Essex. To be successful in the large scheme entry, we are looking for schemes that not only meet housing need but seek to embed key principles of Garden Communities including sustainable development, innovation, stewardship, education, health and wellbeing, transition to zero carbon, Biodiversity Net Gain (on or off site); creating beautiful homes and places.

Key judging criteria for large developments:

- 101+ homes located in Greater Essex with at least 25% completed
- High quality design, construction and or public realm incorporating key principles of garden communities
- Resident / community satisfaction / post-occupancy evaluation / awards / media feedback

4. Excellence in Design and Placemaking

Eligibility

Any development located in Greater Essex that aspires to quality design and placemaking

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

This award recognises the development of homes / commercial development (new or refurbished) of any size which aspires to quality design and placemaking beyond the homes themselves. To be successful in the design entry, we are looking for schemes that accords to national or local design guides / codes such as the [Essex Design Guide](#) incorporating excellence in design, construction or public realm; making a significant contribution to zero

carbon, placemaking and provision of Bio-Diversity Net Gain (BNG) if required either on or off site.

Key judging criteria for excellence in design and placemaking:

- Residential / commercial scheme located in Greater Essex, at least 25% completed
- High quality design, construction / public realm, low carbon / BNG and placemaking
- Resident / community satisfaction / awards / media feedback

5. Excellence in Construction Skills

<p>Eligibility Organisation who has been proactive in meeting Essex's skills needs in construction</p>	<p>Entry Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page</p>	<p>Award Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up</p>
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Ensuring the construction sector has the right skills is critical to whether it can successfully meet an accelerated housing delivery target in Essex. This award is for the organisations / initiatives / programmes that have been most proactive in assessing and meeting the County's skills needs in construction including retrofit. This might be through developing a robust evidence base, skills plan, stakeholder engagement, direct investment in facilities or provision of dedicated skills training / apprenticeship, engagement via schools / colleges, job fairs, involving digital media or via studies helping to inform skills strategies.

Key judging criteria for Excellence in Construction Skills:

- Proactive in assessing skills needs in construction / retrofit
- Pathway showing how the skills need is / or planned to be met
- Evidence of stakeholder engagement and meeting targets / expectations through Essex Opportunities, other skills subgroups / committees, or events such as job fairs, studies / strategies etc

6. Climate Action - Decarbonisation / Retrofit

The reality is, through construction, day-to-day maintenance and operations, the built environment emits **49%** of global CO2 emissions operations (**including life cycle embodied carbon**).

It is imperative that both the public and private sector across the built environment decarbonise their existing stock, alongside developing zero emission new stock (see next category below), in response to the Essex Climate Action Commission report / Developers Charter, and in a way that reflects best practice and aligns with local and national net zero climate targets.

This award recognises organisations that are responding to the climate crisis by decarbonising their housing stock. Nominations are invited from public or private sector partners who are delivering retrofit programmes either as pilots or for wider rollout. This may include net zero carbon extensions to existing properties as part of a re-build / refurbishment. Entries will be judged on the extent to which their programmes will deliver measurable change, how innovative they are and how they might be shared with other partners. Evidence of “quick wins” achieved to date would also be beneficial.

Key judging criteria for delivering Climate Action – Decarbonisation / Retrofit:

- Retrofit programmes to tackle the climate crisis and reduced carbon emissions
- Demonstration of measurable change and innovation
- Evidence of “quick wins” achieved so far and sharing of best practice

7. Climate Action – Low or zero carbon in New Build

<p>Eligibility</p> <p>Organisations actively responding to the climate crisis with measurable plans and actions</p>	<p>Entry</p> <p>Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page</p>	<p>Award</p> <p>Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up</p>
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This award recognises organisations that are responding to the climate crisis by developing low / zero carbon new housing stock in Essex in response to the Essex Climate Action Commission report / Developers Charter, and in a way that reflects best practice and aligns with local and national net zero climate targets.

Nominations are invited from public or private sector partners who have delivered low / zero carbon homes as pilots or at scale, which strive to go beyond Building Regulation requirements and aid the transition of the house building industry towards delivering fabric efficient, net zero carbon homes. Entries will be judged on the extent to which their homes minimise energy use and carbon emissions (operational and embodied) and maximise renewal energy generation on site. Also, on how they mitigate and adapt to climate risks such as overheating, water scarcity and integrate green/blue infrastructure.

This may include net zero carbon extensions to existing properties as part of a re-build / refurbishment.

Key judging criteria for delivering climate action – Low / Zero Carbon:

- Strategies / plans to mitigate climate change and reduce carbon
- Demonstration of measurable change and innovation

- Evidence of “quick wins” achieved so far and sharing of best practice

8. Meeting Housing Need – Specialist housing

<p>Eligibility</p> <p>Organisations that are best meeting Essex’s specialist housing need</p>	<p>Entry</p> <p>Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page</p>	<p>Award</p> <p>Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up</p>
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Essex residents have different housing needs, with one in 25 requiring some form of specialist housing. The type of specialist housing will vary depending on the user group and typically could cover housing for older people, housing for people with disabilities and or other health issues.

To be successful in this award we are looking for organisations that have taken a strategic approach and worked in partnership to address an identified specialist housing need in Essex. This might include a research project, writing of a strategy / policy or capital led programme or project delivering new or improved specialist housing to residents.

We will be looking at imaginative solutions to meeting Essex’s diverse housing needs in either the social or private housing sector. Organisations will need to demonstrate and evidence how the initiative has supported healthy living and/or independent living.

Key judging criteria for Meeting Housing Need – Specialist Housing:

- Organisations that are best meeting Essex’s specialist housing need and have a good understanding of the issues
- To include imaginative solutions which could be either service or project related
- Demonstrate and evidence how the initiative has supported healthy living and/or independent living

9. Meeting Housing Need – Homelessness

Eligibility

Meeting Essex's Homelessness housing needs & have a good understanding of the issues

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

Preventing or providing relief for homelessness remains a central focus both nationally and across Greater Essex. Our commitment lies in prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable, safeguarding individuals, communities, and local services from long-term costs. The multifaceted causes of homelessness extend beyond housing, encompassing health, mental well-being, family dynamics, employment, and training, among others.

To be successful in this award we are looking for organisations or projects that have provided a range of targeted support to vulnerable people and families to either prevent homelessness or intervene with relief when it they become homeless.

Support will often cover those with complex needs, including Substance Misuse, Domestic Abuse, and Offending. This might involve providing early interventions for individuals and families with less complex issues, preventing further deterioration. It could also include the direct provision of temporary accommodation itself.

We will be looking at both your overall approach and specific outcomes achieved and how you worked in partnership with another organisation to deliver a service or project to prevent and tackle homelessness including rough sleeping.

Organisations will need to demonstrate and evidence how their initiative has met or alleviated the housing need for homeless people.

Key judging criteria for Meeting Housing Need Homelessness:

- Organisations that are best meeting Essex's Homelessness housing needs and have a good understanding of the issues
- To include imaginative solutions which could be either service or project related
- Tackling an identified housing issue through partnership working
- Evidence how the initiative has met or alleviated the housing need for homelessness

10. Smart Working

Eligibility

Organisations that have used smart working to improve the outcomes for residents / places

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

This award will go to the organisation that can best show how its use of smart working including use of digital technology or AI is significantly improving outcomes for its residents and/or places. It could cover anything from a new IT system, management scheme, shared service, monitoring system or new repair product to, for example to reduce bills or increase efficiency or manage damp, mould and condensation in a property. Successful applicants will need to demonstrate how smart working has helped transform a local area / property or significantly improved a housing related service. The judges will be looking for evidence of engagement showing for example take-up, ease of use, adaptivity or savings.

This award is designed to recognise vision and farsightedness but may also be suitable for organisations who have drawn on their existing resources in new or innovative ways.

Key judging criteria for Smart Working:

- Improved outcomes for residents and or places in Greater Essex
- Use of digital technology / AI or other resources to bring about positive change
- Evidence of engagement to demonstrate success

11. Housing and Development Professional of the Year

Eligibility

An individual who has made a significant contribution to a housing scheme or strategy

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

To be awarded to someone that has made a significant contribution to the housing profession and/or residents during the year. This award recognises an individual who demonstrates an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the sector. We're looking for someone who's a role model and has personal and professional integrity with the ability to help and support others.

Key judging criteria for Housing & Development Professional of the Year:

- Either based or working in Greater Essex
- Significant contribution to housing profession (development, strategy or management)
- In-depth understanding and knowledge of the housing sector

- Role model with professional integrity to support others
- Recognised by management / board or other individuals / organisations

12. The Mo Slade Rising Star Award

Eligibility

An individual who has become a rising star within the organisation they work

Entry

Upload and complete application form including maximum 500 word statement via the awards web page

Award

Receive an award and certificate or be a runner up

To be awarded to a young person or apprentice that has become a rising star within the organisation they work, making a significant contribution to their business. The person will have personal / professional integrity, drive and ambition to further their career within a professional discipline such as housing, construction, planning, regeneration or environmental sciences. This category is in recognition of the late Mo Slade for her long-standing dedication to the housing sector having worked at Basildon Council for over 47 years and her passion for getting young people into the sector.

Key judging criteria for The Mo Slade Rising Star Award:

- Young person either based or working in Greater Essex
- Significant contribution to a professional discipline
- Possessing integrity, drive and ambition to further their career within a professional discipline such as housing, construction, planning, regeneration or environmental sciences.

JUDGING & SHORTLISTING

Judges and panels

The judging panel will be made up of housing practitioners and advisors and from public and private sector.

Any conflicts of interest must be declared before the assessment date.

Shortlisting

The entries in each category which are scored highest by the judges will be presented as a shortlist July/August 2025.

AWARDS CEREMONY & DISSEMINATION

Awards ceremony

The Awards will be presented at the fourth Essex Housing Awards Ceremony on 16 October 2025.

Those shortlisted will be expected to attend the ceremony.

Dissemination

Essex Developers Group, South Essex Housing Group and Essex Housing Officers Group will promote and disseminate the winning and commended entries via the Housing Essex website and press releases.

Ownership and intellectual property of the entries will remain with the entrants, however, entrants by entering the competition will be giving their consent to general promotion and marketing at the awards event ceremony and thereafter.

Further information and enquiries

This guidance is available on the Housing Essex website at:

<https://www.housingessex.org/essex-housing-awards-2025>

Our Privacy Policy is available here: <https://www.housingessex.org/privacy-policy/>

APPLICATION PROCESS FLOW

