

FORMARTINE AREA COMMITTEE – 7 FEBRUARY 2017

ABERDEENSHIRE DESIGN AWARD SCHEME

1. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to consider and provide comments, to the Infrastructure Services Committee, on the following:

- (i) The categories of award (see possible options in Appendix 1);**
- (ii) Having a public vote;**
- (iii) The venue for the next awards ceremony;**
- (iv) The membership of the judging panel;**
- (v) Investigating the viability of appointing a guest speaker;**
- (vi) Investigating potential opportunities for private sponsorship of the Design Awards; and**
- (vii) Providing any other observations on the Design Awards for the further consideration of the Infrastructure Services Committee.**

2.0 Background / Discussion

- 2.0.1 The Aberdeenshire Design Award Scheme was first endorsed by the Infrastructure Services Committee and the six Area Committees in 1997 as a means of raising the profile of good design.
- 2.0.2 The biennial event is deemed to be a cost effective means of determining the effectiveness of current policies and the development management process. It provides a means of assessing the quality of recent development, stimulating greater awareness of design and the promotion of excellence.
- 2.0.3 The 2016 awards scheme was modified to acknowledge 'The Year of Innovation, Architecture & Design'. The previous seven categories were replaced by six conceptual design categories, a master-planning category and a built category (see **Appendix 1**). Two new awards were also added: public vote and best overall student submission. These changes were initiated by the Infrastructure Services Committee seeking to place greater emphasis on innovative design and facilitate entries from students who had limited or no track record of built achievements.
- 2.0.4 The submission process was also altered, with entrants required to submit two A1 display boards incorporating supporting text instead of the previous arrangement of participants forwarding electronic submissions.

- 2.0.5 Two surveys were carried out after the event to obtain feedback on the revised scheme from participants and the attendees of the awards ceremony; the results of which are included under **Appendix 2**.
- 2.0.6 This report is to seek committee comment on the format of the 2018 Aberdeenshire Design Awards Scheme to allow further consideration by the Infrastructure Services Committee on the future format.

2.1 Issues

Entries

- 2.1.1 The Planning Service received 49 entries for the 2016 awards, a considerable reduction on the 153 submissions received in 2014. It is unclear if the dramatic fall in entries was a result of changes to the entry requirements, the removal of previous categories or other external factors.
- 2.1.2 Respondents to the surveys intimated that they were not adverse to the revised format and new categories but the award scheme should remain focused on completed development.
- 2.1.3 A concern was also raised that a number of the entries from practising architects in the conceptual design categories did in fact relate to specific sites within Aberdeenshire. This suggested the granting of formal recognition to a particular entry, could potentially be used as justification for its future development.

Judging Process

- 2.1.4 The assessment of the submissions was changed from the previous single judging panel supported by specialist advisors carrying out two phases of evaluation. In 2016, two independent groups of judges were appointed to assess entries for specific categories (see **Appendix 3**). The judges assessing the 'innovative master planning' category performed a desk based assessment, while the judging panel evaluating the other categories participated in three separate phases of selection. The latter involved an initial assessment, a presentation exercise with architects of the shortlisted conceptual design entries and site visits to the finalists of the 'As Built' projects. This caused issues with logistics resulting in multiple substitutions of judges at various stages. The consistency of assessing entries clearly benefits from the commitment of judges to the awards scheme and this should be an important consideration when determining who sits on the judging panel. The use of expert advisors is also considered essential when assessing specialist categories and must be taken into account if these categories are to be reinstated in future awards.
- 2.1.5 A video of the architects explaining their shortlisted conceptual designs was also placed onto the Aberdeenshire Council website to facilitate a public vote.

Ceremony with Speaker

- 2.1.6 The format of the 2016 ceremony was changed to accommodate a talk by a guest speaker and the presentation of two new awards; the public vote winner and best overall student submission.

- 2.1.7 The introduction of a guest speaker was rated highly by participants and attendees of the award ceremony. The guest speaker also ran a training session for Aberdeenshire Council Officers which contributed towards their Continuing Professional Development.

Venue

- 2.1.8 The ceremony was relocated from Haddo House to Woodend Barn, Banchory. The former venue had successfully accommodated the ceremony since the inception of the awards but a decision was taken to try an alternative location. Woodend Barn's hosting of the event was well received by attendees despite lacking the historic setting of the National Trust property.

Staffing and Resources

- 2.1.9 The amount of preparation work for the first phase of the selection process was reduced by the revised submission requirements; conversely the amended judging process resulted in a significant increase in workload. This additional work was assigned to a broader range of officers within Planning & Building Standards; nonetheless members of the Environment Team undertook the majority of extra tasks because of their knowledge and experience in organising previous awards. This additional workload impacted on existing areas of statutory work, for example in delaying the review of conservation areas. Indeed, to sustain the scheme into the future, the Environment Team will require support from across the Services including but not exclusively: Customer Communication and Improvement, ITC and Support Services.

With the exception of paying for the attendance of the guest speaker, the various changes to the awards scheme did not result in the Planning Service going above its allocated budget for the biennial event.

- 2.1.10 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and they had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance.

3.0 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance enable the Committee to make comment on matters impacting on their area under 1.2 of Section B.

4.0 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 4.1 An equalities assessment is not required because the recommended actions will not have a differential impact on people with protected characteristics.
- 4.2 The organisation of the Design Awards requires considerable staff time from both Infrastructure Services and Business Services, with over 700 hours of planners' time spent on the organisation and administration of the 2016 awards.

- 4.3 A sum of £6000 is required for the Design Awards Scheme in each of the financial years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019, totalling £12,000. This sum can be met from the Planning and Building Standards Budget, (Environment page 47, Line 34 other Supplies and Services).
- 4.4 The fee for the guest speaker in 2016 was £6429 and additional funding is likely to be required if the option to include a guest speaker is continued in future awards. The further consideration of opportunities for potential sponsorship of specific elements of the Design Awards could be an avenue to reduce the overall cost of the Design Awards to the Council.

Stephen Archer
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by: Shaun Norman, Environment Planner
Date: 9 January 2017

Appendix 1

Aberdeenshire Design Awards Categories and Awards in 2014 and 2016

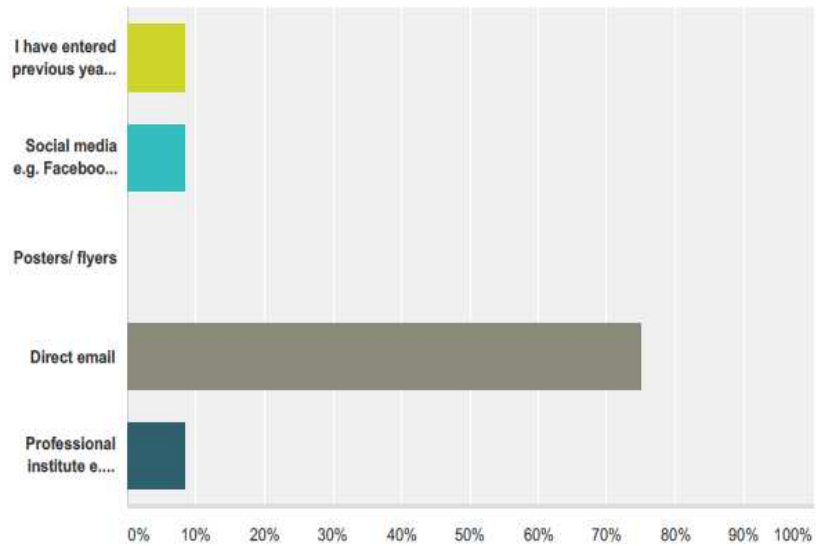
2014	2016
All the categories below were As Built	All the categories below were Conceptual except the As Built -Innovative sustainable development.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Vote
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Innovative Master planning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Award
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As Built -Innovative Sustainable Development ▪ Innovative sustainable development in Aberdeenshire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing ▪ Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Single house sited in a rural Aberdeenshire setting ▪ Single house sited in an urban Aberdeenshire setting ▪ Small scale residential development (up to 20 houses) in a rural Aberdeenshire setting ▪ Non-domestic development in an Aberdeenshire setting ▪ scale mixed use urban design project in an Aberdeenshire setting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape Design 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Craftsmanship 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Art 	

Appendix 2

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q1 How did you hear about the Aberdeenshire Design Award 2016?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 11

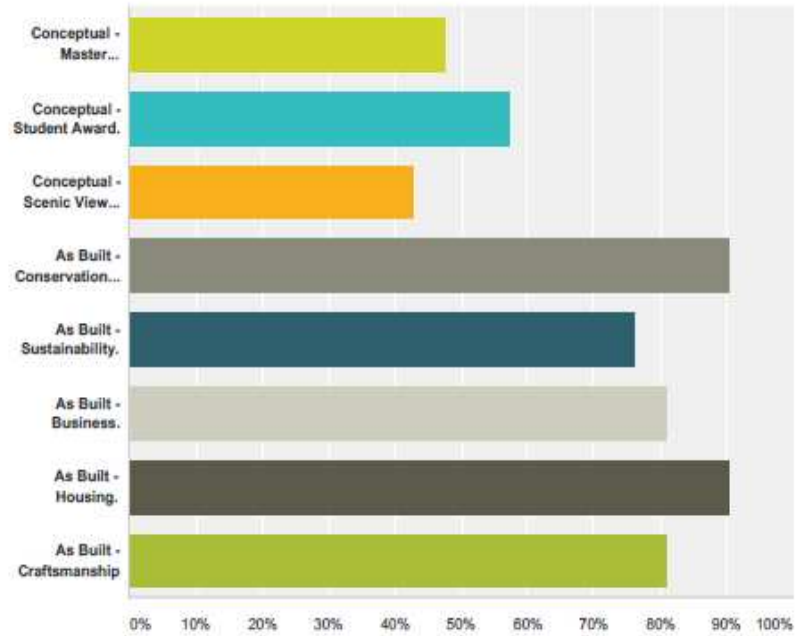


Answer Choices	Responses
I have entered previous years award schemes	8.33% 1
Social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter	8.33% 1
Posters/ flyers	0.00% 0
Direct email	75.00% 9
Professional institute e.g. RIAS, RICS, IHBC etc	8.33% 1
Total	12

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q2 Which category/ categories do you think should be included in the scheme?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 2

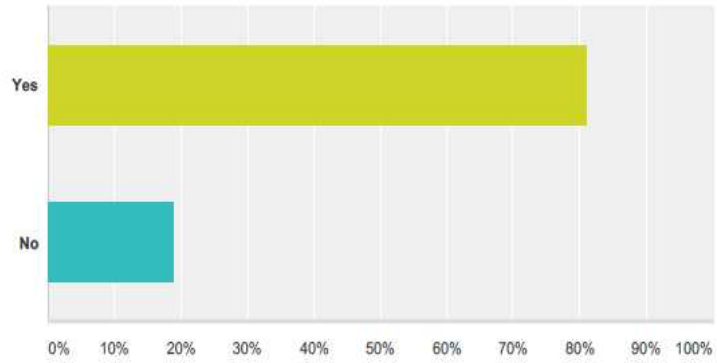


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Conceptual - Master Planning	47.62%	10
Conceptual - Student Award	57.14%	12
Conceptual - Scenic View Point	42.86%	9
As Built - Conservation and Building Adaption	90.48%	19
As Built - Sustainability	76.19%	16
As Built - Business	80.95%	17
As Built - Housing	90.48%	19
As Built - Craftsmanship	80.95%	17
Total Respondents: 21		

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q3 Did you feel the Public Vote was a good idea?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 2

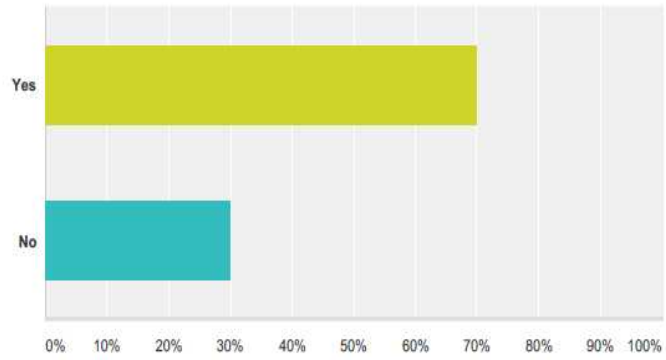


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	80.95%	17
No	19.05%	4
Total		21

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q4 Did you feel the Woodend Barn was a suitable venue for the award scheme?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	70.00%	14
No	30.00%	6
Total		20

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q5 On a scale of 1-5 (5 being best) how would you rate each element of the venue?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 3

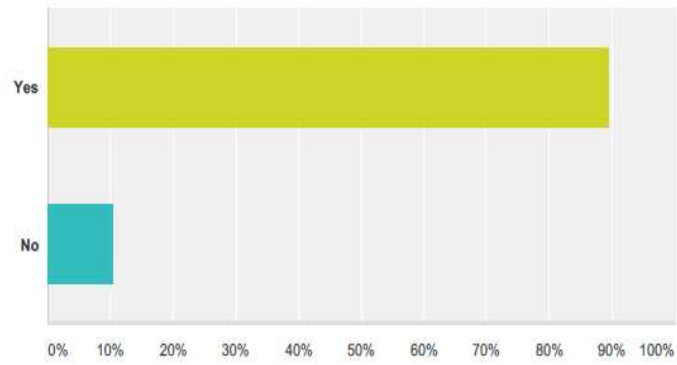


Rating 1 - 5							
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Drinks Reception - Space	36.84% 7	10.53% 2	26.32% 5	21.05% 4	5.26% 1	19	
Drinks Reception - Catering	0.00% 0	5.26% 1	47.37% 9	26.32% 5	21.05% 4	19	
Drinks Reception - Comfort e.g. temperature, lighting	5.26% 1	36.84% 7	15.79% 3	15.79% 3	26.32% 5	19	
Award Ceremony - Space	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.53% 2	42.11% 8	47.37% 9	19	
Award Ceremony - Comfort e.g. temperature, lighting	5.26% 1	5.26% 1	10.53% 2	52.63% 10	26.32% 5	19	

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q6 Did you find it beneficial to have a high profile guest speaker?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 4

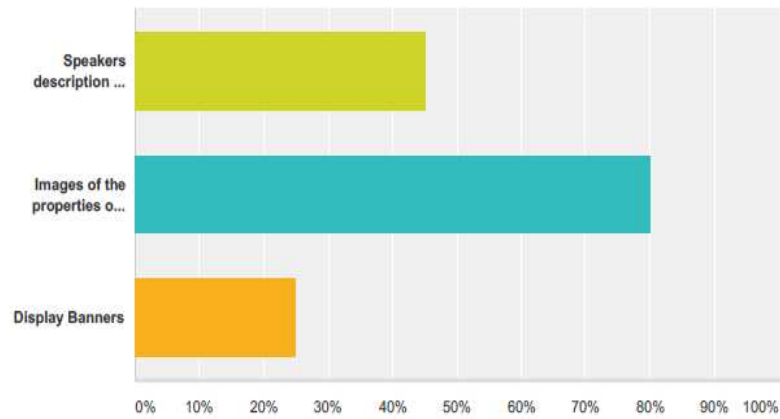


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	89.47%	17
No	10.53%	2
Total		19

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q7 Which element/ elements of the award ceremony did you feel were most helpful in your understanding of the winning schemes?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 3

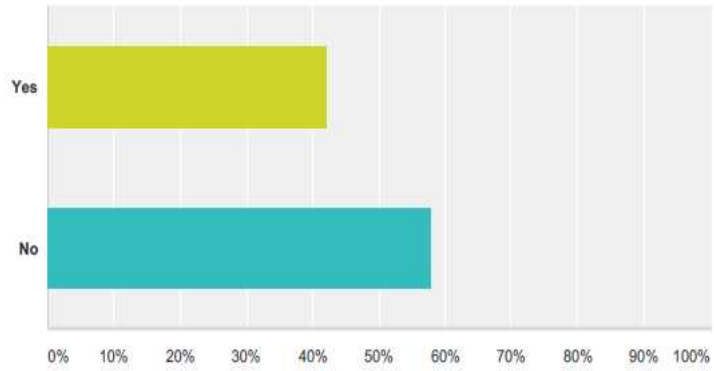


Answer Choices	Responses
Speakers description of the property	45.00% 9
Images of the properties on the screen	80.00% 16
Display Banners	25.00% 5
Total Respondents: 20	

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q8 Did you feel the award ceremony adequately explained why the winning schemes were chosen?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 4

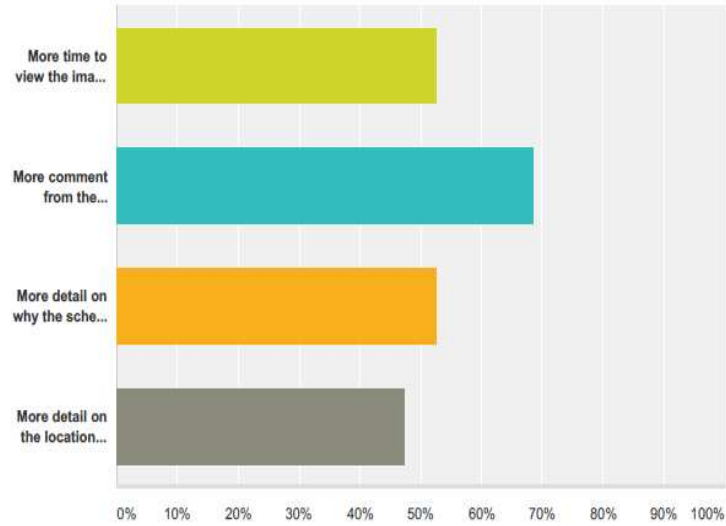


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	42.11%	8
No	57.89%	11
Total		19

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q9 How do you feel the award ceremony could be improved?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 4

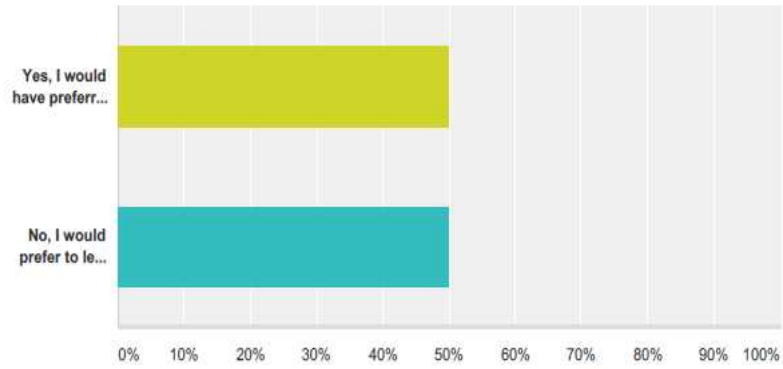


Answer Choices	Responses
More time to view the images of the schemes and their setting	52.63% 10
More comment from the judges/ speakers on the winning schemes	68.42% 13
More detail on why the schemes were shortlisted	52.63% 10
More detail on the location of the As Built schemes	47.37% 9
Total Respondents: 19	

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q10 Following the award ceremony would you prefer more post award refreshments and an opportunity to network?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 5

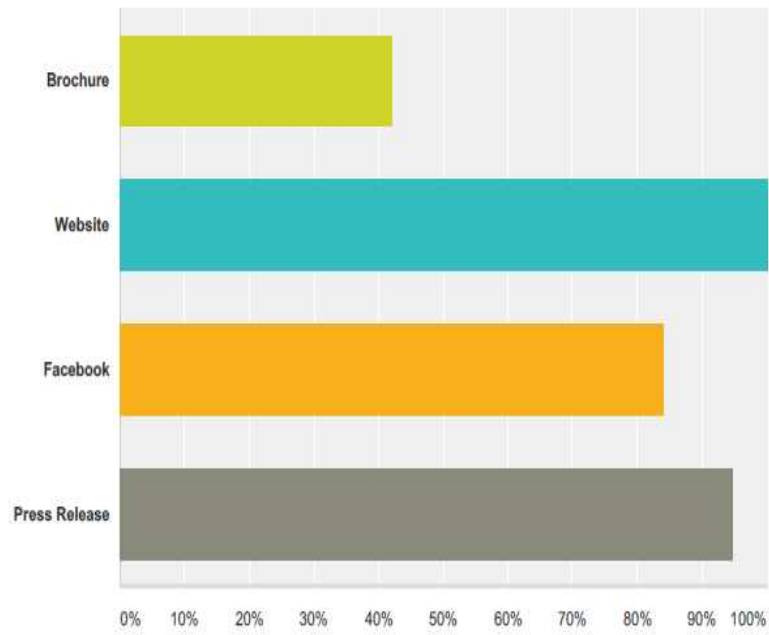


Answer Choices	Responses
Yes, I would have preferred to stay longer following the award ceremony.	50.00% 9
No, I would prefer to leave following the award ceremony.	50.00% 9
Total	18

Aberdeenshire 2016 Innovation Architecture and Design Awards - Invitee Questionnaire

Q11 How do you feel the winning schemes should be publicised following the ceremony?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
Brochure	42.11% 8
Website	100.00% 19
Facebook	84.21% 16
Press Release	94.74% 18
Total Respondents: 19	

2014 Judging Panel
Chair of Infrastructure Services
Vice Chair of Infrastructure Services
Director of Infrastructure Services
Chair, Aberdeen Society of Architects
2014 Specialist Advisors
Landscape Architect, Scottish Natural Heritage
Senior Lecturer, Grays School of Art
Regional Inspector, Historic Scotland
Senior Lecturer, Scott Sutherland School of Architecture

2016 Judging Panel Conceptual Design Categories
Chair of Infrastructure Services
Vice Chair of Infrastructure Services
Director of Infrastructure Services
Chair, Aberdeen Society of Architects
Head of School, Scott Sutherland School of Architecture

2016 Judging Panel Student Entries & Masterplanning Category
Lecturer, Scott Sutherland School of Architecture
Lecturer, Dundee University
Representatives, Aberdeen Society of Architecture