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**2024 Kent Housing Group Excellence Awards – The categories**

**1. Excellent partnership**

Working in silo can restrict the potential to drive forward change and stifle innovation. In a sector where partnership working is crucial; this award is for an organisation, team or member of staff who has the strategic vision to recognise how working in partnership can improve the overall contribution to the customers and the communities that the organisation works with. The winning nomination will clearly evidence and showcase how partnership working has resulted in service delivery improvements, high levels of customer satisfaction, and overall, the positive outcome from a new/improved way of working.

**2. Excellence in delivering services for vulnerable people**

Does your organisation provide pivotal housing and support to vulnerable clients within the communities of Kent and Medway? This award recognises a person, organisation or project who delivers more than just housing and housing advice within the sector. They ensure that residents who require additional support are able to secure and maintain stable accommodation. This award is an opportunity to recognise the development of excellent services or innovation that improve upon existing services; meeting the needs of a specific vulnerable client group, for example:

* Children
* Care leavers
* Older people
* Those with physical or sensory disabilities or mental health disorders.

Does your organisation or service enable a vulnerable client group to live independently? Helping our most vulnerable members of the community is a critical role for social housing and therefore the winning nomination will have clearly evidenced and identified how the overall approach and specific outcomes achieved have benefited the target vulnerable client group. Nominations are invited for a person, organisation or project delivering excellent services to vulnerable people. Who stands out from the crowd for you? What is the true impact of the organisation, project or person?

**3. Excellence in development and regeneration**

Development of high-quality homes, on new sites or regeneration of existing places (urban and rural) can have a significant impact and make a contribution to meeting housing need, changing the perception of affordable housing and how well a community thrives. This excellence award will recognise the development of homes (new or refurbished) which can evidence this. There is no size criteria, the winning development won’t necessarily be a large scheme, the key is demonstrating the achievement of meeting housing need and the provision of well-designed and affordable homes, all delivered in a way that delights residents and the wider local community through excellence in design, construction or public realm.

**4. Innovator of the year**

The housing sector, like others, is moving towards service delivery and outcomes that rely heavily on innovation.  This excellence award will recognise and share an example of an organisation, project or person that’s able to demonstrate a truly innovative approach. Technology may have been central to your innovation but technology alone isn’t essential. This award is not limited to the ‘finished article’, this is recognition of innovation and this could mean that it’s a work in progress. The winning nomination will demonstrate how you’ve thought outside of the box to deliver with effective leadership and change, improving service outcomes as well as improving efficiency. The winner of this excellence award would have the opportunity to share learning and expertise to benefit other members of Kent Housing Group.

**5. Excellent community project**

Does your organisation support and provide the platform for projects within local communities to grow and thrive? Has a local community-based project had such a positive impact on the local community that it needs recognition? This award recognises a project, person or group and there are no restrictions as to what the project outcome could be. Examples of previous winning projects include contribution to improving health and wellbeing, improving physical conditions and contributing to community engagement or projects that have positively addressed issues such as vandalism, anti-social behaviour and social inclusion.

**6. Excellent young professional of the year [aged up to 30 years old]**

This award recognises the importance of roles and work undertaken of young people in the housing sector. The winning nomination will have clearly demonstrated their commitment to their role alongside commitment to their personal development (including attainment and achievement in learning where applicable). Has the young person demonstrated how their contribution to the workplace has exceeded expectation and made a real difference to the organisation they work for? This excellence award category offers the opportunity to recognise young people in a variety of employment capacities, from those officers employed full-time, apprentices or those trainees on work placements, working in housing or a housing-related service.

**7. Excellent housing professional**

To be awarded to someone who truly is an ambassador for housing, a person who has made a significant contribution to the housing profession and/or residents throughout their housing career. This award will recognise an individual who demonstrates an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the sector, who has effectively driven change and helped to put housing at the top of the agenda among their peers. Do you work with or for someone who’s a role model, and who continues to demonstrate personal and professional integrity with the passion and ability to help and support others?

**8. Excellent associate professional**

This excellence award will recognise a person who is not a housing professional, and who has made a significant contribution to their profession, customers and housing. The winning nomination will demonstrate how this professional’s work results in positive outcomes for their employer and the clients. This person may have effectively driven change and helped to drive the integration of housing with other services or found other ways to ensure that multi agency working provides a great service for the customers.

**9. Team of the year**

This award will recognise and celebrate a team who can clearly demonstrate excellence in customer service, in practice or through innovation. Do you work within a team which is passionate and excels in providing an outstanding level of customer service? Is there a team within your organisation that is driving forward change through innovation in customer service and has had a positive impact on the overall business? Do they always go the extra mile to achieve the best outcome possible?

**10. Excellence in the private sector**

This award recognises and celebrates individuals or organisations who are responsible for providing a high-quality service within the private rented sector. This excellence award will recognise an individual, team or organisation that can demonstrate that they have improved the quality or access to good private sector housing or services to the tenants and or landlords in this sector. The nomination could also highlight how activity in this sector has improved the health and wellbeing of tenants and/or provided additional quality rented homes to respond the local housing need, bringing longer-term benefits for all. Can you evidence this and what impact it has had upon your area of service delivery?

11. **Unsung community hero/neighbour of the year**

This award is the opportunity to recognise and reward a resident or tenant who has given up their time to improving the local community, either by organising the community to work together for the common good or through supporting the work of local organisations. They will be an inspirational person who has motivated their community. Do you have a resident or tenant who meets this criteria? Can you evidence the impact they have had on the local community or your organisation’s overall service delivery?

12. **Excellence in asset management**

This award recognises and celebrates individuals or organisations who are responsible for the provision of excellent services in one or more of the following areas:

* **Responsive repairs**
* **Planned maintenance**
* **Major works**
* **Retrofit and energy efficiency**
* **Building safety**
* **Estate regeneration**

This excellence award will recognise an individual, team or organisation who can demonstrate that they have improved the quality of homes or services and demonstrate their commitment to resident engagement. The nomination could also highlight how activity in this sector has improved the health and wellbeing of residents or used technology to deliver longer-term benefits for all. Can you evidence this and what impact it has on residents, communities and your organisation?