

WEYMOUTH CIVIC SOCIETY

REPORT OF ANNUAL AWARDS EVENING 19th November 2018

Weymouth Civic Society's Annual Awards Evening was held at the Nothe Fort on Monday 19th November, attended by the Mayor of Weymouth and Portland, Councillor Gill Taylor and her Consort Mr. Trevor Morgan, with Portland's Mayor Councillor Charlie Flack and Mayoress Maria Flack, other guests from the Borough Council and award winners.

A series of projects were recognised for their contribution to improving the environment of Weymouth and Portland. The award winners, their architects and builders were presented with certificates by the Society's Chairman Dr. Mary Bennett.

The finest project was the restoration of Rodwell Cottage, 50 Rodwell Road - a Georgian house with a Victorian annex near the junction with Rodwell Avenue. Under previous ownership it had deteriorated and was starting to look rather shabby, in full view of all on the main road to Wyke and Portland. Now it has been completely restored with most painstaking care to return it to its original character. The thorough and detailed renovations, indoors and out, have made a real improvement to the area, earning it a Certificate of Merit.

Three Commendations were awarded. A small new development of eight houses in Alexandra Road, now called Princess Gardens, has been built on the site of a redundant residential home. The fine setting of mature trees sets off the new houses beautifully, and really complement this part of the Lodmoor Hill Conservation Area.

Another Commendation went to the sensitive restoration of 2 East Street, an old Portland stone building that had once been a fisherman's store just off the main road in Fortuneswell, and its conversion to a small house on two floors, giving it a new lease of life and enhancing the enclave of old cottages around it.

Some projects do not involve buildings at all. What is termed a 'Special Commendation' was made for the improvements to the viewing mound near Portland Castle. This was originally created at the same time as the adjacent harbourside walkway. Now it has been transformed into a new Memorial Garden, with seating and other features in Portland stone, and information boards on important events in the later history of Portland Harbour, including the D-Day embarkations.

Letters of Appreciation were awarded for two projects – first, the major refurbishment of the Jubilee Clock, together with restoration work to the clock face and interior mechanism; secondly to the Portland Outdoor Centre at Castletown, created from the old and redundant Portland Roads Hotel. This worthwhile new use is a long-term project but it has already made a fine contribution to the regeneration of Castletown, while having the additional benefit of providing outdoor activities, introducing a range of people to Portland's special character and opportunities.

After the Awards presentation, the Mayor spoke on the work of the Civic Society and the awarded projects. This was followed by a fascinating talk by Gail McGarva on traditional boat building, including the Portland lerret. The Evening concluded with wine and refreshments for members and guests.

Note to Editors

The Society makes these awards every year to recognise exceptional contributions to the built environment of Weymouth and Portland, especially projects that go beyond the bare minimum and which are planned with the explicit intention of being excellent. New developments of good quality and sensitive restorations are all considered on their merits by the experienced members of the Society's planning committee. The Society did not make its full award this year owing to the smaller than usual number of entries, which were of high standard but lacked the degree of impact normally expected for the top award.

An illustrated list of past winners is available on the Society's website – www.weymouthcivicsociety.org.

Further information can be obtained from Mrs. Pru Bollam, Chairman of the Society's Planning and Environment Committee, email planning@weymouthcivicsociety.org.