

## THE GOWER SOCIETY

The Gower Society presented three of its annual design awards on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in the Sketty Parish Centre. The Society has been presenting these awards since 2003. The awards for 2017 were:

### 1. The Cliff Coffee Shop and Stores

This award is for the recent extension that the owners Jamie, David and Jo Francis added to the business and completes a 20 year project. Unusually the project incorporates a new public toilet that will be run by the Cliff business and carried out in agreement with the City and County of Swansea.

Strategically placed near to the National Trust car park and on the Wales Coastal Footpath as well as on a bus route the cafe extension has been designed as a meeting place where groups and schools can hold small group events.

The architects were John Rees Architectural Design, builders W Edgar Davies and Sons and J Jenkins Project Development with skilled local craftsmen and women all contributing towards a great asset to this part of Gower.



The Owners were conscious of the responsibility that they had towards providing an interesting building that reflected upon the local heritage and existing neighbouring buildings. The Gower Society Judges thought that the development was sympathetic in the design and choice of materials and added to the quality of its location.

The award was presented by the President of the Gower society, Byron Davies and Gordon Howe Chairman of the Gower Society Judging panel to Bryan Miles, the

architect, who represented the owners.

### 2. Scurlage Social Housing, Gower

This award is given for the design and construction of 14 semi-detached two and three bedroomed houses on farmland owned by the City and County of Swansea. In effect this is an extension of a Scurlage that originally consisted of post war council houses, the majority that have now been sold to tenants. The houses are constructed to the highest

modern standards and owned by the Family Housing Association Wales based in Swansea. There has been a huge demand for rented accommodation on Gower for local people.

The houses were designed by Penlan Architects, the Project Engineers were Roger Casey Associates and constructed by Hale Construction of Neath. The Association stated *“Creating strong communities, where people can live active and fulfilling lives is at the heart of Family Housing Association’s ethos, ensuring the development benefits both the wider community and the people who live there. In line with Family Housing Association’s commitment to benefiting local communities the houses will only be available to people who are already living or working in the area. The development took 40 weeks to complete, providing much-needed homes for the people of Gower and contributing to the local economy by appointing a local firm.”*



Our Judges were unanimous of their decision to make a first time award for such development and were impressed with how the Gower AONB Design Guide had been closely followed to produce a development that seamlessly merges into AONB. They were particularly pleased with the open spaces that had been created in front of the new housing that reflected the original Monksland Road frontage.

The project was completed in partnership with the City and County of Swansea and received both private and Welsh Government funding through Social Housing Grant and Innovative Bond Finance from them has made up over half of the funding.

The award was presented to Karen Dugate and Jackie Royal of the Housing Association.



### **3. Bwthyn y Bugail (Shepherds Cottage) Blaen Myddfai Farm, Felindre.**

It was a pleasure for the judges to travel to Blane Myddfai and its magnificent location overlooking the Lliw Reservoirs. The design and workmanship was exceptional and the accommodation will provide guests with a unique insight into remote Upland Gower that is so close to the City of Swansea. Shame about the new wind farm on Mynydd y Gwair.

The owners Glyn and Susan Morgan wrote :

*The cottage at Blaen Myddfai called Bwthyn y Bugail or Shepherds Cottage, was borne out of the need to restore the barn that was attached to the main house.*

*Planning permission was sought and because we were advised that we would not be granted residential planning, holiday accommodation was applied for and duly granted.*



*Evidence showed that the Shepherds Cottage had stood on the site for many years indeed the main house had been built later at around the 1800's onto the cottage, so the cottage actually predates that build.*

*Since the farm is a traditional Hill farm with a flock of sheep hefted onto the common at Mynydd y Gwair it was apt to call this Bwthyn y Bugail (Shepherds cottage).*

*Since the tradition of hefting sheep goes back to 1235 'statute of Merton' where the Lord of the Manor was obliged to provide grazing rights for the people, it is quite likely that this was the first accommodation on the farm for those Shepherds that tended their flocks on the common and so to recreate this makes Sue and myself modern day shepherds very proud indeed.*

*It was designed by Nick Brown Associates in Gwynfe and built by Kevin Lloyd Builders, Llanrhidian under the very capable hands of his Project Manager, Tom George. We would like to thank everyone involved for such an excellent job from design to finish. Diolch yn Fawr"*



The award was presented to Susan Morgan whose husband Glyn was ill and could not attend.