

Dualchas scoops more top awards

Skye scored a major success at the prestigious IAA Design Awards on Friday night, as two of the island's architecture practices won top awards.

Dualchas Building Design picked up two, with "the Shed" in Tokavaig on the Isle of Skye winning the award for the best New Building category, with "An Gearasdan" – a renovation of a kithouse in Glenelg, winning the award for New Life for an Old Building.

Best Placemaking went to Rural Design of Dunvegan, for their housing in Edinbane on the Isle of Skye.

Event host, broadcaster Muriel Gray, said that the quality of architecture in the Highlands and Islands had developed in quality and confidence over the last ten years, and that the region was setting a standard for others to follow.

'I used to get depressed when I saw these inappropriate kithouses being built across the Highlands. What architects are now showing is that we no longer have to accept this - house designs based on simplicity of form can enhance our beautiful landscapes.'

The awards, held at the newly renovated Eden Court Theatre, attracted two hundred entries. An exhibition of all the short-listed projects is currently on display in the building. Speaking after the event, Dualchas architect Alasdair Stephen said,

'People from outwith the Highlands are taking notice of what is going here, and are impressed with what they see. It's important that areas use architecture to enhance their culture, as it gives people a sense of belonging, as well as projecting a distinctive image to the world.'

The top award for the evening went to the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness, by Edinburgh architects Riach and Hall.