



Entrants' Toolkit

Entries open 30 March 2017

Has your housing association delivered an amazing community project this year? Do you want to share this work with peers and local stakeholders? Then enter your project for our online Community Impact Awards.

We're looking for innovative projects, schemes and programmes that demonstrate a tangible and lasting impact in your local communities and will resonate with people outside the sector.

In this document you'll find all of the information you need to begin preparing your entry. If you have any questions, please contact [Livi Elsmore](#).

The process at a glance

The awards are open for entries from **30 March - 9 June 2017** and entries should be submitted via the [Community Impact Week website](#) online submission form.

One award will be presented for each of the following categories:

- **Better Neighbourhoods**
- **Greener Living**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Investing in People**

For more information about each of the categories, see the categories section on the next page.

There will be two stages of judging. Independent judges will shortlist entrants from each of the categories, with the shortlist being published on the website on 20 July. The public will then be able to vote online for the winners during Community Impact Week, from 24 - 30 July.

Key dates

- Website open for entries: 30 March – 9 June (11.59pm)
- Online voting during Community Impact Week: 24 – 30 July
- Winners announced: 3 August

Awards categories

Better Neighbourhoods

This award recognises housing associations' contribution to improving and reinvigorating the areas they serve. Projects may cover issues such as:

- involving and supporting residents to improve their local area
- revamping physical spaces
- tackling antisocial behaviour
- changing negative perceptions of a community.

Greener Living

This award recognises work that makes a difference to the environment, focusing on green space, biodiversity, waste reduction and efficient use of resources. Projects may cover issue such as:

- ensuring good quality landscape and greenspace become an integral part of residents' lives
- supporting residents to reduce waste and make the best use of resources
- tackling fuel poverty in homes or working to improve energy efficiency of properties
- increased use of renewable energy.

Health and Wellbeing

This award recognises housing associations' contribution to tackling inequalities, promoting independence, improving health and wellbeing and working closely with health and social care services. Projects may cover issues such as:

- helping older or disabled residents regain their independence
- reducing social isolation of residents
- addressing food poverty
- working with partners to improve residents' health or social care
- encouraging healthy living amongst residents.

Investing in People

This award recognises the importance of housing associations' efforts to tackle unemployment and promote financial inclusion. Projects may cover issues such as:

- supporting residents to find work
- providing opportunities for residents to gain vital skills
- helping young residents to unlock their potential
- promoting and supporting digital inclusion

Preparing your entry

This section sets out how your entry will be formatted and what makes a good entry. We are looking for projects that are genuinely innovative and make a real difference in their community, so try to use examples of outstanding work backed by strong evidence of success.

Entries should explain how the project meets the criteria and its objectives, and your written entry is the basis on which the project will be judged. Supporting evidence in the form of images and videos are also accepted – see details below.

Main entry

The entry form will give you space to include the following:

Summary of your project in no more than 150 words. If your project is shortlisted, this summary will be used on our website to represent the project for voting purposes. Please note that we reserve the right to edit summaries for publication.

Project statement in no more than 1,500 words. This is your space to explain why your project should win the award. Within your statement, we recommend you use the following sub headings:

- **Purpose:** why your organisation undertook this project
- **Aims:** the overall aims of the project
- **Method:** how the project was developed and what this involved
- **Innovation:** how the project was innovative
- **Outcomes:** the outcomes of the project, including evaluation of its impact
- **Transferability:** how this project could be used in other organisations/regions.

Be sure to include all the relevant information to give your project the best chance of making an impact with the judges.

Additional information

You will also be asked to input:

- **Contact and organisation details**
- **Award category**
- **Size of organisation** (small 1-1,000 units, medium/large over 1,000 units)
- **Name of the project/work**
- **Budget:** insert project spend based on a yearly period within the project's life cycle. Include staff costs where possible, and sponsorship and costs for a yearly period within the project's life cycle.
- **Partnerships:** provide a list of the partners you worked with on the project.

Supporting content

You can include supporting content in the form of video and images, but do not rely on this material to tell your story – ensure all key facts are within your main submission.

- **Video:** you can include web links to videos, but please ensure videos are no longer than two minutes.
- **Supporting images:** you can include up to five high quality colour images that support your entry (300dpi JPEG, PNG, GIF, or TIFF, no larger than 5 MB) with a description for each image. This could be images of people involved in the project, images used as part of the campaign, or images from events. Should you be shortlisted we will pick one image to go on the website with a summary of the project.

These images may be used for any promotional activity linked to Community Impact Week.

For more information visit:
www.ciw.housing.org.uk



We will not accept:

- scanned images – if you have no choice but to include scanned images, please ensure they are 300dpi resolution
- press cuttings.

Hints and tips

It can be hard to know where to start when compiling your entry, let alone what will make it stand out from all the rest. Here are some useful things to think about before entering.

What makes a winning case study?

- Innovative ideas and schemes.
- Focus on the differences a project made to individuals – give prominence to value based activities over community fun days which may have been activities as part of the project.
- Transferable initiatives that could be implemented across the housing sector.
- Projects that have involved creative thinking, regardless of the size of the budget.
- Projects that have a good return on investment – do not get too bogged down with complicated evaluation metrics as sometimes client testimonials can sum this up simply.
- Careful choice of category. The content of many entries will inevitably be relevant to more than one.

How to write a winning case study

- Answer all the questions on the entry form.
- Write clearly in plain English.
- Show personality and feeling in your writing – treat it as though you are selling the project.
- Try to include first-hand testimonies.
- Where possible, highlight the outcome and the scale of the project.
- Be explicit – do not assume judges have knowledge of your entry. Write the entry as though you are speaking to individuals outside the sector and always put stories into wider context.
- Sometimes less is more – do not feel obliged to fulfil the word count limit. Be clear and concise – your entry is one of many that judges have to read.
- Include useful facts and statistics to demonstrate the difference your project has made.
- Independent or external opinions can help to illustrate the success of the project and add weight to your own findings.
- If the project is still continuing and in its early phases, demonstrate how the outcomes and learning may or may not influence the next phase of the project.
- Illustrate how the project has gone beyond the remits of core business.

Bringing your case study to life

- Supporting information in the form of photos and videos can enable judges to visualise the project and gain a complete picture, but do not rely on them to tell your story.

What lets a case study down?

- Entries that are too vague.
- Entries which do not explain the impact the project has had on people's lives.
- Supporting information which doesn't clearly link to the project.

Rules

- The Community Impact Awards are open to full members and associate ALMO members of the National Housing Federation.
- The Community Impact Awards are free to enter.
- Submissions will only be accepted via the website submission form.
- There will be six shortlisted entries in each category.
- Entries can be submitted by any member of staff, board member or agency working on behalf of the housing association.
- Entries from partnership projects can be submitted, but one organisation – which must be a housing association or associate ALMO – should take the lead on submitting the entry on behalf of the partnership. Please ensure consent is received from all organisations concerned.
- Organisations can enter up to one project in each of the four categories. If you are making multiple entries, each entry should be about a different project.
- Judging relies entirely on the evidence organisations provide for their project in the application. Shortlisted projects will be uploaded to the website with an image and summary for public voting.
- Any conflicts of interest or ties will be dealt with by the judging panel.
- By entering Community Impact Week, entrants give permission for entry material to be used for publicity purposes (please see the disclaimer below for more information). Please ensure you have retained all necessary permissions from the subjects in any materials submitted (particularly when children under 18 years of age appear in photographs or videos – you will need to ensure you have parental/legal guardian consent).

Disclaimer

By entering the National Housing Federation' Community Impact Week, organisations are expressly authorising the Federation to use the specific text and visual materials submitted in promotions and other activities related to the awards. Material submitted, including photographs, can be published in whole or edited in a variety of National Housing Federation printed or online publicity materials that will only be used by the Federation.

The Federation will make reasonable efforts to ensure that these materials will not be published in an inappropriate or insensitive manner. The organisation submitting an entry is entitled to see, upon request, a copy of any publication in which their entry is to be used. The Federation will endeavour to arrange this as soon as possible following a written request.

Frequently asked questions

Who can submit a story?

Any full member or associate ALMO member of the National Housing Federation can enter. Other partners can help support an application but a Federation member or associate member must be the lead entrant.

Is there a charge to enter?

No. The Community Impact Awards are totally free to enter.

Is there a limit to the number of entries I can submit?

Yes, you can submit a maximum of four entries, one per category.

What are the categories?

The four categories are Better Neighbourhoods, Greener Living, Health and Wellbeing and Investing in People.

How do I submit a story?

It's simple – enter [via our online submission form](#).

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept hard copy applications.

Can I send in any photos or videos?

Yes, in fact we highly recommend that you do. You can upload your media via the online hub.

Supplementary information can liven up your application, impress judges and help us to include you in any publicity work.

Do I have to complete the entry form in one go?

Yes, the system doesn't allow you to save your entry halfway through. Entries are only saved once you select 'submit' at the end of the entry form. So if you select 'back' on your browser or close the window you will have lost everything that you have inputted so far. We suggest that you always have a Word file of your entry so you can copy and paste the information across into the online submission form.

Is there a maximum number of files I can send?

Yes – you can upload up to five images. Videos have to be uploaded via YouTube or another external website. Entrants can include a link to these on the online form.

Is there a limit to the file size?

Yes – each file should be no more than 5MB.

Is there a word limit?

Yes. There is a 1,500 word limit to the main project statement.

Will I receive confirmation that my entry has been accepted?

Once you have completed your submission, we will send email confirmation to the named contact on the online form.

How will the winners be decided?

The winners will be chosen through online public voting. Anyone can vote once in each category.

Will I get feedback on my entry?

Sadly, due to the number of case studies we receive it is not possible to offer individual feedback.

Who can I get in touch with if I have any queries?

Contact [Livi Elsmore](#).

Who can I get in touch with if I have problems submitting an entry?

Contact [Livi Elsmore](#).

When will we find out if we have won?

Winners will be announced on 3 August 2017.