



## **The Winners of the 4th edition of the European Responsible Housing Awards**

On the 16th of June 2022, we celebrated the ERHIN Final Ceremony awarding the winners of each of the five categories. The Ceremony took place in the context of the International Social Housing Festival in Helsinki and was the occasion to finally meet in person and mutually learn from each other's good practices in the housing sector.

This edition has received 70 submissions across five categories from 20 countries and we are now delighted to announce the winners of this year's European Responsible Housing Awards:

### **Winner of the category – [“Fair financing for housing affordability”](#)**

#### **Yes, We Rent! - Leveraging vacant private property to build up a cooperative affordable housing scheme, Mataró “Lloquem! (Mataró, Spain)**

Yes We Rent” tackles a dramatic lack of affordable rental housing. It is a project that aims to explore solutions based on the social and cooperative economy to generate an alternative supply of affordable and stable housing in the city of Mataró, Spain. The project also tests an original organisational model of a tenant's cooperative, drawing on the empowerment and self-management potential of cooperatives.

#### **What the Jury liked, Sander Scheurwater (Head of Public Affairs Americas, Europe, Middle East and Africa, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Brussels)**

- Innovative project: unique “One of a Kind!”. The idea of renovating empty flats of private owners and renting them out below market prices to tenants that form a cooperative.
- Self-sufficiency: set up a Cooperative Rental Housing scheme to promote self-sufficiency in the long term. An approach based on the social and cooperative economy to generate an alternative supply of affordable and stable housing in the city of Mataró. The project proposes incentives to those owners who choose to include their housing units in the program.
- Replicability: this is clearly an innovative project which can be even replicable in different other contexts. We can learn from it.
- Efficiency in contrasting and solving the empty housing units problem in a new way and avoiding speculative uses of housing

**Winner of the category – “More than a roof – supporting communities of equal opportunities”**

**Achtercairn, Gairloch: Regenerating A Rural Highland Community (Gairloch, UK)**

Communities across the Highlands have suffered depopulation, loss of services, challenges of increasing tourism and house prices and consequent loss of existing housing stock and increased pressure on remaining businesses and services. The small village of about 750 inhabitants benefits from a community-led development tailored to local and long-term needs coordinated by the Communities Housing Trust (CHT).

**What the Jury liked, György Sumeghy (Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy Europe, Middle East and Africa, Habitat for Humanity International, Bratislava):**

- Effective project which counterbalances the issue of shrinking rural communities, an important issue of EU relevance that should not be underestimated with regard to the trend of globalisation and urbanisation.
- Important project aimed at supporting small-scale rural communities in Europe. The project development has created a geographic, thriving centre for the village, has contributed to reducing social and economic inequalities, and is a beacon for other rural communities in Scotland.
- The list of partners and stakeholders is impressive: large cooperation 360-degree with all local actors to rethink the whole strategy of revitalising the rural area.
- Replicability – could be a good model and inspiration for other villages.

**Winner of the category – “Leaders of innovation, agents of fair energy transition”**

**Bertelotte student residence: Bio-based transformation of office space into student accommodation (Paris, France)**

Paris Student accommodation is a very important matter that requires innovative solutions. This is why Paris Habitat in partnership with CROUS, took on the project of transforming an office building into a student residence of 139 units using bio-based materials and applying circular economy principles. The transformation of the building into the Bertelotte student residence was the opportunity for Paris Habitat to innovate in terms of construction practices and to contribute to the achievement of its climate commitments.

**What the Jury liked, Zeno Winkels (Director of the Dutch Union of Tenants, Amsterdam):**

- transformation of an office building into a student’s residence: innovative project and much more effective in contrasting the housing crisis in Paris.
- Coordination of stakeholders and renovation process of the buildings.
- Improved living conditions for students/young people.

- Improvement of buildings' energy performance.
- Use of bio-based materials/wood.
- Reduced carbon footprint: Reuse of existing building without full demolition.
- High quality of building and reduced rents

### **Winner of the category – "Building strategic alliances, fostering community participation"**

#### **Empowering tenants to co-create a strategic urban transformation, Aalborg Himmerland (Aalborg, Denmark)**

Boligforening believes that renovations alone are not enough to change a city district. That is why the tenants were made co-creators, to contribute to attracting new residents. The physical renovation included an extensive renovation of a total of 1.100 residences spread over three main roads. In relation to sustainability, up to 50% reduction in energy use was attained after the renovation, which benefits both the environment but also the tenants' bills and the indoor climate.

#### **What the Jury liked, Michaela Kauer (Director of the Vienna House Brussels, Co-Coordinator of the EU Urban Agenda Partnership for Housing, Brussels)**

- Transformation of an area through the adoption of sustainable changes.
- A very good example of how you can make a renovation with the support and influence of the tenants.
- Effective integration of the tenants in the strategic city development by being active city planners, through a bottom-up approach.
- The overall approach to the renovation of "Denmark's Chicago" neighbourhood is holistic and with a clear long-term commitment.
- There is a strong democratic element as part of the impact of the long-term commitment to invest in the district and its citizens

### **Winner of the category– "Going the extra mile in extraordinary circumstances"**

#### **Arriving Home. A sustainable initiative on combatting homelessness in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Vienna, Austria)**

Wien "Arriving Home" brings together the Austrian limited-profit housing sector and the social service sector. The housing sector is represented by GBV, the Austrian Federation of Limited-Profit Housing Associations. Due to the financial consequences of the Covid-19 crisis, many more people became vulnerable to homelessness. The project solves this issue by financing tenants' upfront contributions and allocating apartments in a participatory way

#### **What the Jury liked, Maja Staleska (President of the Housing and Tenants Organization, Skopje)**

- Strategic project: implementation of a sustainable strategy to contrast homelessness in a long-term perspective.

- Provision of economic support to tenants' upfront contributions, which are often an access barrier to people affected by poverty. These contributions have been covered by the project budget.
- Social support is provided to the tenants as well.
- Bottom-up and participatory approach aimed at carefully matching suitable and affordable housing to potential tenants.
- Adoption of a rent monitoring system as an effective instrument for ensuring sustainable rent stability for the benefit of tenants.

The ERHIN Awards are a great opportunity to share and highlight good practices in the housing sector. The number and the quality of the projects submitted were incredible and we want to thank everybody who submitted their application and the Jury, chaired by Barbara Steenbergen, for the amazing work done in evaluating them.

You can find all the information regarding the European Responsible Housing Awards, its winners and finalists in the ERHA Handbook 2022. We invite you to read it and get inspired by these amazing projects and to participate to the next edition of the Awards!

Let's continue working together for more affordable, inclusive and sustainable housing!

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