

Sunderland church conversion named North East's best building for 2023

A listed church which has been converted into a thriving community hub has been named the North East's best building.

The winners of the 2023 RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) North East Awards have been announced, championing schemes for their regional importance as pieces of architecture. The creatively restored 17Nineteen building in Sunderland, by Mosedale Gillat Architects, was named RIBA North East building of the year award 2023, having already scooped a highly commended award at the Constructing Excellence North East awards.

The Grade I listed redundant church Holy Trinity was on Historic England's at-risk register and has been transformed in a £2.6m restoration project to create a new community and cultural hub. 17Nineteen won the North East building of the year Award 2023 as well as the North East conservation award.

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The other winners included City Hall by Faulkner Browns Architects, the new civic building in Sunderland combining offices, municipal services and community outreach spaces, and Gilesgate Durham by Building Design (Northern) Ltd, a zinc clad extension to a Grade II listed Georgian house within the Durham City Conservation Area which also won one of the special awards at the event, the North East project architect of the year trophy.

The residential project was to remodel an existing dwelling within the conservation area to create an open plan, dementia-friendly extension and detached workshop. Godwit House, winner

of the sustainability award, was also a residential project in Northumberland led by MawsonKerr which designed the Passivhaus house on the edge of Warkworth, Northumberland.



Sunderland's City Hall designed by Faulkner Brown Architects
(Image: Faulkner Brown Architects)



Godwit House designed by Mawson Kerr
(Image: Jill Tate)

Others recognised were Newcastle Cathedral: Common Ground in Sacred Space by Purcell Architecture Limited (Purcell), the restoration and renewal of Newcastle Cathedral which took place over 10 years, and St Hilda's Church and Kirkleatham Parish Centre by Chance de Silva, which was the creation of a sustainable community church and parish centre.

The six projects were selected by the expert jury, who visited all the shortlisted projects. The church won the North East client of the year award.

RIBA president Simon Allford said: "Winning a RIBA regional award is a fantastic achievement. These projects, selected by a rigorous peer review process, represent the very best of the region's new architecture. Inspiring buildings and spaces bring joy to all our lives, and this year's award winners certainly fit that bill. Many congratulations to all."

RIBA North East Award winners will now be considered for a national award, to be announced on 22 June. The shortlist for the RIBA Stirling Prize for the best building of the year will be drawn from the RIBA National Award-winning projects later in the year.

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