

ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S AWARDS' CATEGORIES 2025

The President's Awards are a highlight of ADEPT's year, allowing us to shine a spotlight on the extraordinary work of our members and partners across the country. We continue to be inspired by the high standard of entries and the commitment that our members demonstrate in driving service improvement and creating meaningful outcomes for their communities.

These efforts embody our core mission of being 'good ancestors' – making purposeful decisions that will positively shape places and communities for future generations. We are committed to creating environments where people can thrive and contribute to the creation of resilient, inclusive and sustainable places.

Over the past year, resilience has been at the heart of our strategic priorities, focusing on how we build resilient place services, organisations and individuals. This approach means we are not just addressing current challenges, but laying the groundwork to ensure our places and teams can adapt and thrive in the future.

Local authority members are encouraged to enter the awards and celebrate projects that showcase excellence in the areas of **Delivering Sustainable Growth, Innovation in Place Shaping, and Shaping Places for People**. Members are also able to submit nominations for the President's Special Recognition Award, which celebrates the achievements of outstanding individuals and small teams over the past 12 months (judges will consider work that began before that period).

We encourage entrants to reflect on the fact that what may seem like every day or 'business as usual' work, might actually represent a groundbreaking approach or exceptional achievement when viewed by others. This is a valuable and important opportunity to highlight and celebrate the work you have achieved in a sector that can positively impact the lives of communities across the country.

You can see previous award winners [here](#). See below for the award categories and judges' criteria.

Category 1: Delivering sustainable growth

Summary: this category celebrates local authorities that promote sustainable growth, leading the way in creating cleaner, greener communities.

Background:

Local authorities have a pivotal role to play in driving the growth agenda, both as a business themselves, but also in their role as enablers of economic development within their communities. They act as vital partners to the business community, fostering sustainable, inclusive and clean growth. This award is intended to highlight local authorities who have gone beyond traditional roles to promote sustainable, clean growth, in line with the government's ambition to tackle

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climate change, deliver net zero, build resilience and address inequalities. The broad scope of the award includes the delivery of services and infrastructure – housing, transport, waste, economic development, planning and growth or how it operates as a business. Estate improvements, staff policies, commissioning, procurement and fleet are also areas where you may have initiatives or achievements that suit this category.

Winners will need to demonstrate wider benefits:

- Collaboration across departments and/or between local authorities.
- Engaging with employees.
- Working in partnership with businesses, investors and/or other public sector bodies to deliver multiple outcomes through combining resources.

Criteria

Submissions should focus on:

- **Sustainable, future oriented growth:** delivering sustainable growth, not just now but into the future – demonstrating ambition and vision, anticipating future challenges and futureproofing growth, including developing the workforce for the future.
- **Cross boundary partnerships:** working across boundaries and with different partners to achieve long lasting clean growth.
- **Engagement with business:** proactively engaging with business to tackle problems and find solutions, stimulating the clean growth sector at the same time.
- **Long term planning:** going beyond the three–five year budget cycle to prepare for future challenges including the use or consideration of innovative funding solutions.

Category 2: Innovation in place shaping

Summary: this category celebrates innovative approaches to place shaping, focusing on how tools, technologies and/or creative strategies are deployed to create sustainable, resilient and accessible communities that promote wellbeing.

Background

ADEPT, its partners and central government share a commitment to promote innovation in place shaping, with a particular focus on creating smart places (defined as a place that incorporates a range of technologies to address economic, social and environmental challenges). This includes the creative deployment of tools, technologies and approaches, to shape places that are sustainable, resilient, accessible, and promote wellbeing. Innovation is not just about adopting digital solutions or technology – it's about how these tools are integrated into broader strategies, how they are deployed and how they empower people and communities. Adopting smart approaches can be a game changer, leading to the delivery of strategic outcomes and, at the same time improving efficiency and effectiveness, whilst reducing costs.

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This award celebrates projects that demonstrate inventive, forward thinking methods to tackle challenges, blending the best of ingenuity and technological advancement to shape better places for the future.

Criteria

Judges will be looking for evidence of:

- **Successful innovation:** this could include digital innovation and/or the imaginative use of new or existing technology.
- **Improved outcomes for users:** for example [collating traffic information](#) to improve efficiency in works programmes or providing [demand-responsive transport](#) for an underserved community.
- **Transformation of a service, department or organisation:** this can include changing behaviours, delivering savings/value for money or improving ways of working.
- **Cross sector application:** how innovation or technology can be applied in multiple sectors or areas.
- **Scalability and resilience:** the ability to use technology in a wider scope and in a way that encourages longevity of use.

Category 3: Shaping places for people

Summary: this category celebrates innovative and collaborative efforts in delivering programmes and services that enhance outcomes for individuals across diverse backgrounds and social groups, addressing both preventative health and social care agendas.

Background

Place plays a fundamental role in shaping health and wellbeing, with clean, safe and inclusive environments fostering physical and mental health, reducing inequalities and building resilient communities. At the same time, creating spaces that engage and empower young people is vital in shaping the future of our communities. By involving them in the planning and development process, we ensure that places are fit for future generations.

Led by place services, projects may include green spaces, leisure, fitness and active travel, strategic planning and healthy (warm) housing. Entries will be judged on the innovation of their submission, the depth of collaboration and the adoption of a whole systems approach, including partnerships with other services, local authorities, partners, stakeholders and contractors. Successful entries will demonstrate tangible improvements in outcomes for residents, communities, and for health and care services.

Criteria

Award entries will be judged on:

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- **Innovative response:** the extent to which the local authority's work was an innovative response to a significant concern.
- **Impactful outcomes:** the tangible and lasting impact of the project, including improvements to service efficiency, increased inclusivity for residents and efforts to futureproof the service.
- **Collaborations and partnerships:** the depth and level of collaboration between place services and people services, both within the local authority and with external partners and providers.
- **Community engagement and support:** clear evidence of strong community engagement, including with young people, and buy-in to the project or its goals with active participation and support from members of the local community, health and social care providers and external organisations.
- **Innovative funding:** the use of new sources of investment to fund projects.

The ADEPT President's Special Recognition Award

Summary: this category celebrates individuals or small teams who make a significant impact, drive positive change, and promote equality, diversity and inclusion in their communities.

Background

The foundation of any organisation is rooted in its people and the service they provide. In this category, we invite ADEPT members to nominate a colleague or a small team (up to 10 people) they think stands out from the crowd. This is not necessarily the loudest or most senior team or team member. Sometimes it is the quietest member of a group or the smallest teams who make a real difference by the way they work, the outcomes they deliver and the influence they exert.

Criteria

Submissions should focus on small teams or individuals who:

- **Drive and deliver positive change:** continuously drive initiatives that bring about positive results for the team and wider community.
- **Promote equality, diversity and inclusion:** foster an inclusive culture, ensuring diverse perspectives are reflected in their work and the outcomes they deliver.
- **Achieve excellence:** demonstrate a commitment to achieving excellent outcomes for all.
- **Make an impact:** focus on making a difference.
- **Inspire others:** use their enthusiasm to engage and motivate others.
- **Lead by example:** act as a role model for their peers, setting high standards.
- **Innovate under pressure:** demonstrate creativity and innovative thinking to find solutions in challenging environments.

To enter: [click here](#) to enter your award submission.