

# News

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## The Word triumphs at national RICS awards



The Word, National Centre for the Written Word, has been judged as one of the country's best buildings after winning the Community Benefit category at the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Awards Grand Final.

The Word was shortlisted in three categories – Community Benefit, Design Through Innovation and Tourism & Leisure – in addition to winning the overall Project of The Year at the RICS North East Awards in April.

Opening to national acclaim last October and welcoming over 400,000 visitors since then, The Word was designed by FaulknerBrown Architects and constructed by lead contractor, Bowmer & Kirkland, as a library for the 21st century. The building incorporates a library, exhibition space, FabLab with 3D printers and vinyl and laser cutters, television and radio studio, children's immersive storytelling area, OpenZone IT suite, café, and a rooftop viewing terrace with views out over the River Tyne.

The iconic building is also the first phase of South Tyneside Council and Muse's ambitious £100m South Shields 365 regeneration masterplan to transform the town centre and has already helped to transform an area of South Shields in addition to providing a vital community resource.

Councillor Iain Malcolm, Leader of South Tyneside Council, commented: "We've just marked The Word's first birthday and what a remarkable first year it had. There has been so much to celebrate, not least the staggering number of awards it has clinched. You only need look at the visitor numbers to know how well received the venue has been but the recognition that it has received from prestigious industry professionals is further endorsement of what a superb asset to the borough it is."

David Wells, Regional Director at Muse Developments, added: "The recognition the building has received in the RICS Awards is an accolade by fellow building and development professionals and an acknowledgement to the work that not only went into this, the first phase of the 365

regeneration project, but also continues to be carried out for future phases. We're delighted to have won this prestigious award and to be part of this exciting partnership with South Tyneside Council."