

The Woodshed, a new home on the outskirts of Hartest and Stanstead has been voted the greenest dwelling in Suffolk. The building is a converted wooden shed with a metal roof which used to be John Kemp's winery and is now home to him and his wife Jeanie.

Judges of the competition known as the Suffolk Green Oscars commended the "trailblazing" design created by Hartest architect Ralph Carpenter, which used modern technology to convert the building into a comfortable carbon neutral house.

The Woodshed, on Stanstead road opposite the entrance to Gifford's Hall Vineyard uses a wood pellet burning heating system, wood burning stoves using home grown wood and photo electric cells to provide energy. It even collects rain water from the roof which is used to flush the loos and feed the washing machine.

The award was presented to Ralph's firm Modece at the "Green Oscars" celebrations at Snape Maltings on the last day of March.

The Woodshed was converted to a home under recent government legislation permitting redundant agricultural buildings to be converted to dwellings without going through the usual planning consents.

Mr Kemp said "The local planners gave us their blessing and we gave our architect Ralph Carpenter his head and simply asked him to build us a carbon zero home without missing out on modern comforts.

"We ended up with pretty much our dream house, it is warm, economical, spacious and family friendly but it is still basically a wooden shed with a tin roof. We love it."

Not only was the architect a neighbour, so were the builders Konrath and Goode. Jason Konrath was born in Hartest and Phil Goode also lives in the village. "A couple of professionals," said Mr Kemp "with a team of great colleagues. We were sorry when they finished and went away."



The Woodshed,
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