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# the HSBC Wales Civic Trust Awards ceremony 2001

at the millennium stadium cardiff 27 july 2001  
sponsored by **hsbc bank plc**

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the civic trust for wales  
ymddiriedolaeth ddinesig cymru  
& the civic trust



## ▶ the civic trust awards and good design

For forty years the Civic Trust Awards have been an opportunity to recognise and celebrate quality in design and planning throughout the United Kingdom. They are recognised in Britain and across the world as one of the leading awards for environmental design.

The 2001 awards cycle saw entries increase by over twenty percent, a clear sign that those commissioning and designing buildings are proud of what they are achieving. In Wales there were 48 entries, and seventeen schemes which earned Awards, Commendations, or Special Mentions.

More Welsh schemes impressed the assessors and judges in 2001 than in any year since 1990. They are collectively a convincing reminder that there are Welsh clients in every sector ready to go an extra mile to achieve high standards, and this is as true of small-scale neighbourhood schemes as it is of landmark developments.

At a time when the difficulties of promoting good design in Wales are so often stressed, this Awards Ceremony, generously sponsored by HSBC plc, offers the opportunity to recognise the commitment of clients and the imaginative responses of the project teams.

Good design is a key to achieving a better quality of life in our communities, and will improve the competitiveness of the Welsh economy. Each scheme presented here makes a notable contribution to these objectives, and proves that good design is an investment, not a cost. This message is also well understood by our partners in the Welsh unitary authorities, whose participation is central to the administration of the Awards.

**matthew griffiths**  
director  
the civic trust for wales

**martin bacon**  
chief executive  
the civic trust

### sponsor message

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**HSBC plc is part of one of the largest banking and financial services organisations in the world.**

The HSBC Group's international network comprises some 6,500 offices in 79 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa.

Committed to quality and innovation in its services to customers, HSBC plc is delighted to support the Wales Civic Trust Awards Ceremony.

The seventeen successful schemes demonstrate creative imagination, an awareness of environmental and social context, and responsiveness to the needs of their users. The Awards are an opportunity to showcase good design in Wales, reflecting HSBC's commitment to Wales, its communities, and its economy.

**elfed roberts**  
general manager



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## carmarthenshire the great glass house



“In the landscape it is unimpeachable...”

The Great Glass House is the centrepiece of the new National Botanic Garden of Wales, and is set in the 568-acre landscaped park of Middleton Hall, an 18th-century mansion at Llanarthne, near Carmarthen, that was demolished between the wars.

The Great Glass House, the symbol for Middleton, is a 95-metre by 55-metre elliptical dome set into the landscape.

The domed roof, covering 5,000 square metres, is a simple, continuous arched form with a minimal structure, which maximises the transmission of light whilst minimising maintenance. The glass house is solid on the north face, responding to the cold in winter, with generous ventilation to avoid overheating in summer. It is said to be the largest single-span glass house in the world.

Seen from outside, the shallow arc of the Glass House's dome, inclined towards the south, fits gently into the surrounding rolling hills, and seems to change in scale depending on the visitor's standpoint. “In the landscape,” says Richard Weston, “it is unimpeachable, its ideal geometry naturalised by echoing the surrounding hills, and tilting to turn its earth-sheltered back to the north and opening to southerly sun and views.”†

Internally, the steel roof arches, set at an angle to the base, give excit-

ingly different views of the space depending on the position of the observer.

The roof encloses one major volume and creates the ideal climate for the display of Mediterranean species across the world. The landscaped interior was designed by Kathryn Gustafson, and its habitats include the Canaries, Chile, South Africa and Mediterranean Europe. The ground within the dome is covered in a pale sandstone gravel that matches the artificial rock faces. These add to the sense of space in the dome and provide microclimates for plant species.

† Richard Weston, “Between a dome and a soft place,” *Touchstone*, 8, Autumn 2000



**OWNER** National Botanic Garden of Wales  
**ARCHITECT** Foster and Partners  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Symonds Ltd  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** Anthony Hunt Associates  
**SERVICES ENGINEER** Max Fordham and Partners  
**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Gustafson and Porter  
**CONTRACTOR** Schal International Management Ltd



“A rare survival, once hidden...”

**OWNER** Cadw & the Powys Castle Estate  
**ARCHITECT** Garner Southall Partnership  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Paul Goodwin Associates  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** RVW Consulting  
**SERVICES ENGINEER** Building Services Design  
**CONTRACTOR** Frank Galliers Ltd



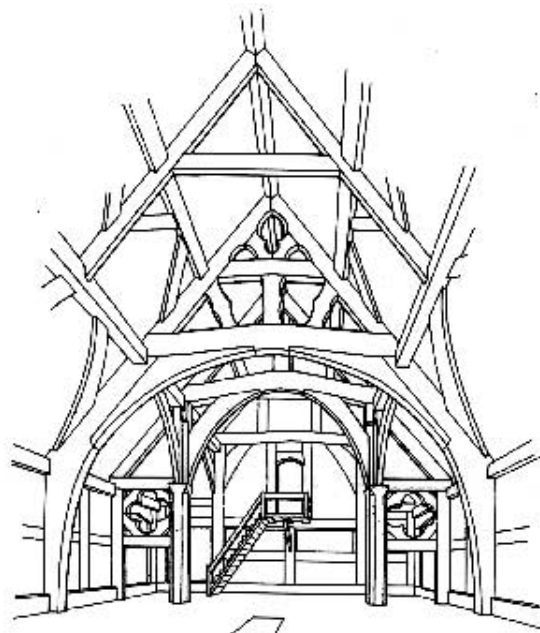
Once hidden within a tumbledown brick farm building, the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments discovered Ty Mawr in 1971. Subsequent recording, excavation and tree-ring dating have allowed a detailed history of the house to be reconstructed.

The core of the derelict was a timber-framed aisled hall, of a type formerly common in Montgomeryshire but now a rare survival. Built of timber felled in 1460, on the platform of an earlier dwelling, Ty Mawr measures just 17.5m by 8m. It was of five bays, with an unheated chamber at the upper end, a two-bay hall with an open hearth at its centre, a cross-passage, and a lower bay where animals were stalled. The timber frame was aisled, with the exception of the base-cruck that spans the centre of the hall. Around 1594, a floor was inserted into the upper chamber, and, probably later, the hall was also floored over, creating two new first-floor rooms. The hearth was moved to the upper end of the hall. In 1631 a fireplace with wattle-and-daub hood was built, which survives miraculously today. By the mid 18th century the house had been encased in brick, and in the early 19th century it fell out of use as a dwelling.

Purchased by the Welsh Office, Cadw provided £450,000 in grant for the restoration, by Garner South-

all of Llandrindod Wells. To protect the original structure it was decided to reconstruct the building around it, bring the house back to what it may have looked like around 1635.

The quality of the restoration has also been recognised by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, who gave it their Building of the Year award.



## ► commendations

### ceredigion aberystwyth arts centre



Designed by Smith Roberts Associates, this new building extends the original 1970s arts centre with wit and energy. Its series of arcs provide a strong contrast to the clear, straight logic of the original building, and its softer shapes engage positively with the surrounding garden area. Quirky and irreverent, yet beautifully composed, the detailing is complex and well resolved. The new extension has a clear, yet complementary character of its own.

**OWNER** University of Wales, Aberystwyth  
**ARCHITECT** Smith Roberts Associates  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Hills  
**ELECTRICAL ENGINEER** Veryards  
**SERVICES ENGINEER** McCanns  
**CONTRACTOR** Birse

### ceredigion four and a half quay parade, aberaeron



Designed by David Thomas, Architect, this unusual house extension has been built in a conservation area, behind a formal quayside of Regency stuccoed façades. Constructed from oak, copper, and rubble stone, visually it seems to melt into the walls, sheds and fences that make up the backland of the street. Cleverly squeezed into a constrained site, the building seems to peep around and over the neighbouring house in front.

**OWNER** Sarah Holgate and Peter Bottoms  
**ARCHITECT** David Thomas architect  
**ELECTRICAL ENGINEER** Symonds Group Ltd

### conwy rnli boathouse extension, conwy



Designed by Diane Williams, Architect, this extension provides much needed facilities — a training room, shower and changing rooms for the crew and a shop to help raise funds. The materials used — dark pebbledash render and natural slate roof — have been chosen judiciously so that it blends easily with its surroundings.

The unobtrusive and restrained design respects and enhances its location.

**OWNER** RNLI  
**ARCHITECT** Diane Williams, Architect  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Roberts Bayliss  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** WJ Halls  
**CONTRACTOR** AO Roberts Ltd

### denbighshire corn mill, llangollen



Designed by David A Griffiths Partnership, the Mill dates in part from the early 13th century, but was largely rebuilt in 1630, then had further 19th-century additions. Now skilfully restored and converted into a pub/restaurant, it provides a unique platform for viewing watersports on the river below. The extension maintains the architectural language of the original structure, yet is clearly contemporary, respecting and continuing the ad hoc way in which the mill has developed over the centuries.

**OWNER** Brunning and Price Ltd  
**ARCHITECT** David A Griffiths partnership  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** AJ Associates  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** Doubt, Hughes and Crawford  
**CONTRACTOR** Read Construction

### neath port talbot baglan energy park gateway



Designed by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, this speculative factory development is an exemplar in terms of energy efficiency. Having consulted experts at the Welsh School of Architecture, the design features unusual towers that house the natural ventilation system and also allow natural light to penetrate the building. Clad in metallic bluish grey panels, the building looks particularly striking when floodlit at night. Speculative factory developments are not usually known for their design quality. This scheme, however, is elegant and austere and stands as an excellent example of energy efficient design for future developments in this business park.

**OWNER, DEVELOPER, ARCHITECT, QUANTITY SURVEYOR, STRUCTURAL ENGINEER AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
**CONTRACTOR** Tilbury Douglas Construction

**powys offa's dyke visitor centre, knighton**



Designed by Powys County Council this centre is a useful facility for people walking the Dyke Path and other nearby national walking routes (over 30,000 annually). The carefully chosen materials reflect the way that the Path extends from coast to coast — with slate from the north, stone and oak from rural mid Wales, and steel and concrete from the industrial south. Logically and simply laid out, the design is clean and crisp in its detailing, and the centre will provide a great boost to local tourism.

**OWNER, ARCHITECT, QUANTITY SURVEYOR AND SERVICES ENGINEER** Powys County Council  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** RV Williams Partnership  
**CONTRACTOR** CJ Bayliss & Co

**rhondda cynon taff pen-nych community school**



Designed by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council, the bright airy classrooms radiate from a central axis and are arranged to allow children to integrate gradually into the school as they learn and develop. The nursery is a separate space with independent access and a protected outdoor area for storytelling and play. Designed with expertise and care... hopefully government initiatives to encourage better design of schools should result in more buildings of this quality.

**OWNER, DEVELOPER, ARCHITECT AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC/Lee Wakemans  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** Nicholas Taylor Associates Ltd  
**SERVICES ENGINEER** White Young Green  
**CONTRACTOR** Wiggins Gee Construction Ltd

**torfaen garn lakes**



Designed by Celtic Energy (formerly British Coal Opencast), this new country park lies on 148 acres of reclaimed mining spoil. Thirty thousand trees and shrubs have been planted, along with 100 acres of grassland, and the park includes two lakes, one for fishing and one for conservation. The success of this project is demonstrated by the fact that Garn Lakes has become a haven for several bird species that are declining in number, such as the skylark, grey partridge and lapwing.

**OWNER** Torfaen County Borough Council  
**DEVELOPER. QUANTITY SURVEYOR AND SERVICES ENGINEER** British Coal Open Cast/ Celtic Energy  
**ARCHITECT** Celtic Energy/British Coal Open Cast  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** British Coal Open Cast, Robert West and Partners  
**LANDSCAPE DESIGNER** Celtic Energy/Progressive Restoration  
**CONTRACTOR** Taylor Woodrow Mining/Jones Brothers/Fieldwork

**vale of glamorgan ty hafan children's hospice, sully**



Designed by Nigel Arnold, architect, the new hospice is set against the dramatic backdrop of the Bristol Channel. Its crisp modernist design and generous natural light filling the building give it the atmosphere of a seaside holiday. This was a central requirement of the Ty Hafan Charity. The care bedrooms, many of which are sea-facing with their own external terraces, would not feel out of place in a well-designed seaside hotel. The hospice provides a real haven for sick children and their families; the judging team found their visit an inspirational experience.

**OWNER** The Children's Hospice of Wales  
**ARCHITECT** Nigel Arnold, Architect  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Davis Langdon and Everest  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** Hubert Jenkins and Partners  
**SERVICES ENGINEER** Bayntons Design Services  
**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Treescene  
**CONTRACTOR** Balfour Beatty Ltd



**blaenau gwent the bert denning centre, tredegar**

Designed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council this day centre provides care for fifteen adults with profound physical and learning difficulties and special needs. Occupying an small but prominent site, the building is confident and modern, taking its architectural reference from the nearby former Dunlop Rubber Factory. A wonderful local resource, that allows its users opportunity for greater integration into the community.

**OWNER, ARCHITECT, QUANTITY SURVEYOR, STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
**CONTRACTOR** Kier Western

## **carmarthenshire** seafront promenade, millennium coastal park, llanelli

Designed by Ove Arup and Partners and Macgregor Smith Landscape Architects for Carmarthenshire County Council, the promenade is an excellent first stage in a far larger scheme, the 20km coastal park. The three-quarter-mile long prom restores the town of Llanelli's link to its beautiful coastline, previously separated by a line of industrial works. The promenade is well-conceived, detailed and entirely appropriate to its setting. The coastal park promises to be a sensational and very civic contribution to its area.

**OWNER AND DEVELOPER** Carmarthenshire County Council  
**DESIGNERS** Ove Arup & Partners, Macgregor Smith Landscape Architects  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Chandler KBS  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** Ove Arup  
**CONTRACTOR** Birse Construction Ltd

## **neath port talbot** aberafan bridge canopy, port talbot

Designed by the Transportation, Highways and Engineering Directorate of Neath Port Talbot CBC and Arcane Fabric Engineering Ltd, this canopy, covering the Grade II listed Aberafan bridge, occupies a key position in Port Talbot's town centre, linking two shopping areas. It provides cover from the weather as well as direction and focus to the centre's main pedestrian route. The stark white and bold design of the canopy contrasts sharply with the dark valleys beyond.

**OWNER AND DEVELOPER** Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
**DESIGN** Arcane Fabric Engineering Ltd  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS** Fenton Holloway/Neath Port Talbot CBC, Foundation Design  
**CONTRACTOR** Arcane Fabric Engineering Ltd

## **swansea** the assembly rooms

The restoration of the Assembly Rooms was designed by Dewi Evans Architects. Once one of Swansea's finest Regency buildings, the Rooms had become derelict. This housing association scheme has restored the façade — the only part that could be saved — and created flats and mews houses behind. Design and execution are sensitive and meticulous.

**OWNER** Gwalia Housing Society Ltd  
**ARCHITECT, SERVICES ENGINEER AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Dewi Evans Architects  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Landers Wheelers  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** ATEB Consult  
**CONTRACTOR** John Weaver (Contractors) Ltd

## **swansea** new chapel, st illyd's church, ilston

Designed by Dewi Evans Architects, this scheme opened up a tiny chapel in the base of a 12th-century tower, the oldest part of the Church. The modest design of this chapel has been sensitively and carefully executed with judicious use of materials and lime-washed stone walls.

**OWNER** The Parish of Ilston Parochial Church Council  
**ARCHITECT** Dewi Evans Architects  
**CONTRACTOR** Abbey Masonry and Restoration

## **swansea** the environment centre

Designed by Air Architecture, the design and execution of the scheme provide an excellent demonstration of the Environment Centre's purpose and intentions. It is well-insulated, naturally ventilated and energy efficient. Constructed from local green oak and recycled and reclaimed materials, it is powered partly by solar and photovoltaic panels. The centre successfully integrates green principles with good design."

**OWNER** The Environment Centre  
**DEVELOPER** Bennett Bros Ltd  
**ARCHITECT** Air Architecture  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR** ER Brown and Partners  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** WS Atkins



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**KEY** 1 Bert Denning Centre 2 Millennium Coastal Park 3 Aberafan Bridge Canopy 4 The Assembly Rooms 5 St Illyd's Church 6 The Environment Centre



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**the HSBC Wales  
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good design, sustainable development and  
respect for the built environment ”