

# THE CIVIC TRUST FOR WALES Ymddiriedolaeth Ddinesig Cymru

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29 October 2004

## Press release

### Celebrating good design in Welsh communities

The Civic Trust for Wales has recognised fifteen schemes across Wales in the Welsh Civic Societies' Local Design Awards.

The Awards were presented at ceremonies in Caernarfon and Cardiff. Speaking in Cardiff, artist William Wilkins – rescuer of the lost gardens of Aberglasney and creator of the National Botanic Garden – emphasised good design as an essential component of civilised living. He paid tribute to the work of Welsh civic societies in demanding that high standards of design are pursued in Welsh communities.

Trust Director, Matthew Griffiths explains the role of the Design Awards:

“The Local Design Awards recognise and celebrate good design. We were not necessarily looking for “outstanding” work, but for design that was responsive to context in a way that can be readily emulated.

“The twin ideas of sense of place – as something that helps to sustain communities – and design for context have recently crept in to the lexicon of planning policy in Wales. But they are not new as far as Welsh civic societies are concerned.”

For over forty years, civic societies across Wales have been promoting development that responds to context as much as it meets the needs of users. The Assembly's recent Design Initiative signals that these ambitions are recognised and endorsed by government.

It was against this background that in 2003 the Civic Trust asked civic societies to identify development and conservation projects which – in their view – met these fundamental criteria.

The Trust asked that they should also have in mind the factors identified as making for good design that are identified in the Assembly's innovative Technical Advice Note 12 (Design).

Moreover, the Trust felt it was important that it was local lay judgement that would count for once in an awards scheme – rather than outside experts and professional leaders.

All types and scales of project were eligible – from shop-fronts to large-scale development schemes, conservation or new build.

The **detailed criteria** – following TAN 12 – were:

response to local character and context  
response to the opportunity to seek an innovative solution  
accessibility to all  
fitness for user needs  
sensitivity to the opportunity to improve the relationship between the public and private realm  
sustainability and biodiversity  
contribution to an enjoyable, safe and secure environment.

The response to what has been a first-time exercise for all involved has been successful in picking out projects that have been positive and creative in meeting a variety of needs and uses. Each project shows that, with a little forethought, quality can be achieved.

## **Ends**

### **Associated files:**

certificate\_recipients.doc lists award winners  
awards\_8.pdf is a copy of the printed awards brochure

Project photographs are available on request.

Local contacts for schemes are available on request.

## **Further information**

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