

Subject

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Prime Minister urges public sector leaders to celebrate great design

For immediate release

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Headteachers, chiefs of NHS Trusts and local council leaders are being urged to seek recognition for their new public buildings by entering them for the 2005 Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award.

Now in its fifth year, the Prime Minister's Award - jointly sponsored by CABE, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and OGC, the Office for Government Commerce - recognises both design and procurement excellence in building projects from across the public sector.

The Prime Minister, The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP, said:

'I am delighted that in the five years since I launched the award its influence has been felt across the public sector, with more entries and a rising range and quality of projects.

'Improving the quality of buildings where people live and work is at the heart of the Government's policy for modernising public services. Across the sector there is a realisation that good design means more than just looks. It means buildings working efficiently and effectively for their users, the public, and the environment.'

Lord McIntosh, Minister for Media and Heritage, said:

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‘The Prime Minister’s Better Public Building Award is unique in that it awards publicly commissioned and funded projects that have met the highest standards of excellence not only in terms of design but also in terms of procurement, construction, delivery and project management.

‘Buildings touch on very different aspects of our lives, and this alone demonstrates the importance of good design, as good – or bad design – impacts on our every day lives in a very real way. Good design isn’t just about landmark buildings – it is every bit as important to get design right in road projects.’

Launched by the Prime Minister in 2000, the award reflects the scale and ambition of the Government’s construction programme and has gone from strength to strength, with an unprecedented 137 entries in 2004, twice the number for 2003.

To celebrate five years of the Award and to mark the call for entries for 2005, CABA hosted a reception for past winners and those presently involved in procuring, designing and constructing public buildings on 16 March at Tate Modern, winner of the inaugural Prime Minister’s Better Public Building Award in 2001.

At the evening reception Paul Finch, Deputy Chair of CABA, said: ‘The award has been on an interesting journey since 2001. The range of winning projects and the even wider variety of shortlisted projects demonstrates not only that the principles of design and procurement excellence apply to projects both large and small, but that the ability to improve quality of life is what really matters in designing public buildings and spaces.’

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To coincide with the launch of the call for entries for this year's award, CABA has re-launched the PM's Award website at www.betterpublicbuildings.org.uk which contains more information about the award and the Better Public Building initiative.

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Notes to Editors

- CABA champions the creation of great buildings and public spaces. It is a non-departmental public body set up by the Government in 1999. Through public campaigns and support to professionals, CABA encourages the development of well-designed homes, streets, parks, offices, schools, hospitals and other public buildings - www.cabe.org.uk
- Images of the projection on the outside of Tate Modern marking five years of the Prime Minister's Award can be obtained from Dominique Owen at CABA 020 7960 2470
- Past winners are: 2004 - A650 Bingley Relief Road, 2003 - Bournemouth Library, 2002 - Bristol City Learning centre, 2001 - Tate Modern
- The OGC is an office of HM Treasury that works with central civil Government as a catalyst to achieve best value for money in commercial activities. The OGC, working with departments and the wider public sector, will play a key role in delivering efficiency improvements.