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Brighton rocks as eco library clinches the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award for 2005

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A Private Finance Initiative (PFI) funded public library in the heart of Brighton has won the 2005 Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award.

The Jubilee Library beat 14 other schemes on the shortlist chosen from a record 139 entries, at an evening awards ceremony in London on the 13 October.

Now in its fifth year, this annual award, jointly sponsored by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), recognises excellence in design quality and procurement practices of publicly funded building schemes. It is part of the British Construction Industry Awards (BCIA).

The new £8 million library, which has seen visitor numbers and book loans triple since opening, demonstrates how PFI projects can succeed when the client actively champions design quality before and during the procurement process and the team of client, contractors and users work creatively together to achieve it.

Designed by Bennetts Associates Architects in association with Lomax Cassidy & Edwards, the library enjoys low energy consumption (using an estimated 50% reduction in carbon), relies on local climatic conditions and can recycle rainwater, making it one of the country's most energy-efficient public buildings. The building was delivered on time and on budget.

Presenting the Award at the British Construction Industry Award ceremony, Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said:

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'The Jubilee Library in Brighton is a stunning piece of architecture that enhances its location, its environment and its community. In a very tight field, it makes a most deserving winner of this prestigious award.'

John Oughton, Chief Executive of OGC, said:

'The Jubilee Library is a worthy winner of this prestigious award. It shows a practical application of the principles of good construction procurement practice, especially those on sustainability, which are embodied in the OGC's Achieving Excellence in Construction initiative. This building is innovative, stylish, efficient and eminently useable. I hope the people of Brighton and visitors to the city will enjoy using this wonderful library. I'm delighted that, jointly with CABE, we have been able to recognise this outstanding achievement.'

The judges said: 'This PFI project has given Brighton a long-awaited facility which has been designed and delivered with great flair.' Jonathan Glancey architecture critic for the Guardian, said: 'The blue-tiled, glass-fronted building, which faces the sea, is crisp, simple, translucent, energy-efficient - and packs a surprising architectural punch.'

Katharine Pearce, Project Manager, Brighton and Hove City Council, added:

'The new Jubilee Library has proved a phenomenal success with our harshest critics, our customers. We know from the many hundreds of comments received in its first few weeks of opening that they find the building as much of a thrill as we do. We feel we have achieved with our partners an astoundingly beautiful building, combining a very strong aesthetic with its overall function, to truly work as a space for learning, contemplation and interaction. It works on three levels, as a fabulous building in its own right, as a sustainable public building (using an estimated 50% reduction in carbon), and most

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importantly, as a functioning efficient and accessible library for our 250,000 residents and visitors.'

As well as a new library, the project includes a hotel, residential housing, offices, retail and restaurants, with a masterplan based on a new public square and reinstatement of the original street pattern.

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Notes to Editors

- The complete short list for the 2005 Award is as follows:
 - Brent Birth Centre, Acton Lane London
 - Kingsmead Primary School, Northwich Cheshire
 - Inn the Park, St James's Park London
 - Boscastle Flood Defence System, Cornwall
 - Bridges 2/11 – 2/12 Reconstruction, Battersea London
 - Mossbourne Community Academy, Hackney London
 - Jubilee Library, Brighton
 - South Stockton Link, Stockton on Tees
 - A470 Cardiff to Glan Conwy Road, Wales
 - The Home Office Project, London
 - Tinsley Viaduct strengthening project, Sheffield
 - Goggs East (Government Office Great George Street)
 - The SAGE, Gateshead
 - The Hub, Newham London
 - Sladesbridge Flood Defence Scheme, Cornwall
- Further information on each of the shortlisted schemes can be found at www.betterpublicbuilding.org.uk
- The winner of last year's Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award was the A650 Bingley Relief Road, Yorkshire
- Adrian lent, OGC press office on 020 7271 1366 or email: adrian.lent@ogc.gsi.gov.uk
- **Images** of all shortlisted projects are available from the CABE Press Office, contact Katherine Heaton on 020 7070 6768

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- The Award is made annually to new projects commissioned by central or local government and paid mainly with public funds. It is part of the Better Public Building Initiative launched by the Prime Minister in October 2000 to encourage the adoption of quality design principles in all new public sector buildings, regardless of size and cost
 - CABE 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, CABE encourages the development of well-designed homes, streets, parks, offices, schools, hospitals and other public buildings – www.cabe.org.uk
 - OGC's mission is to work with the public sector as a catalyst to achieve efficiency, value for money in commercial activities and improved success in the delivery of programmes and projects. www.ogc.gov.uk