

Brighton's Jubilee Library Scoops Another Award

The Observer awards the revolutionary Jubilee Library in Brighton the first-ever Ethical Award for Best Building of the Year.

The Ethical Award for Building of the Year is awarded to a project that has raised the bar for environmental sustainability. It's heating, lighting, ventilation and cooling systems have all been designed in accordance with environmentally sustainable principles. The prominent, glass-fronted library is one of the most energy-efficient buildings in the country. The glass façade provides natural lighting, recycled rainwater is used to flush toilets and cutting edge ventilation replaces the need for air-conditioning reducing the use of energy.

A special issue of The Observer Magazine announced the award following a public vote and a decision by the Observer panel.

The Jubilee Library has also received a commendation from CABE, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. The building has also received the prestigious Prime Minister's award for Better Public Buildings 2005.

The Jubilee Library was a complex PFI project in which we were the lead legal advisers to Brighton City Council. Although the PFI process has attracted criticism for producing dull, conventional buildings, when the library opened to the public in March 2005, it was met with widespread approval for its innovative and visually appealing design.

Chair of Brighton & Hove City Council's culture committee, Councillor Sue John comments: "It's a very proud moment for the council and the city. The commitment of the Council to a building that would combine quality and urban improvement with low environmental impact was established at the very outset of the project. Environmental sustainability remained at the heart of the project throughout. This award shows that public buildings, including those funded by the PFI, can be of remarkable quality and value if you have vision, determination and the right team in place."

Graham Burns, our lead legal adviser on this project commented "I am delighted that the Library has won yet another award. It clearly demonstrates that the PFI process can produce attractive and environmentally friendly infrastructure. This will certainly promote public expectations for PFI projects in quality, design and environmental awareness. I am pleased that I was part of the team who assisted with the very successful development of the site which had lain derelict for a 43 year period."