
News release

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Bumper year as seven buildings in Wales win national architecture award

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2010 RIBA Awards. Seven winners in Wales will today win an RIBA Award for architectural excellence.

The winning projects range from learning environments to commercial business centres. A record number of seven winners represents a significant increase from previous years and demonstrates continued enthusiasm for the RIBA Awards programme in Wales.

The winners illustrate a new level of design excellence in Wales with dazzlingly different buildings that are emerging in the landscape, all of which are thoughtful, intelligent and sensitive.

The seven buildings in Wales by that have won RIBA Awards are:

1. Margam Discovery Centre, Port Talbot SA13 2TJ by Loyn and Co Architects and Design Research Unit, Welsh School of Architecture
2. Creative Business Units, Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Penglais Hill, Aberystwyth SY23 3DE by Heatherwick Studio
3. Cardiff Central Library, The Hayes, Cardiff CF10 1FL by BDP (and Stride Treglown Davies)
4. Chapter Arts Centre, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff CF5 1QE by Ash Sakula Architects
5. Sleeperz Hotel, Station Approach, Saunders Road, Cardiff CF10 1RH by Clash Associates (and Holder Mathias)
6. Skypad - Teenage Cancer Trust Unit, Heath Park, Cardiff CF14 4XW by Orms Architecture Design (and Stride Treglown Davies)
7. Hafod Eryri (Snowdon Summit Building), Betws Garmon, Caernafon, Gwynedd LL55 4NO by Ray Hole Architects

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CITATIONS

Margam Discovery Centre, Port Talbot SA13 2TJ



Photo credit: Loyn and Co Photography

Architect:	Loyn and Co Architects and Design Research Unit Wales
Client:	Neath - Port Talbot County Borough Council
Contractor:	WRW Construction
Structural Engineer:	Faber Maunsell
Services Engineer:	Faber Maunsell
Contract Value:	£4.9m
Date of completion:	March 2009
Gross internal area:	3138 sq m

80% of this experimental building was prefabricated as modular units and craned into position although the building module is only visible in vertical joints in the timber cladding. The research into this sustainable educational, cultural and leisure facility was undertaken by the Welsh School of Architecture, in collaboration with local architects Loyn and Co Architects.

The building plays a didactic role in demonstrating sustainable design to users, incorporating passive design strategies, biomass plant and water recycling. It also provides a base from which to explore the history, culture and ecology of the surrounding landscape.

The architectural form reinforces these aims with the buildings set on 'pilots', in fact drilling tubes recycled from the oil industry, so the building literally treads lightly on the earth.

Creative Business Units, Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Penglais Hill, Aberystwyth SY23 3DE



Photo credit: Edmund Sumner

Architect:	Heatherwick Studio
Client:	Aberystwyth Arts Centre
Contractor:	Heatherwick Studio Construction
Structural Engineer:	Packman Lucas
Services Engineer:	Adrian Tester
Contract Value:	£1.15m
Date of completion:	January 2009
Gross internal area:	624 sq m

This RIBA Competition winning project for Aberystwyth Arts Centre provides sixteen small creative business starter units set along a gently meandering path on a wooded hillside site overlooking the sea.

The interiors of the 39 square metre units are modest, in stunning contrast to their exteriors, which appear to be clad in shiny inflated stainless steel pillows that reflect the colours of the surrounding trees and sky. These plump, creased forms are in fact hard and durable and formed of wafer thin sheet – pre-creased by a bespoke hand operated 'mangle' invented by the architect – and coated on the reverse with two types of CFC-free insulation foam, which brings thermal performance and rigidity. The effect is completely extraordinary and simultaneously intriguing and charming.

Cardiff Central Library, The Hayes, Cardiff CF10 1FL



Photo credit: David Barbour photography

Architect:	BDP (and Stride Treglown Davies)
Client:	Cardiff County Council
Contractor:	Laing O'Rourke
Structural Engineer:	Ove Arup & Partners
Services Engineer:	Foreman Roberts
Contract Value:	£18m
Date of completion:	April 2009
Gross internal area:	5,167 sq m

This is a bold and colourful building at the convergence of two pedestrianised streets. The ground floor foyer to the library is appropriately modest, so as to encourage the use of the escalators that rise through a lofty linear atrium - a theatrical arrival sequence that allows the visitor time to take in their surroundings and orientate themselves. At the very top, the library is crowned with a warm timber ceiling, laid out on a grid that cuts across the atrium and reinforces building planning which is dynamic and sophisticated.

It was opened by the Welsh rock band Manic Street Preachers, whose lyric "libraries gave us power..." is quoted on the commemorative plaque and is an appropriate sentiment for a bold and accessible new public library.

Chapter Arts Centre, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff CF5 1QE



Photo credit: Jon Pountney

Architect:	Ash Sakula Architects
Client:	Chapter
Contractor:	WRW Group
Structural Engineer:	Adams Kara Taylor
Services Engineer:	Michael Popper Associates
Contract Value:	£2.24m
Date of completion:	November 2009
Gross internal area:	3,991 sq m

The brief required the rationalisation of Chapter's existing buildings without losing the sometimes eccentric qualities which have made it a highly successful centre for the visual and performing arts and a Cardiff institution since the 1970s.

In an inspired reversal, a previously open courtyard has been covered to create a cafe and bar which is bright, airy and constantly animated by visitors. Despite a low budget, spaces are of uniformly high quality. New finishes are full of character and the building is full of delightful details – such as the putty-green panelling and the chocolate ceramic dado tiles - uncovered from behind years of paint and plasterboard. There is even a low-budget homage Gunnar Asplund's Skandia Cinema, with red velvet seats and a fibre-optic night-sky ceiling.

Sleeperz Hotel, Station Approach, Saunders Road, Cardiff CF10 1RH



Photo credit: Daniel Clements Photography

Architect:	Clash Associates/Holder Mathias
Client:	Sleeperz Hotels
Contractor:	Cowlin Construction
Structural Engineer:	Techniker
Services Engineer:	Hulley and Kirkwood
Contract Value:	£4.6m
Date of completion:	November 2008
Gross internal area:	1,632 sq m

The 350 square metre triangular site near Cardiff Central Station lay empty for fifteen years and contributed to an air of neglect. The enterprising development of a bold new 74-bed hotel acts as a high quality catalyst for the regeneration of the wider area. The interior is comfortable, witty and enjoyable and the 74-bedrooms redefine spatial economy without feeling mean.

The planners insisted on the use of real stone and this shifted the project from a budget hotel towards that of a boutique destination. Even so, the construction cost per room is lower than even budget providers, suggesting many more sites could be made to work with this sort of thinking and with clever design tailored to small sites. This is not back to basics architecture but possibly a reinvention of the city-centre hotel model for a money-conscious world.

Skypad - Teenage Cancer Trust Unit, Heath Park, Cardiff CF14 4XW



Photo credit: James Brittain photography

Architect:	ORMS Architecture Design (and Stride Treglown Davies)
Client:	Teenage Cancer Trust
Contractor:	Cowlin Construction
Structural Engineer:	Price & Myers
Services Engineer:	AECOM
Contract Value:	£2.4m
Date of completion:	May 2009
Gross internal area:	585 sq m

This extraordinary project can take its rightful place in a series of landmark healthcare buildings including the Paimio Sanatorium by Alvar Aalto – an explicit point of reference for the architect – which uses sensitive, humane design to improve the physical and emotional environment for patient care.

The architects have drawn on their experience in hotel design to provide attractive and customisable interiors for the treatment of young people with cancer. The two-storey building is on a well placed but highly constrained, landlocked site. The distinctive blue metal-clad form is supported on inclined tubular legs, a familiar architectural device which here is driven by necessity, to step nimbly over myriad existing services, ventilation outlets and fire-escape routes and to connect directly to existing adult and paediatric oncology services.

Hafod Eryri (Snowdon Summit Building), Betws Garmon, Caernafon, Gwynedd LL55 4NO



Photo credit: Ray Wood photography

Architect:	Ray Hole Architects
Client:	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Contractor:	Carillion Building
Structural Engineer:	Arup
Services Engineer:	Arup
Contract Value:	£7.3m
Date of completion:	October 2008
Gross internal area:	700 sq m

It is rare in the modern era to describe a building as heroic, yet this project truly deserves that accolade. This is the highest building in the UK and was designed to withstand extreme climate and visitor numbers.

Before being taken to site, the galvanised steel-framed building was completely pre-assembled to resolve any issues of fit and tolerance. It was then clad in an aluminium standing seam enclosure and enveloped in rough-hewn granite blocks. This is an extraordinary contextual building which is completely at one with its uniquely sensitive setting, and which - because it forms the summer terminus for the Snowdon Mountain Railway - brings Wales' most symbolic mountain into reach for everyone without compromising the mountain or its enjoyment.

RIBA

RIBA President Ruth Reed said about the 2010 RIBA Award winners:

“The RIBA Awards reflect not only the state of British architecture but also that of its economy. In the midst of the deepest recession in the 45 year history of the RIBA Awards, this year’s winners demonstrate that although times might be hard for architects, there are still great buildings being built throughout the country and overseas. The RIBA Awards always give an opportunity for gem-like small projects and less established practices to shine through and this year is no exception. Far from being a size prize, the RIBA Awards are for buildings that offer value to people’s lives. I am looking forward to seeing an exciting RIBA Stirling Prize shortlist.”

The RIBA Stirling Prize shortlist will be drawn from the 102 RIBA Award winners. The RIBA Stirling Prize, in association with *The Architects’ Journal* is awarded to the architects of the building that has made the greatest contribution to British architecture in the past year. The prize will be presented at The Roundhouse, London on Saturday 2 October 2010.

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Notes to editors:

1. For further press information and images please contact: Sophie Gibbs, Royal Society of Architects in Wales, 029 2022 8987, e: sophie.gibbs@inst.riba.org

More information can also be found at www.architecture.com/awards.

2. The RIBA is delighted to confirm *The Architects’ Journal* as sponsor of the RIBA Stirling Prize 2010. For more information please visit their website

www.architectsjournal.co.uk.

3. The RIBA Stirling Prize jury comprises architects and lay judges from the arts. The 2010 judges are: Edward Jones - Architect, Mark Lawson – Presenter, Lisa Jardine – Author, Ivan Harbour – Architect, and Ruth Reed, RIBA President.