

NEWS RELEASE

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BIRMINGHAM PROJECT RECOGNISED IN NATIONAL AWARDS

An outstanding online initiative offering literary support to young people is one of the pioneering projects selected for the shortlist of a national award scheme that identifies and promotes the many tangible benefits obtained from the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Birmingham Libraries 'Stories from the Web' is just one of the 118 entries received and one of the 21 projects short-listed in the 2004 UK eWell-Being Awards developed by SustainIT and sponsored by BT, Vodafone and Brother with The Guardian as national media partner. The awards aim to uncover exciting new projects that use ICT to deliver environmental and/or social benefits.

This innovative project was entered in the eGovernment category, sponsored by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). This was open to national, regional and local government and focuses on projects which use ICT to deliver better public services.

'Stories from the Web' is a Reader Development website supporting young people aged 8-14 years, their families and adults working with young people that encourages young people to enjoy reading and provides value added services for participating library authorities. The project presents stories and poetry to accompany the reading experience and publishes young people's creative writing and drawings in a gallery area. The website promotes all youngsters regardless of their abilities or background to be involved and can be used independently or as part of a structured programme. The past two years has seen pilot sessions for refugees and asylum seekers, young people living in residential homes or foster care and work with young people excluded from mainstream school. Improvements for future development are continuing.

Said SustainIT Programme Manager Simon Hills: "Once again, the entries highlight how organisations use ICT creatively to provide tangible environmental and social benefits". A sentiment echoed by awards judging panel member Caren Bland, of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). "The level of entries was exceptionally high, which supports the commitment and progress being made in these areas", she said.

BT has supported the eWell-Being Awards programme since its inception in 2002. Mike Hughes, BT Head of Environment and CSR Campaign, said: "In 2004 the standard of the entries was again exceptionally high, and we are eager to champion those organisations that are leading the way."

Winning projects will be announced at an awards ceremony at 30 St. Mary Axe, London (affectionately referred to as 'The Gherkin'), on Monday 14th March 2005.

For more information on the Awards, or if you would like to attend the awards ceremony please contact Simon Hills or Richard Craven, SustainIT on 01733 312286 or shills@ukceed.org.

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Notes to editors

1. The judging panel for the 2004 Awards included representatives of BT, Vodafone, Brother, IDeA, Local Transport Today, The AA, OFCOM, Oracle, SOCITM, ZDNet, The Guardian, Ability magazine, UK CEED and Netmums (category winner in the 2002 eWell-Being Awards).

2. SustainIT is an initiative of The UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development (UK CEED), an entrepreneurial research and policy centre. It conducts research on, and provides best practice examples of, synergies between ICT and sustainable development. It works in partnership with business, government and the voluntary sector to encourage adoption of ever higher environmental standards in their activities. The Centre undertakes research, develops policy, implements technology demonstration projects and carries out a wide range of engagement and education activities with its partners in the UK and across Europe. For more information visit www.sustainit.org and www.ukceed.org

3. BT is one of the world's leading providers of communications solutions serving customers in Europe, the Americas and Asia Pacific. Its principal activities include IT and networking services, local, national and international telecommunications services, and higher-value broadband and internet products and services.

BT consists principally of three lines of business:

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- **BT Wholesale**, providing network services and solutions within the UK to more than 600 fixed and mobile operators and service providers including the provision of broadband, private circuits.
- **BT Global Services**, providing IT and networking services to meet the needs of multi-site organisations globally. BT Global Services operates in more than 130 countries and also offers international carrier services.

In the year ended 31 March 2004, BT Group's turnover was £18,519 million with profit before goodwill amortisation, exceptional items and taxation of £2,013 million.

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