

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMUNITY PROJECT RECOGNISED IN NATIONAL AWARDS

An empowering centre providing training for adults with learning disabilities and their carers is one of the pioneering projects selected for the shortlist of a national award scheme that identifies and promotes the many benefits obtained from the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The HFT Karten CTEC Centre 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 beneficial project was entered in the Digital Inclusion category, sponsored by BT. For the 2004 programme there was an additional award within the Digital Inclusion category focusing on projects that enhance ICT access and services specifically for disabled people.

The HFT Karten CTEC Centre opened in mid 2003 to provide ICT training for people supporting adults with learning disabilities and for people with learning disabilities themselves; the first centre dedicated to this purpose.

The benefits of ICT for people with learning disabilities are enormous and include the development of communication skills, lengthening of concentration spans and increased participation in everyday activities such as preparing shopping lists and menus through the use of symbol-based software. The intangible benefits of increased self-esteem and confidence are also considerable. HFT recognises that training for staff is absolutely essential to the success of any ICT project for people with learning disabilities and a variety of courses including basic ICT skills, knowledge of accessibility software and assistive devices, use of internet, email and digital cameras are offered but are focussed on the needs of those with learning disabilities.

Said SustainIT Programme Manager Simon Hills: "Once again, the entries highlight how organisations use ICT creatively to provide tangible environmental and social benefits".

BT has supported the eWell-Being Awards programme since its inception in 2002.

Mike Hughes, BT Head of Environment and CSR Campaign, said: "Digital Inclusion is a key focus for our business and our support for the eWell-Being Awards plays an important role in it. In 2004 the standard of the entries was again exceptionally high, and we are eager to champion those organisations that are leading the way such as the HFT Karten CTEC Centre".

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, SustainIT 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:

- BT Retail**, providing a comprehensive range of communications and related services to over 20m UK consumers and businesses.
- 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.

BT Group plc is listed on stock exchanges in London and New York. British Telecommunications plc (BT) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BT Group and encompasses virtually all businesses and assets of the BT Group.

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