

BCO celebrates Midlands and Central England's best workplaces

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The Midlands and Central England's most outstanding workplaces have been announced, with **British Council for Offices Awards going to five office buildings across the region. Held at ICC in Birmingham, the BCO's annual Midlands and Central Awards Lunch recognised projects that demonstrate best practice in office design, fit-out, operation and sustainability, setting the standard for excellence across the sector.**

The winners of this year's competition in the Midlands and Central England stand out for their ambition in combining user-centric design credentials with the creative implementation of wellbeing and sustainability measures.

The BCO Regional Award winners for the Midlands and Central England are:

- TTP Campus, Cambridge Road, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire (Corporate Workplace)
- One Centenary Way, Paradise, Birmingham (Commercial Workplace)
- Arup, One Centenary Way, Paradise, Birmingham (Fit Out of Workplace)
- 10 Brindleyplace, Birmingham (ESG and Refurbished/Recycled Workplace)
- Rare, Manor Park, Twycross, Sheepy Manga (Projects up to 2,500m²)

The new Cambridgeshire HQ of technology consultancy TTP received the award for **Best Corporate Workplace**. Set amidst the rural landscape of Melbourn, the c.110,000 sq ft campus comprises three distinct, single-storey buildings shaped around collaborative working. BCO judges were particularly impressed with the largest of the buildings, the Hive, formed of a series of modular squares within a lattice grid of circulation. Occupants benefit from a mix of laboratory, flexible workplace and amenity space,

including a restaurant and gymnasium. The building boasts a clear connection to nature with significant natural light and external views, while extensive solar shading and PV panels produce 38% of the campus' energy requirements.

One Centenary Way in Birmingham was crowned **Best Commercial Workplace**. Judges commended the bravery and ambition of this speculative office scheme, which delivers 280,000 sq ft in the heart of the city's new mixed-use district. One of Birmingham's most sustainable buildings, One Centenary Way is all-electric, BREEAM 'Excellent' and EPC A rated, and has been designed to WiredScore requirements for connectivity. It also has a fully demountable superstructure, enabling a circular economy. The building houses the city's first public cycle hub for 450 bikes, with showers, storage and maintenance facilities, and provides shared access to high quality wellness suites.

Arup's Birmingham office at One Centenary Way was awarded **Best Fit Out of Workplace**. The judges were struck by the close collaboration between occupier and developer in redesigning the building's gas fire boilers to incorporate air source heat provision and smart gateways. Embodied carbon was minimised during the fit-out through a natural and recycled material pallet and the project is on target to achieve WELL Building Platinum certification. Arup's approach to innovative smart enabling operating systems will also allow for minimal energy use in unoccupied areas of the building. The judging panel applauded the steps Arup had taken to support neurodiversity, wellbeing and inclusivity through a series of flexible workspaces.

Birmingham's largest refurbishment project at 10 Brindleyplace was the recipient of both the **ESG** and **Refurbished/Recycled Workplace** awards. The scheme involved a complex back-to-frame refurbishment to connect two 20-year-old buildings into one single, open and connected floorplate, delivering more than 217,000 sq ft of modern office accommodation. The judges singled out this building for the ambition to pack multiple sustainable and smart features into the specification, resulting in several accreditations including two-star FitWel and WiredScore Platinum certification, and a 65% reduction in energy demand. The panel also recognised the strong focus on wellbeing strategies and amenities such as multiple roof terraces, a climbing wall, gymnasium and events space.

Rare's Xbox gaming development studio in Twycross, rural Leicestershire, was the winner of the category for **Projects up to 2,500m²**. The two-storey, net zero extension development seamlessly integrates 1,500m² of additional space into an existing campus, catering for more than 70 employees. BCO judges were impressed by the bespoke nature of the design which has been shaped around ecology, amenity, and sustainability, drawing inspiration from regional architecture and using local materials and suppliers. It has led to the development of a timber frame structure that connects with nature and maximises a range of energy saving and water reducing technologies.

Lee Jones, Partner at Quantem and Chair of the BCO Midlands and Central Judging Panel said: "The calibre of this year's awards has pushed the boundaries of workplace design. The increasing focus on carbon reduction in use and during construction, and a true emphasis on the health and wellbeing of all who use workplaces, has been outstanding."

Rob van Zyl, Building Services Partner at Cundall and Chairman of the BCO Midlands committee said: "These offices represent best practice in a post-pandemic world. Society has been forever changed, and

with it the workplace of the future is emerging. In this exciting year when we look forward to the BCO conference in the region, these outstanding projects demonstrate what can be achieved by creative and dedicated teams who are delivering exceptional offices for the Midlands and Central England.”

Midlands and Central England winners will compete for the BCO National Awards on Tuesday 8 October 2024.

The lead sponsor for this year’s BCO Awards is ISG. Gold sponsors are AECOM and Troup Bywaters + Anders, with Overbury and Quantem as this year’s regional sponsors. The BCO awards are in association with EG.