

Autonomous Environmental Information Centre

"So AtEIC throw s dow n the gauntlet. No PVC, no cement (the greatest CO₂ producers in the industry). Instead there is the more forgiving hydraulic lime-crete. There are no chemical surface finishes. Instead of cement concrete blocks, they make thermal and acoustic mass earth-blocks on site and bed them on hydraulic lime mortar, (they're sited on a slate tip so needed to look further afield for the earth). Instead of foam or glass fibre quilt insulants they use 325mm depth of local sheepsw ool insulation, 450mm Warmcell in the roof, and heatstores linked to a 120 square metre solar roof w ater heating installation (they already have the largest UK photovoltaic roof installation at CAT). This is linked by a heating main to a bio-mass w ood chip boiler to ensure all year round zero fossil fuel usage. Then there is locally sourced timber, non-reinforced rammed earth structural w alls and columns, w oodw ool sheathing bound w ith magnesite rather than cement, and finally harvested rainw ater for cisterns, w aterless urinals and compost toilets - all for a public building." RIBA Journal November 2000

"Here, as a backdrop to the calm of the book and pamphlet brow sing public, the place is almost temple-like. If the Cistercian Abbeys w ere 'buildings', so be it, but this in my book is 'architecture'. The play of light and suprise reflections and vistas are enchanting. To all the building and ecological functional justifications of the section has been added the careful generous proportioning of this nave and its tw o side aisles." Pat rick Hannay – Touchstone

Client: Centre for
Alternative
Technology
Location: Machynlleth, Pow ys
Design: 1998
Build: 2000
Cost: £500,000
Area: 450m²

