



Press Release
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Leadwork craftsman receive the ultimate accolade

The 2015 Murdoch Awards, which recognise the very best in leadwork design and installation carried out by members of the Lead Contractor Association, were handed out at a celebratory dinner attended by 57 LCA members and guests.

Before announcing the winners at Fawsley Hall Hotel, near Daventry, Awards Chairman Richard Murdoch thanked Associated Lead Mills for continuing its long standing sponsorship of the awards in support of the LCA's quality standard ethos. The awards are the ultimate accolade for the craft of working with lead. Mr Murdoch once again paid tribute to the very high standard of entries while noting that, in the absence this year of any large scale projects featuring extravagant decoration, all entries were subjected to particularly close scrutiny.

Acknowledgement was also made to ALM for the company's foresight in introducing the Murdoch Sponsors Award in 2006 for smaller projects. This had given many more LCA members the chance of recognition, a point highlighted by the fact that there were three new members entered for the Sponsors Award of which two, Leadwise Contracts and SWG Roofing, made it to the final.



The panel of judges selected D Blake & Co (Edinburgh), Lead-Tech Roofing (Worcester Park) and Norman & Underwood (Leicester) as finalists for the Murdoch Award and N Lee & Sons (Whitney), Leadwise Contracts (Co Antrim) and SWG Roofing (Dunmow) as finalists of the Murdoch Sponsors Award for projects using less than 5 tonnes.

Winner of the Murdoch Sponsor's Award was Leadwise Contracts for its work on The Parliament Building at Stormont Castle. In a role reversal of recent trends, lead sheet on front sloping pediments replaced a failing stepped tile design.

Martin Cahalan of Leadwise commented that they were delighted to have worked on such an iconic Belfast landmark. The project team from Hamilton Architects, led by Paul Millar, took the decision to replace the tiled roof with lead and to mimic detailing as far as possible. Leadwise offered key advice on the required sub-structure, sizing and ventilation and these were incorporated into the final design. With aesthetics of paramount importance it was, however, essential that joinery work should be of the highest standard and this was achieved by the Tracey Bros of Enniskillen. Leadwise, while delighted to have its contribution recognised by their peers, stressed the importance of contributions by others in achieving a lasting legacy on this historic building. Some 110 sheets of Code 6 lead sourced from Jamestown Metals were pre-cut and formed prior to being sent to site.



The Murdoch Award finalist projects were noteworthy for their focus on precision detailing, consistency of setting out and exceptional workmanship. The judges applauded the unusual pitched roofing over a thick stone substrate at Borthwick Castle by D Blake and Norman and Underwood's flat roof at Staunton Harold Church. However, they were unanimous in choosing as winner the large roofing and cladding project by Lead-Tech Roofing at Rygar House in central London.

Rygar House is in the heart of Mayfair. Lead-Tech was appointed through the main contractor, 800 Group Ltd, to install roof timbers and Code 6 lead sheet to the crown flat roof, the 70° mansard roof and vertical sections. As an LCA member, provision of the association's 25-year insurance backed guarantee was a key factor in securing the project. Some 20 tonnes of lead sheet was supplied by Associated Lead Mills.

Consistency of design and workmanship were key to the aesthetics of this large project which involved flat and pitched roofing as well as work on vertical panels. Working in partnership with the architect, Lead-Tech helped facilitate design changes to improve the roof's long-term integrity. In particular, potential technical issues were identified with detailing and how the new lead roof was to be ventilated and suggested changes were incorporated. Lead-Tech also decided to reduce the setting out of wood rolls to 575mm centres, ensuring that it was installed well within its design limits. The wood rolls were staggered and included a ventilation ridge detail.

On the 70° pitched mansard roof, Code 6 sheet was again installed at 575mm centres and the length of bays reduced to 2.00 metres overall. At the head, 3 rows of staggered fixings were fixed using 38mm copper ring shanks. Sizing and fixing of the bays were therefore set well within design limits, removing any risk of failure, a problem which would, in future, be very costly.

Paul Mulry, who worked extensively on Rygar House, received the Award on behalf of Lead-Tech from LCA Chairman Stuart Bailey. Lead-Tech MD Martin Walsh was delighted for Paul to receive such public recognition of his individual craft skills and workmanship and was very proud that his company had continued the quality ethos that had enabled them to win the Sponsors Award two years ago.

Barry Smith, Managing Director of sponsors Associated Lead Mills, was delighted that this year's awards in both categories had featured "new blood" challenging established LCA members. "It's great to see new faces coming through for these awards," he said. "Not only does it show that anyone stands a chance of being a finalist or even winning if their work is good enough, but also that the craft of working with lead is alive and well and in very good hands."

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