



Down
To
Earth



CENTRE FOR PRACTICAL SUSTAINABILITY
& NATURAL BUILDING

www.downtoearthproject.org.uk

Down to Earth Project Newsletter

Reaching the end of Reaching Out....

On Tuesday Sept 13th we'll be celebrating the end—and the achievements—of the Reaching Out Project. This Big Lottery Funded project has enabled us to work intensively with 144 'disaffected' young people on 20 week long programmes over the last 3 years. Not only have they gained a wide range of traditional building and land management skills and OCN accreditation in

modules such as Green Woodwork, but they have developed as groups and grown measurably in emotional intelligence and self-esteem. The project was partly aimed at gathering research—at measuring how much difference outdoor intervention programmes could make to the participants' lives..... And the results demonstrate that the

positive difference is strong and significant. The celebration day will include a wide range of activities, demonstrations and a presentation about the project outputs. Invitations will be coming out soon—please tell us if you'd like one....



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Down on the farm!

We have two of our lovely pigs going to slaughter in Llanmorlais on Tuesday 21 June (yup, summer solstice pigs!)...and we'll be able to offer you some top quality, hand reared, local Gower pork . It all helps visitors here understand the connection

between "animal" and "meat"... And we have two new nine week old weaners in to take their place. They are unusually friendly and are really enjoying meeting all of the groups.



Garden Volunteers: Inspiring Teamwork

We didn't find one single Garden Volunteer! But we did find a few of them! Kate and Danielle , who have been volunteering with Down to Earth Project over the past year at site volunteer days, took on the garden last month for a day

or two each per fortnight—and done a fantastic job, THANK YOU! And since then we've had many more enquiries! It's a massive task and the busiest time of the year! If you would like to join the team then let us know.....



Emma Thompson from Newport City Homes reported back to Down to Earth Project on their young people's summer residential last year:

"First of all a massive thank you to you and your staff for our overnight stay. The young people really enjoyed themselves.... they are still talking about organic food so this obviously had an impact on them.....the feedback was very positive. We thought that there was a good range of activities for the young people to take part in and loved the ice breaker/ warm up games. It was a lovely refreshing experience for both the staff and young people. ..."

There are only a few residential days available for this summer in weeks beginning 8th and 15th August so get in touch fast if you're planning a trip!

Down to Earth Project has been successful in securing an Engagement Gateway contract (funded through the Welsh Assembly Government and the European Social Fund). Engagement Gateway aims to reduce economic inactivity in Wales "by improving the employability of people who face barriers to employment and are furthest from the labour market" and Down to Earth's project will include a wide range of provision for adults in traditional and sustainable building, land

management skills, green woodworking, adventurous activities and/or organic gardening, depending upon the needs and preferences of each group. Some of the activities will be delivered at our site in Murton, and others will be at our partners' site. Project director, Jen McKenna, says "it's a fantastic opportunity to bring community groups together in a focused activity over a three month period..."



The courtyard cob fireplace at Cwmbwrla Day Centre—built by a group from the centre with Down to Earth.

Sustainable School Grounds Projects

This year Down to Earth Project is working with Llanrhidian and Pennard Primary Schools, as part of our Sustainable School-grounds project. The school pupils and teams of local volunteers have been involved in a really wide range of activities from making fences, gates and benches, to creating special wildlife habitats to

laying new paths. Down to Earth Project's work has been well documented in Swansea Environmental Education Forum's new [Good Practice Guide: Making the Most of Your School Grounds:](#) This three year project is funded by the Gower AONB Sustainable Development Fund.

Pupils in Pennard who cleaned the pond with Tom from Down to Earth Project



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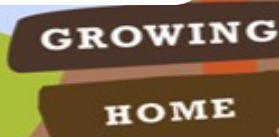
Diary Markers: Courses, Events, Volunteer Days...

Courses, Events and Volunteering 2011
 Wed 1st June **Go Wild with Your Child!** Have fun, get muddy, build fires... For 6-12yr olds plus parent/carer (E60 for both child and adult)
 Sun 10th June **Volunteer Day** Traditional, sustainable and organic land management, animal husbandry and food production.
 Thurs 16th Aug **Cob/Earth building** One day course—learn the basics of making earth structures.
 Sun 14th Aug **Volunteer Day**
 Thurs 18th Aug **Earth/Cob Oven building** Learn to make a fully functioning oven in one day!
 Sun 11th Sept **Open Day and Volunteer Day**
 Mon 12th Sept **Working with Hard to Reach Groups through Use of the Outdoors** One-day training course for youth/community workers and teachers.
 Mon 19th Oct **ESPEC** Through Use of the Outdoors One day OCN accredited course for youth and community workers and teachers.
 Sun 16th Oct **Volunteer Day**
 Mon 14th Nov **Hedge-laying** One day course - learn the basics of hedge-laying.
 Sun 20th Nov **Volunteer Day**
 Mon 21st - Weds 23rd Nov **Dry Stone Walling** 3 day course - tackle your own walling project.
 Advance, early booking essential for all! Volunteer days are for people aged 16+ years, from 10am-3pm and are free... Course fees per day: £10 for individuals/£100 for groups, £100 for public/private sector and larger 3rd sector organisations (500ppal)

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Specialising in sustainable education, natural building and therapeutic outdoor learning. Based on a beautiful 4 acre small-holding on Gower

With thanks to....



We wish to thank our partners and volunteers for their support, and our funders, without whom our

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