

Down  
to  
Earth



CENTRE FOR PRACTICAL SUSTAINABILITY  
& NATURAL BUILDING

[www.downtoearthproject.org.uk](http://www.downtoearthproject.org.uk)

## Down to Earth Project Newsletter

### Down to Earth Project Merry Christmas!

We'd like to wish everyone who has supported us, worked with us, got muddy with us and generally spent time with us this year a merry Christmas and an exciting New

Year... it's been a lovely and busy year for D2E and we're really looking forward to seeing you all again

Our rare breed pigs out enjoying the Snow!



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#### Inside this issue:

[Down to Earth Project Merry Christmas](#) **1**

[Sustainable Swansea Award Winner](#) **1**

[Christmas dinner.. fresh or frozen?](#) **1**

[Staff team focus: Cob Building Apprenticeship](#) **2**

[Courses for Christmas](#) **2**

[2011: the year you volunteer?](#) **2**

[With thanks to...](#) **2**

### Sustainable Swansea Award Winners!

Down to Earth Project is the proud winner of the Sustainable Swansea Low Carbon Communities Award, one of the seven award categories for 2010! The judges commented that D2E had "clearly raised awareness about carbon emissions and in addition to limiting

their own carbon footprint had also helped other people lead a low carbon lifestyle." The awards evening was a truly celebratory event, with 120 representatives from the shortlisted projects, a reception with the Lord Mayor and an inspiring speech by Jane David-

son AM.

The Low Carbon Communities award was sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government. Other award winners were Swansea Community Farm, Swansea Metropolitan University, AB Glass, RSPCA Llys Nini & Ynystawe Primary School.

### Christmas dinner?.... Fresh & Frozen

We'll have fresh pork from our hand-reared rare breed pigs on Saturday 11th December—and after that you can buy it frozen..

Last month we adopted 3 young Khakhi Campbell ducklings (ahhh... they're very fluffy and cute!) and they have now been joined by a Welsh Harle-

quin Drake. They are loving their new home and keeping their feathers fluffed up against the icy weather. We're looking forward to the eggs!

Nadia Bogdan, Upper Afan Forum, on the benefits of a Down to Earth Project programme for her group of young people.....

“We have found that the young people take a great deal from the project and thoroughly enjoy being on site and all activities the project offers, we have also found that by taking part in the project they have learnt new skills, have developed social bonds, gained confidence and have a greater understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship. ...”

Down to Earth Project welcomed Robin Buckley Houston and Steve Palmer to the team in the summer, to join us on a 6 months' Cob Building Apprenticeship Scheme.

The placements are funded by the Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme, which was designed to assist both craftspeople already working in the main construction industry and career changers seeking to obtain particular traditional building skills or experience in the heritage sector. It is funded largely by the Heritage Lottery Fund and run in partnership with English Heritage, The National Trust, Construction

Skills, the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG), and Cadw.

Robin was trained as a brick-layer and stone mason before being made redundant in the recession. As a volunteer at Down to Earth Project he soon heard about the bursary opportunities and was made-up about his new role.

“I've been learning about making cob mixes, applying cob plasters and making plumb walls with cob....but it's also made me think lots about the construction industry's carbon impact... It's good to know that cob is sourced locally and can be

repaired as needed and recycled... And that it biodegrades safely when a building isn't being used anymore...”

What does Robin want to do next? “I want to make a career out of what I've learned.. And a home... And to inspire lots of other people to build with cob!”



D2E Cob Apprentice Robin maintaining the turf roof on the cob seating area.

## Courses for Christmas?

What do you buy the practical, environmentally-conscious person in your life for Christmas? What about a voucher for a Down to Earth Project natural building course? This year we're trying out a new voucher scheme, with vouchers available at a value of £10,

£20, £30, £40 etc, which can be redeemed in full or part payment for our 2011 courses. If you'd like a voucher or two for your family and friends, just pop a cheque in the post to the address below, telling us the amount/s required and your



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## 2011: the year you volunteer?

We've had so many enquiries about volunteering over the last few months that we're stepping up our volunteering programme and will have more frequent volunteer days through the winter! Next dates are:

- SUNDAY 12 December
- SUNDAY 16 Jan 2011
- SUNDAY 30 Jan 2011

- SUNDAY 13 Feb 2011
- SUNDAY 20 March 2011

Our main on-site projects will include creating cleft oak fencing - a low impact, low maintenance, long-lasting boundary that's a great skill to learn—and we've offsite projects at Llanrhidian and Pennard primary schools to make their grounds more vibrant and sustainable!

So we hope to see you all here! Please phone or email to book.



Volunteers in the poly tunnel

LIVING

LEARNING

GROWING

HOME

## With thanks to....

As ever, we wish to thank our partners and volunteers for their support, and our funders, without whom our

project would not be possible: BIG Lottery Fund, HLF, Welsh Assembly Government Sustainable Development Fund

(Gower AONB), WCVA, SCVS, Tudor Trust and Environment Wales.

