

## **Creating Opportunities And Skills Teams Alliance (COASTAL).**

The COASTAL Project is a regional strategic project, covering six local authority areas which include: Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion. The project is aimed at the promotion of vocational guidance, employment, skills training and lifelong learning opportunities for individuals who are currently economically inactive as a result of illness, disability, substance misuse problems and/or the serious social disadvantage associated with the transition from long-term care into adulthood.

### **Contribution to the Environmental Sustainability Cross Cutting Theme.**

Many of the training providers have included environmental sustainability awareness raising within their project delivery and a wide range of activities have been undertaken with delivery agents such as The Princes Trust, the Down To Earth Project and others who incorporate an environmental focus to their work.

### **The Down To Earth Project.**

This project has delivered over 200 accredited training sessions, involving more than 300 participants with over 90% achieving an OCN qualification. Training sessions included a diverse range of activities which combined: traditional and sustainable building methods such as dry-stone walling, cob building and green wood carpentry with cutting edge environmentally friendly technology such as bio-mass generators, solar energy and rain water collection and drainage.

The Project has also established its own Eco-Code, which has been adopted wherever possible and encourages all partners to work towards a recognised environmental award such as the Green Dragon Award.

### **Upcycling.**

This has been developed in a number of schemes which have a strong recycling element. In Neath Port Talbot, the team have developed a range of projects for



example, **'In-Tandem'** which refurbishes unwanted and/or damaged bicycles, for re-use, whilst its sister group, **'BeSpoked'**, takes the damaged or surplus bicycle parts and uses them to create a range of unique furniture and decorative items, built entirely from the waste cycle parts.



### **Environmental Study Centres.**

Participants with a learning disability are currently managing and maintaining two environmental study centres, built within the grounds of two major local employers: Sony and Rockwool. In addition to the study centres a further eco-friendly timber built facility within Bryngarw Country Park houses a scheme entitled **B-Leaf** which is a horticultural centre, staffed by participants, which propagates and grows a wide range of herbs, plants and flowers for hanging baskets and roadside floral displays which are planted by the local highways department. The participants have also secured a contract to maintain the formal gardens at Bryngarw House, the original manor house of the Country Park.

The traditional timber built structure, such as the example illustrated in the photograph below, was built by individuals with a learning disability as part of the project:



### **How integration of the Environmental Sustainability Cross cutting Theme has enhanced the project,**

Integration of the Environmental Sustainability, Cross Cutting Theme has enabled participants to have a much wider perspective about the way in which the world works and the lifestyles they choose.