

Learning through Recycling



Cae Post Recycling Centre

Cae Post in Welshpool gives people who have been socially disadvantaged and those with special needs a chance to learn new skills – and save the environment at the same time. Set up in 1986, it recycles around 5,000 tonnes of waste in Powys every year.

The charity uses OCN units to provide its supported volunteers with opportunities to learn waste management skills – three volunteers have now got part time jobs on the sorting line.

“The beauty of the OCN courses is in the flexibility,” said Cae Post Training Officer Sara Heath. “Courses can be tailor made to suit individuals with learning disabilities – it would not have been possible without the flexibility that OCN allows us.”

Volunteers have learned Health and Safety in Waste Recycling, a course specially written for the plant, and vital in a centre where waste from 65,000 households includes glass, tins, plastics, paper, textiles and card. Volunteers sort plastic

bottles, which are baled and sold, to be become anything from drainage pipes and buckets to furniture and clothes!

The courses give volunteers a real sense of achievement – there is always a ceremony when OCN certificates are handed out; friends share in their success. For many, this is the first time that they have received a national qualification.

The courses have been so successful that Cae Post is working with OCN to devise a new 'Learning to Recycle' unit. Cae Post was one of the top ten social firms in the UK in 2006 and also won the Green Champion for Wales Award because of their unique training programme – proving that even where there is waste, there can also be success.

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