

A new diploma has been created

The Office International has created a diploma aiming at encouraging and at rewarding social activities within the allotment gardens.

The activities can be very far reaching and varied and can concern for example elderly people, children, disabled, unemployed people, immigrants.

At the occasion of the study session in Birmingham the diploma was awarded for the first time.



The Cold Barn Farm allotments (Great-Britain) received the diploma for their activities with young people.

Cold Barn farm allotments

The history

Cold Barn farm is a youth activity centre who are dedicated to children and young people and making a difference in their lives.

The allotment project started in 2006 when a group of young people showed an interest in growing their own vegetables.



The young people adopted a small area at the front of Cold barn farm at first but this although very successful proved to be too small an area for the interest shown.

We were fortunate to own some land around the building so we set out to dig larger arrears for our allotments. We fenced of the area in question and the young people spent a few hard days digging to achieve five allotment arrears.



These allotments served for two years and produced some great crops of vegetables and salad. We did however have a few problems, firstly the young people did not enjoy all the bending and also when it rained due to grass paths

we were unable to work the allotments during wet periods and as you know we have a few in Wales.

After consultation with the young people and volunteers we applied for funding to build raised beds and stone paths so the site would be useable in the wet as well as the dry.





So the site was cleared and timber raised beds were erected making planting a joy for the young people and weeding a doddle.





By making the allotment area much easier to work in the young people showed much more interest in the project and really took ownership of it.

The Vegetables were and still are cooked by the young people in the centre for the young people of the centre ensuring that all the young people who use the centre get to eat healthy home grown produce.







Cold Barn farm allotments

Where we are now

Following on from the history surrounding the allotment here is a report to where we are this year 2010.

Poly tunnel project

After further consultation with the young people they asked if they could have a green house to grow more exotic plants and vegetables, we were lucky to secure funding from the tidy towns fund and purchase a poly tunnel.





The poly tunnel has enabled us to grow vegetables a lot earlier than we would normally and also start off our vegetables and flowers much earlier. This has resulted in many more plants than we needed so we have donated this year's surplus to other youth clubs and OAP complexes. We have also secured a deal with our local green grocer for next year to sell on all our seedlings that we don't need. This offers the community locally grown produce therefore reducing the carbon foot print.



Another big bonus with the poly tunnel is that we can work in it whatever the weather and grow crops all year round as well as growing more exotic plants such as peppers and chillies.





Willow plantation

We are a very busy and creative youth activity centre and find ourselves using large amounts of willow for arts and crafts, this is not only an expensive resource to buy but often can come from far distances. With this in mind cold Barn Farm with the help of BTCV planted a willow plantation



The willow will be harvested every year for use by ourselves and also many community groups around us. We hope to start work on our willow shelter late this year with the first harvest.

Bamboo

We are also growing our own bamboo to harvest and use in our allotments next year.

