

Nomination for SUSTAINABILITY Building Awards 2008



Nature Study Centre

Address : **Dow Corning,
Cardiff Road,
Barry,
Vale of Glamorgan.**

Applicant : **Dow Corning**

Agent : **Milsom Architects, Powys**

Contractor : **Twyn Construction, Newport.**

When Dow Corning Ltd., bought the land in 2000, they worked in partnership with a local angling group, the Glamorgan Anglers, and the Environment Agency's Sustainable Fisheries Department to restore and preserve 2 ponds. The whole area was allowed to remain a natural haven for many species of birds, animals and plants.

Dow Corning Cadoxton Ponds Nature Centre has been developed for education, conservation and leisure pursuits. The Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales has partnered with Dow Corning to create a land management plan to preserve the wildlife and promote biodiversity. They have also helped to provide a dedicated education officer who will help host school visits and lead the educational programmes there.

A New Education Centre building has been constructed and provides a valuable facility for the study of nature. It is used by schools and local groups for environmental studies, field trips and science projects involving ecology.

Materials used in creating the building were, whenever possible, from sustainable sources. The building's features include:-

- Provision of its own heating and electricity through ground source heat recovery and photo-voltaic panels.
- Rainwater harvesting.
- Services and building materials chosen to ensure minimum impact on the environment.
- Energy efficient lighting.
- Oak external structure.

All the insulation material was donated by Rockwool, who use rock pumice and other recycled materials in the manufacturing process. The centre's arched timber, multi-purpose hall opens to external platforms which overlook the ponds. An outdoor teaching amphitheatre is adjacent to a dipping pond which facilitates study sessions for young children.

The builders, Twyn Construction had an unusual arched shape building to set out and construct, as well using sustainable materials and environmental technology.

The site was at all times well maintained, and this project adds to the local biodiversity by supporting existing species and encouraging learning and leisure, while also having the facilities of a special classroom within this new sustainable education centre building.



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