



A TRAINING centre in the Neath Valley has been recognised for its green credentials.

Glynneath Training Centre has been awarded Neath Port Talbot Council's Green Project of the Year award.

Winners were announced at an Environment Awards ceremony last month in Neath where the centre also scooped the overall winners prize for 2012.

Centre manager Pauline Morgan said the awards came as a result of a conservation project that has been taking place at the Rheola Estate.

"Over the past three years we have been renovating the Victorian walled garden at Rheola, using traditional methods and recycled materials and providing practical work and skills building for local people.

"The project has been mainly funded by the Welsh Government, Environment Wales and Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service' CFAP (Communities Facilities and Activities) programme.

"We have been very kindly granted a lease to work there for 25 years, from the landowner, Howard Rees."

Housing, regeneration and heritage minister Huw Lewis said he congratulates the centre on their award. "I am delighted that the Western Valleys Regeneration Area programme has helped such a worthwhile project to get off the ground and to help local people learn new skills, as well as regenerating an old garden for the benefit of the community," he said. "I hope it continues to go from strength to strength in future."

The Oddfellows Street-based centre has recently received funding from Wren (Waste Recycling Environmental Limited).

Grant manager for Wren, Meleri Jones, said: "Wren makes a difference to communities by awarding grants to projects that make a difference to people's lives. We're delighted to support the Rheola Garden Project and their valuable work and wish them continued success in the future."

Ms Morgan added: "Wren are funding the renovation of a large Victorian greenhouse and this greenhouse, along with other outbuildings will enable us to grow fresh seasonal produce for sale to the community.

"When all work has been completed the centre will be offering practical training courses in country craft skills, special events and storytelling at the site."