

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **THERE'S GOLD IN DEVON'S BLACKDOWN HILLS!**

24 November 2010 for immediate release

A small eco-business in the Blackdown Hills has struck double gold by offering visitors to Devon peace and relaxation in a truly green environment powered by sun, wind, wood and water.

Devon Eco Holidays, which owns 'Swallows Nest', one of the most eco-friendly, luxury, self-catering holiday cottages in the South West, has been awarded Gold Status - the top accolade possible awarded by the Green Tourism Business Scheme. Already rated as 5 Star and gold award by Visit Britain, double gold awards are rare events. These reward the unique aspects of Devon Eco Holidays which combines a holiday cottage enterprise alongside organic gardening and complementary therapies.

Devon Eco Holidays is run by husband and wife Jim and Lesley Rogan from their home at Riggles Farm House and offers guests a unique green holiday in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Swallow's Nest, which is located on the farm, is a restored milking parlour. It has the lightest possible carbon footprint, with water piped from the farm's spring and heating supplied from wood burning boilers and solar heating. The result is a 96 per cent energy efficiency rating and a SAP 'B' rating (with CO2 emissions of 0.44 t/year). The cottage is super insulated with triple glazed windows and, outside, has its own private patio area and garden complete with table, chairs and BBQ.

Visitors to Swallow's Nest can enjoy the farm's spacious landscaped gardens, which features several ponds (including one suitable for 'wild' swimming or boating) and abundance of flora and fauna. Guests can also meander through 15 acres of woodland described as "the Amazon on your doorstep" by Devon Wildlife Trust and purchase what they need from Lesley and Jim's extensive organic vegetable garden.

Jim and Lesley say: “We are extremely pleased to have received the highest award from Visit Britain and the Green Tourism Business Gold award is proof and welcome recognition of our approach of using sustainable practices on the land - without compromising on providing the highest quality luxury holiday experience for our guests.”

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **1. The Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS)**

The GTBS is the national sustainable tourism certification scheme for the UK. Originally developed in partnership with Visit Scotland, it is now the only certification scheme validated by Visit Britain, through the International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT) For more information, go to: <http://www.green-business.co.uk/>

### **2. Devon Eco Holidays**

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For more information, go to: <http://www.devonecoholidays.co.uk/>

#### **- Devon Eco Holidays Green Policy**

Devon Eco Holidays is committed to living sustainably and offering its guests a ‘green’ holiday experience in luxury, whilst emitting as little Carbon Dioxide as possible.

- We are members of the Green Tourism Business Scheme, as an indicator of our sustainable practices.
- We embrace the requirements of environmental legislation and approved codes of practice
- We reduce, recycle and reuse wherever possible.
- All our energy usage is from renewable sources; sun, wood, water and we aim to move to photovoltaic and other alternatives in due course.
- We actively seek ways to reduce the use of energy and other resources.
- We grow as much of our own organic food as possible
- We shop locally from local suppliers and encourage our visitors to as well.
- We promote and participate in local events or activities and are committee members of Blackdown Hill Transition to encourage a sustainable lifestyle for all. See [www.blackdowntransition.org](http://www.blackdowntransition.org) for more information.