



## **Oxford Environmental Educator Receives “Investors in Education Award”**

Biologist and Broadcaster Howie Watkins will be among those who receive an “Investors in Education” award today (29/06/06) at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock.

The awards, which are now in their sixth year, are presented annually by the Education Business Partnerships of Oxfordshire. Gerry Shaw, East Partnership manager, said, “These awards are a tangible way of recognising and rewarding the considerable contribution made to education of our young people by businesses and companies in the county”

This year, Professor Roger Mumby-Croft, Director of the Enterprise Centre, Oxford Brookes University will be presenting the awards.

Howie was nominated for the award by Marlborough School, Woodstock, in recognition of his work with Orinoco – the Oxfordshire scrapstore and for helping raise funds for their wildlife garden with a benefit performance of his one-man-show ‘Beastly Behaviour’. Howie said, ‘I didn’t know they were going to nominate me, this is a quite a surprise - a pleasant one of course“.

Howie has been working with Orinoco to find new sources of scrap for sale in their store at the Bullingdon Community Centre, Peat Moors (off the Slade), Headington. The material Howie and the other volunteers at Orinoco collect from businesses is sold on as art materials and games. Howie has been developing educational kits and is working on a new product range of toys and furniture made from waste materials. ‘We’re trying to promote re-use and recycling by direct action as well as education. We don’t just talk about recycling, we do it for real, diverting waste from landfill and filling homes and classrooms with it in the name of art’.

‘Scrapstores are exciting places for adults and children alike, places where your imagination and creativity can run riot. I really look forward to opening up the store each Saturday. No week is the same. Sometimes we’ll have loads of parents and children looking for materials for play or an art project, sometimes the store is full of teachers swapping ideas for classroom projects. I am a science and environmental education specialist so I often get to combine arty materials with science teaching. Last week we made a machine to investigate how friction worked out of some old boxes, fabric, card and wood’. The Scrapstore is open on Saturdays between 11am and 4pm. Further details from [www.oxorinoco.org](http://www.oxorinoco.org).

The Oxfordshire Education Business Partnership (OEBP) links young people to the world of work so that they: know more about working life, adapt well to employment, learn more effectively.

Oxfordshire Education Business Partnership operates: across the county and seeks to bring education and business together. Through a series of programmes and initiatives, OEBP helps teachers and business people to understand each other's worlds so that young people can experience and appreciate the world of industry and commerce.

Howie hopes to work more closely with the Education Business Partnership to offer teachers the chance to train and work for Orinoco. ‘By working closely with schools and teachers we hope to get our rubbish into more schools and homes than ever before’.

## Contact:

- Howie Watkins, Orinoco: 07771 708178 / 01865 762474 / [office@howie.info](mailto:office@howie.info)
- Bullingdon Community Centre, Peat Moors, Headington, Oxford, OX3 7HS  
[www.oxorinoco.org](http://www.oxorinoco.org) store open from 11-4 on Saturdays and by appointment during the week (subject to the availability of volunteer guides)
- Gerry Shaw, East Partnership Manager, (OEBP): 01865 316170 / [oeebp@btconnect.com](mailto:oeebp@btconnect.com)

## Notes

- The presentation will take place at the Marlborough room, Blenheim Palace, Woodstock on June 29<sup>th</sup> at 08:30
- Suitable quality photographs will be available by Thursday pm. From Howie Watkins or from Gerry Shaw
- Further information on Oxfordshire Education Business Partnership available from Gerry Shaw (see above) or from their website [www.oebp.org.uk](http://www.oebp.org.uk)