



## Gold for Green at Lower Gill

A year ago Lesley and Tricia went to a meeting arranged by the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at Tosside Community Hall about sustainable and green tourism. They were asked if they would like to put our cottages in the "Green Tourism business scheme". As things seem to be heading in that direction we said Okay, (you'll try anything to get more bookings).

When green is mentioned you get a few groans, but when you see what savings can be made financially and environmentally you start getting interested.

A grading assessment came next. There are three grades, bronze, silver and gold, (we thought with the wood chip boiler we would have a good start. Hmmm! Think again, that was only one section of ten). We were "working towards bronze". A family meeting was called, different jobs were

allocated and the work started.

The heating was sorted with the wood chip, next came low energy lighting. Jeff and Paul sorted out the reduction of water consumption and checked that loft insulation was to the required standard. Electrical appliances and their energy rating was checked and recorded. Tricia had the task of finding natural products for cleaning and use in the laundry. After much research and trial and error she came up with recipes for a complete range of cleaning products, all costing a fraction of what we were paying for chemicals.

We needed to keep records. Lesley got the job of designing and



Gold Green Tourism Award being presented at Hornby Village Hall to Jeff, Paul and Tricia Wilson. Lesley had work commitments and was not able to attend.



keeping the forms - on recycled paper of course!

Tricia compiled and displayed information for our guests in the leisure centre. To promote our green status Barry Tyrer a local website designer helped to create [www.lowergill.co.uk](http://www.lowergill.co.uk). This scored us more points.

Wildlife habitats have been created as part of the countryside stewardship scheme restoring hedgerows and ponds. The children helped, Oliver made a nesting box and fixed it to a tree. Finally it was time for the grading inspection. The inspector did not give anything away, it took two hours to check everything and it was weeks before we got the result via an email. We had achieved **Gold**.

Thanks to Hetty Byrne (Sustainable Tourism Officer, Forest of Bowland AONB), for all her help and advice.

Jeff Wilson