Good news for Tamar Valley

13/06/2014

The Tamar Valley AONB, designated in 1995, is a hidden gem straddling the boundary between Cornwall and Devon with its diverse range of heritage, history and culture, creating a rich tapestry of a landscape and a strong sense of place. Careful management is needed to conserve and enhance this special area.

Starting this May, the Helping Hands for Heritage project will create a trained volunteer taskforce within the Tamar Valley AONB by bringing together the various organisations already functioning within the area, and offering opportunities for training and new volunteers. Working within a partnership of other organisations in the Tamar Valley, the AONB team aims to build the capacity of the 'Valley Volunteers' as a thriving, skilled and knowledgeable volunteer taskforce to help address some of the loss and damage to the varied heritage of the area.

Corinna Woodall, Tamar Valley AONB Manager, who is delighted with the award, says: "Volunteers will be our eyes and ears on the ground and will enable us to understand more about the AONB and World Heritage Site Landscape. This initiative will develop locally grown volunteers with a range of backgrounds and interests to be equipped and to take on the stewardship of the heritage in their local patch."

The project will incorporate a series of focussed activities that the volunteers can be involved in; these will include conservation work to improve biodiversity and to preserve archaeology, improved interpretation, surveys, fieldwork, podcasts, interactive map and publications.

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, Head of HLF South West, Nerys Watts, said: "Our natural heritage, whether it be our grasslands or ancient woods, pollinating insects or wild plants, or landscapes and geology, is crucial for our survival and wellbeing yet we know that it is being lost at a fast rate due to the activities of humans. To halt the loss of our habitats and species we need to engage more people in learning about and appreciating our natural heritage. That's why we were delighted to have the opportunity to support Tamar Valley AONB with their project, which will increase the skills of existing volunteers and provide opportunities for a wider range of people to engage with and appreciate their local area."

Helping Hands for Heritage will be officially launched on 1 May at the Tamar Valley Centre. Keep checking local press for details of events and activities coming soon.

Notes to editors

Helping Hands for Heritage is a partnership between:

- Tamar Valley AONB
- Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site
- Tamar Community Trust
- Devon County Council
- Buckland Monachorum Parish Council
- Calstock Parish Council

The project is grateful to the 25 other organisations and individuals who have provided their support in other ways.

About Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):

1. the main aim of the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) team is to protect and enhance the landscape of this special area
2. it is a partnership of Cornwall and Devon County Councils, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council, Plymouth City Council and Natural England
3. Natural England helps protect our finest landscapes – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coasts and National Parks – through legislation
4. we must all work together to protect our finest countryside

Further information

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