West Berkshire's wildlife project wins Heritage Lottery Fund support

16/07/2012

The grant of £17,300 from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) enables BBOWT to develop the project in detail and apply for the full grant of £440,000 at a later date.

Jacky Akam, one of the BBOWT team, explains: "Linking the Landscape will be a five-year project involving many community groups and local residents. We hope it will inspire local people to make strong links with the beautiful and wildlife-rich landscape and take an active part in protecting and enhancing it."

The Linking the Landscape team will devise an innovative method to measure the health of the landscape for wildlife, and working with volunteers, community groups, landowners and managers to reconnect broken links, create 'stepping stones' and 'corridors' for wildlife to expand and thrive.

This project will be the next stage of the West Berkshire Living Landscape Initiative, covering the varied and rich landscape from Newbury to Woolhampton, and from the River Enborne to the River Kennet. Over the last three years BBOWT has worked in partnership with West Berkshire Council on the Living Landscape Initiative, restoring heathland, organising regular volunteer work parties and events at Greenham Common, Bowdown Woods and Thatcham Reedbeds.

"We have achieved a lot, learned even more and built up so much momentum from the enthusiasm of volunteers and local residents," says Jacky. "A five-year grant from HLF for the new Linking the Landscape project would enable us to harness all this and take the initiative forward in exciting new directions, strengthening links and achieving so much more for the people and wildlife of West Berkshire."

Stuart McLeod, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South East, said: "We are delighted to give our initial support to this project, which will see lots of opportunities for volunteers and people of all ages to get involved in the natural heritage on their doorstep. We look forward to working with BBOWT and receiving the full application in the future."

Notes to editors

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) is one of 47 Wildlife Trusts across the UK working to achieve the shared aim of securing a better future for wildlife. BBOWT's vision is to create a region rich in wildlife and appreciated by all. BBOWT manages 80 nature reserves across the three counties, works with other agencies and individuals to help safeguard the wider countryside, and aims to inspire people to take action for wildlife. BBOWT has over 54,000 members.

Further information

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