Living Wild at Kielder secures National Lottery



Following a 200 year absence, ospreys returned to the area in 2009

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded Kielder Water and Forest Park Development Trust an initial grant of £17,700 to develop its Living Wild at Kielder project.

The project will help people experience and learn about the area's special animals and plants through the development of 'nature hubs' and a year-round events and activity programme.

Wildlife trails will be created from Stonehaugh, Falstone and Greenhaugh villages with support from the local community, while wildlife ambassadors and volunteers will inspire and engage with visitors.

The Trust will also work with businesses to increase the number of people taking part in wildlife events and activities.

There are plans to improve visitor interpretation and support the long-term protection of the Park's wildlife, particularly at Bakethin Nature Reserve which provides an important sanctuary for local plants, birds and other wildlife.

Kielder Salmon Centre, which has been a major contributor to turning the River Tyne into the best salmon fishing river in England and Wales, will also benefit from the project by seeing improved visitor facilities at the site.

Lynn Turner, Director of Kielder Water and Forest Park Development Trust, said: “We’re home to the largest man-made lake in northern Europe and England’s largest working forest, so it’s no wonder we attract such impressive and diverse wildlife with the sheer variety of habitats on offer. We’re delighted that HLF have given us the support for our Living Wild at Kielder project, and it’s great to know that we are a step closer to animating the Park’s amazing wildlife for the benefit of our visitors and the local community.”

The award-winning park is home to 60% of the UK's native red squirrel population. In 2009 ospreys returned to the area following an absence of more than 200 years in Northumberland.

Mike Pratt, Chief Executive of Northumberland Wildlife Trust, said: “This is a great opportunity to really bring to life the amazing variety of wildlife that lives in and around Kielder Water and Forest Park, which is one of the main reasons people visit the area. A wild day out at Kielder can include seeing everything from raptors to red squirrels, ospreys to badgers and owls, and there is a real sense of being in a really wild place. This funding will help people find out about the wildlife spectacle that is Kielder.”

Kielder Water and Forest Park Development Trust plans to progress an application for a full grant of £341,500 from HLF in spring 2016.

Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF North East, said: “Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, we’re delighted to offer our support to this project which will transform the way visitors can experience the fantastic natural heritage at one of Northumberland’s key attractions. We look forward to seeing the plans develop.”

Northumbrian Water, Forestry Commission, Northumberland Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency will help deliver the project with the Trust, with the support of Northumberland National Park Authority and Newcastle University.

Notes to editors

Kielder Water and Forest Park

Kielder Water and Forest Park, which spans 250-square miles, is home to the largest forest in England and the largest man-made lake in northern Europe. It was awarded the number one tourism experience in England by Visit England 2013, and the most tranquil place in England by the Campaign to Protect Rural England. Together with Northumberland National Park, it was granted gold tier Dark Sky Park status in December 2013. For more information go to the Visit Kielder website.

Kielder Water and Forest Park Development Trust

Kielder Water and Forest Park Development Trust is a registered charity working to develop the Park as an inspirational place. It aims to improve economic, social and environmental sustainability, provide public recreation and leisure facilities, facilitate education in all aspects of the natural environment and advance art and architecture in the Park. The Trust works with the range of communities to benefit from these activities.

Members, who have appointed directors/trustees to serve on the board, are Northumbrian Water, Forestry Commission, Calvert Trust Kielder, Northumberland County Council and Kielder Observatory Astronomical Society. Affiliate organisations that are not members but have a close working relationship with KWFPDT include Arts Council England, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, The Scout Association and local decision-making bodies such as

parish councils.

Further information

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