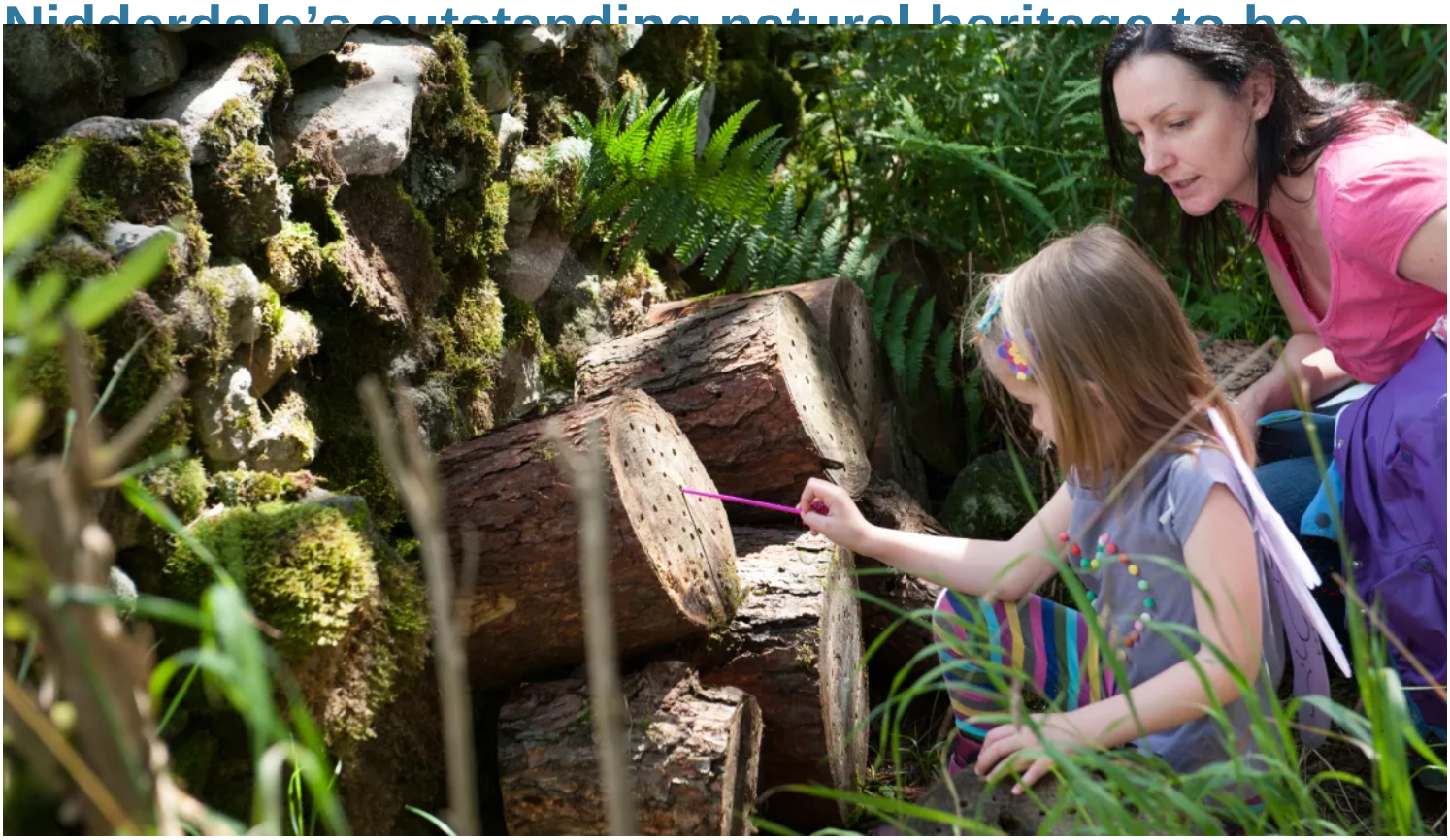
Nidderdale's outstanding natural heritage to be



Citizen scientists on Studfold Farm Paul Harris

One of Yorkshire's most beautiful and best-loved landscapes will be conserved for future generations, thanks to a grant of over £295,000 from HLF.

The Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is home to a remarkable variety of species and habitats, making the area of international importance for conservation. The rich concentration of plants and wildlife found in its heather moorlands are at the heart of this exciting new project.

The Wild Watch aims to protect some of the UK's most iconic but threatened species, including otters, adders and bumblebees, through volunteer conservation research.

Using the power of citizen science

The project will train local people to collect huge amounts of data on threatened species and their habitats, which will be used in a conservation programme by farmers, land managers, Nidderdale AONB, Natural England and conservation charities.

The research by volunteers and leading scientists aims to understand how targeted conservation action can effectively protect much-loved species, once a common sight, but are now increasingly threatened and rare.

[quote=Paul Burgess, Nidderdale AONB Manager]"Following the generous support of HLF we can now make a real difference to some of the country's favourite species."[/quote]

Paul Burgess, Nidderdale AONB Manager, said: "The recently published *State of Nature Report 2016* highlights catastrophic species decline in the UK. In the light of this, it's essential that we take action now so that the fortunes of threatened species can be reversed. Following the generous support of HLF we can now make a real difference to some of the country's favourite species".

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "This wonderful project will allow significant numbers of people to really get to grips with the natural world in their local area, which so often goes undiscovered. It is also fantastic that the important species and habitats in the AONB will be conserved, so we are delighted that National Lottery players can help make this happen".

An engagement programme also forms part of the project plans, which will encourage local people of all ages to get involved with the natural world on their doorstep.

A bumper year for Yorkshire's natural heritage

The investment continues a bumper year for natural heritage in Yorkshire. HLF launched the Yorkshire's Back Garden campaign, promoting funding for natural heritage projects throughout the region, and during the campaign £2.6million has been awarded to projects helping raise awareness of wildlife and nature to be found close to home – in back gardens and local neighbourhoods in both urban and rural locations.

To find out more about the campaign, visit our website or follow us on Twitter through the hashtag #HLFNature.