£1.3million to help improve landscape in Havering



Ingrebourne valley looking north

A new Landscape Partnership scheme will help improve the quality of the local landscape and increase awareness of, and access to, the natural and cultural heritage of Havering and beyond.

The Land of the Fanns will help local people get involved with restoring, reconnecting with and understanding local heritage. Travelling archaeology exhibitions will explore the fascinating heritage of the London/Essex borderlands, and there will be opportunities for volunteers to learn new skills in natural, built and archaeological heritage work.

Saxon fenland

The ‘Fanns’ landscape extends from the River Rom in the west towards Basildon in the east and from Brentwood in the north to the River Thames. The word ‘fann’ comes from the old Saxon word for fen and refers to the historic wet, marshy landscape, some of which remains today - such as the Ingrebourne and Rainham Marshes.

A working landscape

The area has a rich history as a unified, working landscape underpinning the growth of London, but has been consistently under threat due to the numerous gravel extraction and landfill sites which service London developments. Despite this, and the major development in the London Gateway, the landscape retains a character and identity which needs to be preserved.

Councillor Melvin Wallace, Cabinet Member for Culture and Community Engagement, said: “We are very pleased to receive this generous grant. The project will promote heritage restoration, increase physical access to Havering’s natural and cultural heritage, and provide educational opportunities for local people.

“This scheme will also provide residents with a renewed appreciation of the significance of their local landscape and will ultimately better equip local communities to work together and protect the land.”

[quote=Stuart Hobley, Head of HLF London]“We are delighted that National Lottery players’ money will help to reconnect communities with the natural heritage on their doorsteps.”[/quote]

Stuart Hobley, Head of HLF London, said: “This fascinating project will help protect and preserve a rare and under threat working landscape which hugs the borders of London and Essex. With a rich history going back to the Saxons and including historic buildings and ancient monuments as well as protected species and habitats, the essence of this landscape can sometimes be under-appreciated, so we are delighted that National Lottery players’ money will help to reconnect communities with the natural heritage on their doorsteps."

Habitat preservation

As well as exploring the rich history of the area, the scheme will make plans for the protection and preservation of the priority habitats in the area, including ancient hedgerows, extensive reedbeds and grasslands, and four Sites of Special Scientific Interest.