

The best Red Squirrel Week ever!

07/10/2010

However, as if this wasn't enough, the week is ending on even higher note with the announcement that Save our Squirrels (SoS) has been awarded a grant of £50,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The funding has been given for the next six months to help SoS develop a new major HLF public engagement and education project to be called "Save our North East Squirrels". If successful, the project will aim to work with, and support, every community with a local population of red squirrels across the North East of England.

Carri Nicholson, 'Save our Squirrels' Project Manager, said:

"I am thrilled that the Heritage Lottery Fund has shown its faith in Save our Squirrels by supporting us over the next six months whilst we develop this project. To be able to continue our already successful partnership with such a supportive organisation is a real gift."

She continued: "If people still want to be able to see these gorgeous creatures throughout our region in 10 years time, then everybody has a part to play in their protection. Involving local communities in monitoring and protecting their red squirrels is vital to the success of all planned red squirrel conservation efforts over the next 5 years, and that's what we will aim to deliver."

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund, North East, said: "The Heritage Lottery Fund is delighted to be supporting this project that will help protect this increasingly rare species. Volunteers will have a great opportunity see and work with these special animals, taking part in monitoring their numbers, recording sightings of the squirrels and giving guided walks to the local community and visitors. The Red Squirrels are native to England and are an important part of our natural heritage, it is important that we do what we can to ensure their survival."

Notes to editors

Save our Squirrels

Created by Red Alert North England, the Save our Squirrels project is currently the largest single species conservation initiative in the UK. The aim of the project over the last 4 years has been to work with partners to deliver the North of England Red Squirrel Conservation Strategy by protecting and conserving the red squirrel, not only within the 17 designated Red Squirrel Strongholds, but across the wider landscape of northern England wherever red squirrels are found.

The project is hosted, managed and directed by Northumberland Wildlife Trust, with a team of 8 dedicated project officers delivering the project throughout Northumberland, Cumbria, North Yorkshire, and North Merseyside.

Until July 2010, Save our Squirrels received 56% of its funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with the balance coming from members of Red Alert North England, a public-private partnership of organisations interested in the conservation of red squirrels on mainland England; corporate sponsorship; and donations from individuals, including HRH The Prince of Wales.

Now part of the new Red Squirrels Northern England project (to be launched in October 2010), Save our Squirrels is re-focusing priorities to concentrate on delivering community engagement and education

activities; fundraising for Red Squirrels Northern England; supporting existing and new local squirrel groups; and providing advice on conservation and habitat management to landowners and individuals.

The project continues to receive support for its activities in Northumberland through The SITA Trust and a development grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and in Cumbria through an innovative visitor payback scheme operated by Nurture Lakeland, and a dedicated affinity savings account offered to members of the Furness Building Society. www.saveoursquirrels.org

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK with £209 million in the North East alone.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is the largest environmental charity in the region working to safeguard native wildlife. One of 47 Wildlife Trusts across the UK, Northumberland Wildlife Trust has campaigned for nature conservation for over 40 years. It aims to inform, educate and involve people of all ages and backgrounds in protecting their environment in favour of wildlife and conservation.

Supported by over 13,000 individual and 100 corporate members in the region, Northumberland Wildlife Trust manages and protects critical species and habitats at over 60 nature reserves throughout Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland. www.nwt.org.uk

Further information

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