Wildlife trust secures Greno Woods

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Following a heartfelt campaign to the public and an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, the trust are delighted that they have now raised enough money to buy the last section of Greno Woods.

The trust has received a confirmed grant of £277,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to progress the plans.

“With this money in place, we are now confident that we can secure the future of this magnificent woodland habitat, protect the wildlife within it and hopefully encourage new and varied species to move in” said the trust’s Chief Executive, Liz Ballard.

The project will work with Weston Park Museum, supporting the Working Woodlands Trust to promote the sustainable use of woodlands and to engage people from South Yorkshire in woodland crafts.

The project is to restore Greno Woods and will include: purchasing a further 26 hectares of the woods to safeguard them and manage them as part of the 169ha site; restoring areas of ancient woodland and heathland; and increasing the quality of wildlife habitats.

“We want to work with local people to identify and record the ecology and archaeology in the woods, so that we can plan future sustainable management activities, such as re-planting with native species, thinning the conifer trees, reducing bracken and cutting back its encroachment onto the heath” said Liz.

Fiona Spiers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund for Yorkshire and the Humber added: “Greno Woods, just north of Sheffield, is a special place well loved by the local community. We are delighted that now, with this grant, the trust will be able to offer opportunities for even more people to get involve in learning about and protecting these ancient woodlands for future generations.”

Two other exciting aspects of the project involve a partnership with Weston Park Museum to create a new interactive installation to be hosted within the museum’s natural science gallery entitled ‘Natural Connections’ which will feature Greno Woods, its wildlife, ecology and conservation management.

A mobile phone app will also be developed to support a self-guided walk around the woods with an interactive map enabling families to enjoy an informative walk without a guide.

The project will also:

- Deliver an inspirational education programme including; public events, youth work projects, projects with schools and an informal training programme
- SWT will work in partnership with the Working Woodlands Trust to hold a large woodland event and training in heritage woodland crafts such as green wood working. Activities will complement and be planned in conjunction with those at the Woodland Discovery Centre in Ecclesall Woods
- A series of courses focusing on different aspects of wildlife held in conjunction with Grenoside Conservation Society will help people increase their knowledge and skills in wildlife identification

- The history of the woodland will be further brought to life by the delivery of a series of short courses for the public in woodland heritage crafts

Roy Mosley, the trust's Head of Operations,said: "Our ambition is to actively involve local people in the management of the woods from decision making to practical delivery of conservation management and monitoring. We are thrilled to have this opportunity to look after such a beautiful part of our natural heritage. But we need the help of the local community to make it work."

As well as the practical involvement of our volunteers, the trust is looking for local people and users of the woodland who would like an input into decision making regarding management of the site. Grenoside Conservation Society and the trust will work together to set up a new 'Reserve Advisory Group.'

If you would like to be involved in the future of Greno Woods, please contact the trust on 0114 263 4335.

Note to editors

Greno Woods contains Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) and is a valuable heritage resource, providing a habitat for threatened and declining species and offering a window to the past. South Yorkshire's woodlands supported people for many centuries as a place for livestock, for fuel and supporting a number of industries from basket making to the steel industry. However between the 1930s and 1980s almost 40% of ASNWs were converted to plantation, mostly planted with non native coniferous species.

Further information

For further information contact Julie Gough on 0114 263 4335, email: j.gough@wildsheffield.com.