

View from the Mermaid Inn at South West Peak

Over £3.6million will be invested in natural heritage projects across the West Midlands, thanks to National Lottery players.

The three projects in Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire will protect some of the region’s most important historic environments. From rare grasslands to ancient woodlands, the significant investment will enable organisations to not only preserve these remarkable landscapes, but to educate and involve residents in their local heritage.

South West Peak Landscape Partnership Scheme

Thanks to the HLF Landscape Partnerships programme, the Peak District National Park Authority has been awarded £2.4million to protect the unspoilt landscape of the South West Peak.

Landscape Partnerships schemes put heritage conservation at the heart of regeneration. Local, regional and national organisations work together to make a long-term difference to landscapes and communities by conserving habitats, reviving long-lost skills and much more.

The three counties of Staffordshire, Cheshire and Derbyshire meet at Three Shires Head at the heart of the South West Peak. The area supports the habitats of internationally important species, including the curlew, short-eared owl and golden plover, and provides a vital role in flood mitigation and drinking water for over 605,000 people.

This HLF grant will enable the authority to work with farmers on sustainable practices, improve water quality, enhance and restore habitats, and provide rural skills apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities.

A total of 18 projects will be launched over the five-year life of the scheme to address the wide-ranging needs of the Peak's ecosystems and communities.

Princethorpe Woodlands Living Landscape Scheme

Over £1million has been awarded to the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust for a project restoring and reconnecting the habitats, species and historical sites of the Princethorpe Woodlands.

The scheme covers over 10,000 hectares across 17 parishes in Warwickshire and Coventry and has a 50 year vision to protect the ancient woodlands for future generations.

Deemed the most important ancient woodlands in Warwickshire, the scheme area includes 20 woodlands representing more than 10% of the whole of Warwickshire's ancient woodland, together with 600km of hedgerows, six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 34 species of butterflies!

By working with local partners, landowners and communities, the scheme will enhance wildlife habitats, improve accessibility and provide learning opportunities, with the aim of reconnecting local people with the living landscape on their doorstep.

Hardwick Green Meadows

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust has been given a first round pass for a £201,400 Heritage Grant to purchase and protect an internationally important collection of rare wildflower meadows.

Worcestershire contains around 20 per cent of MG4 classified meadows in the UK and Hardwick Green Meadows is the country's largest unprotected floodplain meadow.

As the meadows are hard to reach and have short flowering periods, harnessing the enthusiasm of local people is key for the project. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust will engage residents with the importance of the meadows through a fantastic range of activities, from creating a cycle route and researching species, to a poetry competition and hay meadow festival.

Investing in natural heritage

Vanessa Harbar, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: "Our £3.6million investment is only possible thanks to National Lottery players. It's fantastic that we've been able to support such diverse projects and protect the important and beautiful landscapes of the West Midlands for future generations."

For more information on funding available to protect natural heritage, take a look at our Landscape Partnerships and Heritage Grants information pages.

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