



Reconnecting London's Woodlands: Funding Secured for London Wildlife Trust's 'Reuniting Sydenham Hill Wood & Dulwich Wood' Project

London Wildlife Trust has received a generous £1,020,000 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to advance the 'Reuniting Sydenham Hill Wood & Dulwich Wood' project. This funding, complemented by a partnership with The Dulwich Estate and Southwark Council, will secure the future of the largest remaining tract of the ancient Great North Wood landscape in south London, by bringing together the management of Sydenham Hill Wood and Dulwich Wood.

The project aims to revitalise 27.4 hectares of vital woodland, enhancing biodiversity and improving the experience for visitors, volunteers, and the local community. A comprehensive Activity Plan will engage over 4,000 people, with a strong focus on increasing accessibility for under-represented communities. The project's four key strands include community activities, a learning & engagement programme, volunteering opportunities, and a communications and access programme.

This grant follows a successful one-year development phase, during which London Wildlife Trust laid the foundation for the upcoming three-year delivery phase, set to begin in late 2024. The Trust actively collaborated with local communities through taster events, guided tours, and listening exercises, ensuring their voices are at the heart of the project.

Leah McNally, Director of Learning, Youth & Communities at London Wildlife Trust said: "I am delighted that with generous support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and partners, our 'Reuniting Sydenham Hill Wood & Dulwich Wood' project will launch in late 2024. The project will see significant investment in the largest remaining fragments of the Great North Wood, a previously wooded landscape in south London. London Wildlife Trust will enhance and protect woodland biodiversity while ensuring that a wider range of people can access and enjoy these significantly important Woodlands."

Simone Crofton, Chief Executive at The Dulwich Estate said: "The Dulwich Estate, as landowner of Dulwich Woods, is delighted to be a partner in this important project. It will bring the joy of the outdoors to more people, protect the heritage of the Great North Wood, and help strike a balance between supporting both the natural environment and the visitor experience. Our thanks go to London Wildlife Trust for leading this initiative which builds on the Estate's work over decades. We look forward to working together."

Stuart McLeod, Director of England - London & South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "We know how important it is that everyone has an opportunity to connect with the nature and wildlife on their doorsteps. Natural landscapes form the

bedrock of our culture and heritage, improving wellbeing, sparking curiosity, and providing for the communities around them. We are delighted to support London Wildlife Trust with this important project that will protect, restore and unite these two woodlands to create one cohesive space that visitors can access, learn about and enjoy.”

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Notes to editors

More information about Sydenham Hill and Dulwich Woods:

- London Wildlife Trust has managed Sydenham Hill Wood, in partnership with Southwark Council, since 1981, while Dulwich Wood has been made accessible to visitors by the Dulwich Estate since the 1990s. Sydenham Hill Wood is a Local Nature Reserve and Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.
- Since 2015, the Trust has worked with several partners to deliver the Heritage Fund supported ‘Great North Wood Living Landscape’ project, which included support for Sydenham Hill Wood and Dulwich Wood. The Trust is now in a great position to build on the positive impacts of this project by delivering much-needed enhancements to the largest remaining tract of this once vast ancient forest. The project will also develop plans for involving a wider range of people in natural heritage activities.

To find out more visit <https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/projects/reuniting-sydenham-hill-and-dulwich>

About London Wildlife Trust

Founded in 1981, the Trust manages 36 free-to-access nature reserves across the capital. We engage with London’s diverse communities through practical land management, campaigning, volunteering, and education to give London’s wildlife a voice.

We work with many partners to advocate for a city richer in biodiversity and ecological resilience, through policy, planning, and best practice. The Trust is one of 46 Wildlife Trusts working across the UK, with the support of over 900,000 members and 38,000 volunteers, to help nature recover and make it a part of life, for everyone.

wildlondon.org.uk

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

National Lottery Heritage Fund grant applications over £250,000 are assessed in two rounds. Reuniting Sydenham Hill Wood & Dulwich Wood has initially been granted round one development funding of (£108,365) by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, allowing it to progress with its plans. Detailed proposals are then considered by The National Lottery

Heritage Fund at the second round, where a final decision is made on the full funding award of (£1,020,000)

As the largest dedicated funder of the UK's heritage, The National Lottery Heritage Fund's vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future as set out in our strategic plan, Heritage 2033.

Over the next ten years, we aim to invest £ 3.6 billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players to bring about benefits for people, places and the natural environment.

We help protect, transform and share the things from the past that people care about, from popular museums and historic places, our natural environment and fragile species, to the languages and cultural traditions that celebrate who we are.

We are passionate about heritage and committed to driving innovation and collaboration to make a positive difference to people's lives today, while leaving a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy.

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