



The local charity protecting **wildlife** for the future

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Black Country Nature gets a boost: £440K Access to Nature Award for Wildlife Trust

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is very pleased to announce that it has been awarded £442,000 towards its innovative Black Country Living Landscape project by Natural England as part of its Access to Nature programme funded by £25m from the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces Programme.

The exciting new Black Country Living Landscape Community Involvement Programme is a 3-year, £594K project led by The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country. It will help the people and communities of the Black Country forge new links with their local wildlife sites, enabling them to discover and care for their Local Nature Reserves and other natural greenspaces. By promoting access, understanding, involvement and volunteering Black Country Living Landscape will achieve lasting change by engaging local people with the transformation of the Black Country's natural environment.

Neil Wyatt, Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country said "Black Country Living Landscape is a vision for a vibrant living landscape, with green spaces full of wildlife that everyone can enjoy and everyone can be part of making it happen. It's a 'green blueprint' for cities and towns across the UK; a better future for everyone who lives in the Black Country has just got a step closer."

Roger Owen, West Midlands Regional Director for Natural England said "As a result of the Access to Nature programme a greater number of people from diverse backgrounds will have the opportunity to experience nature at first hand. Black Country Living Landscapes will give those who live in and around the Black Country a fantastic chance to learn new skills either through training courses or practical tasks made available as result of this project."

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Action for People and Wildlife in Town and City
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Notes to Editors

- 1 To find out more about the **Black Country Living Landscape Community Involvement Programme** please contact Mark Dixon at the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country on 0121 454 6091 or email mark.d@bbcwildlife.org.uk.
- 2 **The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country** is one of 47 local trusts working to make the United Kingdom a better place for people and wildlife. With 765,000 members, the Wildlife Trusts are the largest UK voluntary organisation dedicated to conserving the full range of the UK's habitats and species, whether they be in the countryside, in cities or at sea. Collectively they manage over 2,000 nature reserves covering more than 90,000 hectares. Locally The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country works to conserve biodiversity, improve the environment and raise awareness and understanding of wildlife issues. For more information please visit www.bbcwildlife.org.uk or telephone 0121 454 1199.
- 3 **Natural England** works for people, places and nature to conserve and enhance biodiversity, landscapes and wildlife in rural, urban, coastal and marine areas. We conserve and enhance the natural environment for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people, and the economic prosperity it brings. For more information please visit www.naturalengland.org.uk.
- 4 **Access to Nature** is run by Natural England and is part of the The Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme launched in November 2005 to help communities enjoy and improve their local environments. It manages this £25 million Lottery-funded programme on behalf of a consortium of twelve national environmental organisations comprising BTCV, British Waterways, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Greenspace, Groundwork UK, Land Restoration Trust, The National Trust, Natural England, RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts and the Woodland Trust.

Through this programme, it is Natural England's ambition to create opportunities for people from all backgrounds to have greater access to our natural environment and bring a lasting change to their awareness and understanding as well as improved links to the natural world, which many of us can take for granted. For further information about Access to Nature visit www.naturalengland.org.uk/accesstonature.
- 5 For further information about the **Big Lottery Fund**, its programmes and awards visit www.biglotteryfund.org.uk.