



Building communities. Transforming lives.

LAND PURCHASE PROJECTS

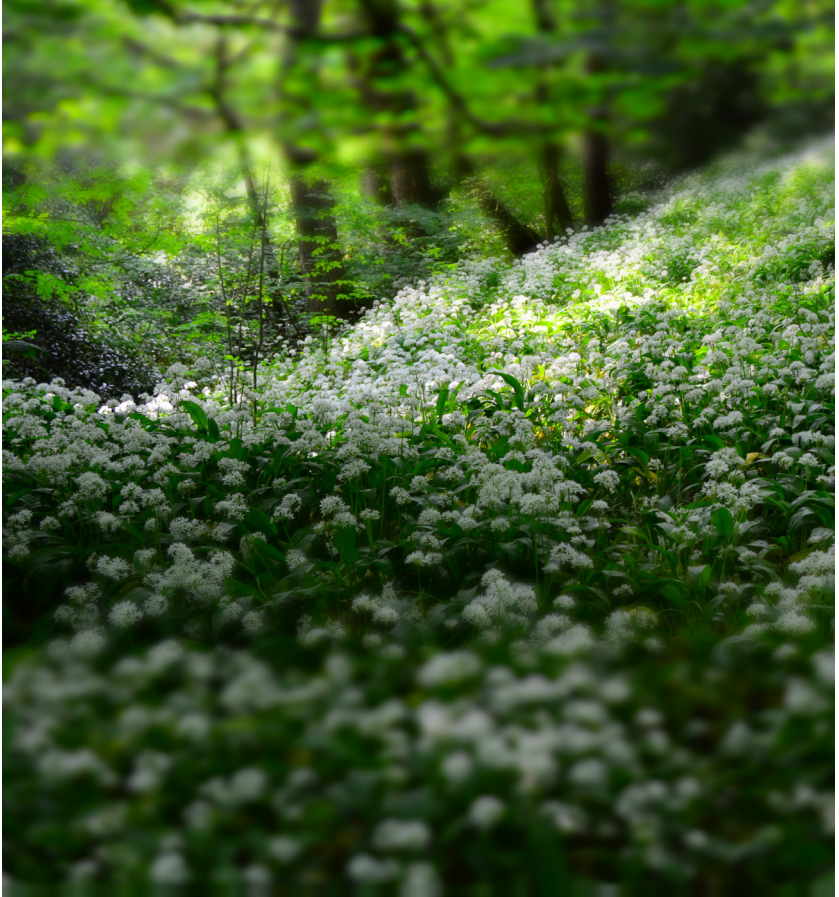


Introduction

Biffa Award funding for land purchase schemes allows environmental organisations and partnerships to carry out far reaching and high impact biodiversity projects. Giving organisations, who already have high expertise, the opportunity to manage new sites and expand existing ones is resulting in some fantastic, wildlife rich areas.

Improving natural environments on a large scale not only creates networks of green spaces for wildlife to thrive but also enables people to flourish. The land purchase projects that Biffa Award have supported have created opportunities for volunteers, interpretation and trails for visitors and new green spaces for the local community to enjoy on their doorstep.

Biffa Award are proud to be part of these significant projects and each one is a prime example of just how the Landfill Communities Fund can bring about very positive change.



Lazenby Bank

Tees Valley Wildlife Trust

At Lazenby bank there was an urgent need to protect the land as well as a great opportunity to restore ancient woodland and to increase the local community's outdoor engagement.

Lazenby Bank is a great swathe of woodland which provides a green backdrop to Middlesbrough. It is ecologically significant because of its scale. Most of the country's broadleaved woodlands cover just 20 hectares, while Lazenby extends to four times this figure.

Parts of the site has had uninterrupted woodland cover since early times and can be described as Ancient Woodland - a rare and irreplaceable habitat. Studies show Lazenby Bank to be valuable for birds, fungi and for an unusual diversity of land molluscs.

The site also has historical significance relating to the iron and steel industry and the birth and growth of Middlesbrough. For one hundred years from 1850, some 6 million tonnes of ironstone were extracted from Lazenby and the surrounding Eston Hills to feed Teesside's blast furnaces, shipyards and steel manufacture. Considerable evidence of this activity remains within the woods today.

The recent closure of Teesside's last blast furnace at Redcar, Lazenby Bank presented a unique opportunity to establish a memorial to the region's global role in iron and steel production.

Biffa Award has helped Tees Valley Wildlife Trust purchase this land as, although the area is considered industrial, it holds many sites of environmental significance and natural beauty, as well as being vital to our heritage. The land purchase will mean that the Trust can preserve this land for future generations.



St Clair's Meadow

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

St Clair's Meadow is a 16 hectare meadow in the heart of the Meon Valley and home to a rich diversity of wildlife, including water vole and kingfishers. The Meon Valley is loved for being a spot for clouds of dragonflies and butterflies and its exceptional habitat has been said to be as internationally important as the rainforests or Great Barrier Reef.

The stretch of river at St Clair's is considered to be of exceptional conservation status. There are only 200 chalk streams in the world and the River Meon is one of them. The channel and banks have an abundant array of characteristic vegetation including water crowfoot, water speedwell and gypsy wort. The adjacent meadows contain meadow vetch and meadow sweet which support large populations of banded and beautiful demoiselles and a wide range of butterflies including marbled whites, meadow browns, ringlets, small skippers, commas and painted ladies.

A Biffa Award grant of £333,000 allowed Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to purchase the meadow and restore it to excellent condition. Restoration work, including returning the river back to its original channel and implementing sensitive grazing using rare-breed cattle, took place once the purchase was complete. The site is now open to the public and proves to be a popular and highly important site for wildlife.



Smithills

The Woodland Trust

The entire Smithills landscape in North Bolton is now under the ownership and protection of The Woodland Trust. 1,700 acres of open countryside, streams and woodland now make up The Woodland Trust's largest site in England.

Over £250,000 was raised in the run-up to Christmas 2017, along a grant of £400,000 from Biffa Award to purchase the land. The project will see the planting of 130,000 new trees that will create connecting corridors for wildlife.

The landscape is being revitalised to include everything from the moorland fringe to the lowland woodland. Habitats will receive expert management to provide a better quality home for thousands of animals, plants and fungi. New social enterprises will be encouraged to set up on site, inspiring a renewed economy and there'll be a range of events and activities to get involved in too.

The story of Smithills revitalisation is only just beginning and will play a part in the Northern Forest project which will see trees planted across a 120-mile stretch of northern England over the next 25 years.

