



PRESS RELEASE

Ref MB38

Today's Date: 24/08/2007
Media Contact: Mike Bray, The Mersey Forest Team
Tel: 01925 859 611 / 07770 735 755
Email: michaelbray@merseyforest.org.uk

WEAVERHAM'S GREEN HEROES CELEBRATE WITH CHARLIE DIMMOCK

Volunteers from Weaverham have scooped a high profile award after being hailed as 'Green Heroes' for their achievements in improving their local environment.

The Friends of Owley Wood, who are supported by environmental regeneration initiative The Mersey Forest, were presented with the 'Zurich Risk Management Award' for the North West-North East region by celebrity gardener Charlie Dimmock at the BTCV Green Hero awards ceremony in Manchester.

The award recognises the group's work to transform the paths and accessibility of Owley Wood, turning what was once a daunting site due to its steep slopes and boggy riverside areas into a safe environment for all to enjoy. The new paths and boardwalks installed at the site have improved access not just for nature lovers and families, but have also meant that school groups can now safely visit the site, something that in the past would not have been possible.

Mac Carding of The Mersey Forest Team said: "I'm really pleased for the group. They have worked tirelessly and brought together a wide range of different organisations to make Owley Wood a safer place, and this award is a great tribute to that."

The awards, run by practical conservation charity BTCV and sponsored by Zurich and

Prudential plc, recognise the difference that volunteers like the Friends of Owley Wood can make, and through publicising their achievements hope to encourage others to follow their lead.

Tom Flood, chief executive of BTCV, said, "Every one of our regional 'Green Heroes' deserves recognition for the contribution they have made to the local community, and the environment around them. Why not join them next year, either by volunteering or by supporting the work of your local BTCV office in some way?"

For more information about the Friends of Owley Wood and how to get involved, call Noel Woodhead on 01606 852960 or contact Mac Carding at The Mersey Forest Offices on 01925 816217. To find out more about BTCV, call 01302 388 888.

ENDS

Media Contact: Mike Bray, tel. 01925 816 217 / 07770 735 755

Editors Notes:

The Mersey Forest:

The Mersey Forest is the leading environmental regeneration initiative in the North West and the largest of England's 12 Community Forests. The Mersey Forest is not restricted to a single site, rather it is being created across a 465 square mile area of Merseyside and North Cheshire as networks of woodlands and other habitat between and within our cities, towns and villages for - and with the involvement of - local communities.

The regeneration of The Forest is driven by The Mersey Forest Partnership, which includes the Forestry Commission, Natural England and nine local authorities – Cheshire, Liverpool, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Sefton, Vale Royal and Warrington. The Mersey Forest is the key driver for investment into and for the development of a green infrastructure for the North West, reclaiming over 8000 hectares of land, home to 1.6million people, over a 30-year period to bring revolutionary economic, social and environmental benefit to the region.

BTCV:

www.btcv.org

For contact details for the BTCV Green Heroes winners, please contact:

Kerry Nixon, BTCV Customer Services, T: 01302 388883 E: information@btcv.org.uk
Helen Mitchell, PR Manager, BTCV T: 01491 821612 E: h.mitchell@btcv.org.uk .
Simon Toseland, Media consultant T: 07930 323065 E: simon.toseland@googlemail.com

About Zurich Financial Services Group

Zurich Financial Services Group (Zurich) is an insurance-based financial services provider with a global network of subsidiaries and offices in North America and Europe as well as in Asia Pacific, Latin America and other markets. Founded in 1872, the Group is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. It employs approximately 55,000 people serving customers in more than 120 countries.

For over 100 years Zurich has been dedicated to providing insurance and risk management services to the third sector. With the experience and know-how to help charities and voluntary organisations identify and manage the risks they face Zurich works with its customers to develop tailored solutions which enable them to focus on meeting their objectives.

About Prudential

www.prudential.co.uk

Prudential plc, a company incorporated and with its principal place of business in the United Kingdom, and its affiliated companies constitute one of the world's leading financial services groups. It provides insurance and financial services directly and through its subsidiaries and affiliates throughout the world. It has been in existence for over 150 years and has £238 billion in assets under management, as at 30 June 2006. Prudential plc is not affiliated in any manner with Prudential Financial, Inc, a company whose principal place of business is in the United States of America.