



PRESS RELEASE

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Volunteers launch Cheshire's Big Tree Plant

A four-year tree planting drive to create a greener, healthier Cheshire was launched this weekend.

Volunteers from Marston's Lion Salt Works and wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation dug in at a planting morning at the Salt Works' newly created butterfly garden to kick off Cheshire's part in The Big Tree Plant, the national campaign to get more people planting and caring for trees.

Locally the campaign has set aside £255,000 over the next four years to support tree planting and get people involved in their environment across North Cheshire and Merseyside. The funding for the local area was secured by The Mersey Forest who will use the cash to help community groups and schools to brighten their neighbourhoods with new street trees, woodlands and mini-orchards – starting with thousands of trees to be planted across North Cheshire this winter.

George Martin from Butterfly Conservation's Cheshire and Peak District branch joined in the tree planting and said: "Creating a well-wooded local area benefits us all – from providing places to relax and stay fit and healthy, to helping fight climate change and providing habitat for wildlife. It's great to see this new campaign continuing the fantastic greening of Cheshire's landscape that's already been achieved as part of The Mersey Forest."

He was joined by David Roberts, Chair of the Lion Salt Works Trustees, who said: "Across the country The Big Tree Plant is aiming to help people plant 1 million trees by 2015. It's great to be part of launching Cheshire's contribution – the more people we can get involved, the better."

The butterfly garden was created last year by the volunteers, and forms part of the overall rejuvenation of the Salt Works, which is being renovated to become a museum of

the salt industry. The garden is home to the newly created Cheshire Buddleia Collection, containing over 35 different varieties of the plant to attract insects and create a profusion of colour. Funding for the garden came from local chemicals manufacturer INEOS Enterprises through the Landfill Communities Fund, with additional funds from the Cheshire and Peak District branch of Butterfly Conservation. The layout of the butterfly garden was designed by Isabelle Brook and Sue Beesley, owner of Bluebell Cottage Gardens at Dutton and former BBC Gardener of the Year.

People interested in getting involved in The Big Tree Plant can call The Mersey Forest on 01925 816217, email mail@merseyforest.org.uk or visit the national website www.direct.gov.uk/thebigtreeplant.

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Notes to editors:

The Big Tree Plant

1. The Big Tree Plant is a national campaign that helps people and communities across England to plant more trees where they live and work. Our target is to plant 1 million additional trees by April 2015.
2. Details of the campaign can be found at: www.direct.gov.uk/thebigtreeplant
3. Details on how community groups can apply for funding can be found at: <http://thebigtreeplant.direct.gov.uk/funding>
4. The Mersey Forest funding was applied for through Community Forests Northwest, the charity that supports The Mersey Forest, Pennine Edge Forest and Red Rose Forest - the latter of which has also been offered an additional £184,000 for tree planting in Greater Manchester.
5. The campaign has the support of major bodies, environmental charities and agencies including National Forest Company, The Tree Council, Trees for Cities, the Woodland Trust, England's Community Forests, Keep Britain Tidy, BTCV, Civic Voice, Groundwork, Natural England, Mayor of London, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Local Government Authority and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Lion Salt Works

Lion Salt Works in Marston, Northwich is a group of buildings owned by Cheshire West

and Chester Council designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The land and buildings are leased to the Lion Salt Works Trust which is working to restore the site as a museum of the salt industry. In March 2008 the site was awarded a £4.96 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant towards the restoration. www.lionsaltworkstrust.co.uk

Butterfly Conservation

Butterfly Conservation is a UK charity that promotes the conservation of butterflies, moths and their habitats. The Cheshire and Peak District branch was established in 1985. www.butterfly-conservation.org and www.cheshirebutterflies.co.uk

INEOS Enterprises

INEOS Enterprises is based in Runcorn and consists of a group of eight chemicals manufacturing businesses, each a leader in its area of activity. INEOS Enterprises is the number one producer of sulphur chemicals in the UK from their Runcorn plant, and have expanded their product range and market penetration outside the UK by acquisition and major investment in new manufacturing capability. www.ineosenterprises.com

The Mersey Forest

The Mersey Forest is a growing network of woodlands and green spaces spread across Cheshire and Merseyside, which has been creating 'woodlands on your doorstep' for 20 years.

The Forest is one of the leading environmental regeneration initiatives in the North West. Through community and partnership working, we have planted more than 8 million trees - equivalent to five new trees for every person living within the Forest area.

The Forest helps our towns and cities adapt to climate change and has won the Brian Redhead Award for Environmental Sustainability, creates woodlands that 20% of local people visit at least once a week, and by improving the image of our towns and cities sets the scene for growth within the region's £98 billion economy.

We achieve all of this and more through our partnership of local authorities, landowners, the Forestry Commission, Natural England and businesses including United Utilities. www.merseyforest.org.uk