



PRESS RELEASE

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SCHOOL PUPILS CREATE ART TO TOP OFF NEW LOOK FOR OWLEY WOOD

Pupils from St Bedes Catholic Primary School have helped brighten up Weaverham beauty spot Owley Wood by designing a special new bench for the site decorated with carvings of wildlife from the wood.

The bench provides the finishing touch to a circular trail at the site and rounds off a range of improvements over the past three years funded through the Landfill Communities Fund by Runcorn-based chemical manufacturer INEOS ChlorVinyls. The work has included path upgrades, new sculptures, improved entrances and an education pack to encourage teachers to use the wood as a resource for schools.

Along with the wider project, the creation of the bench was co-ordinated by award-winning community group the Friends of Owley Wood. Their role included bringing the St Bedes pupils and their design ideas together in workshop sessions with sculptor Bill Welch, whose other work in The Mersey Forest includes the impressive entrance arch at Marbury Country Park.

Janet Ward, Public Relations Officer at INEOS ChlorVinyls, said: "It's great to see volunteers, schools and local artists working together to create such an original feature. Owley Wood is a site we're proud to have supported, and we hope that people gain a lot of pleasure from the new additions to their woodland."

Jo Sayers of The Mersey Forest Team, who have supported the Friends of Owley Wood since 1998, said: “The bench is another testament to the excellent work of the Friends group here, who have made such a difference to the woodland. It has attracted very favourable comments from local people so far, as well as providing a welcome resting point when visiting the wood.”

To find out more about getting involved with the Friends of Owley Wood, call Noel Woodhead on 01606 852960 or contact Mac Carding at The Mersey Forest Offices on 01925 816 217.

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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.