



PRESS RELEASE

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Sefton volunteers turn timber into woodland products

Local volunteers and apprentices are helping to transform spare timber from trees felled in Sefton's coastal woodlands into countryside products.

Forestry company UPM Tilhill, contractor Mike Gillett and haulier Les Hughes have donated pine logs from their contract at Formby's coastal woodlands to a local social enterprise, Workshop Wardens.

With the help of local volunteers and apprentices, the logs will be used to create picnic tables, seating and litter bins, which will be eventually used in the coastal woodlands.

Nigel Blandford of The Mersey Forest said, "Sefton Council's Coast and Countryside young apprentices will turn the logs into planks, and they'll then go into their workshop and be turned into useful items by a group of adults with learning difficulties.

"The project will not only give individuals the opportunity to gain new skills, it will also provide useful woodland items which will be used by the public when they explore the coastal woodlands."

Mark Morgan of UPM Tilhill said, "It's great to be able to carry out a commercial contract that also has a strong environmental and social dimension."

The essential woodland maintenance work currently being carried out at Sefton's coastal woodlands has been organised by The Mersey Forest and is being principally carried out to improve the habitat for Merseyside's isolated population of red squirrels.

The project has seen some 4000 tonnes of wood harvested for saw logs, chipboard and wood fuel. It will be followed up with the replanting of 20,000 new pine trees in the autumn, which will guarantee a source of food for the red squirrels in the future.

The Mersey Forest has been able to coordinate this woodland contract on behalf of four major landowners with help from the Heritage Lottery funded Sefton Landscape Partnership Scheme.

Caption: Mark Morgan, Harvesting Manager, UPM Tilhill

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Notes to editors:

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