



Press Release | 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013

## **Eccleston green spaces aim for Local Nature Reserve status**

Volunteers and local organisations have begun work to improve a woodland and neighbouring wetland in Eccleston in a bid to have them recognised as an official Local Nature Reserve.

Over the next 12 months, Mill Wood and Mill Brow will benefit from upgraded footpaths and boardwalks, tree management, and rhododendron control. Working in partnership with St.Helens Council and Eccleston Parish Council, the work will be led by Lancashire Wildlife Trust, with volunteers and local residents carrying out many of the tasks.

The improved Mill Brow will also provide an outdoor classroom facility for the neighbouring De La Salle School.

The funding for the work has come from United Utilities via the St.Helens Landscape Fund – a scheme to invest in communities affected by the construction of the West East Link Pipeline, which carries water 34 miles between Prescott and Bury. Additional funding has been secured from the Forestry Commission.

The two sites are owned by Eccleston Parish Council and St.Helens Council respectively, and it is hoped once the work is complete that they will together be designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

Eccleston ward Councillor Teresa Sims, Vice Chair of Eccleston Parish Council, said: “Mill Brow and Mill Wood are key open spaces within Eccleston and it is great to see local community members getting involved in what will be a valuable improved asset for the local area.”

Brian Tollitt from United Utilities said “We’re delighted that the fund is helping to support woodlands and public enjoyment within this area of St.Helens. If the improvements can help the future for the sites even further as a Local Nature Reserve that will be an even more rewarding outcome.”

The fund, managed by The Mersey Forest on behalf of St.Helens Council, has also contributed to the landscape restoration of Victoria Park and eight other projects throughout the borough.

**Photo captions:**

Landscape2.jpg:

L-R: Mike Roberts (St.Helens Council), Cllr Teresa Sims, Adam Graham (Lancashire Wildlife Trust), Mark Unsworth (local resident and volunteer), Chris McGloin (The Mersey Forest), Brian Tollitt (United Utilities).

Portrait2.jpg:

L-R: Mike Roberts (St.Helens Council), Mark Unsworth (local resident and volunteer), Cllr Teresa Sims, Brian Tollitt (United Utilities), Chris McGloin (The Mersey Forest), Adam Graham (Lancashire Wildlife Trust).

## **ENDS**

**Media contact:** Mike Bray, tel. 01925 859 611 / 07770 735 755

**Notes to editors:**

**St.Helens Landscape Fund**

This Section 106 fund allows people to apply for funding for landscape enhancement and community infrastructure projects in the area of St.Helens marked on this map. The fund is available as a result of the new West East Link Pipeline being provided by United Utilities.

[www.sthelenslandscapefund.co.uk](http://www.sthelenslandscapefund.co.uk)

**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 more than 20 years.

The Forest is one of the leading environmental regeneration initiatives in the North

West. Through community and partnership working, we have planted 9 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, 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, the Environment Agency and businesses.

[www.merseyforest.org.uk](http://www.merseyforest.org.uk)