



Press Release | 26 February 2014

Wirral street trees programme enters second year

A tree planting programme that is helping to transform Wirral into a thriving economic hub is entering its second year in Bidston and Birkenhead.

By April this year over 600 trees across 8km will have been planted in streets and green spaces, as part of a three-year programme to link residential areas to places of employment and training.

The trees will be planted on streets including Price Street, Cleveland Street, Argyle Street, and Hamilton Street, which are key transport routes around the Wirral Waters investment area. They will also be planted at Wirral Met College, as well as in social housing landscapes and gardens.

The planting follows consultation with Birkenhead residents and businesses during the last year. The project is being coordinated by The Mersey Forest.

Ben Greenaway, Green Streets Coordinator at The Mersey Forest, said: "The launch of this part of the three year programme follows the planting of over 370 trees in Wirral last year.

"By planting these trees, we are transforming grey streets into leafy green thoroughfares, improving the area's prospects for further investment.

"Our recent research shows that local people would be more willing to walk and cycle if the routes were lined with trees. We hope that by providing greener routes we will boost health and wellbeing and promote the use of sustainable transport within Wirral."

Richard Mawdsley, Project Director at Peel Holdings, who is managing the development of Wirral Waters, said: "We believe that trees lead to jobs. Improving the attractiveness of an area improves investor confidence, therefore boosting the local economy. This is vital in the context of the Wirral Waters development nearby."

The tree planting is funded by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund through Merseytravel and the Department of Transport and by Forestry Commission's Setting the Scene for Growth Programme as part of the Wirral Green Streets and Green Infrastructure Programme through The Department of Business Innovation and Skills. The project is also supported by European project Interreg ForeStClim.

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Notes to editors:

Wirral Waters

Wirral Waters is a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring about the regeneration of Inner Wirral, creating over 20,000 new jobs and 14,000 new homes over a 30 year delivery timeframe. The vision is to create a new international city waterfront destination centred upon East Float, part of the Birkenhead and Wallasey docks.

Since the initial launch of the proposals, Peel Holdings have been working with Wirral MBC and stakeholders to set in place a shared regeneration strategy for Inner Wirral. The East Float Outline Planning Application was approved in August 2010. Wirral Waters has recently been granted Enterprise Zones Status, demonstrating the government's support for the proposals.

Peel are now working with delivery partners to begin delivering the early stages of development. This includes the International Trade Centre at West Float.

www.wirralwaters.co.uk

Newlands

Launched in the summer of 2003, Newlands is a unique scheme that has reclaimed large areas of derelict, underused and neglected (DUN) land across England's Northwest. Newlands responds to local and regional economic and social needs, tackling some of the worst areas of neglected land in the Northwest and transforming them into thriving, durable, community woodlands.

Newlands is a Forestry Commission scheme funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

Newlands has worked with a wide partnership to make a real difference to local economies, communities and environments. Newlands has made the north west region more attractive place for investment; with projects based around key gateways to the region as well as close to major cities and conurbations.

Besides the Wirral Green Streets programme 2012-2105, Newlands is working to transform Bromborough landfill site into a fully accessible recreational green space.

www.newlandsproject.co.uk

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is making a difference by supporting sustained growth and higher skills across the economy. Almost everything that BIS does – from investing in skills to making markets more dynamic and reducing regulation, and from promoting trade to boosting innovation and helping people start and grow a business – helps drive growth.

www.bis.gov.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 20 years. www.merseyforest.org.uk

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

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

Merseyside's third Local Transport Plan (LTP) has a long term strategy to 2024 and a short term implementation plan to 2014/15 containing a delivery programme of transport investment and service improvements. Visit www.TransportMerseyside.org for more information.

Its vision for Merseyside's transport network is for a city region committed to a low carbon future, which has a transport network and mobility culture that positively contributes to a thriving economy and the health and wellbeing of its citizens and where sustainable travel is the option of choice.

The Merseyside Transport Partnership consists of Merseytravel and the five local authorities of Merseyside – Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, and Wirral. TravelWise Merseyside is Merseyside Transport Partnership's campaign to help people in Merseyside to make smarter travel choices – to walk, cycle and use public transport.

www.LetsTravelWise.org

ForeStClim

ForeStClim brings together a wide range of experts from the United Kingdom and other countries in Europe to work on issues relating to climate change and forestry. This project has received European Regional Development Funding through Interreg IVB.