



Press Release | 04 August 2014

## **Birkenhead children get in touch with nature this summer**

Birkenhead children are being given the opportunity to explore the changes taking place at Ilchester Park this summer.

A programme of play sessions is being held at the park to help kids reconnect with the local green space.

The sessions are being organised by The Mersey Forest and run by Play Out, a local play charity. The sessions will focus on introducing kids to natural play, helping them to reconnect with nature, and teaching them the value of local green spaces.

Ilchester Park is currently undergoing a transformation after a project to improve the park was granted £67000 by The Veolia Environmental Trust through the Landfill Communities Fund.

The improvements will include tree planting, improved pathways, wildflower meadows, and the addition of natural play features such as climbing logs. So far, trees have been planted on site, with the rest of the improvements set to commence over the course of this year. A celebration event to mark the changes and their significance to local people will be held on 23 August.

Play Out sessions will be held every Wednesday and Friday between 23rd July - 20th August from 12 - 4pm.

Children of all ages are invited to take part in the free open access play and craft activities and can bring a picnic. During wet weather, sessions will take place at the nearby St. James Centre.

Kath Shaw from North Birkenhead Development Trust, who is coordinating the activities, said: "It's great to see so many children enjoying the improved park space and appreciating the value of natural play in a green setting, amongst all the new park trees."

The Executive Director of The Veolia Environmental Trust, Paul Taylor, added, "With the improvements currently being undertaken in the park, it is clear that these play sessions are the shape of things to come for the park's young visitors."

## ENDS

**Caption:** Children hold hanging baskets at last year's family fun day at Ilchester Park.

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### Notes to editors:

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

**Landfill Tax and the Landfill Communities Fund** Any waste that is discarded which cannot be reused, reprocessed or recycled may ultimately be disposed of in a landfill site. To encourage Landfill site Operators (LOs) to re-use, recycle, recover more value from waste and use more environmentally friendly methods of waste disposal, Landfill Tax is charged on each tonne of waste sent to landfill.

LOs are able to redirect a small proportion of landfill tax liability (currently 5.1%) to support a wide range of community and environmental projects in the vicinity of their landfill sites through the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). The LCF is regulated by ENTRUST on behalf of HM Revenue & Customs, and the projects are delivered by enrolled Environmental bodies (EBs).

Since its inception in 1996, over £1 billion has been spent on more than 32,000 projects across the UK. For further information, please visit [www.entrust.org.uk](http://www.entrust.org.uk) or [see HMRC's general guide to Landfill Tax](#)

**The Veolia Environmental Trust** has been supporting community and environmental projects for over 16 years. Since we were established in 1997, Veolia has supported us by contributions of over £58 million to 1790 projects.

We have helped fund a diverse range of projects, including the repair of woodland footpaths, the renovation of community halls and the installation of playgrounds and play

areas. For more information, or to find out how to apply for funding, visit our website [www.veoliatrust.org](http://www.veoliatrust.org).