

Funding secured for next stage of Lichfield Canal restoration

November 23, 2022



HS2's Community & Environment Fund has provided a £75,000 grant to restore the Darnford Moors section of the canal, transforming the area into a wildlife haven.

Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust (LHCRT) has been awarded £116,200 to create an ecology park at Darnford Moors. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is providing a grant of £41,200, with match funding of £75,000 from HS2's Community and Environment Fund (CEF).

Carole Mills, chair of LHCRT, said: "This funding is fantastic news for the Trust, as we will be able to create a wonderful space for wildlife and for the enjoyment of walkers, whilst also having another section of the canal in water. Grants like this are vital for us to undertake major work, as we're a volunteer-led charity with minimal regular income.

"I want to thank our hard-working volunteers who have spent so much time working on these successful bids. These ERDF and CEF grants are critical in enabling us to progress and we are looking forward to the completion of the ecology park early next year."

This will enable LHCRT to make habitat improvements to the Darnford Brook wetlands, existing woodland and hedgerows from Darnford Lane to past the lift bridge. It will also enable the Trust to put the canal channel into water to the east of the liftbridge.

LHCRT's volunteers have been preparing the site and Bluetech Waterfront Solutions Ltd has been commissioned to engage specialist contractors to put the canal channel in water, and become an aquatic habitat, by February 2023.

Cathy Elliott, independent chair of the HS2 Funds, said: "We are pleased that Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust has successfully secured funding to transform a section of the canal into a new wildlife haven.

"The construction of HS2 will cross multiple waterways between London, Birmingham and Manchester, and I would encourage community-led environmental organisations impacted by HS2 to contact Groundwork UK to explore the tangible benefits available from the Funds."

This part of the Lichfield Canal will link to the new section being constructed as part of the HS2 Cappers Lane diversion.

The HS2 Community and Environment Fund (CEF) provides funding over and above the committed mitigation and compensation to communities along the HS2 route and is available to organisations demonstrably disrupted by the construction of Phase One of HS2.

HS2's Community & Environment Fund (CEF) and Business & Local Economy Fund (BLEF) has provided over £12 million funding to over 200 projects across the UK. Both the CEF & BLEF Funds are still welcoming applications, which are independently administered by community charity, Groundwork UK.