

# HS2 donates 300 trees to Coventry school for Queen's Green Canopy initiative

November 30, 2022



HS2 Ltd and its contractors have donated 300 native tree saplings and sustainable tree guards to Corley Academy, a secondary school near Coventry for students with complex social and communication difficulties.

The project contributes to the Queen's Green Canopy, the tree planting initiative created to mark the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".

Over 20 volunteers from HS2 Ltd and BBV spent a day at the school, planting the trees donated by HS2, from stock grown by Crowders Nursery in Lincoln, the company contracted to grow the 7 million trees for Phase One of HS2.

The trees will enhance local wildlife in the school grounds, and create green spaces where students can learn about the natural environment as part of the Academy's education programme.

Corley Academy student Max said: "The feeling of planting a tree is amazing. Simple things really matter.

These trees are simple things, yet they help us live.”

James Hicks, Biodiversity Specialist at HS2 Ltd said: “HS2 is committed to leaving a positive environmental legacy, so we’re thrilled to deliver this project with Corley Academy in Warwickshire as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy, which will benefit future generations.

“Across our extensive ecology programme, with over 845,000 trees already planted between Birmingham and London, it’s important for us to support local biodiversity, so we source species that are native to the local area. At Corley Academy we planted hazel, alder, silver birch, English oak, rowan, hornbeam, wild privet and dogwood, which will blend perfectly with the local landscape as they grow over the coming years.”

Charlotte Brooks, Senior Teacher at Corley Academy said: “As a school for students with complex communication difficulties, it’s so important to develop our outdoor area, and we have outdoor learning as part of our curriculum. This is such a fantastic opportunity for the students to understand how trees grow alongside all of us and how we’re supporting the environment.”

Environment and Landscape teams at HS2’s construction contractor in the Midlands, Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV) designed the tree planting areas, including 28 metres of native hedgerow planting around the school’s ‘willow garden’, and 300 square metres of native woodland planting to extend an existing area of trees along the boundary of the school.

Amy Middlemist, Landscape, Art & Culture Lead at BBV said: “Our team at Balfour Beatty VINCI have thoroughly enjoyed taking time out of their busy schedules to contribute their ideas, time and effort to this fantastic project, forming part of our late Queen’s Green Canopy initiative.

“Providing Corley Academy with new areas of woodland is a great example of how we work alongside local schools to deliver environmental projects, which also provide excellent educational opportunities for pupils and encourage their interest in the natural environment.”

The 300 biodegradable tree guards were supplied by Ezee Tree Ltd, a family firm based in Welford. The business, which was established in 2013 and now employs 10 people, supplies 100% sustainable products developed in conjunction with expert arboriculturalists.

Andy Barnwell from Ezee Tree Ltd said: “Ezee Tree was delighted to be able to donate our sustainable and ‘100% plastic free’ tree and hedge guards in support of HS2 with their donation of 300 trees for the ‘Queens Green Canopy Initiative’. This tree planting is even more poignant, given the passing of our beloved Queen. For years, decades and centuries to come, these wonderful trees will evoke wonderful memories of Her Majesty and add further to her incredible legacy.”

With a focus on planting sustainably, the Queen’s Green Canopy project encourages planting of trees to create a legacy in honour of the late Queen’s leadership of the Nation, which will benefit future generations. The initiative will be extended to the end of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant trees in memoriam to honour Her Majesty.