

Tree-mendous grant helps community tree planting in Perthshire

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Network Rail has given a grant of £16,000 to a tree-planting initiative run by a community group in Perthshire.

This meant 2,000 native trees and shrubs could be planted in the area. The grant was made through The Tree Council – a national conservation charity.

The trees were planted as part of the Allan Water Improvement Project. This is a project hosted by Forth Rivers Trust to revive the river and its associated habitats and to benefit the wider landscape. The planting involved local volunteers and businesses on land made available by Blackford Farms

The native tree and shrub species were planted on the Danny Burn, a tributary of the Allan Water, south of the A9 to create new habitats and link fragmented habitats, on the banks of the upper Allan River.

Not only did this project represent an excellent opportunity to plant native trees and shrubs with local people, planting native trees and shrubs will also improve water quality, and offer weather resilience and climate change adaptation benefits.

The work will help to address potential flooding issues downstream at the village of Blackford, where the A9 and Scottish Central Mainline railway are located, an area which has previously been subject to flooding.

James Morrison, senior asset engineer, Network Rail Scotland, said: “This project offers a range of practical and environmental benefits – including helping to mitigate the impact of flooding on the railway further downstream.

“Replanting will capture carbon, add biodiversity and over time will improve bank stability on the water course. This will help improve water quality and enhance the habitat for fish, birds, insects and for beavers and other animal species like foraging bats.

“The initiative shows that planting in the right places, even on a relatively small scale can make a really positive impact and make a big difference.”

Sara Lom, Chief Executive Officer of The Tree Council, said: “It is fantastic to support the community of the Upper Allan catchment to make a real difference to their environment. This is exactly what Network Rail’s pledge set out to achieve, and in this case has the added advantage of reducing the risks of flooding – something so important with the changing climate.

“The Tree Council has had relationships with volunteers in Perthshire for over 30 years, and it is a delight to be able to support this initiative.”