



Herefordshire Meadows Press Release - December 10th 2020

Plantlife receives grant from the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund

- 68 projects have been awarded grants between £62k and £3.8 million to kick-start a pipeline of nature-based projects while creating and retaining jobs
- First funding round sees £40 million pot allocated, second round of funding to open in early 2021

Herefordshire Meadows, a local group of farmers, smallholders and estates are delighted to be partners in Plantlife's Meadow Makers, one of the first environmental projects awarded a grant from the government's £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Defra announced grants between £62,000 and £3.8 million today, to help create and retain thousands of green jobs. The projects, spread across England, will see trees planted - 800,000 in total - and protected landscapes and damaged habitats such as moorlands, wetlands and forests restored, alongside wider conservation work. The projects will also support environmental education and connecting people with green spaces.

Thanks to the cash injection, Plantlife will spearhead Meadow Makers, a major new conservation partnership project that will reverse the decline that has seen 97% of meadows eradicated and the remaining 3% teetering on the brink of extinction.

The wide-scale meadows restoration initiative will provide a prime platform for wild flowers and wildlife to make a stunning recovery in Cornwall, Cumbria, Devon, Sussex, Herefordshire, Lancashire, and Wiltshire. Plantlife joins forces with the Arnside and Silverdale and High Weald AONBs, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Duchy of Cornwall, Herefordshire Meadows, Moor Meadows and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to turbo power meadows recovery.

Commenting on the meadows funding, James Hawkins, Herefordshire Meadows Chair, said:

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the group to make over 50 ha of new wild flower meadows across Herefordshire in 2021 to benefit biodiversity and farm businesses as well as soil and water quality in the wider landscape"

Sue Holland, who leads the Herefordshire Meadows seed harvesting team said:

We will be collecting green hay and brush harvested seed and spreading it from 'donor' meadow sites to 'recipient' sites in an operation that will give a powerful shot in the arm to nature recovery. This funding firmly plants wild flower meadows as important natural capital assets in the green recovery of Herefordshire."

Herefordshire Meadows Co-ordinator Caroline Hanks said:

"Our group has restored more than 65 ha of meadows since 2019 and building on that success our members are sharing knowledge they've gained using different seed sources and restoration methods. Meadow making is something that everyone can get involved in, from garden to landscape scale. If you share our passion for meadows and diverse swards in the Herefordshire agricultural landscape and are interested in joining our expanding team please get in touch through our website"

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is a key part of Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan to kick-start nature recovery and tackle climate change. The fund is being delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Environment Minister, Rebecca Pow, said:

“These projects will drive forward work across England to restore and transform our landscapes, boost nature and create green jobs, and will be a vital part of helping us to build back greener from coronavirus.

“I look forward to working with environmental organisations as these projects help address the twin challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, while creating and retaining jobs as part of the green recovery.”

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

“Supporting our natural environment is one of the most valuable things we can do right now. All these projects are of huge benefit to our beautiful countryside and wildlife, but will also support jobs, health and wellbeing, which are vitally important as we begin to emerge from the coronavirus crisis.”

The government’s forthcoming [Environment Bill](#) puts the environment at the centre of policy making to ensure that we have a cleaner, greener and more resilient country for the next generation. The fund is supporting a range of nature conservation and recovery and nature-based solutions projects, which will contribute towards government’s wider [25 Year Environment Plan](#) commitments, including commitments to increase tree-planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025.

ENDS

Notes to editors

- 21 projects will receive the larger grants (over £250k - £5m) and 47 projects awarded funding for the smaller grants (£50 - £250k).

More information about Herefordshire Meadows can be found at www.herefordshiremeadows.org.uk

Insert photo http://www.herefordshiremeadows.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/orchids_joans_hill-e1506096517831.jpg Photo Credit Chris Harris

Other photos of people and machinery involved in meadow restoration available from Herefordshire Meadows website www.herefordshiremeadows.org.uk or from Caroline Hanks 07779 080940 Caroline.hanks@farming4wildlife.co.uk