



3 June 2021

Circular economy initiative helps fund restoration of vital habitat

DPD Eco Fund benefits Forestry England campaign in Wareham

A year on from a fire which devastated Wareham Forest, an innovative eco fund created by parcel delivery firm DPD is helping fund the restoration work.

In May 2020 a fire, believed to have been started by disposable BBQs, scorched heathland, destroyed woodlands and wiped-out critical habitats for wildlife across an area equivalent to the size of 350 football pitches.

Wareham Forest is a stronghold for wildlife and much of it is classified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It is one of the few places where it is still possible to find all six of the UK's native reptiles, including the endangered smooth snake and sand lizard, and it is home to many rare species of birds and insects.

Forestry England launched a fundraising appeal to help with the restoration and DPD backed the appeal with a significant donation from its Eco Fund, part of the company's wide-ranging sustainability programme.

The money went towards a range of initiatives including the purchase of a specialised heavy-duty mower and collector that will help create firebreaks and gather up the vegetation to minimise the risk of future fires in the forest. The DPD donation also helped to fund the planting of 79,000 new trees. Forestry England is carefully restoring the forest and heathland of Wareham Forest to support a range of wildlife and habitats and connect landscapes.

The DPD Eco Fund is funded solely by the firm's circular economy initiatives to protect the environment. Plastic shrink wrap used throughout the operation is broken down, and then recycled to create new plastic shrink wrap. The money generated from this, along with the recycling of wooden pallets, goes straight into the Eco Fund.

Anyone can apply for a grant from the Eco Fund via the DPD Green website, and in just over a year, DPD has donated £220,000 to community groups, educational facilities and start-up companies, to fund green, ecological or sustainable projects benefiting the environment.

DPD's Head of CSR Oly Craughan has now been able to visit Wareham Forest to find out more about the work and it is hoped that DPD staff will be able to volunteer later this year as part of the restoration work.

Oly Craughan commented, "Wareham Forest is a very special place and it was fantastic to be able to visit and find out first-hand about the work going on. I'm delighted the Eco Fund has been able to help in such a significant way and it is important for us to feedback to everyone at DPD how we can make a huge difference through working smarter and more sustainably. I'm very grateful to Forestry England for inviting us and hopefully we can work together on other initiatives up and down the country.

"Our approach to sustainability is so wide ranging now. It isn't just about the investment in decarbonising our van fleet, which will see us with around 1,700 electric vehicles on the road by the end of this year. It is about making everything we do that bit smarter and more sustainable and looking for opportunities to join the dots to create circular economies. The Eco Fund sits alongside other initiatives like ReLOVE which, in partnership with clothing company ASOS, sees our drivers collect pre-loved clothing on the doorstep and deliver it to one of five leading UK charities, free of charge."

Mike Seddon, Forestry England Chief Executive, said: "The fantastic support of DPD through their Eco Fund is giving us a chance to sensitively restore the unique landscape of Wareham Forest. This is a much-loved place for people to explore and enjoy as well as being home to rare and captivating wildlife. Working in partnership with DPD and others, we're replanting some of the trees lost in the blaze and also creating open areas of heathland habitat and it's this careful balance which will give a mix of wildlife a chance to thrive. We're looking forward to continuing our partnership with DPD and seeing Wareham Forest flourish."

Full details of all of DPD's sustainability initiatives can be found on its dedicated green website: <https://green.dpd.co.uk/>

ends-

For further information please contact: press@dpd.co.uk

Notes to editors:

Picture: L to R Graham Nottage, Forest Beat Manager, Oly Craughan from DPD and Mark Warn, Wildlife Ranger, pictured with the new heavy-duty mower designed to create firebreaks.

The UK's favourite parcel delivery group: DPD has been voted top in MoneySavingExpert's consumer satisfaction poll for parcel delivery companies eight years running.

In April 2015, DPD was awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise 2015 in the Innovation category, for its unique one-hour delivery service, Predict.

In 2018, DPD opened the UK's first all-electric parcel delivery depot in Westminster. DPD currently has over 700 EVs on the road in the UK and in October 2020, announced plans to deliver to 25 of the largest towns and cities in the UK with zero and low-emission delivery means by 2025. Details of all of DPD's sustainability initiatives can be found on its dedicated green website: <https://green.dpd.co.uk/>

DPD is a member of DPD group, one of Europe's leading parcels groups, wholly owned by France's La Poste, the second largest postal group in Europe.

The company operates more than 10,000 vehicles from 84 locations and delivers over 300 million parcels a year.