



## PRESS RELEASE

### ROCKINGHAM FOREST FOR LIFE – CORPORATE BUSINESS EVENT UPDATE BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR LOCAL APPROACH TO TACKLE GLOBAL CLIMATE ISSUE

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Contact: Neil Monaghan Tel: 01604 237325 Email: [nmonaghan@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:nmonaghan@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

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The River Nene Regional Park Community Interest Company's Rockingham Forest for Life initiative took a major step forward on the 15<sup>th</sup> July at Boughton House where Northamptonshire businesses supported proposals to create 1,200ha of new woodland to help address climate. The project, which is supported by the Forestry Commission, is an innovative scheme that will work with the private sector to make energy saving measures, improve their market position and competitiveness by developing their green credentials, to release funding to support the planting of trees.

This will have widespread benefits as the woodlands will absorb CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide), a green House Gas produced from energy consumption, thereby reducing the businesses' net carbon footprints, and provide a tangible link between energy use and the local environment. Businesses investing in the Rockingham Forest for Life will be able to fulfil corporate obligations whilst their engaging employees in making and increasing energy savings in the work place.

The scheme will increase the level of woodland cover in Northamptonshire, which is only two thirds of the national average in England, and less than a sixth of that in Europe, and help to reinforce the character of the Rockingham Forest, a former Royal Hunting Forest, much of which is Ancient Woodland. The regeneration of the Rockingham Forest will offer significant benefits to health and well being, wildlife and offers an innovative and purposeful means of bringing together both communities and businesses around a common cause. It will also make the area more resilient to climate change, provide a wide range of opportunities for leisure, recreation, and education, invigorate the local economy and contribute to Northamptonshire being one of the most attractive landscapes in England in which to invest, to live and work.

Christopher Davidge, Chair of the River Nene Regional Park said "We were delighted with the very positive response from our colleagues in the private sector and will be working with them to move the project forward. We are already working with landowners to identify suitable sites and are planning to start planting later this year, in Autumn."

Rob Purdie, Executive Director of Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership Ltd (NEP) said "Working in partnership with the private sector to tackle major issues such as these is the way forward, and its value should not be under-estimated. Green and environmentally aware businesses are important to Northamptonshire. We are delighted to be supporting this event, encouraging Northamptonshire businesses to make a positive contribution to our local environment and at the same time providing tangible benefits to our local economy."

Supported by: Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership 

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- Notes to Editors -

**The River Nene Regional Park CIC** - A Community Interest Company

More information can be found on [www.rockinghamforestforlife.org](http://www.rockinghamforestforlife.org) as the project moves forward, or you can contact the River Nene Regional Park on 01604 236764.

1. The River Nene Regional Park (RNRP) is the implementation body for Green Infrastructure, supporting the growth areas in Northamptonshire. Since its inception in 2004, the RNRP has secured more than £20 million of Government funding to support the delivery of green infrastructure projects in Northamptonshire. Its strategic framework for the delivery of green infrastructure has been adopted throughout the county and supports both the North Northamptonshire and emerging West Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategies.
2. The River Nene Regional Park:
  - Champions the provision of green infrastructure – a network of multi-functional green spaces across Northamptonshire
  - Secures funding – enabling partners to develop and deliver innovative projects that contribute to and enhance the green Infrastructure network
  - Co-ordinates the delivery of green infrastructure through partnership collaboration – ensuring that there is a strategic and joined-up approach among partner organisations involved in delivering green infrastructure. Partners include Regional Government Agencies, Local Authorities, the private and third or voluntary sectors
3. For more information, please see [www.rnrp.org](http://www.rnrp.org)