

Community Woodlands

Project Summary

The creation of four community woodlands in Greater Manchester, using financial support from the private sector.

Background

With 25% of the UK's derelict land occurring in the north west, there is considerable political, commercial and community support for creating publicly accessible greenspace for the 7 million people who live in the region. The Co-operative Bank, whose head office is in Manchester, chose to celebrate its 125th anniversary in just this way, supporting a project that would bring long-term benefit to the people of the area.

The Project

With assistance from the Bank, the Red Rose Forest and other partners planted 4 major new woodlands, over 100 hectares all together. As the woodlands have matured, they have transformed previously derelict land into a thriving wooded landscape.

What has been achieved?

Kenworthy Wood is a good example. Covering 40 hectares, it is on a prime site between the River Mersey and the M60, forming a green lung between two large housing estates and several busy transport routes. Prior to planting, the site was sparsely vegetated and inaccessible to the public.

Over 12 hectares of woodland, including silver birch, alder and poplar, were planted in the first two years. A community orchard was created and produces a variety of fruit for local use. More than 5 hectares of meadow have been

created, attracting grey partridge and grasshopper warblers.

Site monitoring shows that Kenworthy Woods now support:

- 42 species of breeding or visiting birds
- 59 species of fungi
- 15 species of butterflies
- 17 species of orchids.

Kenworthy Woods will continue to be monitored over 10 years and the results posted on a website, enabling people who have been involved with the project to follow the wood's evolution.

KEY FACTS	
DATES	1997 – 2000
Partners & funders	Co-operative Bank, Countryside Agency, Groundwork, Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority, local authority partners
Costs	£1 million
Size/scale	Over 100 ha woodland planted

