

# Annexe No.1 South Derbyshire Environmental Forum

## Environmental Volunteering Project: Terms of reference and project development Jan 2014

**The Environmental Volunteering Project is part of South Derbyshire Environmental Forum and South Derbyshire Partnership Sustainable Development group.**

It is run by SDDC's Environmental Education Project –Alan Bates, Kate Allies, Lawrence Oates

### Background

- Voluntary groups have asked for help with environmental projects in their villages as part of the South Derbyshire Environmental Forum group consultation 2013.
- 6 local businesses who are major employers have approached the Environmental Education Project team with offers of environmental and community volunteering, including some multiple opportunities.
- Linking potential volunteers to projects would achieve benefits to the community as a whole. Providing some basic training and support should be possible with the support of the South Derbyshire Partnership.
- Derbyshire County Council are also reviewing their work with volunteer groups with reference to improving public space owned by the County and Public Rights of Way. It is a good opportunity for joint working and sharing resources.
- The National Forest Company have a Heritage Lottery Project, 'Black to Green' which has some funding to assist in engaging volunteers and schools in environmental projects on the S Derbyshire/ N W Leics border.

### Aims

- To improve biodiversity and the visual attractiveness of South Derbyshire
- To enable more environmental volunteering to take place in South Derbyshire
- To provide support and training to voluntary community environmental groups and individuals
- To support businesses in their Community Investment and 'Business in the Community' (BiTC) work
- To plan long term outputs to be SDDC cost-neutral (include inputs from partners and external funders)
- To provide a project template which can be shared with neighbouring authorities and partner organisations

### Terms of reference:

- To strengthen links between business and the local community, with the council acting as the initial interface / facilitator

- To enable practical environmental improvements in towns and villages by identifying ways of linking business volunteers with local voluntary environmental groups
- To identify the potential for businesses to provide environmental volunteers and what the business needs would be for the project to be a success
- To work with voluntary community groups to highlight their desired environmental improvements (eg 'stiles to gates'; create wildflower meadow) and make these into projects that are suitable for corporate volunteer teams
- To identify barriers to this process and potential solutions and trial the process
- To identify training needs within the voluntary environmental village groups to enable them to lead on attracting volunteer corporate teams to their projects in future
- To link with training programmes for individuals to provide opportunities for them to develop confidence and practice their new skills.
- To review business opportunities for this project to form part of an apprenticeship scheme or other work opportunity by accessing external funding

### **Potential Issues**

- Managing expectations of the voluntary groups
- Identifying the barriers e.g. risk assessment, paperwork and training needs within the voluntary groups and providing solutions in a timely manner
- Attracting businesses to the scheme and managing their expectations

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### **Potential outcome/s**

- New environmental projects would be made possible across the District
- Potentially the voluntary groups could attract new members to help them with long term sustainability of their group and their projects
- Individuals who wish to start volunteering can be supported and signposted to suitable projects.
- Pool of resources and expertise which can be shared with other councils and community groups; could be an example of good practice / innovation
- Opportunity for volunteering on SDDC-owned land and potential to contribute to SDDC environmental projects
- Cross-over links with Heritage Lottery Projects in the Heart of the Forest and Eureka

Park

- May attract external funding
- May be opportunity for apprenticeship or other workplace opportunities

**Risks:**

- Cost and future ownership of materials needs to be factored in.
- Need to be clear about insurance responsibilities
- Risk that groups might need more sustained support than can be provided
- Economic changes could reverse the business sector support
- Project needs to be set up to charge to cover costs from the start
- Projects need to be led and delivered in a professional manner and we need to contribute positive environmental benefits and avoid doing any damage...

**Key stakeholders/ consultees:**

South Derbyshire Environmental Forum

South Derbyshire Partnership (Sustainable Development Group)

Individual business: eg Bison, Toyota, Rolls-Royce, Nestle, Vodaphone

South Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Services (SDCVS) - volunteering and training

South Derbyshire Voluntary Sector Forum and Strategic Volunteering Partnership (SDCVS)  
- Chris Harris

Derbyshire Biodiversity Project Officer (hosted by Derbyshire County Council) Nick Moyes

Derbyshire County Council (Countryside Service) Volunteers Project Officer - Steve Cresswell

South Derbyshire District Council – Ian Hey

Parish Councils

Other volunteer programmes eg University of Derby (Peter Walker/Jason Nichols – Community Relations); Community Payback teams.

SDDC department who may have potential projects: Grounds Maintenance team, Housing services and within the Community and Planning teams eg Open Spaces.

Similar Programmes in other areas

Other landowners (particularly with public access sites eg Forestry Commission)