



This project has received European Regional Development Funding through INTERREG IV B.



INTERREG IV B

WP2 - Action 13 - Investment 4: Holmesdale demonstration project in Surrey, South East England



Map of the proposed woodland planting schedule for the site © Surrey County Council

The Holmesdale demonstration project in Surrey, South East England will illustrate how a mineral company's non-operational land can enhance the restoration of its operational land, to provide habitat, landscape and recreational benefits.

Sibelco UK's sandpits at North Park Farm & Pendell in East Surrey are being restored to an agricultural and woodland use, linking existing blocks of woodland together. By tree planting on land owned by Sibelco but not being used for sand extraction (the pink area on the above map), this will strengthen and enhance the final restoration of the sandpits themselves.

The demonstration project sits within the Holmesdale Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA), one of a number of areas across South East England that has been identified as providing on-the-ground opportunities to enhance local wildlife habitats. The whole area has been and continues to be worked for sand extraction. The western end of the BOA has already been restored, creating wetland habitats forming part of the Nutfield Marsh Nature Reserve. The woodland creation in this project will add significant biodiversity interest to the eastern end.



Aerial view of the Holmesdale Biodiversity Opportunity Area © Sibelco UK

The creation of new woodland corridors to reconnect existing areas of woodland, some beautiful ancient bluebell woods, will allow wildlife to move more freely through the Surrey landscape. The planting will visually enhance the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and will also provide opportunities to improve pathways and access with new woodland walks for local people and visitors.



Sibelco's sandpit at North Park Farm © Sibelco UK



The project will be achieved by working closely with the local community and the mineral extraction company, Sibelco UK. The plan is to hold a number of community and school tree planting events to plant approximately 11,400 trees along a 4km stretch of land. This will complement the conservation volunteer activity already taking place in the existing woodland.

The Holmesdale demonstration project will serve as an exemplar of what can be achieved using non-operational land owned by the mineral extraction companies. It will illustrate how non-operational land can be used to enhance the restoration of sites following mineral workings to provide benefits for wildlife and people in Surrey. It is hoped it will encourage others to take similar action.

