

Dear stakeholder,

We are delighted to be able to announce that Charnwood Forest has been successful in a £2.75m grant bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for initial support through its Landscape Partnership (LP) programme. This is the result of two years' hard work by a range of partners in the Charnwood Forest Regional Park and many of you will have contributed to the bid through your attendance at last year's Stakeholder Forum at County Hall.



Image: © Chris Donohoe

Charnwood Forest's unique landscape erupted out of a volcano in the oceans near the South Pole 600 million years ago. It has developed rich layers of heritage: its landscape is defined by granite-topped hills, wooded valleys, heathlands and grasslands; its shaded lanes reveal Arts and Craft cottages, ancient monasteries and drystone walls. Sir David Attenborough was inspired as a boy in Leicestershire by its internationally important geology and fossils.

But, despite being on the doorstep of Leicester, Loughborough and Coalville, its value, beauty and importance is not as well-known as it should be. This puts it at risk: if people are not passionate about Charnwood, they will not understand its importance and, ultimately, the things that make it so special risk being forgotten and lost.

Our Landscape Partnership project aims to raise the profile of Charnwood Forest as a surprising outpost of upland England in lowland Leicestershire. It will help people to explore Charnwood by investing in the 'honey-pot' sites of Beacon Hill, Bradgate Park and the Outwoods and improving the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes that link them. It will also help people to engage with Charnwood's rich history through arts, activities and events and offer them opportunities to learn new skills such as drystone walling and wildlife recording. It will then harness people's interest in Charnwood to get them involved in its future through helping tell its stories, managing its habitats and protecting its heritage.

This announcement means that we will have funding for an 18-month development phase, during which we will be gathering key information and pulling together the detail of the projects that will form the basis of the five-year Landscape Partnership.

Early next year, we will hold our Stakeholder Forum and we hope you can join us to help celebrate this great step forward for our partnership and for Charnwood Forest. We'll be able to update you on what the next two years hold in store and how you can continue to contribute.

In the meantime, keep up to date on what's happening through our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/charnwoodbid/) and our Twitter feed ([@CharnwoodBid](https://twitter.com/CharnwoodBid)).

Thanks again for would support and contributions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Lattaway', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sam Lattaway | Head of Landscape, Biodiversity & Recreation

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