



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Summer Family Nature Challenge Success

The Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership has successfully helped and encouraged over 20 local families to learn more and engage with their local green spaces and associated nature. Families took part in this challenge throughout the school summer holidays.

As with many services, the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership engagement team had to change their plans for summer 2020 – and think outside of the box! With original intentions to deliver the John Muir Discovery Award to a number of families over spring/summer 2020, the team didn't just want to give in to current restrictions. Instead they planned and delivered the Award, all virtually.

The John Muir Award, developed by the John Muir Trust, is an environmental award aimed at getting children and adults alike engaged and inspired by their local 'wild places' and nature. There are 4 parts to the Award: Explore, Discover, Conserve and Share. For many the lockdown experience from the end of March inspired a connection, or re-connection, with nature and the local landscape. Many people were exploring and discovering more on their daily walks – and families showed an interest in learning more!

After expanding the free opportunity to any family from around the Pendle Hill (and wider Lancashire) area, the team focused on offering a new theme of nature exploration each week of the school summer holidays. Via weekly emails and short film clips, families were inspired to learn and discover more about minibeasts and pollinators; wildflowers and hedgerows; birds; local archaeology and history; and Pendle Hill at night.

As well as completing the activities, participants also had to share their experiences through photos, videos, diary entries or scrapbooks. Lots of families got involved, completing the 25 hours of required activity (and in some cases many more hours!) and sharing wonderful photos and scrapbooks with the PHLP engagement team.

The activities and information provided could be completed in gardens or nearby parks, with an emphasis on staying local and discovering 'what's on your doorstep.'

One family said 'our family really enjoyed having a weekly focus to help us achieve something and for my children to return to school with many stories to tell and the scrapbook we have created.' After a strange few months of mostly home schooling, many

families appreciated the 'real-life learning' opportunities and more family focused engagement for the summer holidays.

For the PHLP team, things have looked quite different without face to face engagement. Alison Cross, Outdoor Learning Officer funded by the Ernest Cook Trust, said 'delivering the virtual John Muir family Award has been very rewarding. As I was unable to deliver any of my summer holiday family nature events, delivering a family engagement project online really saved my summer! I would just like to say a big thank you to everyone who got involved and we hope that we can restart events and activities soon.'

The John Muir Award can be completed by families, as individuals or as groups. Find out more online at <https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award>. Some families now plan to complete the next level of the John Muir award themselves.

Community Officer Jayne has now set up a new engagement project. 'As autumn appears, and the weather is set to get colder and wetter – you may feel like you need more motivation to stay connected with nature and the outdoors. We have set up a Connecting to Nature newsletter series, open for everyone to sign up to!' These fortnightly newsletters will include a nature theme, facts and activities to encourage families and adults alike to stay connected to nature. To sign up, please visit www.pendlehillproject.com.

EDITORS NOTES

- The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is led by the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- The partnership aims to:
 - I. restore, enhance and conserve the heritage and landscape of Pendle Hill
 - II. reconnect people with their past and their landscape
 - III. bring the two sides of the hill together
 - IV. create a sustainable future for the environment, heritage and for visitors' experience of Pendle Hill
- The scheme was awarded a National Lottery grant of £1.8million by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in January 2018. These funds will be delivered from 2018-2022 and will be matched with a further £1m raised locally.
- The scheme is made up of a dozen projects which safeguard the area's wildlife and heritage and improve people's access to this popular countryside area. We will do this by providing opportunities for training and volunteering; by supporting research and devising creative and digital interpretation to inspire a new generation about our heritage; by restoring important landscape features, and by working with communities to re-tell the stories of radical Pendle people. The scheme will increase pride in this special place and raise aspirations amongst communities, and it will bring in new investment to support the environment and the economy.

- The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Fund and by the Forest of Bowland AONB. Partners include representatives of parish councils, the landowning and farming community, Pendle and Ribble Valley Borough Councils, Lancashire County Council, statutory bodies, tourism businesses and volunteers.
- Projects will be delivered by the AONB team, plus local delivery partners including In –Situ Arts, the Dry Stone Walling Association, Mid Pennine Arts and Ribble Rivers Trust.
- The Pendle Hill LP covers 120 square kilometres, stretching from Gisburn down to Whalley, and from Clitheroe across to Nelson and Padiham.
- The Hill is well known as a beauty spot and is heavily visited by residents of the local towns: it is a perfect place for walking and cycling. The area's heritage is dominated by the story of the Pendle Witches, but there are lots more stories to tell including the founding of the Quaker movement, non- conformists and radicals, Roman and Bronze Age settlers, medieval farming systems and early industrial developments. The network of dry stone walls and hedgerows give the area a distinctive feel, and the landscape is also important for its wild moorland, rare birds and woodlands.
- For further information contact the LP Scheme Manager cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk on 07891 537835 / 01200 420420
- Visit the project website at www.pendlehillproject.com or visit our Facebook page 'Pendle Hill Project' for up to date news and views.

About the Heritage Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #HLFsupported



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