



Little Ouse Headwaters Project

PRESS RELEASE

TOP PRIZE FOR FEN PEOPLE

Restoration work on wetlands to the east of Redgrave has won a top national award. Members of the Little Ouse Headwaters Project, based in Blo' Norton and surrounding parishes, received their prize at a ceremony in London last week, their second major award in ten years.

The Project, which has been buying and restoring wetlands and fens in the Little Ouse valley close to the source of the river, was honoured for its work at Parker's Piece and Bleyswycks Bank in Thelnetham, which was partly funded by the Biffaward scheme. The LOHP is run entirely by volunteers, and beat off strong competition from across the country.

Major works on the sites included the scraping away of the degraded top layer of peat and creation of open water, which have made these areas now more attractive to the valley's unique wildlife - and public access has also been created on formerly private land. It was these works that particularly impressed the judges of the 2011 Biffaward Award for Rebuilding Biodiversity.

Delighted with the prize, given annually by Biffa, the waste disposal company, Project chairman Nigel Clark told the Diss Express:

"This is brilliant news. Two major national awards in our first ten years shows that we are doing something that is really special. It makes all the hard work of our volunteers worthwhile."

Honorary Secretary Jo-Anne Pitt added: "This latest prize means that more people will hear about our activities and perhaps join us in preserving the wetlands, such an important part of our landscape heritage."

ENDS.

Notes for Editors

Biffaward

In 1997 Biffa Waste Services agreed to donate landfill tax credits to the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) to administer under the fund name **Biffaward**. Grants made from the fund currently amount to £100 million, supporting many worthwhile projects.

Biffa is a leading integrated waste management business providing collection, treatment, recycling and technology-driven energy generation services.

Biffa promotes and delivers sustainable waste management solutions for commercial and municipal.

The **landfill tax** came into operation in 1996. Its purpose is to reflect the impact of landfill on the environment and also to help achieve the targets for more sustainable waste management. The tax, levied on the tonnage of all material disposed of in landfill sites and collected by Biffa on behalf of HM Revenue and Customs, aims to encourage recycling and reduce waste by raising the cost of disposal.

The regulations allow landfill site operators to direct approximately 6% of the tax they have collected towards approved environmental projects. However, any approved project can only receive 90% of its desired funding from

the landfill tax. The remainder must come direct from the landfill site operator or from a third party organisation or company.

www.biffaward.org



Building Communities. Transforming Lives.

Little Ouse Headwaters Project

The Little Ouse Headwaters Project is a registered charity, established in 2002 by local residents who were keen to take practical action to help protect and restore threatened aspects of the local landscape and its wildlife. It is located on the Norfolk/Suffolk border at the headwaters of the Little Ouse River (which forms the county border). The LOHP remains a community-based project – it is managed by a Board of Trustees drawn from the local area, has no paid staff and is entirely run by volunteers.

The upper Little Ouse valley contains a number of sites of local, national and international importance for wildlife, most notably the small remaining fragments of valley fen. Some of the sites we manage are protected by conservation designations (national – Site of Special Scientific Interest, or European – Special Area of Conservation)

As well as managing sites for the benefit of wildlife, we are committed to increasing public access and enjoyment of the project area by creating new footpaths, providing guided walks, and encouraging people to become involved as volunteers.

The project has won a series of awards: the RSPB/Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management “Living Wetlands” Award (2006), the first entirely voluntary organisation to gain this national recognition. In 2008 the 'Greenest Community' award for 'outstanding work to protect the landscape and biodiversity', from the Suffolk Strategic Partnership's Greenest County initiative. In 2010 the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership's Sites Award for our work to conserve, restore and manage the valley fens and associated habitats of the Little Ouse.

Further information about the project, volunteering opportunities, and all forthcoming events can be found on our web site. www.lohp.org.uk

Contact us:

Email: enquiries@lohp.org.uk

Phone: Peter Coster (Press & Publicity) 01379 688018

Jo-Anne Pitt (Hon. Secretary) 01379 898684 or 07919576513