



## ***Little Ouse Headwaters Project***

### ***MEDIA RELEASE***

**16 June for immediate release**

## **£60,000 grant helps local conservation project to develop**

The Little Ouse Headwaters Project (LOHP) is delighted to announce that it has secured a grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and as a result appointed its first-ever employee.

The grant, totalling £60,000 over two years, will fund a Conservation Manager post for 4 days a week, as well as the continued production of our successful “News from the Ouse” newsletter. With the new conservation manager overseeing day to day running of the project, which now manages 71 hectares of land for conservation and public access, its trustees will be able to spend more time developing the project and encouraging local involvement.

Peter Coster – Chair of the LOHP - says “We are pleased to announce the appointment of Rob Martyr as our Conservation Manager; his appointment marks the beginning of an exciting new phase in the development of our project. Rob brings a wealth of experience of river and wetland conservation management to us and we look forward to working with him. We are extremely grateful for the generous support of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.”

Rob Martyr, who will start work with the project on 19th June, said “I was inspired by what the LOHP and its partners have achieved already, and I really relish the chance to be a part of its continuing development. I’m particularly looking forward to meeting and working with the LOHP’s many volunteers – it’s inspiring that so many people have such a commitment to their local project”

The appointment of an employee marks a major milestone for the LOHP, which has been entirely volunteer-run since its inception in 2002.

**ENDS**

## ***Notes for editors***

### **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities throughout the UK both now and in the future. We do this by funding the charitable work of organisations who are building an inclusive, creative and sustainable society.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. In 2016 we made grants of £42.4 million towards a wide range of work within the arts, children and young people, the environment, food and social change. We also have a £45 million allocation to social investments for organisations with the aim of creating social impact.

[www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk](http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk)

### **Little Ouse Headwaters Project**

The Little Ouse Headwaters Project (LOHP) is a community based charity, established by local residents in 2002 and run by entirely by volunteers until June 2017 when we appointed our first employee.

The LOHP is located on the Norfolk/Suffolk Border, an important but previously somewhat neglected link between the Broads and the Brecks. The area has internationally important valley fen habitats, as well as wet woodland, heathland and dry grassland, and wet meadows.

The project has brought 71 hectares of land into active conservation management, and so far raised over £1.3 million to fund its work.

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.

In addition to the hard work of volunteers, our success has been due to generous support from a wide range of funding organisations. These include The Heritage Lottery Fund and most recently, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Volunteering is at the heart of what we do. We provide training opportunities covering a range of skills and knowledge, from practical land management to fen ecology and identification of plants and animals. A large network of expert naturalists volunteer to record the species present on our sites. Many of our sites are changing rapidly as they undergo restoration from years of damage and lack of management, so monitoring progress is important.

Our newsletter, the "News from the Ouse" is delivered to all households in 7 local parishes. Our website holds much information on the project and our activities, as well learning resources for schools and an archive of reports and other material relevant to the project area.

LOHP sites are open to the public at all times, with over 5 km of permissive footpaths, with boardwalks and bridges over ditches and river, wide access kissing gates, and benches for the weary.

Further information about the project, volunteering opportunities, and all forthcoming events can be found at [www.lohp.org.uk](http://www.lohp.org.uk), [@LOHPProject](https://www.facebook.com/LOHPProject) and [www.facebook.com/LOHPProject](https://www.facebook.com/LOHPProject)

**For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact us via:**

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**Photographs:** Images to support this story are available at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BxxXkh1J5B8FOXVxOENaWkZ6VkU?usp=sharing>