



La Soci t 

For nature, history and
science in Guernsey

PRESS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

Woodland across Europe occupies 42% of the land area whereas the UK has just 12%. In comparison, Guernsey has less than 8% woodland cover. With these figures in mind, La Soci t  Guernesiaise (LSG) is launching a new Community Woodland project in the island.

The project has five main aims -

1. Provide suitable locations for memorial trees
2. Increase native woodland cover across the island
3. Undertake tree planting for local carbon offsetting
4. Provide publicly accessible spaces (where appropriate)
5. Link existing areas of woodland (where feasible)

Various areas of land have been donated to LSG over the years and in some cases, it has been suitable for tree planting. The Jardin de Lorette (Les Petites Capelles) and the Bougourd Orchard (La Rue Carriere) were both derelict greenhouse sites which were cleared by LSG and planted with fruit trees. They have become important pockets of natural habitat which support wildlife within our developed landscapes. They are also enjoyed by the public. With this in mind, La Soci t  would be pleased to receive further donations of land across the island in order to protect our green spaces.

The Community Woodland project is a new initiative aimed at enabling us to respond to specific requests from the general public who wish to plant trees, perhaps as a community project, as part of corporate social responsibility or in memory of a loved one. Unfortunately the organisation does not currently have land available as its existing nature reserves are already hosting important habitats such as species-rich grasslands, orchid meadows, reedbeds etc. With this in mind, La Soci t  are seeking donations of new areas of land which can be dedicated to tree planting and, where appropriate, opened up to the public. If land is not available for donation, it may be possible to raise funds in order to purchase some sites.

The site(s) would be prepared, maintained and coordinated by LSG and would be planted up with trees by individuals, families, corporate groups, clubs etc over the course of time.

Only native trees would generally be planted e.g. English Oak, Common Ash, Silver Birch, Common Alder, Grey Willow, Yew, Holly, Hazel, Hawthorn, Crab Apple and Wild Pear.

Suitable land might include derelict greenhouse sites or isolated land which is not viable for commercial farming. Areas which already host important habitats, or would be better managed with other habitats in mind, would not be planted up but LSG would still be pleased to take such land on.

Trevor Bourgaize, President of La Societe said 'Land is at a premium locally and is disappearing under development at an alarming rate. Whilst we acknowledge the need for housing, we are keen to protect and enhance what is left of our natural environment. Community woodlands are a great way to ensure that wildlife is safeguarded in places where we all live and work. We are particularly keen to establish woodlands in the north of the island to counter the ongoing urbanization of that part of the island'.

Julie Davis, Ornithological Section Secretary said 'A walk through woodland in spring, full of birdsong and other biodiversity is an uplifting experience. Creating new woodland with the help of the community is a great investment for the future of the island'.

La Societe would be pleased to hear from anyone who can help - please email info@societe.org.gg or contact the office on 725093.