



JOINT COMMITTEE (SPELTHORNE)

DATE: 21 March 2022

ITEM 10: PUBLIC WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Question 1: from Mr Andrew McLuskey

In the light of the recently declared support by Surrey County Council for therapeutic 'Social Prescribing' – but also noting the limited facilities for this service in Stanwell – will the Joint Committee agree to press for the realization of this by proactively supporting the exciting, environmentally and educationally friendly 2016 agreed plan for Stanwell Woods - this given the long-standing but not yet honoured commitment by landowners Cemex to provide an enhanced restoration scheme to deliver biodiversity, public access and historical reference of a kind that would, we are told, otherwise not be possible.

Response

As was clarified at the recent site visit with Mr McLuskey, the approved restoration scheme for the site will deliver areas of greenspace involving species-rich meadows, woodland, water features and elements of the historic gardens of the former Stanwell Place; all traversed by proposed footpath routes. The restoration of the site is due to be completed on a phased basis by 2027, and contrary to Mr McLuskey's assertion has not been abandoned or changed.

Surrey Heartlands is one of 7 national green social prescribing 'test and learn' sites that are being funded by NHSE, DEFRA, Natural England, Sports England and a number of other national partners to pilot nature-based approaches to tackling mental ill-health.

As well as supporting local green voluntary and community organisations to deliver innovative projects that support people with identified mental health need to connect to nature, the Surrey Heartlands green social prescribing programme also aims for:

- GSP to be accepted as an evidenced based way to support mental ill health in Surrey Heartlands by embedding it into commissioning strategies
- Agreed access points in Mental Health pathways where people are offered GSP
- The health benefits of nature to be embedded into Surrey's environment policy/strategy, and the green voluntary/community sector

In Stanwell, Mindful Ninja are going to be running nature-based mindfulness courses for teenagers. And the Stanwell Allotment continues to offer social & therapeutic horticulture sessions.

This may also be of interest:

www.surreycc.gov.uk/spelthorne

Local Authority Treescapes Fund - Funding available to local authorities in England to increase tree planting and natural regeneration in local communities. Applications will be accepted from unitary and top tier local authorities in England. Local authorities are strongly encouraged to work with other organisations, NGOs, community groups and private individuals to deliver tree planting and natural regenerations. The deadline is 31/05/22 and more information is available at [Local Authority Treescapes Fund - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/local-authority-treescapes-fund).

Question 2: from Mr Andrew McLuskey

Given that the new Environment Act includes specific requirements on species abundance and biodiversity how will the current proposals for restoration at Stanwell Quarry assist in achieving these goals?

Response

The Environment Act 2021 introduces new provisions which will be phased in over a number of years, not least the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Such a commitment to BNG is set out in the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) and the County Council has applied this for many years in its approach to mineral site restoration. Indeed, the Environment Act specifies a minimum of 10% BNG, but on mineral sites this is often above that percentage, including at Stanwell.

Parts of the Stanwell site are designated SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Importance) and the restoration scheme reflects such interest in retaining and creating new wetland features, woodland interest and the addition of species-rich grassland.