

PRESS RELEASE

Natural Surrey Heath launches with free bird nest boxes

The state of nature in Surrey and elsewhere in the country has never been so serious. The UK State of Nature Report 2016 headline findings were that **50%** of wildlife species have shown a declining population between 1970 and 2013, that **15%** of all UK wildlife is threatened with extinction or is already extinct and that species with priority conservation status are doing even worse! What is more, the UK compares very badly in the international league table included in the study.

Natural Surrey Heath is the brainchild of two local charities, The Camberley Society and Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust. The mission of the initiative is to make Surrey Heath a Natural borough – a place where people and nature are better connected, a borough rich with wildlife where every child can benefit from exploring, playing and learning outdoors. The project seeks to make a better, greener, healthier place for people and wildlife to live.

Natural Surrey Heath wants to help the whole community see the benefits of working together to make this happen and make Surrey Heath one of the most beautiful and naturally diverse places in the country.

To start the initiative the project will be giving away fifty superb bird box kits, in National Nest box week, to residents of Surrey Heath. Within just a few weeks the lucky owners will begin to see birds making their nests and be able to watch them as they lay their eggs, hatch them and finally fledge their young in springtime. The boxes will be strong enough to last for many years.

If you would like to have a free nest box kit, all Natural Surrey Heath will want from you is contact details so they can keep in touch with you about their project. We will have a stand in The Square, Camberley, near Poundland, on Saturday 17th February where you can reserve or collect your nest box kit. Then all you have to do is follow the simple instructions, assemble your box and put it in the garden and watch the birds use it!

David Powell of The Camberley Society, Joint Leader of the Project said “The idea for Natural Surrey Heath came from the London National City Park Project. It inspired us to think about what we could do, albeit on a smaller scale. Let’s make Surrey Heath a natural borough. A place where people and nature are better connected. A borough that is rich with wildlife and every child benefits from exploring, playing and learning outdoors”.

Colin Wilson, of the Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust, the other Joint Leader, is already heavily involved with the natural world locally and said ‘Given the parlous state of nature we really need to up our game in protecting it for future generations to enjoy. The sound of birdsong in spring, the sight of butterflies in the garden and the humming of bees in our parks is the right of all of us and we need to do all we can to keep them flourishing here in Surrey Heath”.

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