



Corporate Biodiversity – Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust - Blists Hill: May 2015

This event was held in response to a request from the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust to rectify some of their business issues, utilising BESST's knowledge and links. Their popular Blists Hill Victorian Town Museum opened in 1973 and has been growing ever since. However, so have the trees on the site, which were now causing litigation risks and water leakage from the canal basin.



To rectify this, two events were held on Fridays in May, covering tree management and hedgerow planting. Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) provided the expertise (supported by Mark Eccleston from *Pics & Sticks*), with BESST members bringing the “muscle”. Ricoh's Eco Ninjas, Lyreco, St Gobain, Single Source, Alcoa & T&W amongst others attended the events.

The first Friday involved tree clearing in the overgrown canal basin. (with the bonus of watching the Solar Eclipse in the morning!). Tree management skills were taught and the area was cleared ready for the next stage of restoring the basin.



The second Friday involved working with the extremely helpful guys from the Alcoa Foundation, who have been supporting SWT and BESST members with several planting schemes over the last year (a big thanks to Claire Masefield and Julia Cosco for driving the support). SWT's Matt Fletcher and Stuart Edmunds were on hand to cover tree planting training and risk assessments, and BESST members were shown how hedgerows provide a natural soft barrier instead of hard fencing, whilst enhancing the natural capital and increasing biodiversity of the site.



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Business Environmental Support Scheme for Telford



360 saplings were planted over 150 metres, including disease resistant elms to create a Telford resource for nationally repopulating this species.

Both day's had great weather, and members also tucked in to the complimentary "proper old time" fish and chips provided by the Museum!

Stuart Edmunds of Shropshire Wildlife Trust was also impressed with the turn out for the events: *"Shropshire Wildlife Trust are proud to be able to assist and give expert advice to BESST members and look forward to working with them more in the future".*

Andy Whyte, Chair of BESST summarised:

"The interest from local businesses in these two events demonstrated the commitment of a growing number of BESST members to developing their knowledge of natural capital. I'm sure I speak for all those who attended by saying that it makes us both privileged and proud to help our World Heritage site. We now aim to make the next corporate biodiversity events even bigger and better."



Filming of the event was carried out by SWT's Stuart Edmunds and can be viewed on You Tube : <https://youtu.be/bvSYriVISZk>



For further information on any of the environmental topics discussed please contact the BESST Coordinator Jaclyn Kitson on 01952 567578 or email jaclyn.kitson@telford.gov.uk