

Croydon is to host cutting-edge butterfly habitat restoration project, creating butterfly havens for residents to enjoy.

Over the next two years, Brilliant Butterflies will create new homes for butterflies and insects through the creation and restoration of chalk grassland, a rare habitat many species thrive in.

London Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation and the Natural History Museum will be working together with volunteers and local communities to create chalk grassland 'Living Landscapes' that will come alive with butterflies, wildflowers and insects.

This is also an excellent opportunity for residents to volunteer and work alongside specialist scientists to survey the areas using pioneering environmental DNA analysis technology and capture data about chalk grassland wildlife, as well as learn new skills in conservation, all whilst spending quality time outdoors.

Up to 40 new butterfly havens will be created on and adjacent to existing London Wildlife Trust reserves as well as in community greenspaces in south Croydon and Bromley such as housing estates, parks and road verges; enabling residents to experience a snapshot of chalk grassland habitat, and the diversity of species it supports, in everyday places.

Many butterflies and insects are in serious trouble and the State of the UK's Butterflies 2015 report evidenced that 76% of species have declined over the last 40 years. Butterflies and moths are also key indicators of climate change and have been recognised as indicators of biodiversity and a healthy environment.

Brilliant Butterflies aims to enhance the local populations of small blue, grizzled skipper (see photograph), chalk hill blue and common blue butterflies, and reveal secrets about other insects found in these habitats in this part of London, for which we need to know more to ensure their future survival.

Funded by the Dream Fund Award, from the players of the People's Postcode Lottery, the butterfly havens will provide a picturesque and tranquil setting for residents to relax in the warmer months in amongst the butterflies.



Mathew Frith, Director of Conservation at London Wildlife Trust says "Brilliant Butterflies provides us with an unrivalled opportunity to reverse the declines of the amazing diversity of London's chalk grassland wildlife. Not only will we be able to create new havens for butterflies, beetles and bees within our nature reserves, but we can bring nature closer to the communities that live nearby by transforming greenspaces into colourful wildflower spaces. We look forward to working with local people and organisations to put butterflies back on Croydon's map, and bring about a step change in the way we design and manage suburban green space for wildlife and people."

For more information and to sign up to our newsletter please visit the project webpage at <https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/brilliant-butterflies>