



THE WOODLAND TRUST UNVEILS AN OAK FILLED GROVE AT MARTINSHAW WOOD IN LEICESTERSHIRE IN DEDICATION TO PARTNER SOFIDEL AS A THANK YOU FOR 10 YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR UK WOODS AND TREES

Martinshaw Wood, Leicestershire, 28 June 2023 – A decade of dedication to UK trees and woodland, a quarter of a million trees planted, and a million pounds of funding is cause for celebration as the [Woodland Trust](#) thanks [Sofidel](#), a world leader in the manufacturing of paper for hygienic and domestic use, and its [Nicky](#) brand for its commitment to investing in nature-based solutions to climate change and the nature crisis.

The acre grove of oak, hazel, rowan and Scots pine at [Martinshaw Wood](#) in Leicestershire, close to two of Sofidel's UK production sites in Rothley and Hamilton, is **standing testament to the achievements of a decade of partnership** and its commitment to the environment.

In ten years the relationship has grown from Sofidel's support for the Woodland Trust's free tree packs for schools and community groups in 2013 through consumer sales of its Nicky brand toilet tissue and kitchen towel, to its 2023 commitment to champion **protection of UK woodland at a time of crisis for UK woods and trees**.

In its report issued this week [Trees and Woods at the Heart of Nature Recovery](#), the Woodland Trust outlined how restoration work must be prioritised by UK government to rescue nature in the UK's woods – only 7% of Britain's woodland is in good ecological condition and woodland birds and butterflies are in steep decline. Britain's ancient woods are more polluted and damaged, containing less wildlife than at any other point in history.

Well-known for its Nicky brand in the UK, Sofidel is stepping up to support the Trust in its protection of these irreplaceable habitats and helping shine a spotlight on the need to **create fair and free access to green spaces, trees and woodland for communities across the UK**.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP
Together we have planted over 250,000 trees.
Let's continue to create, protect and restore more trees within the UK.





Karl Mitchell, Woodland Trust Director of Fundraising: “Access to woods and trees shouldn’t be the privilege of a few. Everyone should feel the benefit of taking time in green space. It’s proven that trees make us happier and healthier. But there are places where we need more trees, particularly in our urban spaces where they can provide shelter, shade and much needed pollution and flood alleviation. Sofidel has worked with us for a decade and their generous funding has meant we’ve accomplished a great deal in partnership. From supporting farmers and landowners through our MOREwoods scheme to enabling schools and community groups to create and care for green spaces via our tree packs initiative. We’re grateful to have the opportunity to work with an organisation that grows with us and supports all aspects of the work we do at the Trust. Sofidel’s continued commitment means we can focus on protecting our most vulnerable woodland and improving tree equity, pushing for better access to trees for more people, as well as keeping all our woods open and free to access for all.”

Luca Lolli, Sofidel Line of Business Director – Private Label: “I am delighted to celebrate 10 years of partnership with the Woodland Trust. Together we have achieved exceptional results in the UK. From beginning our collaboration under the Nicky brand planting thousands of trees, and now to safeguarding the woodland we have planted, we continue contributing to the protection of our planet. I feel extremely enthusiastic we will achieve a lot more in the future.”

Sofidel is proud of its investment in its local communities. **Over half of its UK staff – more than 450 employees of 30 nationalities across all ages – is employed in its Leicester business** and Sofidel are working with a local 6th Form College to provide students with work placements to support vocational T Levels training.

As more businesses are only just beginning to appreciate the dependency of their business model on a healthy ecosystem and the risks presented by nature’s decline, **Sofidel have been pioneering in their connection with the Woodland Trust, supporting solutions for nature’s recovery for ten years.** As well as demonstrating the importance of protecting their natural assets, they have recognised the need to do this beyond their value chain – giving back to nature because it’s the right thing to do.

Sofidel’s funding also supports restoration and protection at local woods such as Martinshaw Wood, nestled between the communities of Ratby and Groby in the National Forest. Less than 10 miles

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from Sofidel's UK Leicestershire base, and steeped in history dating back to the Domesday Book, Martinshaw is set across 103 hectares and is a home for wildlife including 270 species of moth, some of which are rare.

The Woodland Trust has been restoring this picturesque site with its areas of ancient woodland to its former glory for the past 40 years. Removing plantation conifers and thinning the tree canopy has allowed the woodland flora and fauna to regenerate and flourish. The elusive woodcock, mistle thrush and gold crest are found in the wood, and wood anemone and rare eared willow have returned to this site.

David Logan, Site Manager at Martinshaw Wood: "The decades of restoration work here at Martinshaw have not only created a thriving haven for wildlife, it means we can offer a welcoming green space for our local communities who come here to benefit from nature's remedy – to walk through the woodland or cycle and horse ride along the bridleway. There's even a local orienteering club based here."

Trees keep communities strong and the planet healthy. Support from Sofidel means the Woodland Trust can continue its vital work to protect, restore and create precious native woodland across the UK for the benefit of generations to come.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

About the Woodland Trust

The Woodland Trust is the largest woodland conservation charity in the UK. It has over 500,000 supporters. It wants to see a UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife. The Trust has three key aims:

- 1) protect ancient woodland, which is rare, unique and irreplaceable
- 2) restore damaged ancient woodland, bringing precious pieces of our natural history back to life
- 3) plant native trees and woods with the aim of creating resilient landscapes for people and wildlife.

Established in 1972, the Woodland Trust now has over 1,000 sites in its care, covering approximately 29,000 hectares. Access to its woods is free so everyone can benefit from woods and trees.

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About Sofidel

The Sofidel Group is one of the leading manufacturers of paper for hygienic and domestic use worldwide. Established in 1966, the Group has subsidiaries in 13 countries – Italy, Spain, the UK, Ireland, France, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Poland, Hungary, Greece, Romania and the USA – with more than 6,500 employees, net sales of 2,801 million Euros (2022) and a production capacity of over one million tonnes per year (1,440,000 tonnes in 2022). “Regina”, its most well-known brand, is present on almost all the reference markets. Other brands include: Sopalin, Le Trèfle, Hakle, Softis, Nalys, Cosynel, KittenSoft, Lycke, Nicky, Papernet. A member of the UN Global Compact and the international WWF Climate Savers programme, the Sofidel Group considers sustainability a strategic factor with regards to growth and is committed to reducing its impact on natural capital and maximising social benefits, setting as objective the creation of shared added value for all stakeholders. Sofidel’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets to 2030 have been approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) as consistent with reductions required to keep warming to well-below 2°C, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

About Martinshaw Wood, Leicestershire

Martinshaw Wood is an Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) covering just over 100 hectares (254 acres). It is located 5 miles north-west of Leicester, situated between the villages of Groby and Ratby. The complex of woods owned by the Trust which includes Martinshaw, Pear Tree and Burroughs forms the south-eastern boundary of the National Forest.

Martinshaw is one of the largest single areas of mature ancient woodland habitat in the National Forest area and now that additional new woodlands have been created adjacent and in the wider vicinity of the site its significance in the landscape is considerably enhanced. When the process of restoration is complete its importance in terms of biodiversity will be highly significant within the National Forest and the County of Leicestershire.

There is an abundance of tree, plant, fungi and bird species, with a diverse range of habitats and archaeological features. The extensive path network which links to nearby woods provides a wealth of opportunities to explore for walkers of all abilities, horse riders and cyclists.

The History of Martinshaw

Martinshaw Wood might be one of the woods mentioned in the Domesday Book as lying within the Manor of Groby. Historical research suggests that Martinshaw has been a productive managed wood since the 13th century. For much of the last seven centuries it formed part of the estate of the Earls of Stamford and supplied timber, underwood, and other woodland products to the local economy. Within the large estate were several deer parks and the significant ditch and banks which surround the wood clearly illustrate the need to keep out foraging deer from such a park. The estate records also show that over a long period the wood was used variously for pannage, wood pasture and in the nineteenth century as pheasant cover.

The woodland was clear felled in the early 20th century before it was taken over by the Forestry Commission in 1950. Between 1954 and 1969 the Forestry Commission planted 27 species of both native and exotic broadleaves and conifers the woodland as a commercial plantation. In 1967 Martinshaw was dissected by the construction of the M1 motorway and for the purposes of management the woodland is now divided into 6 compartments. The Woodland Trust purchased the site in 1986 and has been restoring it to its former glory ever since.

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