

BIODIVERSITY CASE STUDY

Company: Imerys Minerals Ltd

Country: United Kingdom

Title **The Woodland Project – Restoration of the landscape of mid-Cornwall’s clay mining regions for the benefit of both the environment and the community.**

Context The woodland project is a post-mining restoration project. It aims to restore the landscape of the china clay area in Cornwall. It follows on from the Heathland Project. From 1997 to 2004, 750 hectares of lowland heath land – another endangered habitat - was restored on former mining sites. Together, the two projects form the biggest initiative of their kind in Europe

Solution Imerys Minerals Ltd. is a key partner in a 3^{1/2}-year program that involves planting a million trees. Under the Woodland Project, tips and surrounding areas on former mining sites will be planted with native broadleaved species to restore biodiversity and improve the landscape. Upland oak and ash woodland has been identified as an endangered habitat in the United Kingdom. To restore the sites, “non native” or commercially planted species will be removed and oak, ash and other native hardwoods will be reintroduced. These deciduous trees open up the woodland floor, enabling wildlife to flourish.
This will make a substantial improvement to the local landscape and make a valuable contribution by Imerys to the re-creation of local biodiversity. The total budget for the project is £2.5 M. This project has many funding sources, the principle ones being Objective One, DEFRA and Imerys. Imerys’ contribution is approx. £0.5M made up of contributions in kind whereby Imerys carry out landscaping activities as a part of the project.

Result Mid 2007: creation and management of 300 ha of new woodland, 300 ha of restoration of existing woodland, 180 ha of conversion of existing tree belts to native broadleaved trees, plus the creation of 12 kms of new access routes increasing community access. It is also hoped that as the woodland becomes established there will be economic opportunities for small businesses e.g. crafts, wood fuel suppliers etc.

Partners English Nature works closely with Imerys co-ordinating the activities. Other partners: Forestry Commission, Restormel Borough Council, Cornwall County Council, DEFRA and Objective One.

