

## **Video transcript – Epping Forest Hedgerow Planting at Copped Hall**

**[0:00-0:09] \*\*Music\*\***

**[0:09-0:34] \*\*Caroline Haines, Chair, Epping Forest & Commons Committee\*\*:**

The cop hedgerow project is a large scale landscaped project. The central idea being to build connectivity between different areas for nature resilience and biodiversity to recreate some natural barriers, some natural hedging which would have been in the heritage landscape.

**[0:34 -3:05] \*\*John Phillips, Epping Forest Grazing & Landscape Team Leader\*\*:**

So here on Cop what you have is a nice bank of green grass that basically runs from between two towns. And so we want to create these great corridors for wildlife to be able to come through, thrive, and then hop into the forest as well.

And so we have to look at why is a hedge important? What does it do? When a tree plant grows, it photosynthesizes. And in the morning, the sun comes up. So these plants are basically taking in that energy and they're pulling in carbon through the air into their roots. And also what they're doing is these plants are breathing. And the interesting thing is that they breathe in carbon dioxide, breathe out oxygen.

And one of the great things about hedges is that they provide protection. So things like insects, things like birds, they want to create a space to be able to breed and live. And hedges provide that protection from predators.

So these are all native species which we know grow well here. But they're also species that in our wider landscape context we don't have a lot of. So we've got your like your thorns which we have everywhere which are good produced berries in the winter but also things like hazel and privet um and maple which we don't have a lot of in the wider landscape. So it's a way of bringing in some species we don't have which are adapted to the landscape.

So some of the things that are going to want to basically feed on these plants while they're still young are things like rabbits, voles, and deer. We've got voleguards which are biodegradable so we won't have to cut them off like the previous plastic ones that we used to use. And we've got netting which basically prevents rabbits and deer getting in. Also, it's a protection for against cattle who will also want to munch on it later on. And we have cattle grazing on the wider landscape as well.

So, one of the things with the soil world is that we want it to be a bustling place. So, if we look at it as the plant and the roots are like your Amazon marketplace. They are a structure where you can buy and sell things. Um, and so what we're doing is we're popping them in some powder with mycorrhizal fungi. So, we're basically propagating the marketplace with buyers and sellers. So, the soil becomes this thing that is alive

with lots of microbiology trading, feeding on each other, and making an exchange of minerals. One of the ways that we're helping to keep moisture in the ground is by using wooded mulch effectively over the top. And this is mulch that we've taken from the forest, from our own operation. So, it's carbon that's from our landscape that we're keeping, putting back on our land. And this will basically help retain the moisture in there and also slow down the filtration of water as it goes through. And this meter will then tell us. So we'll be able to come out with a water bowser on the back of a tractor and we'll be able to supply it with water if the plant does need it for the first couple of years.

**[3:05-3:14] \*\*Music\*\***

**[3:14-3:20] \*\*Caroline Haines, Chair, Epping Forest & Commons Committee\*\*:**

The best place to find out information is to visit the General City of London Corporation website.

**[3:20-3:29] \*\*Music\*\***