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Native Woodland Restoration

The Native Woodland Restoration project involved the restoration and expansion of remnants of native woodlands on the Chisholme House Estate near Hawick.

Chisholme Institute approached BFT with a proposal to restore over 30 hectares of woodland on a hillside above the Borthwick Water near Robertson. The estate's mixed conifer and broadleaved woodlands had been commercially managed and largely cleared felled by previous owners. Fortunately precious areas of birch and aspen still remained which included one of the largest stands of aspen in the Borders.

Thanks to the project funding provided by Millennium Forest for Scotland Trust, the Institute was able to undertake new native woodland planting and the conservation management of existing broadleaved woodlands with a special emphasis on the creation a network of access and habitat improvements.

Nearly 15,000 trees were planted to create predominantly birch-oak woodlands mixed with ash, rowan, hazel, holly, juniper, gean and alder. The majority of the trees were planted by volunteers connected to the Chisholme Institute, many of which came from abroad. The project also involved the creation of a small tree nursery, a path network linking each of the woodland areas and car park, drainage works and the creation of a small wildlife pond.

The success of the project has been due to the high levels of voluntary effort. The staff at the Chisholme Institute welcome visitors to the project to take a walk round the woodlands or the other projects on the estate.

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