



## PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE USE

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### **RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANTS PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AREA'S FIRST RED SQUIRREL ENCLOSURE AT THE YORKSHIRE ARBORETUM**

The Yorkshire Arboretum has been granted planning permission by Ryedale District Council to begin its Red Squirrel project. This will bring a small group of native Red Squirrels to live at the arboretum in a large, tree-filled enclosure, as part of its mission to promote healthy trees and healthy woodland. Arboretum Director Dr John Grimshaw said 'We're delighted that we can now go ahead with this exciting project, which will enable visitors to encounter this iconic native animal, which has long been extinct from this area, while learning about its role in our woodlands.'

The arboretum, located opposite Castle Howard, applied for planning permission earlier this year – the plans include breeding and release pens, a boardwalk for visitors and a viewing platform. Construction of the enclosure will take place over the summer and it's expected that the first Red Squirrels will arrive in autumn. Public opening is planned for spring 2022.

The enclosure will cover 3,000 square metres, and will not only provide an effective facility to interpret the ecological and economic consequence of Grey Squirrels to natural and commercial woodland and the need to manage them, but also offer a unique visitor experience. Visitors will be able to enjoy close encounters with the increasingly rare native Red Squirrel.

The arboretum will work closely with Defra's Animal and Plant Health Agency, based at Sand Hutton, on the husbandry and veterinary care of the animals. The project will run alongside the arboretum's Tree Health Centre and the Castle Howard Estate to enable effective interpretation of native wildlife, healthy trees and woodland.

John Grimshaw said 'Our Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, is keenly interested in both tree health and Red Squirrels, and we were very fortunate in securing a grant from the Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund to support our tree health work and create this new enclosure, for which we're extremely grateful.'

**ENDS**

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#### **PHOTOS**

Images available by WeTransfer: <https://we.tl/t-IMxZBQI1tP>

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## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Yorkshire Arboretum and Ray Wood are gardens of the Castle Howard Arboretum Trust, an independent charity (registration number 1044931) established to maintain and protect these unique collections. Founded in 1997 as a partnership between the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Castle Howard, the Trust's patron is HRH The Prince of Wales.

Book admission at [www.yorkshirearboretum.org/admission-booking](http://www.yorkshirearboretum.org/admission-booking)

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### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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