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Summer 2005

The Sefton Coast Woodlands are to be designated a 'national red squirrel refuge.'

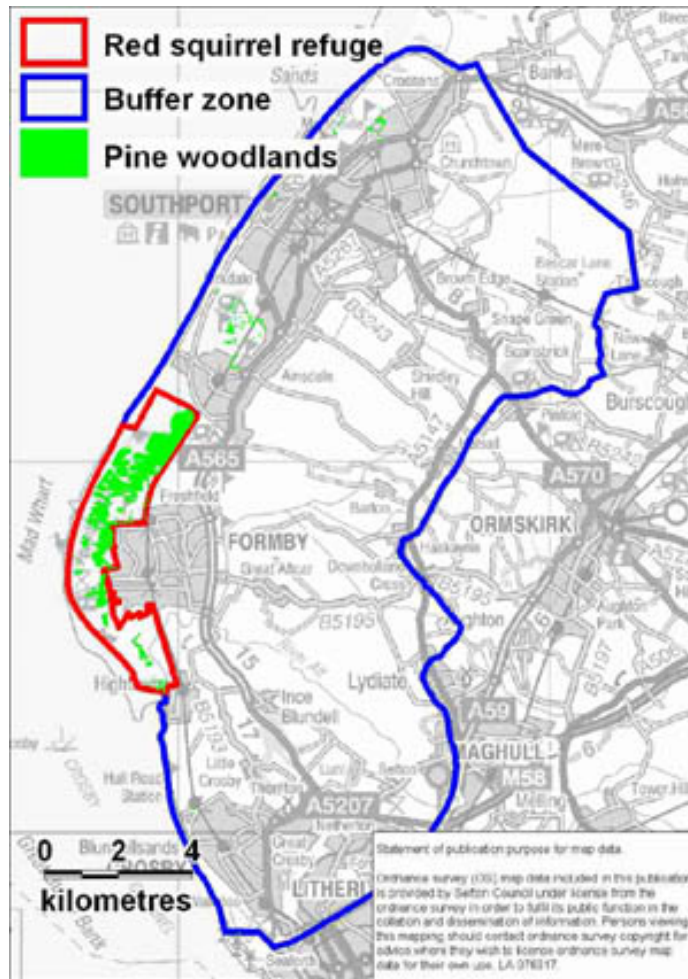


Red squirrel conservation experts across the country have agreed on a strategy to ensure the survival of the red squirrel in Britain through the establishment of refuges and buffer zones. Refuges have been

selected in areas where red squirrels persist, where the habitat can be maintained to support a viable population and where an effective buffer zone can be managed as hostile squirrel habitat to minimise the possibility of grey squirrel incursion.



-previous page-



A total of 20 refuge sites have been proposed for designation in the north of England, nine in the north-west. The Sefton coast refuge and buffer zone is the only site proposed in Merseyside/ West Lancashire. The Sefton coast woodlands have met all the criteria set out and the refuge and buffer zone proposal has received endorsement from the England Squirrel Forum.

The next stage is to seek the support of all landowners, managers, statutory agencies and conservation bodies in this area, many of whom have already expressed their support and who already carry out red squirrel conservation work on their land.



Red squirrel conservation is a key priority for both the Red Alert North West Regional Action Plan and the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan and this national designation will give added weight to all efforts to protect the red squirrel population of Sefton.



We hope to launch the 'Sefton Coast Refuge and Buffer Zone' during Red Squirrel Week in September 2005. If you want any further information about the refuge and buffer zone proposal or would like to get involved in red squirrel conservation please ring Fiona Robertson on 0151 920 3769 or e-mail at frobertson@lwildlife.cix.co.uk

[Home Page - Top](#)

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