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Media Release

STAFF AT CITY FIRM GET GREEN DAY OFF TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT

Local PR company Athene Communications is giving staff the day off on 29 February as part of Green Leap Day. In return for a day off on full pay, the team at Athene will be taking part in a national initiative to tackle climate change and improve the environment.

Athene is following in the footsteps of the National Trust, which is giving all 4,800 of its staff the day off. The somewhat smaller Athene team of twelve will be carrying out conservation work around Helpston and Bainton alongside volunteers from the Langdyke Countryside Trust.

Richard Astle, managing director of Athene, said, 'February 29th is effectively an extra day in the working year – a great benefit to employers, but perhaps less of a blessing to employees. Green Leap Day is a wonderful way of bridging that divide. By giving staff the day off, we recognise their continued contribution to the company. By asking them to use that day constructively, we can start to make a difference to our local environment.'

During the day, the Athene team will be helping with the development of a new heritage and nature reserve at Torpel Manor Field, between Helpston and Bainton. Torpel Manor Field contains the visible remains of a medieval manor house and is one of the most important ancient monument sites around Peterborough.

The owners of the field have recently offered the Langdyke Trust the opportunity to purchase the site in order to establish a new nature and heritage reserve. The Trust will shortly be launching an appeal for funds, but in the meantime has been given interim management agreement to start work on clearing the site of accumulated rubbish.

Richard Astle continued, 'We hope that other companies in Peterborough will follow the lead of the National Trust. The more companies that join us on 29th February and take part in Green Leap Day, the more we can demonstrate just how seriously we are taking Peterborough's aspirations to become the Environment Capital of the UK.'

Notes for editors

Athene Communications is a strategic communications consultancy, offering innovative and integrated advice and support to organisations looking to improve the way they engage and communicate with key internal and external audiences, particularly those embarking on major change programmes or projects.

Clients in 2007 have included Hush Puppies, Pearl Assurance, Unisys Insurance Services Ltd, Budget Group, Peterborough City Council, the East of England NHS Collaborative Procurement Hub, the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board, Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and the Peterborough Enterprise Programme.

The Langdyke Countryside Trust is a voluntary, membership based organisation that, through community action, aims to preserve and enhance the natural heritage in the area between Peterborough and Stamford, including, where possible, through the restoration of the lost limestone grassland landscapes described by John Clare.

Working in partnership with parish councils, local communities, businesses and landowners its vision is , *'To create a model of 21st century rural living to the west of Peterborough¹ famous as an exemplar of how to build sustainable rural communities for the benefit of local people and local biodiversity.'*

The Trust already runs a nature reserve at Swaddywell Pit, near Helpston. For further details visit its website: www.langdyke.org.uk.

Media contact

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¹ Roughly the area bounded by the A1, A47 and A16