



**Closer
to Nature**

PRESS RELEASE

New Interactive Trail near Mladá Boleslav Opens to the General Public

Nepřevázka, 27 September 2014 - On Saturday, the Czech Union for Nature Conservation (ČSOP) opened a new educational trail leading through the Chlum nature preserve near Mladá Boleslav, which was built with the support of the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme. The site is invaluable, both archaeologically and from the perspective of biology and ecology. Visitors can look forward to a seven-kilometre circuit with 10 new info panels, including interactive elements and QR codes for smartphone users.

The opening ceremony of the trail took place at the former school building in Nepřevázka, where the first info panel along the trail has been installed, and included a broad range of attractions accompanying the main event – such as a game for children, and a guided tour with experts specialising in mushrooms, beetles, plants, and history.

Chlum prides itself on having a great variety of species-rich habitats, ranging from oak-hornbeam groves and herb-rich beech forests and (on the northern hillside) wetlands, to orchards and pastures on the southern hillside, including the "white slopes", where numerous protected animals and plants are found, such as White Dittany, Lesser Honeywort, and Dog's Tongue. "Our mission is to familiarise the general public with this local natural treasure, which is not only protected as a Site of Community Importance, but is also one of the most rewarding sites for archaeologists in the greater Mladá Boleslav area. Thanks to this trail, we are able to present for the first time ever a host of very recent archaeological findings, the most stunning of which are treasures of gold and silver", said Milada Vrbová, president of the local ČSOP chapter Klenice. But the designers of the trail were mindful to also include such other interesting facts as the one-time stay of composer Bedřich Smetana and the impact of his work here, or the "cross of atonement" associated with the Dobrovice executioner, or the numerous folk tales and legends of local origin.

The educational trail is rounded off by several interactive features for children, and a panoramic vista of the natural landmarks around Mladá Boleslav. In addition, each panel also features a QR code, taking visitors into cyberspace, where additional information, photos, and topical pictures await them.

"I am glad that the natural wealth of Chlum no longer remains hidden from view, but thanks to our programme has entered the minds of locals and tourists alike, and is moreover contributing to the natural science lessons taught at a number of schools", said Zuzana Kučerová, who is in charge of the Closer to Nature programme at NET4GAS. With the latter half of her remark, she alluded to the fact that the Klenice chapter of ČSOP not only installed play elements along the trail, but also created activity sheets for students and teachers at elementary schools, which familiarise pupils in a playful way with the most interesting natural and prehistoric phenomena found in the vicinity.

Part of the trail is navigable by bike, and in fact follows the local cycling track. The site is also easily accessible using Mladá Boleslav public transport.

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The **Czech Union for Nature Conservation** (Český svaz ochránců přírody) is a club of people who love nature and wish to actively contribute to its conservation. Today, we have almost 7,000 members, among them expert ecologists, as well as enthusiastic volunteers, both adults and children. Everyone can make a difference. Are you a friend of nature? Come join us! Visit www.csop.cz for additional information.

NET4GAS is the reliable and safe gas transmission system operator, and has been developing a responsible policy for protecting nature and the environment that takes into account the interests of future generations. The line of business in which NET4GAS is active is closely related to the issue of nature conservation, which fact is the point of departure for the firm's long-term strategy being implemented under the colors of NET4GAS Closer To Nature. Since 2007, NET4GAS has been acting as the general partner of the CSOP, while the firm also supports other projects that endorse the motto "Closer To Nature" as an integral part of sustainable development. Detailed information on the sites that we have opened thus far, and on other natural points of interest, as well as tips for excursions, can be found on the website www.blizprirode.cz.