



WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK

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www.wildernessfoundation.org.uk



**ANNUAL REPORT
AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31ST DECEMBER 2024**

Wilderness Foundation UK/Registered Company No. 06003527
Registered Charity in England No.1118493/Registered Charity in Scotland No.SC041697

Wilderness Foundation UK

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TRUSTEE'S REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK
INTRODUCTION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The Directors, who are also the trustees of the charity for the purposes of Charity Law, present their annual report, which is also the Directors report as required by the Companies Act and the audited financial statement of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies as set out in the note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities applicable to entities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)" as amended for accounting period commencing from 1 January 2019.

This report represents the twelve months to 31 December 2024 and describes what the Wilderness Foundation UK achieved, explains our constitution and governance arrangements, and outlines our future.

We would like to thank the donors, sponsors, and friends of the Wilderness Foundation for their tremendous contributions in enabling us to make meaningful impacts for nature and people, and continue to reach thousands of beneficiaries, during the year.

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WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

T Aykroyd
Dr SJ Carver GVB Thompson
D Fielding
JA Fosh
AL J Gibbs
P Grewal
Dr P Hobson

P Martin

G Parry
T Platts
E Posey
JK Roberts
A Sheepshanks
MD Soutar
M Thomasson
MA Williams

Secretary JK Roberts

Charity Number (England & Wales) 1118493

Charity number (Scotland) SC041697

Company Number 06003527

Registered office

England and Wales:
Trinity House
2 Whitbreads Farm Lane
Chatham Green
Chelmsford
Essex
CM3 3FE

Scotland:
Wilderness Foundation
c/o Scottish Land and Estates
Stuart House
Eskmills Business Park
Musselburgh
EH21 7PB

Auditor

Edmund Carr LLP
146 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex,
CM2 0AW

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Chair of the Board of Trustee's Report



It is with great regret that I must open my report for 2024 with the sad news of the unexpected death of our trustee, Mark Thomasson, on 9 May 2025. Mark was the latest addition to our Board, elected in December 2024, but made an immediate contribution through his lively commitment to our cause and using to great effect his multiple financial and commercial skills. We will miss him greatly, but our thoughts and condolences go to his wife and family.

In early 2021, in the wake of the pandemic and a resultant significant increase in demand for our services, the Board of Trustees took the decision that we should develop the scale of WFUK's activities given their immediate relevance to two key concerns of society, namely the state of our planet and the mental health of our communities.

Later that year, having considered various options outside of Essex, the Board decided to focus this development within our home ground of Essex for an unspecified period but with a view to five years. A strategy to increase and develop our wilderness engagement in Scotland was a priority -taking into account the importance of Scotland to our work both currently and historically.

In 2024, the fourth year pursuing this strategy, I am pleased to report that WFUK has made further significant progress and with several exciting initiatives in hand, by end 2025, we expect to have achieved full coverage of areas of deprivation in Essex and to be looking to move further afield. There are multiple opportunities to take our mission to a wider public facing the negative impact of Covid which is becoming ever more apparent. The integrated nature of our three areas of activity, Education, Environment and Therapy, distinguishes us from our competitors and provides a highly successful format which is in ever increasing demand.

Notable achievements for 2024 were the acquisition of Mann Wood (as noted in my report in the 2023 Annual Report) and the award in March 2025 of the High Sheriffs' Shield, arguably the most prestigious award for charities in the County of Essex. The standing of WFUK within Essex is high and its reputation spreads far wider. We also developed our successful partnership arrangements with The National Trust and Spains Hall by working with Colchester City Council at High Woods and moving into Tendring.

The figures reported in our Statement of Financial Activities page 38 are significantly impacted by the purchase of Mann Wood and related funding. However, stripping out these factors, income for the core business was £803k up from £690k in 2023, an increase of 16.4% with costs of £830k up from £757k allowing a decrease in reserves of £27k.

The acquisition of Mann Wood on 22 April 2024 of course has a fundamental impact on our results for 2024 and notably our balance sheet with total reserves increased from £286k to £1,070k. This transformational acquisition, our first ownership of land since inception in 1976, provides the Board with the asset backing and confidence to continue our steady progress notwithstanding an increasingly difficult funding market.

The financial figures reflect a further steady increase in the scale of our activities as evidenced by the five-year track record on page 32 with the number of beneficiaries catered for in 2024 being 7500. Our various activities are comprehensively covered in the Trustees Report that follows so I will not repeat except to say that, in addition to reinforcing our balance sheet, the acquisition of Mann Wood, 92 acres of semi-natural ancient woodland, has greatly enhanced our ability to provide all three areas of our service (which includes environmental education, nature based therapy, and working for wilderness and environment), with the number of groups using the facility significantly increased.

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We are also well advanced on plans to use Mann Wood to further research into environmental aspects, notably biodiversity and climate change mitigation with a view to developing a model for owners of other woods to follow. In this regard, we are actively engaged with certain academic institutions with a view to partnering with them in this research.

Whilst the steady growth of the Foundation and its reputation is to be welcomed, it inevitably increases the funding pressures with a larger target each year to be raised in an increasingly competitive market. We follow a targeted strategy using both internal resources and external consultants and have been successful in covering our costs to date. However, as our scale builds, we are increasingly in need of significant funding on a committed basis to cover a multiple year.

We are also seeking to adjust our operating model to increase the proportion of commissioned income in areas such as education and social prescribing. Since both are dependent on government funding the constraints are considerable and compounded by proposed changes to local government which will particularly impact Essex and the provision of care services and education.

These pressures are compounded by our growing reputation for providing a fast response, and effective solutions to complex cases, children, adolescents and adults, faced by the statutory services for whom WFUK is often a 'first call'. There is no shortage of demand, so we are extremely grateful to all our faithful funders in both Scotland and Essex, who together enable us to deliver our mission. We have benefited for example, from a generous grant from The National Lottery for example over three years which has made a significant difference.

We have an excellent Board, with a wide range of skills of which we can be rightly proud. And we are especially proud that our colleague, Julie Fosh, has been appointed as the current High Sheriff of Essex. Sadly, several Trustees who have contributed so greatly over a number of years to the building of this highly successful platform will be stepping down over the next few months as their length of service comes to an end. Happily, our reputation is such that it allows us to re-enforce our Board bringing in new skills to our various committees as required. In this regard, we were delighted to welcome in 2024, Deborah Fielding, who comes with an exceptional CV in the NHS, as too of course Mark Thomasson with an exceptional CV in finance though his time with the Foundation was tragically short. We shall continue to look to supplement our Board with relevant skills and refresh the structure of our committees that have worked so effectively to involve our trustees with our operations.

We also continue to strengthen our Executive team with selective appointments that will lighten the burden on our CEO and her Senior Management Team.

2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the foundation of WFUK which will be celebrated in a suitable way. It also marks 28 years since Jo Roberts became involved in the Foundation firstly as a volunteer and then took over as CEO in 2003. She has transformed the charity into the beacon that it now is.

I look forward to writing my report for 2025 when I am confident that we will present a solid platform with coverage across all the areas of deprivation in Essex and a strong asset base to provide a springboard for development further afield.

Meantime, I would again like to record my thanks to our exceptional CEO and her dedicated team, who together do so much to address some of society's most pressing issues in a totally constructive way. It is a privilege to work with them and invariably stimulating and refreshing. I would also like to record our thanks to all our funders without whom none of this would be possible.

Vincent Thompson
Chair of Trustees
June 2025

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Our Objects and Aims

Founded in 1976, WFUK has sought to pursue its objectives through the three disciplines outlined below, all of which are interrelated and support each other. Our approach to all three disciplines has been academic with regular and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation supported by a long-term relationship with The University of Essex, The Judge Business School, Cambridge and more recently Anglia Ruskin University. The five-year track record included under the Financial Review on page bears witness to the success of our approach and the increased demand for our services, including extensive waiting lists, and our growth over the past year. We aim to continue our development of all three disciplines with environment gaining a significant enhancement in 2024 due to the Foundation's purchase of 92 acres of semi natural ancient woodland.

Our charity's objects as set out in the company's memorandum of association are:

To advance the education of the public by increasing knowledge and understanding of wilderness and the conservation thereof and the interrelationship between wilderness and the environment generally by the provision of instruction and of opportunities for direct experience of wilderness; to initiate and manage social benefit programmes which use wilderness experience to enable vulnerable and disadvantaged people to play a fuller role in society (especially the young).

These philosophies are deeply embedded within the guiding principles of the organisation, and WFUK undertake to support and facilitate programmes and advocacy under the following banners:



Climate change mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity enrichment, rewilding, and sustainability has been a focus for the management of our own 92-acre woodland. Emphasis is also on incubating youth ambassadors for wild places and nature. Environmental and curriculum-based workshops for Primary, Secondary and SEND schools as well as our Leadership Academy involving team building and wilderness expeditions.

Supporting vulnerable young children, teens and adults in personal growth, improved mental health, and resilience. Working with wild nature as a therapeutic tool to gain perspective and understanding for groups and individuals

The nature of our work intertwines these objectives. Those who are referred to us for a therapeutic reason always leave with an understanding of the natural environment and vice versa. Therefore, whilst the following report looks to define the work undertaken within each discipline, there are often overlaps.

Most of the work is undertaken at our headquarters at Chatham Green, located in the rural outskirts of Chelmsford in Essex and our newly acquired Mann Wood only a short drive or hour walk away in Great Leighs. Other satellite sites include Essex based spaces – such as Spains Hall Estate (near Finchingfield), Highwoods Country Park (Colchester), Hatfield Forest (near Harlow) and a range of rural Scottish estates, primarily in South Lanarkshire, Perthshire, and Aberdeenshire.

We refer to the Charity Commissions of England and Wales, and OSCR in Scotland for guidance on public benefit when reviewing our objects and aims and on planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the objects and aims they have set.

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The charity was reconstituted in 2006 and changed its name from The Wilderness Trust to The Wilderness Foundation UK.

In 2021 our Governance Committee updated our Memorandum and Articles of Association and worked through the Charity Commission to have these amended and filed.

Additionally, in 2024 we conducted further training and development in Outdoor First Aid, mentor training, outdoor therapists CPD and training, GDPR, health and safety and safeguarding.

We provide part time alternative education for bespoke groups and individuals for Essex County Council..

In 2024 we became licensed with AALA (Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority) for our work in Scotland as well as Learning Outside the Classroom and the Institute for Outdoor Learning. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

Public Benefit Statement

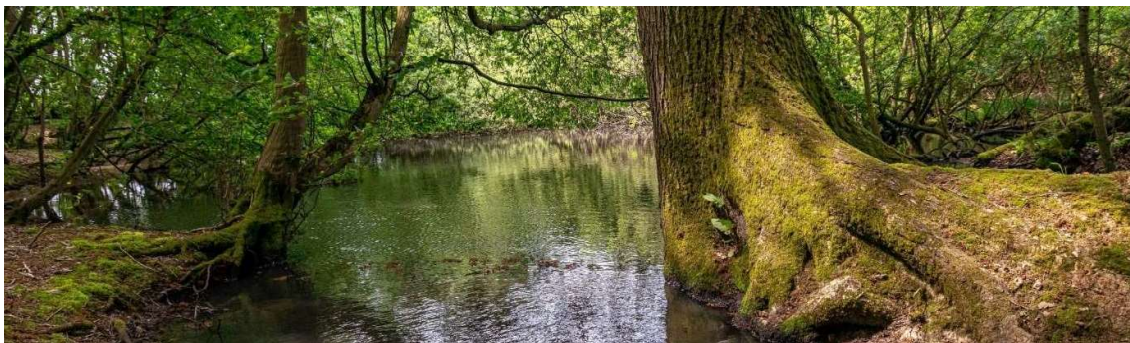
This statement complies with the duty set out in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit as published by the Commission.

The charity was founded in 1976 by Dr Ian Player DMS and Sir Laurens van der Post with the aim of raising the profile and value of wilderness areas, through offering direct experience of wild places to a wide range of the public, with a focus on young people.

We continue this work today, with our activities focused on three key areas – the environment, education (including leadership) and outdoor therapy with its concomitant social benefits.

Regularly connecting with the public is achieved through community engagement events by our Development and Marketing team with a new project and development officer who joined us in November. We also use a range of communication tools, such as blogs, articles, podcasts, lectures, events, sharing research outcomes and social media to help continue to grow our engagement. and reach beyond our immediate community of participants and friends on the need for our work. As we communicate the urgency of creating global and local awareness of the balance between people and nature, we advocate for the wellbeing of both through conservation efforts, social programmes, nature therapy, outdoor activities, and leadership.

1. The Wilderness Environment



We aim to protect wilderness and wild places by highlighting the economic, social, mental health and biodiversity benefits of wild nature. We encourage our participants to take action to build a sustainable planet.

A ground-breaking development during 2024 was securing the purchase of Mann Wood, a 92 acres site of semi-natural ancient woodland close to our base at Chatham Green and the towns of Braintree and Chelmsford. The

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woodland is right in the heart of housing development expansion and therefore offers the space as a green lung for nature and people. Funding was successfully obtained from the Biffa Award with a contribution from the Bannister Trust.

Having our own land opens opportunities to focus on research into biodiversity and climate mitigation. Work in this year started in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University to explore the research dimensions that could be conducted in the wood.

The Environment Committee meets quarterly in support of the main board of Trustees. They continue to follow a long-term growth strategy for our environmental engagement and maintaining our wilderness ethos across our sites and programmes.

To add to our engagement footprint and strategy, we have established partnerships with landowners with similar objectives and continue to drive our network to expand our reach. We have used opportunities to educate and advocate on how biodiversity and rewilding can support the mitigation of climate change. We've engaged in volunteering in both England and Scotland and offered facilitation that supports groups or individuals come up with ways we can all help to reduce our carbon impact on the planet. Our work with Beaver Education at Spains Hall Estate has been key to this along with our Wild Schools programme which reaches, classrooms, schools and the parent network throughout Essex.

Through our social media, public talks and engagement programmes we draw attention to the loss of biodiversity, increasing population, pressure from housing development and infrastructure on fragile and disappearing space for nature across Essex and nationally, and the positive impact of wilderness and protected green space in mitigating climate change and biodiversity decline.

Both our CEO and Professor Peter Hobson, co-chair of the Environment Committee, continue to serve as commissioners on the **Essex Climate Action Commission**. This enables us to make a difference through the commission on climate change mitigation and reaching carbon net zero goals by 2050. We have greatly benefitted from being at the forefront of action across Essex and other parts of the UK.

Our CEO also serves on the **Local Nature Partnership** in Essex. This forms part of a national initiative for raising awareness of existing and potential areas for protection in each county.

The Environmental Education team join various think tank groups of other environmentalists and educators across the country such as Conservation Optimism, Heads of Education Sustainability Group, and have close links with Chelmsford City Councillors who are focused on sustainability and environment.

We believe that communities, government, and business leaders have an inherent responsibility to act as responsible custodians of the environment and to support a healthy society through best practice. We ran a range of outdoor activities for corporates, social service providers, and others on sustainability and human wellbeing, delivered during the year. Through the development of ESG and CSR, we continue to engage with corporate organisations such as QBE, Rotary and other community groups.

1.1 Partnerships

In 2024, we have maintained and grown partnerships with third party landowners, such as Colchester City Council, Hatfield Forest in Takeley owned by The National Trust and Spains Hall Estate in Finchingfield, owned by Archie Ruggles Brise.

Colchester City Council enable us to deliver programmes in Highwoods Country Park on the edge of the city. This area provides access to communities of high levels of disadvantage such as Clacton and Jaywick, and other more remote parts of north Essex up to the Suffolk border.

Hatfield Forest offers an exciting opportunity to deliver education programmes. It is an internationally significant site, both for its ecology and cultural heritage and is the most complete example of a medieval royal hunting forest surviving today. With over 1,000 acres of ancient coppices and wood pasture and 1,000 years of continuous

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management, it provides a unique insight of how the countryside was shaped in the years following the Norman Conquest.

Spain's Hall Estate complements our education programmes and environmental goals through regenerative farming and the recent reintroduction of beavers, the first in Essex for over 400 years. The estate requested we deliver their education programmes on the beaver habitats, complementing the established education programmes at Chatham Green, by providing a new innovative experience. During the year we also delivered a specific outdoor Forest School programme for home schooled pupils.

The Foundation works with the Essex Wildlife Trust, John Muir Trust, Institute of Outdoor Learning, Learning Outside the Classroom, X-Adventures amongst others.

We also received an outstanding report from the latest cohort of Executive MBA students from Judge Business School on 'Developing a Sustainable Woodland Business Model: Integrating Conservation, Education, Therapy, and Sustainable Monetisation.' for our 92-acre Mann Wood. It was an incredible opportunity to have such high-level engagement through JBS and their students. We benefited from the dedication and time spent on our project from the team, and their professional and varied inputs and output around how to make the woodland financially sustainable for the future.

1.2 Environmental Programmes, Young Ambassadors and Climate Action

1.2.1 Treun Scotland

Conservation volunteering is embedded within Treun, our wilderness therapy, personal growth and resilience programme that operates across various estates in Scotland. Participants are encouraged to spend a day on the rural estates, working with rangers and ecologists to undertake conservation volunteering alongside wilderness therapy. For example, peatland restorations, wetland management, vegetation clearing and tree planting. This goes alongside therapy-based wilderness trails over five days.

The programme was primarily delivered at Glenlivet Estate in Aberdeenshire throughout 2024, with additional delivery available at other Scottish estates such as Douglas and Angus and Atholl Estate.

During their weeklong wilderness therapy programme, participants had the opportunity to earn a Leave No Trace (LNT) certificate. We also continued our partnership with the John Muir Trust, a Scottish charity, established in 1983 to conserve wild land and wild places 'for the benefit of all.' The LNT and JMT awards help the participants to gain a sense of accomplishment, improving self-confidence and self-awareness. At the same time, it advances their understanding of the natural environment and helps develop practical employability skills and care for the natural world.

1.2.2 The Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge

In 2024, we proudly continue to hold the LOtC Quality Badge accreditation, confirming that we meet rigorous standards in both learning and risk management needs across all our programmes on offer. This accreditation will be renewed again in 2025.

During the year we hosted a training event which welcomed a wide range of LOtC members at our Chatham Green site, including Essex County Council, Essex Outdoors, Lee Valley Park and RHS Hyde Hall amongst others.

1.2.3 Wild Schools

Throughout 2024 we continued to deliver 'Wild Schools', our Climate Action Outreach programme for Year 5 and 6 students. Understanding climate change is complex and our team endeavour to make the programme easily digestible, simple in message but also empowering young people to take action and influence in their school communities by becoming 'environmental heroes'. Learning covers the importance of nature and our relationship to it, the definition of climate change, sustainability and all the concepts around climate change that are out there. After presentations the young people create a youth led environmental project over 4 weeks. Under guidance and

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supervision, the group decide on a common goal they want to champion. For example, one school focused on the plight of hedgehogs and created a campaign which they spread through their village and community

1.2.4 Down to Earth Allotments in Chelmsford



The Down to Earth Allotments Project continues to work out of 6 allotment plots in Melbourne Community Allotments, central Chelmsford. A variety of different fruits and vegetables are grown, alongside ornamental plants, and areas left wild for the benefit of native wildlife including a new nature pond and wetland area. This year, our horticultural facilitator Kate began her maternity leave and was seamlessly covered by Jane, who joined the team for the remainder of the year and into 2025.

To ensure minimal disruption for participants, Jane attended sessions alongside Kate in advance, allowing her to become a familiar and friendly presence for the group each week.

The Tuesday group continued to flourish with new members joining with various additional needs including mental health difficulties, learning delays and social exclusion. The group met weekly throughout the year in all weather conditions, taking on seasonal tasks including sowing seeds and planting out, harvesting produce, alongside routine jobs like weeding, watering, mowing the grass, and pruning. The group sit together for breaks and at lunchtime to help reduce the feeling of isolation whilst learning new social skills that they may not experience in their daily lives. We continue to facilitate a Tuesday lunchtime club from New Hall School, who come during term-time to help work on the allotments. This group provides the students with a chance to learn new horticultural skills whilst benefitting from being outdoors and connecting with nature.

2024 involved developing the site including the addition of trellis and new beds around the container which continued to provide storage, shelter from the rain/sun and a safe quiet space when needed.

Impact:

In 2024, over 1,260 hours were spent on the allotment by participant adults and children, with a large number of further hours given freely by our team of volunteers to help maintain the allotment space. Some of these hours were kindly donated by groups of corporate volunteers, such as QBE, Chelmsford College, Giant Group, Rotary and Birkett's who helped to paint trellis, clear overgrown areas, rebuild planters, clear compost areas, harvest fruit and veg, rebuild the shed and side awning to name a few examples.

The food grown at the allotment is shared amongst participants as well as donations to the homeless charity 'Sanctus' in Chelmsford, to support others in the community in need.

During 2024 we have hosted several public engagements including the opening of our refurbished 'Chandler Shed' attended by the Mayor of Chelmsford and other councillors from the area. We also held a stall at the Hyde Hall Flower Show in August helping to strengthen our relationship with the RHS and reaching a wider Essex community about the work of the Foundation.

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Braintree Community Garden

2024 saw the creation of a new Braintree Community Garden project, funded by Braintree Council and UKSPF. This weekly group was set up to help provide a safe, supportive, and therapeutic space for Braintree residents facing complex challenges and a disconnection with their local environment. The garden is located within central Braintree and through a partnership with Braintree Council and the Braintree recreation ground trustees, we were able to set up a weekly gardening group to help vulnerable participants engage in gardening. Each week the group helped to build confidence, resilience, and practical skills, actively combatting social isolation by creating a welcoming and inclusive space where individuals can connect, build friendships, and feel a sense of belonging.

There were 95 attendees over the year with 170 hours of participation, with participants regularly attending each week. Referrals included those from ECL, Braintree First Stop Centre, Mind Essex, Mount Chambers Medical Practice and NACRO. Ultimately, the garden serves as a bridge to reconnect isolated individuals with their community, offering not just practical skills but also emotional and social enrichment. Corporate sponsors included Envar, Longacres and Tesco who donated tools, bulbs, woodchip and soil to help us keep costs to a minimum.

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1.2.5 Leave No Trace Training

We continue to promote Leave No Trace values throughout all our programmes and through our outreach over the years, we have delivered LNT Awareness training for hundreds of children and adults. This teaches the values and ethics of respecting nature and the outdoors, managing your personal impact on the earth and learning not to leave litter or traces of ourselves wherever we travel outdoors.

All human life and being is inextricably entangled with and suffused by everything else. This broad commonwealth includes every inhabitant of the biosphere, the animals, plants, fungi, bacteria and viruses. It includes the rivers, seas, winds, stones and clouds that support, shake and shadow us. These animate forces, these companions on the great adventure of time and becoming, have much to teach us and have already taught us a great deal.

We are who we are because of them, and we cannot live without them.

- James Bridle

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2 Environmental Education and Leadership



Through the year we educated over 6500 young people about biodiversity and nature, their relationship to the wild and how they can care for it. We develop leaders for the future who understand the crucial need for a balance between humans and nature, to ensure a sustainable future for all. We continue to develop our offering to include primary, secondary, graduate, and postgraduate education, alongside bespoke training for businesses and corporates.

2.1 Education

We understand that learning from an early age embeds practice and forms mindsets. For this purpose, we take our role as environmental educators very seriously. Through the year, we delivered a range of curriculum-based education opportunities to children and teenagers about wilderness ethics, our relationship to nature, biodiversity, natural history, and geography linked to landscape and the sciences.

During the outdoor classes we teach Leave no Trace ethics, principles of sustainable living, and aim to build a long and lasting love and connection to the wild.

We continue to work with schools and young leaders to develop a social and ecological experience through wilderness journeys. Since Covid we had not replaced our South African Wilderness Leadership trails which have existed since 1976 but have been offering wilderness journeys in Scotland in its place. We continued to work with schools under the Haberdashers' Company and liaised with existing partner schools to develop a Scotland based trails programme for 2025 during the year. The work with young leaders of the future is core to the wilderness mission of the Foundation.

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2.1.1 Wilderness Environmental Education



The Wilderness Environmental Education programme engaged a total of 6,139 young people from January to December 2024.

In 2024, the team delivered environmental education across 4 sites in Essex including our headquarters at Chatham Green, Mann Wood, National Trust Hatfield Forest and Spain's Hall Farm Estate in Finchingfield.

Youth Advocacy and Climate Action

2022 saw the launch of Wild Schools, a new Climate Action outreach programme for Year 5 and 6 students. The programme for 2024 was funded for 2 classes to each receive 4 interactive presentations focused on the importance of nature, understanding climate change, sustainability, and planning environmental projects. Wild Schools has been an influential programme delivered within schools, to encourage stewardship of the environment by giving young people the knowledge and empowerment to make a difference.

We have formed a Wilderness Youth Voice who volunteer on groups, camps and conservation tasks such as rebuilding the wildlife pond at our allotments.

"Thank you for the sessions. The children have been very inspired by all the talk of ponds and bug hotels and hedgehog homes, and have also loved talking about the bigger picture threats to the planet. It's been great seeing your smiley faces every week. Really hope we can do this again next year!"

– Teacher at Writtle Juniors

School Visits

Across the year the team engaged over 2,000 young people, spanning from early years all the way into secondary school. This year we have trialled new KS3/4 workshops to ensure that these are both informative and have an element of challenge and problem solving for older students. We have continued to provide our climate change workshops which were new for 2023, adding in new games such as Climate Charades to ensure we are constantly evolving and improving our offer to schools.

"The staff were extremely knowledgeable, and we all learnt loads. Their command of the children was excellent, and the activities were at the right level."

Quote from a School Visit 2024

"The service was exceptional, and all children were engaged throughout."

Quote from a School Visit 2024

I don't think many of our children go to outdoor settings like Hatfield Forest very often so it was good for them to recognise what is around us and how interesting it can be without needing toys and gadgets to entertain them

Quote from a School Visit 2024

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Forest Holiday Camps

School holiday camps have continued to be successful across 2024 with a total of 611 young people joining us throughout the year. We have found an increase in SEND young people joining our camps, so we have continued to evaluate the opportunities and enabled support for all that join our groups.

Special Education Needs and Disability Groups

SEND groups have continued throughout the academic year. The sessions have continued to be of extreme value to the wellbeing of students and teaching staff. In 2024 we have reached new SEND schools and we plan to continue expanding our reach in 2025. We have had a total of 272 SEND students visit us across the year and we continue to work closely with each school, ensuring that every visit is specifically tailored to the young people's needs.

Home School Forest School



Our new programme for 2024 was our offering of Home Education Forest School. We have been running this programme at Mann Wood in autumn/winter 2024 and some sessions over the summer at Spains Hall Farm Estate. The forest school group allows young people to learn new skills, communicate with others that are home schooled and for the parents to find support in each other as they educate their young people.

We had a slow start to building our reputation and this grew to around 11 children per session in addition to some parents to stay for the sessions.

Chelmsford College Initiative for SEND

We have engaged nearly 600 young adults through our CCI programme. This group is now well established and provided fantastic skill building opportunities and social development to SEND young adults. Some young people on our CCI programme have progressed to our Down to Earth Allotment Programme once they leave CCI.

Bird Ringing in Essex, on our various sites

Towards the end of 2023 we began a partnership with the South Essex Ringing Group to undertake Bird Ringing surveys at our Chatham Green site, as well as to provide educational engagement opportunities.

During 2024, the team ringed 26 species at the Chatham Green Project, totaling 361 individual birds. These included winter migrants such as Lesser Redpoll and Redwing, as well as declining farmland birds such as Linnet and Bullfinch. The group held six public Bird Ringing demonstrations over the course of the year with 39 children and 12 adults engaged in this unique activity. Heading into 2025, we will offer this activity to visiting youth groups alongside other activities and our Education Manager, Terri Dawson and our Site Maintenance Lead, Liam Morgan, are training for their Bird Ringing license qualifications.

2.2 Leadership Programmes

Whilst protecting the environment, we also understand that effective leadership and advocacy is enhanced through direct experience of the natural world. We facilitate this by using experts in their field to deliver the programme, which includes team building exercises alongside education regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Environmental Social and Governance (ESG).

We live in a world where the disconnection with nature grows daily and there is urgency to address this as resources and biodiversity diminish. Climate change is a vital area to address and support all groups to play their part in contributing to a more sustainable future. The Foundation is linked to a wide range of influential groups and think tanks in this realm and seeks to address public engagement and action through its varied programmes, both social and environmental.

The increase in corporations and organisations looking to evidence their environmental and social responsibility dovetails into this work and we continue to build relationships with business groups and corporates who volunteer or donate to support our work.

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All our programmes have included:

- building respect for the earth's rich but diminishing biodiversity;
- the value of simple and low impact experience of the outdoors;
- the benefits of leaving no trace and an undisturbed environment;
- understanding the challenges that nature endures at present and how we as individuals and collectively support nature and the environment;
- nature needs half and we must make space for nature to thrive for us as a species to survive and
- global awareness of wilderness at risk through our founder membership of Wilderness Foundation Global.

During the year:

- We hosted several environmentally based corporate events with one large event around the value of water at the Royal Geographical Society called Water Lines attended by over 300 guests. Speakers included Paul Rose, the TV presenter and Professor Jules Pretty amongst other explorers, writers and conservationists.
- We were invited to be part of a small group of Charity CEOs supported by Team Lewis to help us with our leadership and impact with excellent networking and publicity.
- We attended the World Wilderness Congress in South Dakota representing the Foundation and delivering papers on wilderness therapy and driving conservation ethics through personal engagement.
- Gave a range of talks to different community-based organisations on nature-based therapy, Mann Wood, forests, and Space for Nature.

2.2.1 Wilderness Leadership Academy

Continuing many years of working with Haberdashers' Company schools, we had a break in 2024 but continued to develop the programme ready for another expedition in 2025. After a review, we have decided to work with slightly younger students – just going into their A levels, so that they can take back their learning into the school on their return for a wider impact on others about their learning, whilst continuing to build on their leadership skills.

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3 Social Benefit Programmes and Outdoor Therapy



We aim to support vulnerable children, young people and adults in personal growth, improved mental health and resilience. We work with nature as a therapeutic tool to gain perspective, a sense of belonging and understanding. More and more people are gaining understanding of how much better being in nature makes them feel and this has really helped us in our work. Feedback often contains words such as ‘relaxed’, ‘peaceful’, ‘finding myself’, ‘feel I am part of something’.

This narrative continues to be reinforced by robust monitoring and evaluation, and we are confident through this that the mix of nature and wild places, with excellent therapy and outdoor facilitation is effective and at times, life changing for the participants who trust in our work.

Through the year, we worked on key social issues in our communities that benefit from therapeutic wilderness programmes – providing a range of experiential, outdoor based programmes that improve physical and mental wellbeing for the individual, many of whom are disadvantaged and vulnerable. We have continued to grow and develop our work with survivors of domestic abuse – with increasingly large waiting lists, particularly for children. We continue to support the police, and referrers such as Next Chapter amongst others for the referrals that we receive and their recognition of a safe next pathway for their clients.

In our Treun Scotland programme we also find an increasing number of referrals of young people who have experienced domestic abuse, much inflamed during the Covid pandemic when families were locked up together, and school was not there to help add structure and support.

As in 2024, the Foundation, delivered bespoke and tailored therapy interventions to a wide range of beneficiaries who harnessed the healing power of nature during this year. We resourced and supported a wide range of vulnerable children, teenagers, vulnerable adults, and those with SEND needs to see improvements in their behaviour and mental health and an improved connection to nature. During the year we adapted our services to become more inclusive wherever possible and started up neurodiversity camps to support children and younger teens in the holidays as often their struggle to connect well with others could isolate them and exacerbate low feelings and loneliness.

At the core of these interventions are carefully developed physical and psychological wellness programmes, which aim to provide specific support for our participants. These include talking and practical therapy, as well as tools

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to regulate their mental health, employability soft skills, resilience building, coping mechanisms, aspiration, self-esteem & confidence building, and skills development or vocational training aspects.

Furthermore, we have again seen how powerfully young people respond to spending time in wilderness areas. Based on a long history of using the healing power of nature for personal and social transformation, we continued to integrate various levels of long and short Wilderness Trail experiences into our holistic intervention projects.

Through research, and our monitoring of social and personal change, and improvements in mental health, we have been able to share our outcomes through social media, articles and speaker opportunities. This demonstrates the positive benefits and value that wilderness and wild places offer everyone in our communities, with a focus on those in need.

We consult all our participants through a structured, academically led, and informal feedback process. Since 2007, this has been supported by our longitudinal research and analysis by the University of Essex, and internal assessments of projects such as the 'Out There Academy', Treun and Turnaround.

We also conduct our own internal evaluation as we are using other measures such as the Warwick Scale.

The measured benefits of time in the wild, supports the urgent need to protect our remaining wild and green spaces, not just for their biodiversity and landscape value but also to improve the wellbeing and mental health of society. We share our outcomes widely through a range of papers, blogs, conferences, documentaries, and the media.

3.1 Treun Scotland



Treun supports young people in areas of high youth unemployment and disadvantage in Scotland. Young people who display an interest in the outdoors and are experiencing difficulties with their mental health are targeted to take part. The project provides nature-based experiences and conservation volunteering opportunities, focusing on personal development, wilderness therapy and skills-based learning opportunities within wild, rural areas. We remain a proud partner with Scottish Land and Estates.

During the year the team continued to focus on areas of deprivation in and around cities, and some rural schools. We are still experiencing the devastating impacts of the Covid pandemic in terms of young people's mental health, school engagement and behavioural problems.

We have continued to develop the Scotland team with new members to support our Treun coordinator, shadowing or serving on the trails programme.

We delivered four programmes during 2024 and included a new element of running workshops both prior to the trails and after trails to maintain contact with the groups. During the year we approached new schools and refreshed some that we had not worked with since Covid.

During the year we worked predominantly with teens aged between 13-15 years old, with different emotional and behavioural needs. Mental health difficulties include trauma, depression, anxiety, gender dysphoria, suicidal

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thoughts, self-harm, surviving domestic violence, behavioural and emotional disorders, eating disorders, bullying and self-esteem issues. Participants are encouraged from all backgrounds, and the programme is inclusive, seeking to engage all genders, sexual orientation, and ethnic groups.

One to one time, as well as group therapy, offers a powerful opportunity to build self-confidence, social skills and to work through issues that may be troubling them. The participants carry out a volunteering programme and they earn the John Muir Award and Leave No Trace accreditation. Six weeks support counselling is made available for graduates to support them once home after the trail.

Group sizes range between 6-8 participants thus keeping the groups small to ensure personalised attention, and measured impacts included:

- Happiness
- Leave No Trace awareness
- Teamwork
- Understanding feelings
- Friendship
- Liking myself
- Camping skills
- Nature ID

Quotes from young people on Truen:

‘I found out that I am mentally stronger than I think’
‘That I can do stuff even if I say I can't. That I don't need to listen to my friend all the time and can do my own thing’
‘If I think that I don't want to or can't do something I can always try my best to succeed’
‘I will try harder at achieve my best at the things I want to achieve in life’ (in reply to what would you do differently?)
‘I have learnt that pushing myself is good sometimes’

3.2 Out There Wilderness Academy



The academy works with young people aged between 13 – 15 years old who are primarily referred by schools. During 2024 we decided to extend the offer to 11–13-year-olds due to a growing issue with young people becoming school avoidant – particularly in Years 7 & 8 in secondary school. In our groups we deal with complex needs, such as anger and emotional regulation problems, ADHD, anxiety and depression, self-harm, grief, gender issues, exposure to gangs, other spectrum challenges where most are not attending education or on a limited timetable. It is a six-week course, one full day a week with additional therapy offered to those who need more support.

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Outcomes for 2024

- 6 Cohorts during 2024
- A total of 36 days from those 6 cohorts and 910 Hours excluding communications.
- A total of 52 spaces were offered. 40 accepted, 35 attended: 26 male, 9 female.
- **78%** Improved behaviour at school
- **61%** Improved care for own physical health
- **56%** Improved mood
- **53%** Feeling more confident
- **58%** Improved life skills and knowledge

Quotes from clients:

'I have learned to be more independent and have a more positive attitude about myself'

'Learning how to make new friends'

'I have learned to go to the woods to calm down'

'To respect others and things'

'how to cook bacon and sausages on the fire'

'I have become more confident and controlled my anger towards others.'

Out There participants in their own words.

We believe the Out There programme enables young people to realise their potential and feel confident in moving forward in education or employment. We don't preach to them; we encourage and mentor them in believing in themselves and the possibilities the future holds. Nature allows them to find the space to grow and find their emotional resilience and by working in a group and taking part in activities, they can consider the effects of their behaviour on other people.



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3.3 TurnAround - Cohorts16 and 17



Turnaround is a nine-month intervention for young people aged between 16-23 years old. They are referred with significant complex mental health, trauma, relationship, and behavioural needs. The programme includes one to one weekly mentoring, regular fortnightly workshops, and two wilderness therapy expeditions, family mediation, one to one therapy, group therapy, pathway referrals, and a formal graduation. It is run by outdoor leaders and a wilderness therapist, who are supported by volunteer mentors.

We completed cohort 16 of the TurnAround Project with a graduation in early 2024 and the start of cohort 17 in the second half of the year. For TA 17 we delivered over **3000 hours** of support in person time, excluding additional administration and communications, and overall, we saw an average improvement across the group:

- **71.43%** of the group showed improvements in their happiness, self-confidence and self-acceptance.
- **71.43** of the group showed improvements in their ability to trust and love others, and substance misuse.
- **73%** of the group showed improvements in their family and other relationships.
- **71%** showed improvements in their independent living skills.

We worked with participants presenting some of the following issues including, complex mental health issues, self-harm, depression and anxiety, suicidal ideation, NEET, SEND, anger and mood disorders, isolation, confidence and self-esteem issues, relationship breakdowns, grief and loss, recovery from substances, and domestic violence recovery.

Two fantastic trails ran through the year to North Wales and immersion in our remote Mann Wood.

In the final weeks of the programme and post-graduation the participants reported the following successes/progress in their lives:

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Successfully gained employment, enrolled in further education, continued in education where there were issues, confident to return to school to finish GCSE's following school anxiety and bullying barriers, taking confident steps to become self-employed, increased knowledge and understanding of the risks to personal safety online, the confidence to declare a career path to family that is true to them rather than what was expected of them, integration with community through volunteering, learning to speak to a wider range of people and ask questions and be curious – thus building employability skills and managing social situations.

Examples of what young people achieved in their own words:

'The hardest point was the beginning of the programme and starting to socialise. The best point has been the end and reflecting on all my progress '

'I've learnt to respect myself and others around me. I've learnt to take care of myself. I care more about others. My social skills have improved. I can control my anger a lot more'

'I have achieved to stay focused in college, I have built new life goals and targets, I have built a lot of confidence, I have learned to speak my own voice, I have a routine I follow.'

'I will follow my own dreams and goals; I will do my best to not lose my rhythm'

TA 17 participants.

3.4 Blossom Domestic Abuse Project



Blossom is a nature based ten-week therapy programme, set up to empower children, teens and women who have experienced / witnessed domestic abuse. Participants learn strategies for self-care and understanding of how to process the past and build new futures.

We ran six cohorts, in 2024, two women's groups, three for children and one for teenagers in separate groups. The group therapy programme offered ten weeks for each cohort, a total of 1,600 hours of mental health and communication and admin support to survivors and witnesses of domestic abuse.

After completing the programme, the adult women's group reported 80% on average improvements in emotional health and mood, and between 60-70% improvements in feeling in control of life, money worries, trust and love, social networking and friends, decreased drugs and alcohol, and improved family relationships

Some of the feedback from women survivors in their own words:

'Having the time and space to self-reflect on my trauma and my feelings. Being outdoors.'

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'It has allowed me to make human connections and regain some of my confidence that I had lost. I now feel valued and an important part of humanity.'

'Time for myself, more open, and attuned to my feelings. I listen to my body more.'

'Huge impact. Literally changed my outlook of my feelings, how to manage these, self-worth, being outdoors is so important.'

The children's cohorts on average had the strongest improvements, for example, 80% levels of happiness at school, physical health and feeling more confident. Scores at 60% were in independent skills, and relationships at home.

The teens showed outcomes of friendships being the highest score of 80%, followed by 60% improvements in levels of happiness, feeling more hopeful, and respect for others.

We are grateful to the Essex Police Fire and Crime Commission for their support, our referral agencies and partners, and The University of Essex for their research and academic support.

3.5 Brave Futures Therapy Programme



Brave Futures offers mental health support in nature-based workshops for adults, children, and teens. The groups attend for eight weeks, one day a week. The programme is run by two outdoor therapists with the help of volunteers.

In 2024 we ran 10 cohorts across Essex with a special focus on Braintree and Colchester/Tendring areas where we had specific funding. There were 79 participants through the year, covering 2,265 hours of therapeutic support, a steady increase from 2023.

Outcomes were consistently positive, for example, highest scores for teens were in social networking and friends which is significant as we are experiencing high levels of isolation and social anxiety, 100% in feeling confident, and 67% in respect for myself. Children's scores for example were highest in independent living skills, mood improvement at 68% and social network, physical health, happiness at 64%. Happiness at school had improved by 59%.

The six cohorts running at Highwoods Country Park, in collaboration with Colchester City Council have worked well in supporting the residents of Colchester / Tendring who would otherwise struggle to travel to our main site in Chatham Green, ensuring outreach to North East Essex residents. Highwoods is a lovely setting, and the remote camp area has appeared to work well for the group. The therapists have worked together to ensure the cohorts run successfully. Our only real teething troubles come from storing of kit, as this is not an option at Highwoods, and so requires additional transportation from the counsellors.

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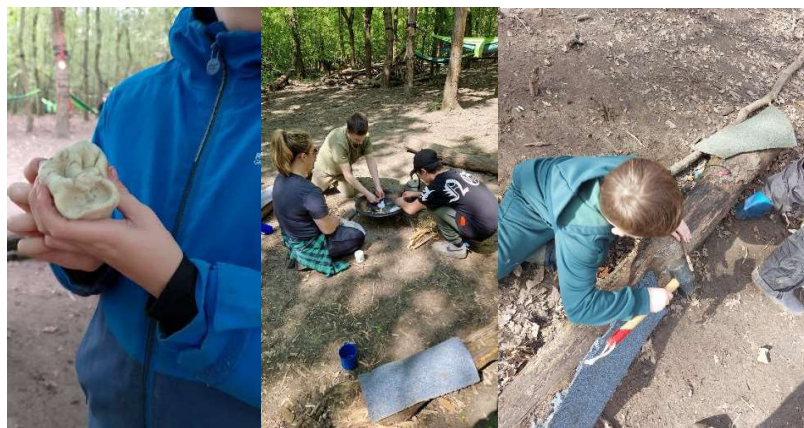
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Quotes from the cohorts:

‘My child is loving the program, and I really think it’s helping – I’m so thankful!’

‘I’m just getting in touch after my experience with volunteering under the guidance of Harriet and Richard. It was pleasant and uplifting session! I loved being outdoors and seeing the group of boys working together and challenging themselves was wonderful to see.’



3.6 1-2-1 Nature-based and Online Counselling

Our one-to-one counselling that is face-to-face or online has as very high demand as mental health issues increase and are more topical. Of note is the crisis in children with high levels of referrals – with complex needs – and we believe our early intervention may help prevent problems into the future.

We continue to increase our outdoor therapy professionals group and have delivered monthly peer supervision, six weekly clinical supervision for individual therapists and have delivered three outdoor training days. We believe in our staff and supporting their development and support, we continue to get very positive outcomes and feedback.

The Foundation has offered a total of 3,658 hours of 1-2-1 counselling to individuals/Groups in 2024, vs 4,352.5 hours in year 2023.

Though the counselling hours in 2024 decreased compared to the year before due to funding not matching demand, 64% of the counselling hours in year 2023 were funded by the targeted investment of reserves by the Foundation, in addition to support from other funders such as The National Lottery.

Like the year 2023, on average 41 referrals were received each month in 2024.

While The National Lottery Fund is the main source of our counselling funding in 2024, our free counselling was also offered thanks to the donations from:

- Brampton College
- D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust

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- Gleeds
- Leathersellers

Due to the continuous high demand for the counselling service and limited funding, waiting time unfortunately has increased from 3 months to 5 months.

Out of the questionnaires completed and returned by individuals, 100% reported improvement in challenging behaviors, relationships, emotional distress and social isolation after receiving counselling support: 55% reported improvement in aggressive behavior, and average 38% reported improvement in conflict with family and risky behavior.

According to our 1-2-1 counselling satisfaction survey in 2024:

- 100% of clients responded they will recommend Wilderness Foundation to others
- 87.5% of clients rated our counsellors 10 out of 10
- 81.3% of clients rated their overall experience 10 out of 10

Feedback from referral agencies, participants and parents:

“Continue the brilliant work that you all are doing it works for so many of our young people,

I don't know where we would be without places like the wilderness.”

Children's Social Care, Mid Quadrant

“The Foundation has been a wonderful resource for my family, they have helped all of us from 1-2-1, family counselling and the TurnAround I honestly can't thank them enough. The counsellors have the right approach and put you at ease. There's no feeling judged, just understanding and help and guidance. Everyone I have met to do with the Foundation have been so kind and helpful. *Wonderful place, ethic and people, who make a real difference, thank you*”

“The outdoor and relaxed nature of the 1-2-1 counselling session my son received at the Foundation have been fantastic. The last few years have been very difficult, and almost all intervention has failed, leaving him isolated and lonely. He needed parental support initially, but he soon felt confident to go with his counsellor alone and he thoroughly enjoyed lighting fires whilst chatting with a safe adult. The support provided by the Foundation has been invaluable and we are incredibly grateful that he had the opportunity. Thank you.”

“I have found every member of staff that I have met, to be wonderful people. It lifts your soul to turn up feeling low, looking across the car park to see a kind face waiting for you, ready to go outdoors. It blew my mind every single visit. The way your therapy works is truly awesome.

Sitting in an office with a counsellor is daunting, even the counselling I had online for a long time vastly pales in comparison to your methods.

I felt such pressure with other counselling situations, although it did get some benefits, I never opened much and ultimately did not move forward much either.

I broke down some of my walls, shared some things, quietly hid when I could not, There was never any pressure. The system worked for me; I hope to be accepted in the future to try to get a bit farther.”

3.7.2 Outdoor Therapy Immersions for referral agencies and other groups

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During the year we continued to deliver wellbeing days for referral agencies and other social care agencies who work with the Foundation or who have been interested in our work, for example, Anglia Ruskin University, Adopt East, NELFT, ECC Youth Services, SETDAB and CHESS. They are bespoke groups that we create specialist facilitation plans for, including their own team needs and any issues.

As the teams and group participants gain a more in depth understanding of our work and delivery through their experiences outdoors with us, our referral process has improved significantly. We feel we are also able to contribute to the wellbeing of teams who work at the coal face in very stressful roles.

In addition, we supported corporate days, enabling teams to access wild nature and a beautiful environment, whilst they explored and developed their work practice, leadership, and team support.

3.7.4 Mentor Training

During the year, we continued to make use of a personalised training online medium, called Goal 17 Loop as well as topping up our face-to-face training in intensive mentor programmes like TurnAround. Online access to training has meant people could study in their own time and at their own pace. This has facilitated the training of mentors as soon as they complete our Safer Recruitment procedures and we don't lose time with people waiting on fixed dates.

We have also increased our training in bushcraft skills, and outdoor first aid – offered to all staff to improve and be upskilled.

Mentors serve young people on our Treun Programme in Scotland, TurnAround, Allotments, Out There, Blossom, Brave Futures and undertake climate change work. They are key to our delivery quality. Other volunteers support administration and finances within the office.

4 Marketing, Media & Fundraising Activity

In 2024, we saw steady growth in engagement, driven by successful marketing campaigns and fundraising efforts. These continue to play a vital role in supporting the rising costs and expansion of our Wilderness programmes to meet increasing demand. We are deeply grateful to our funders, supporters, and private philanthropists, whose generosity has enabled us to extend and strengthen our educational and therapeutic support and employ an additional member of the team, supporting marketing and education administration.

A selection of our 2024 Events:

- World Wilderness Congress: South Dakota- speaker programme
- Making Waves Event at Royal Geographical Society
- VVU Charity Conference
- Wild Talks
- Mann Wood Grand Opening
- Partnership with Chelmsford Museum on JA Baker, The Peregrine
- Open Farm Sunday
- Formal opening of the Wellbeing Garden in Braintree
- Schools Food and Farming Day
- Educational workshops for external partners at various reserves and on site

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4.1 Marketing



On 12th September the Foundation hosted an event at Mann Wood to celebrate the acquisition of Mann Wood, 92 acres of ancient semi-natural woodland in Essex, funded by Biffa Award and The Banister Charitable Trust. This event was attended by many dignitaries and influential people in Essex including the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, High Sheriff of Essex, the Mayor of Chelmsford, ECC Climate Czar, ECC Chair, CCC Leader and CEO of Essex Wildlife Trust who all saw the importance of this woodland and its legacy for generations to come.

Our annual Wilderness **Charity Golf Day** took place at Braintree Golf Club again this year in June, with 17 teams of four players along with hole sponsorship, raffle ticket sales and donations helping make it yet another successful event. Monies raised on the day went to helping support our TurnAround programme. Due to the successful partnership with the team at Braintree Golf Course and positive feedback from players, another golf day is booked for 2025.

We worked in partnership with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner' team, and the Violence and Vulnerability Unit of Essex Police, , to exhibit at their **PFCC Safety Conference** at Hatfield House in February 2024, where we were honoured to be the chosen charity invited to exhibit alongside the VVU team.

Working in partnership with **Chelmsford Museum**, we were invited to contribute to their education outreach workshops and involvement in audio recordings for the JA Baker exhibition in April 2024. JA Baker was renowned as an environmental writer, particularly on his work *The Peregrine*. After this exciting collaboration and attending the Love Parks event, the Museum kindly offered the Foundation an opportunity for our own community exhibition display case within the museum where items from our work were displayed in one of the main rooms for the public to see for over 6 months.

Making Waves Voices for Water was an inspiring event at the Royal Geographical Society in September, packed full of inspirational speakers exploring their adventurous and therapeutic connection to water. The evening event took place in partnership with the Wilderness Art Collective who exhibited at the RGS over a 2-week period. The evening

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of speakers included Paul Rose, Helen Scales, Mark Agnew, Jules Pretty and Amy-Jane Beer and the event helped raise funds for the foundation whilst also opening our reach up to new audiences.

4.2 Media partnerships



We were invited to partner again with Argonon Productions but this time for the Masked Singer UK Series 5 digital campaign which took place from Dec 2023 to March 2024. This was a huge boost to our social media engagement which included an incredible 44,700 impressions made throughout the digital campaign and the opportunity to take part in their podcast The Masked Singer:Maskcast

We were also chosen as charity of the month for 'Win your Dream Hike', through their online social media campaign in March, where they helped raised additional funds and widened our social engagement reach through new audiences.

4.3 Fundraising

It was a busy year with diverse fundraising. This generated record income in the year, despite a challenging funding environment and we seek to raise more funds in 2025 to support the valuable activities of the Foundation as we seek to expand our services within Essex.

Throughout the year, most of our income was secured through grants awarded by a diverse range of charitable trusts and foundations. Additional funding was generated via our annual Big Give Christmas online match funding campaign, events and donations. We strengthened our corporate engagement, with several companies selecting us as their Charity of the Year—leading to employee-led fundraising initiatives and corporate team-building events. To meet our growing targets, we enhanced our fundraising capacity by bringing in two external fundraisers. We were pleased to continue building on previous success, securing another large donation from a private donor and additional multi-year funding commitments to help sustain and expand our programme delivery.

4.4 Community Fundraising & Events

We regularly attended **community outreach events** including those run by Writtle College, Braintree Council Livewell Strategy, Chelmsford CVS, NHS Social Prescribing Conference, NHS Neighbourhood Forum, ECVYS Cluster. We gave talks to community groups including Probus (Brentwood and Dunmow groups), WI (Tillingham/Chelmsford), ARU students, U3A, Trust Links, Police, Rotary, Schools and other community groups.

Community fundraisers in 2024 included fundraising by several Rotary groups who helped us purchase new equipment including radios. Southwick Methodist Church and their parishioners helped raise money in support of our TurnAround programme and were able to double their donation through our Xmas Big Give campaign. There were also some amazing global fundraising challenges taking place including Al Marriott who walked an incredible 3,000 miles across the USA in aid of the Foundation. Widford Lodge School raised money at their end of year charity ball as well as the WI and customers at the White Horse Pub who also raised money via quiz nights. Other fundraising events included our own successful Wilderness Quiz Night with the kind support of the Mildmay Rotary group as quiz master. We also received legacy donations via JustGiving and through various Funeral Directors with families supporting us in memory of those they have lost. We continued to use our **online fundraising platforms** in 2024

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including, JustGiving, and the Big Give match funding platform, raising funds through our Xmas and Green Match Fund campaigns and individual sponsorship pages. This online presence helps expand our donor outreach and increases the variety of ways people can donate, making the process as accessible and easy as possible. As technology constantly updates, we too must grow and allow a wide range of digital donation channels to capture all those who wish to support us.

Our **corporate partners** and donors also increased their support including Suregreen donating wood, Wickes donating screws and nails, Chandlers funding our rebuilding of the Allotment shed, Ernest Doe for help with the placement of the new Pod. We also received a container at Mann Wood with the help of Brehen Civils and sleepers from Plant Style. Medivet helped raise funds at one of their Charity Golf Days and through their on-going fundraising via Pennies in partnership with our South African sister Foundation.

Corporate Volunteering – we have had an influx of enquiries from corporates wanting to offer volunteering days to their staff which is an area we are looking to develop for future income generation. Corporates included QBE, Chelmsford Racecourse, Giant Group, UK Power Networks, ARU Student Union, Birketts, Rotary, AMS, QBE, NHS, NELFT which helps us extend our reach within the local community.

In 2024 we continued to open the gates at Chatham Green for **Community Events** such as our annual Open Farm Sunday and monthly spoon carving workshops with one of our talented outdoor facilitators, Max. We also introduced the first Wild Talks with two evenings of speakers including Hatfield Forest: Tales of Wildlife and History with David Simmonds from the NT. Community engagement was also encouraged through our Bird Ringing events at Chatham Green in collaboration with the South Essex Bird ringing group. Each event at our Chatham Green site allows the local community to discover the beautiful setting and the support services we provide and allowing us to increase our engagement.

5. Future Plans

We will continue to demonstrate, advocate and apply the positive impact of wilderness and wild places for the wellbeing of the individual and society. Beneficiaries comprise a range of demographics and the spectrum spans from the most vulnerable to those with leadership potential.

To meet the growing interest in WFUK, we continue to work to our growth objectives for the Foundation. These remain consistent and unchanged from 2023 although we have had to adapt to the increasing demand that we are experiencing on the therapeutic services we offer both in Essex and Scotland.

1. Sustainably grow and manage the impact and outputs of beneficiaries supported by our social benefit/therapy, educational and environmental programmes - approximately 7,600 in 2024. Growth must reflect maintaining the high quality of service we work hard to achieve. Slight decrease in numbers from 2023 in educational visits and Out There participants is related to funding and staffing levels, all other programme participation numbers were up from 2023.
2. Extend the areas where our programmes are provided within Essex and Scotland, focusing on areas of deprivation and environmental restoration programmes.
3. Develop and grow our operations, through carefully selected partnerships and new satellite spaces to serve new communities.
4. Increase our advocacy for nature, climate change mitigation and the crucial role of nature in improving mental health and wellbeing.
5. Manage our own semi-natural woodland to increase positive impacts on biodiversity enhancement, research and citizen science around woodland protection, and social benefits from wild land in an increasingly busy world.
6. Continue to sustainably grow our revenue to deliver increased impact whilst increasing our operational and financial strengths.

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We will do this by undertaking activities that:

- Educate and inspire people to experience and connect with wild places.
- Provide an integrated service for improving the lives of the most vulnerable in our society, through the positive benefits of wilderness.
- Grow natural leaders of the future, through directly experiencing the positive benefits of wild nature.
- Protect and enhance biodiversity and green spaces.
- Continue to promote and support mental health and wellbeing across clients in Scotland and the rest of the UK.
- Promote and practice solutions to meet the Climate Change Crisis.
- To grow and strengthen our impact for environment and people we will:
 - Introduce people and children to nature.
 - Educate people how to love the natural world.
 - Change people's lives through nature.
 - Practise what we preach in caring for the earth and people.
 - Continue to grow our network in across Europe and our global relationships.

As WFUK increases its activities, we will also seek opportunities to build on and expand our understanding of wilderness and wild places for the benefit of both planet and its people.

6. Governance

During 2024 we continued to manage our governance, with quarterly governance meetings reporting to the Board on policies, risk management, Trustee recruitment, staff handbook and articles of association. A full review of all our risk assessments were made in 2024 and carried into 2025. Applying for the AALA license in Scotland for our activities there also helps us focus on our governance and compliance.

6.1 Status

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. Our governing document is a Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 20 November 2006, with an update to objects in 2010 and certain revisions in 2021.

6.2 Governing Body and Structure

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

T Aykroyd	Chair of Environment Committee
SJ Carver	
D Fielding	
JA Fosh	Chair – Social Benefits Committee
AL J Gibbs	
P Grewal	
Dr P Hobson	
P Martin	
G Parry	Chair – Finance and General Purposes Committee
T Platts	
EJ Posey	Retired in 2024
JK Roberts	Chief Executive Officer
A Sheepshanks	
MD Soutar	Chair – Scotland Committee

WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK

TRUSTEE'S REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

M Thomasson
GVB Thompson
MA Williams

Deceased May 2025
Chairman
Chair – Governance Committee

The Chief Executive Jo Roberts has dispensation from the Charity Commission to serve as Founding Director on the board, alongside working as Chief Executive Officer.

Our governing body is a Board of Directors of the charity and has an active Governance Committee made up of Trustees, including the Chair. As of 31 December 2024, there were 16 Trustees.

The Board of Directors is responsible for providing overall clarity for the vision, mission and strategic focus of the organisation. It also holds the Chief Executive to account against planned objectives. The Board meets four times over the course of the year and Directors are involved in other operational matters as needs dictate. Several committees offer more detailed support to the overall governance, programme oversight, strategy and finance – and report back quarterly to the main Board. In 2024 a special Mann Wood working group continues to support the management and oversight of the woods, alongside the Environment Committee leading on strategy and management.

The Wilderness Foundation UK forms part of the independent “Wilderness Foundation Global”, a consortium of forward-thinking, like-minded independent organisations with different skill sets. The organisations all share a common past, each founded and/or inspired by Dr. Ian Player, South Africa game ranger and international conservationist and his Zulu mentor and “brother”, the late Magqubu Ntombela.

The other members of the Wilderness Foundation Global are The Wilderness Foundation Africa, The WILD Foundation (USA) and the Wilderness Leadership School in South Africa.. Senior staff meet annually to set shared objectives, agree ethics and working partnerships and projects. All members of the network are completely independent of each other but share a common past. They have no financial ties or obligations beyond goods or services provided (predominantly by the Wilderness Leadership School which facilitates wilderness trails in South Africa for UK beneficiaries and client groups) and these are charged at the time the liability is incurred.

6.3 Decision Making

Responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation is delegated to the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team. The Board of Directors focuses its attention on matters of policy and general strategy, the approval of plans, the monitoring of progress with projects and financial control.

New Directors are appointed by the Board and are assessed as to their suitability and the benefits that their appointment would bring to the Foundation, in terms of additional skills, experience and opportunities for promotion of the Foundation's aims and objectives.

A full induction programme is carried out covering all aspects of the work of the charity, the governance, the memorandum and articles of association and a review of the latest accounts.

On occasion, the Board may extend invitations to individuals to attend meetings in an advisory or observational capacity, where it is felt that the individual concerned can bring insight to an issue, or matter under review.

An ambassador programme invites people who can bring a benefit to the Foundation through their networks and are equally passionate about its objectives. They have no official role but abide by a set of principles and a formal agreement.

6.4 Risk Management

The Foundation is exposed to financial as well as operational risks and through the valuable experience and knowledge of its Board of Trustees, it proactively manages these through robust corporate governance and encouraging expert field-based awareness in all its endeavours.

WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK

TRUSTEE'S REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

To manage and mitigate risk, a risk register is annually scrutinised by the Board of Trustees. The board allocate each risk to the committee/s it is most relevant to, who are then responsible for reviewing them on a quarterly basis. The senior management team review the risks internally and report any new or escalated risks to the main board. The committees collectively oversee a range of tasks, ensuring the organisation remains compliant. These include but are not limited to: data protection, policies, health and safety, legal requirements & updates, whistleblowing and complaints.

We have a robust child protection policy, safer recruitment practice, and safeguarding policy and procedures, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all the young people, staff, and volunteers we work with. We maintain a register to ensure that all essential training is up to date.

7. Scotland

For reporting purposes to the Offices of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), we are required to make a separate statement of our work in Scotland. In this document we outline our achievements in the delivery of the Treun Programme. This work provides public benefit for the people of Scotland, particularly young people. The programme includes our project management team, headed by our CEO, Operations Manager and an administrator, guides, volunteers, and facilitators.

A Scotland committee oversees our work and delivery in Scotland, and we report annually to OSCR. We work in partnership with Scottish Land & Estates and have benefitted from the kindness of several landowners who have given access to their land, including Atholl Estates, Angus and Douglas Estates and the Glenlivet Estate. Our participants have been involved in conservation volunteering and we continue to work closely with the estates to offer benefits through this activity.

The programme includes 6 optional follow-on therapy sessions for the participants as well as workshops/or meetings in advance of trails with the schools.

8. Financial Review

8.1 Financial Review

2024 was a very significant year for the development of WFUK with continued strong growth of our service delivery and the completion of the purchase of Mann Wood, 92 acres of semi-natural ancient woodland close to our base at Chatham Green and the urban centres of Braintree and Chelmsford. Funding for the purchase of Mann Wood was provided by a grant from Biffa Awards of £734,391 and a contribution of £77,500 from the Banister Charitable Trust. This is the first land purchase completed by WFUK and as well as being significant operationally it also has a significant impact on the reported financial trends and so we also comment below on the results excluding Mann Wood to allow a better comparative to the past performance.

Total income for the year was £1,614,888 or £797,747 excluding Mann Wood, an increase of 15% and continuing the strong growth achieved in 2023. This was a very strong performance against the backdrop of a challenging fundraising environment. Our expenses increased by 10% to £830,127 and we generated a modest surplus excluding Mann Wood of £66,214. The deficits in 2022 and 2023 reflected the board decision to invest an exceptional one-off donation of £109,000 received in 2021.

Our total reserves at 31 December 2024 are £1,070,278 or £351,731 excluding Mann Wood, up from £285,517 at 31 December 2023. We believe it is prudent to retain these reserves and grow them modestly given the current high levels of uncertainty in the macroeconomic and geopolitical environments and also to enable us to respond to future development opportunities.

WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK
TRUSTEE'S REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2020 (COVID)	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of beneficiaries	1,200	6,500	8,000	8,200	7,500
Total income	359,334	621,938	558,400	690,455	1,614,888
Total income excluding Mann Wood	359,334	621,938	558,400	690,455	802,997
Total expenses	258,150	439,733	615,831	757,342	830,127
Surplus / (Deficit)	101,184	182,205	(57,431)	(66,887)	784,761
Surplus / (Deficit) excluding Mann Wood	101,184	182,205	(57,431)	(66,887)	66,214
Total reserves	227,630	409,835	352,404	285,517	1,070,278
Total reserves excluding Mann Wood	227,630	409,835	352,404	285,517	351,731
Restricted reserves	137,149	207,942	173,672	126,274	914,807
Restricted reserves excluding Mann Wood	137,149	207,942	173,672	126,274	196,260
Unrestricted reserves	90,481	201,893	178,732	159,243	155,471

8.4 Investment Policy

As WFUK have not historically been required to make any financial investment, it was not previously deemed necessary to hold an Investment Policy. However, the Trustees recognise that this could become a requirement in the future as the charity continues to grow. With our purchase of Mann Wood successfully completed in 2024, the Trustees will have a land asset for the first time and new policy will need to be drafted in accordance with this.

8.5 Affiliate Funds

As in previous years, WFUK continue to be custodian trustees, managing funds and donors, on behalf of affiliate charities overseas, with whom we share the same values and mission. There are individual contractual agreements with each charity, which derive a small amount of income to cover overheads.

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Guarantors

Every member promises, if the Charity is dissolved while he or she is a member or within twelve months after he or she ceases to be a member, to contribute such sum (not exceeding £10) as may be demanded of him or her towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Charity incurred before he or she ceases to be a member and of the costs and charges and expenses of winding up and the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves.

WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK
TRUSTEE'S REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

9.2 Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees, who are also directors of Wilderness Foundation UK for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

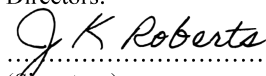
Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. These must give a true and fair view of the situation of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources. This includes the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company. These enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved on behalf of the Directors:


Mrs Joanne Roberts
Chief Executive Officer


.....
(Signature)

Date:

5 August 2025
.....

Vincent Thompson
Chair


.....
(Signature)

Date:

5 August 2025
.....

Wilderness Foundation UK

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Wilderness Foundation UK

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Wilderness Foundation UK (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2024, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Wilderness Foundation UK

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report (incorporating the Directors' Report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Directors' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Directors' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of trustees' responsibilities (set out on page 3), the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Wilderness Foundation UK

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder. Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows;

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector
- We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group and parent charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur by;

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud.
- Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate the risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we;

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships
- Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Wilderness Foundation UK

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with Regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

S Drain

.....
S Drain (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Edmund Carr LLP, Statutory Auditor

146 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0AW

Date: **5 August 2025**

Wilderness Foundation UK

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Other Comprehensive Income)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	186,006	1,274,548	1,460,554	558,793
Charitable activities	4	15,642	56,355	71,997	65,887
Investment income	6	2,770	-	2,770	2,629
Other income	5	20,370	59,197	79,567	63,146
Total income		<u>224,788</u>	<u>1,390,100</u>	<u>1,614,888</u>	<u>690,455</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	28,605	15,721	44,326	30,017
Charitable activities	8	165,304	620,497	785,801	727,325
Total expenditure		<u>193,909</u>	<u>636,218</u>	<u>830,127</u>	<u>757,342</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		30,879	753,882	784,761	(66,887)
Transfers between funds		<u>(34,651)</u>	<u>34,651</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		(3,772)	788,533	784,761	(66,887)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>159,243</u>	<u>126,274</u>	<u>285,517</u>	<u>352,404</u>
Total funds carried forward	20	<u><u>155,471</u></u>	<u><u>914,807</u></u>	<u><u>1,070,278</u></u>	<u><u>285,517</u></u>

All of the charitable company's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Wilderness Foundation UK
(Registration number: 06003527)
Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	14	746,753	2,600
Current assets			
Stocks	15	-	1,640
Debtors	16	37,907	18,293
Cash at bank and in hand		346,199	296,810
		384,106	316,743
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	(60,581)	(33,826)
Net current assets		323,525	282,917
Net assets		1,070,278	285,517
Funds of the charitable company:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds	20	914,807	126,274
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		155,471	159,243
Total funds	20	1,070,278	285,517


For the financial year ending 31 December 2024 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:


- The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 38 to 55 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 5 August 2025, and signed on their behalf by:



 G Parry
 Trustee



 G VB Thompson
 Chairman and Trustee

Wilderness Foundation UK

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds per SOFA		784,761	(66,887)
Adjustments			
Depreciation	7	975	-
Cash on deposit, included with investments	7	-	50,000
Investment income	6	(2,770)	(2,629)
		782,966	(19,516)
Working capital adjustments			
Decrease in stocks	15	1,640	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	16	(19,614)	991
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	17	26,755	(8,168)
Net cash flows from operating activities		791,747	(26,693)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest receivable and similar income	6	2,770	2,629
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	14	(745,128)	(2,600)
Net cash flows from investing activities		(742,358)	29
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		49,389	(26,664)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		296,810	323,474
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		346,199	296,810

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

1 Charitable company status

The charitable company is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charitable company in the event of liquidation.

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

Wilderness Foundation UK meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charitable company.

Income and endowments

All income is recognised once the charitable company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

Donations are recognised when the charitable company has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charitable company before the charitable company is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charitable company and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants receivable

Grants are recognised when the charitable company has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Donated services and facilities

Goods donated for resale are included at fair value, being the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale. If it is practical to assess the fair value at receipt, it is recognised in stock and 'Income from other trading activities'. Upon sale, the value of the stock is charged against 'Income from other trading activities' and the proceeds are recognised as 'Income from other trading activities'. Where it is impractical to fair value the items due to the volume of low value items, they are not recognised in the financial statements until they are sold. This income is recognised within 'Income from other trading activities'.

Gift aid

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the Statement of Financial Activities at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expenses categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Support costs, which cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, have been proportioned to the direct staff costs allocated to activities. Governance costs include the costs of servicing Trustees' meetings, audit and strategic planning.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,500 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost of valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment 20% per annum straight line basis

Fixtures and fittings 20% per annum straight line basis

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

Stock

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Trade creditors

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charitable company does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Financial instruments

Classification

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the charitable company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the charitable company after deducting all of its liabilities.

Recognition and measurement

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Donations	78,737	92,610	171,347
Grants receivable	107,269	1,181,910	1,289,179
Commissioned Work	-	28	28
	<u>186,006</u>	<u>1,274,548</u>	<u>1,460,554</u>

In 2024 there was a restricted one off donation of £77,500 and a restricted one off grant received of £734,391 towards the purchase of Mann Wood.

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Donations	69,804	58,085	127,889
Grants receivable	106,489	318,001	424,490
Commissioned work	-	6,414	6,414
	<u>176,293</u>	<u>382,500</u>	<u>558,793</u>

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Therapy camps and training	300	-	300
Bespoke education & therapy	-	54,545	54,545
Other income	15,342	100	15,442
Out there income	-	1,710	1,710
	<u>15,642</u>	<u>56,355</u>	<u>71,997</u>

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Therapy camps & training	300	2,350	2,650
Bespoke education & therapy	-	42,886	42,886
Other income	9,133	-	9,133
Out there income	-	11,218	11,218
	<u>9,433</u>	<u>56,454</u>	<u>65,887</u>

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

5 Other income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Other generated income	3,510	59,197	62,707
Management fees	863	-	863
Event income	15,997	-	15,997
	<u>20,370</u>	<u>59,197</u>	<u>79,567</u>
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Other generated income	1,793	50,639	52,432
Management fees	3,125	-	3,125
Event income	7,589	-	7,589
	<u>12,507</u>	<u>50,639</u>	<u>63,146</u>

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Interest receivable on bank deposits	2,770	-	2,770
	<u>2,770</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,770</u>
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Interest receivable on bank deposits	2,629	-	2,629
	<u>2,629</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,629</u>

7 Expenditure on raising funds

Costs of generating donations and legacies

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Raising and publicly seeking donations, grants and legacies		28,605	15,721	44,326
				<u>Total</u>
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Raising and publicly seeking donations, grants and legacies			30,017	30,017

8 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Direct costs		5,380	117,396	122,776
Staff costs		96,235	458,452	554,687
Support costs	9	41,276	38,656	79,932
Governance costs	9	22,413	5,993	28,406
		<u>165,304</u>	<u>620,497</u>	<u>785,801</u>

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Direct Costs		-	51,754	51,754
Staff costs		45,498	537,281	582,779
Support costs	9	-	63,001	63,001
Governance costs	9	-	29,791	29,791
		<u>45,498</u>	<u>681,827</u>	<u>727,325</u>

In addition to the expenditure analysed above, there are also governance costs of £28,406 (2023 - £29,791) which relate directly to charitable activities. See note 9 for further details.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

9 Analysis of governance and support costs

Support costs allocated to charitable activities

	Governance costs £	Other support costs £	Total 2024 funds £
Rates	-	26,752	26,752
Office expenses	-	11,045	11,045
Professional fees	26,968	-	26,968
Insurance	-	3,814	3,814
Marketing	-	2,935	2,935
Travel	-	11,611	11,611
Sundry expenses	-	23,774	23,774
Bank charges	463	-	463
Depreciation	975	-	975
Total for 2024	28,406	79,931	108,337
Total for 2023	29,791	63,001	92,792
	Governance costs £	Other support costs £	Total 2023 £
Rates	-	28,836	28,836
Office expenses	-	9,014	9,014
Professional fees	29,262	-	29,262
Insurance	-	640	640
Marketing	-	4,009	4,009
Travel	-	5,960	5,960
Sundry expenses	-	14,542	14,542
Bank charges	529	-	529
	29,791	63,001	92,792

Governance costs

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Professional fees	26,968	29,262
Depreciation, amortisation and other similar costs	975	-
Other governance costs	463	529
	28,406	29,791

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

10 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year include:

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating leases - plant and machinery	1,138	1,138
Operating leases - other assets	24,776	24,817
Audit fees	14,400	14,400
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>975</u>	<u>-</u>

11 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charitable company during the year. No trustees were reimbursed expenses during the year (2023: £Nil).

JK Roberts, the Chief Executive Officer, who is also trustee, received remuneration for her role as an employee as agreed with the Charity Commission, this amounted to £50,063 (2023: £48,195) employers pension contribution £1,253 (2023: 1,245)

12 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	349,659	350,750
Social security costs	26,858	28,821
Employer pension costs	7,728	8,287
Sessional staff	167,970	191,931
Staff training and supervision	<u>2,472</u>	<u>2,990</u>
	<u>554,687</u>	<u>582,779</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charitable company during the year expressed by head count was as follows:

	2024 No	2023 No
Average monthly number of employees	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charitable company were £50,063 (2023 - £48,195) employers' pension contribution £1,253 (2023:£1,245) and employers' NI £5,653 (2023: £5,396)

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

13 Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Plant and equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 January 2024	-	28,103	10,218	38,321
Additions	741,789	3,339	-	745,128
At 31 December 2024	741,789	31,442	10,218	783,449
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2024	-	25,503	10,218	35,721
Charge for the year	-	975	-	975
At 31 December 2024	-	26,478	10,218	36,696
Net book value				
At 31 December 2024	741,789	4,964	-	746,753
At 31 December 2023	-	2,600	-	2,600

15 Stock

	2024 £	2023 £
Trademarks	-	1,640

16 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	23,511	6,564
Prepayments and accrued income	14,396	11,329
Other debtors	-	400
	37,907	18,293

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	4,989	4,523
Social security and other taxes	8,343	10,637
Other creditors	32,399	2,003
Accruals and deferred income	14,850	16,663
	<u>60,581</u>	<u>33,826</u>

18 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

Operating lease commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Land & Buildings		
Within one year	<u>25,313</u>	<u>24,450</u>
Other		
Within one year	1,138	1,138
Between one and five years	<u>2,560</u>	<u>3,697</u>
	<u>3,698</u>	<u>4,835</u>

19 Retirement benefit schemes

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

20 Funds

Current year:

	Balance at 1 January 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Other unrestricted funds	159,243	224,788	(193,909)	(34,651)	155,471
Restricted					
CGP	4,451	121,723	(136,478)	10,304	-
TREUN	9,893	11,550	(54,802)	23,359	(10,000)
TurnAround Essex	71,815	57,500	(87,207)	-	42,108
Out There Academy	3,266	25,000	(29,254)	988	-
Wilderness and Nature Therapy	36,849	357,186	(229,883)	-	164,152
Mann Wood	-	817,141	(98,594)	-	718,547
Total restricted	<u>126,274</u>	<u>1,390,100</u>	<u>(636,218)</u>	<u>34,651</u>	<u>914,807</u>
Total funds	<u>285,517</u>	<u>1,614,888</u>	<u>(830,127)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,070,278</u>

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Prior year:

	Balance at 1 January 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
Designated funds	50,000	-	-	(50,000)	-
Other unrestricted funds	<u>128,732</u>	<u>200,862</u>	<u>(220,351)</u>	<u>50,000</u>	<u>159,243</u>
	<u>178,732</u>	<u>200,862</u>	<u>(220,351)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>159,243</u>
Restricted					
CGP	35,077	101,883	(132,509)	-	4,451
TREUN	8,937	48,500	(47,544)	-	9,893
TurnAround Essex	21,580	145,500	(95,265)	-	71,815
Out There Academy	19,606	7,058	(23,398)	-	3,266
Wilderness and Nature Therapy	<u>88,472</u>	<u>186,652</u>	<u>(238,275)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,849</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>173,672</u>	<u>489,593</u>	<u>(536,991)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>126,274</u>
Total funds	<u>352,404</u>	<u>690,455</u>	<u>(757,342)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>285,517</u>

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

Restricted funds have been disclosed within the requirements of the SORP. Included within each fund are individual grants for specific purposes that fit the nature and spirit of each fund disclosed.

Chatham Green Project (CGP)- an education initiative being delivered in partnership with Strutt and Parker (farms) at Chatham Green in Essex.

TREUN- this fund is for the delivery of a youth training programme in Scotland.

TurnAround- launched by the Wilderness Foundation UK in October 2007. It is a multi-faceted, nature based programme enabling vulnerable young people to make positive changes to their lives. This is achieved by linking community mentors, wilderness therapy, skills workshops and support for employment and further education in 6-9 month cycles.

Out There- a programme for young people facing difficulties in school and home lives. Runs during term time offering a personal development curriculum for children aged 13-15 years,

Wilderness and Nature Therapy- this is a range of different programmes offering online or face to face therapy services. We work with individuals, families, couples and groups. The programme addresses the needs of children, adolescents and adults.

Mann Wood- A 97 acre woodland which has been purchased to expand the charities services within the Essex area. In 2024, £811,891 was received as a capital contribution towards the purchase of Mann Wood.

A transfer of £34,651 from unrestricted to restricted was completed to cover the costs of the CGP, TREUN and Out there Academy projects in the year.

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 December 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	4,964	741,789	746,753
Current assets	150,507	173,018	323,525
Total net assets	<u>155,471</u>	<u>914,807</u>	<u>1,070,278</u>
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 December 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,600	-	2,600
Current assets	156,643	126,274	282,917
Total net assets	<u>159,243</u>	<u>126,274</u>	<u>285,517</u>

Wilderness Foundation UK

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

22 Affiliate funds

At the year end, the client held affiliate funds of £43,085 (2023: £55,298) relating to Bush Heritage Australia and WF Africa. There is a creditor on the balance sheet of £30,877 that is due to be paid to WF Africa after year end. The total sum received in 2024 £37,175 and total spent £49,389 as acting agents.

23 Analysis of net cash

	At 1 January 2024 £	Financing cash flows £	At 31 December 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	296,810	52,389	349,199
Net debt	296,810	52,389	349,199
	At 1 January 2023 £	Financing cash flows £	At 31 December 2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	323,474	(26,664)	296,810
Net debt	323,474	(26,664)	296,810

24 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

Wilderness Foundation UK

The following pages do not form part of the statutory financial statements.

Wilderness Foundation UK

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and Endowments from:		
Donations and legacies	1,460,554	558,793
Charitable activities	71,997	65,887
Investment income	2,770	2,629
Other income	<u>79,567</u>	<u>63,146</u>
Total income	<u>1,614,888</u>	<u>690,455</u>
Expenditure on:		
Raising funds (analysed below)	(44,326)	(30,017)
Charitable activities (analysed below)	<u>(785,801)</u>	<u>(727,325)</u>
Total expenditure	<u>(830,127)</u>	<u>(757,342)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>784,761</u>	<u>(66,887)</u>
Net movement in funds	784,761	(66,887)
Reconciliation of funds		
Total funds brought forward	<u>285,517</u>	<u>352,404</u>
Total funds carried forward	<u><u>1,070,278</u></u>	<u><u>285,517</u></u>