

NatureSpot Annual Accounts			
1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026			
Income	Apr25-Mar26	Apr24-Mar25	Notes
Grants	£ 1,300	£ 1,000	
Contracts	£ 3,555	£ 4,156	
Parish pages	£ 2,750	£ 1,650	
Wild Place pages	£ 159		
Donations - online giving	£ 2,863	£ 2,510	(24-25 figure = all donations)
Donations - Easy-fundraising	£ 158		
Donations - CAF	£ 35		
Surveys/Walks/Talks	£ 360		
Photo use	£ -	£ 270	
Misc. income		£ 100	
Total income	£ 11,180	£ 9,686	
Expenditure			
Website maintenance & development	£ 3,024	£ 3,096	
Web hosting	£ 291	£ 354	
Contract payments	£ 3,105	£ 4,050	
Company admin	£ 34	£ 34	
Insurance	£ 101	£ 101	
Zoom subscription	£ 156	£ 156	
Total expenditure	£ 6,710	£ 7,791	
Income less expenditure	£ 4,470	£ 1,895	
Funds owed	£ 2,142	£ 650	BiodiverseIT - web development
Surplus/loss for the year	£ 2,328	£ 1,245	
Balance sheet			
Cash at bank + petty cash	£ 10,047	£ 5,516	
Less funds owed	£ 2,142	£ 650	
NatureSpot total funds	£ 7,905	£ 4,866	
Prepared by: David Nicholls			
Audited by Helen O'Brien			
Approved by the NatureSpot Board of Trustees on: 29th July2026			

NatureSpot Trustees' Annual Report 2025–26

For the year ended 31 March 2026



Reporting Period:	1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026
Name of Charity:	NatureSpot
Charity Number:	1138852
Charity Structure:	Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee
Company Number:	07036856 (Now closed – see below)
Company Secretary:	David Nicholls
Registered Address:	69-71 Church Lane, Ratby, Leicester, LE6 0JF
Web:	www.naturespot.org
Trustees:	Melinda Bell Simon Bennett (appointed 5 th April 2025) Dr Alan Cann Ben Devine David Gould Geoffrey Hall (resigned 5 th April 2025) Mike Higgott William Raymond Morris Dr Helen O'Brien Susan Timms

Executive Summary

The year ended 31 March 2026 was one of significant progress for NatureSpot, both in strengthening its financial position and in expanding its contribution to wildlife recording, public engagement and nature recovery across Leicestershire and Rutland.

NatureSpot continued to fulfil its charitable objectives by promoting the recording, identification and understanding of local wildlife through its freely accessible website and the dedication of its volunteers. During the year more than 45,000 new biological records were added to the database, increasing the breadth and value of one of the county's most important biodiversity resources. The website now features information on over 8,000 species and taxa, providing an extensive educational resource for naturalists, schools, conservation organisations and the wider public.

The charity further strengthened its reputation as a trusted conservation partner through its support for the development of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including leading work on the identification and promotion of one hundred Indicator Species. NatureSpot also worked with Leicestershire County Council to deliver the first in-person Recorders' Conference for several years, bringing together around 140 participants to promote biological recording and strengthen collaboration across the county.

The Trustees also took important strategic decisions to support the charity's future development. Plans were approved for a comprehensive redesign of the NatureSpot website, funded through a grant from Leicester City Council, while discussions progressed towards a three-year Service Level Agreement with Leicestershire County Council to support NatureSpot's continuing contribution to local nature recovery.

Financially, the charity experienced another successful year. Total income increased to £11,180, expenditure reduced to £6,710, and unrestricted funds increased to £7,905, providing a stronger financial foundation for future investment and development. Growth in public donations and increased income from featured Parish pages demonstrated continued confidence in the charity's work and improved the sustainability of its funding.

NatureSpot remains an entirely volunteer-led organisation, and the Trustees acknowledge the exceptional contribution made by county recorders, species experts, photographers, website developers and many other volunteers whose knowledge and commitment make the charity's work possible. Their collective expertise enables NatureSpot to deliver services of a quality and scale that far exceed what would normally be expected of an organisation of its size.

The Trustees are satisfied that the charity remains well governed and financially sound. No serious incidents occurred during the year, the principal risks facing the charity remain low and are managed through appropriate governance and operational controls, and the Board

is confident that NatureSpot is well placed to continue expanding its contribution to wildlife recording, public education and biodiversity conservation in the years ahead.

Achievements and Performance

NatureSpot continued to make significant progress during 2025–26 in fulfilling its charitable objective of promoting the understanding, enjoyment and conservation of the wildlife of Leicestershire and Rutland. Through the continued development of its online resources, the support of an extensive volunteer network and collaborative working with partner organisations, the charity further strengthened its position as the county's principal online resource for biological recording and wildlife information.

Supporting Biological Recording

Encouraging members of the public to observe, record and identify wildlife remains at the heart of NatureSpot's work. During the year, over 45,000 new biological records were added to the NatureSpot database, continuing the long-term growth of one of the county's most comprehensive publicly accessible biodiversity resources. These records were contributed by hundreds of volunteer recorders and verified by an experienced network of county recorders and species specialists before being incorporated into the database.

The continual addition of high-quality records improves understanding of the county's biodiversity and provides an increasingly valuable evidence base for conservation organisations, local authorities, researchers and land managers. The information is also made freely available through the NatureSpot website, enabling anyone with an interest in wildlife to benefit from the knowledge generated by the recording community.

The Trustees recognise that biological recording depends upon the enthusiasm and expertise of volunteers. Throughout the year NatureSpot continued to encourage participation by providing easy-to-use online recording facilities, expert verification, educational information and feedback to contributors, helping both experienced naturalists and beginners develop their identification skills.

Developing the NatureSpot Website

The NatureSpot website remains the charity's principal means of delivering public benefit. During the year it continued to expand both in scope and quality.

By the end of the reporting period the website featured information on more than 8,000 species and taxa, making it one of the most comprehensive local wildlife resources in the United Kingdom. Species accounts, photographs, distribution information and identification guidance continue to be enhanced through the contributions of many volunteers and specialists.

The Trustees recognise that maintaining an attractive and accessible website is essential if NatureSpot is to continue engaging existing users while attracting new audiences. During the year it was therefore agreed to commission a comprehensive redesign of the website. The project will modernise the visual appearance, improve navigation, enhance accessibility and provide an improved experience across desktop and mobile devices.

The Trustees are particularly grateful to Leicester City Council for agreeing to fund this important development through grant support. Work on the redesign is scheduled to commence early in the following financial year.

Supporting Nature Recovery

One of the most significant developments during the year was NatureSpot's growing contribution to strategic nature recovery across Leicestershire and Rutland.

The charity worked closely with Leicestershire County Council in supporting the development of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LRLNRS). Trustees and volunteers contributed their knowledge of local biodiversity and recording, helping ensure that the strategy is supported by robust ecological evidence.

NatureSpot also led the development and promotion of a list of one hundred Indicator Species, selected to help communicate the aims of the Nature Recovery Strategy and provide a practical means of monitoring ecological recovery over time. This work demonstrates how information gathered by volunteer recorders can contribute directly to strategic conservation planning.

Working in Partnership

NatureSpot continues to achieve far more through partnership working than would be possible alone.

During the year the charity worked closely with Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, local recording groups, county recorders, ecological consultants and numerous conservation organisations to promote biological recording and improve understanding of local biodiversity.

A particular highlight was the Recorder's Conference, organised jointly with Leicestershire County Council. This was the first in-person conference held for several years and attracted around 140 participants from across the county's recording community.

NatureSpot trustees and volunteers contributed presentations and workshops throughout the event, helping both experienced and new recorders develop their knowledge while strengthening relationships between the many organisations and individuals involved in biological recording across Leicestershire and Rutland. Feedback indicated that the conference was highly successful and demonstrated the continuing strength and enthusiasm of the county's recording community.

Volunteers

NatureSpot remains entirely dependent upon volunteers.

The Trustees wish to record their appreciation for the outstanding contribution made by the many individuals who generously give their time and expertise to the charity. Their work includes species verification, county recording, photography, editorial work, website development, ecological advice, event organisation and governance.

The breadth of expertise available to the charity is exceptional and enables NatureSpot to provide services that would otherwise require significant financial resources. The Trustees are grateful for the continued enthusiasm, professionalism and generosity shown by all volunteers throughout the year.

Financial Review

The Trustees are pleased to report another positive financial outcome for the year ended 31 March 2026. The charity remains in a sound financial position, with income exceeding expenditure and unrestricted reserves increasing during the year. This provides NatureSpot with a stronger financial foundation from which to continue developing its services and investing in future improvements.

Income

Total income for the year was £11,180 (2024–25: £9,686), representing an increase of approximately 15% over the previous year. The charity continues to benefit from a diverse range of income sources, helping to reduce dependence on any single funding stream.

Grant income amounted to £1,300, while income from contracts totalled £3,555. Following a review of contributions requested from parish councils, a revised charging structure linked to parish population size was introduced. This resulted in income from featured parish pages increasing significantly during the year from £1,650 to £2,750 and provides a more equitable and sustainable funding model for this aspect of the charity's work.

The Trustees are particularly encouraged by the continued growth in voluntary giving. Online donations increased again during the year and, together with contributions received through Easyfundraising and the Charities Aid Foundation, demonstrate the continuing support of the public for NatureSpot's work. Income was also received from talks and guided walks, reflecting the charity's commitment to public engagement.

Expenditure

Total expenditure amounted to £6,710 (2024–25: £7,791). The principal items of expenditure continued to be website maintenance and development together with specialist contract payments supporting the charity's technical infrastructure and services.

The Trustees continued to exercise careful financial management throughout the year, ensuring that expenditure remained proportionate to the charity's activities while maintaining the reliability and security of the NatureSpot website and associated systems. Administrative overheads remained low, reflecting the charity's volunteer-led structure.

Surplus and Funds

After allowing for outstanding liabilities at the year end, the charity recorded a net surplus of £2,328 for the year (2024–25: £1,245).

Total unrestricted funds increased from £4,866 at the beginning of the year to £7,905 at 31 March 2026. Cash balances at the year end stood at £10,047, although this included £2,142 committed to website development work undertaken shortly after the year end. The Trustees consider this to be a healthy financial position for a charity of NatureSpot's size and one that provides greater resilience for future activities.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees maintain unrestricted reserves to ensure that NatureSpot can continue to operate effectively should income fluctuate or unexpected expenditure arise.

Given the charity's relatively modest running costs and reliance on volunteers, the Board considers unrestricted reserves of approximately one year's normal operating expenditure to represent an appropriate level of financial resilience. At the end of the reporting period unrestricted funds totalled £7,905, which the Trustees consider appropriate in light of planned investment in the website and the continuing development of the charity's activities.

The reserves policy will continue to be reviewed annually in conjunction with the budget and financial forecasts.

Risk Management

The Trustees are responsible for identifying and managing the principal risks facing the charity. Risk management is considered regularly and appropriate controls are maintained to minimise identified risks.

NatureSpot is a relatively low-risk organisation. Its principal activities comprise the management and development of an educational wildlife website, the collection and verification of biological records, and the dissemination of information for public benefit. The charity has no employees, owns no property and undertakes only limited physical activities.

The principal risks identified by the Trustees include:

- interruption to website hosting or technical infrastructure;
- loss or corruption of biological data;

- cyber security and data protection;
- dependence on key volunteers and specialist expertise;
- maintaining adequate financial resources to support ongoing development.

These risks are mitigated through regular data backups, secure website hosting, financial oversight by the Board, succession planning where practical, and close monitoring of income and expenditure.

The Trustees are pleased to report that no serious incidents occurred during the year and that the charity continued to operate effectively throughout the reporting period.

Structure, Governance and Management

NatureSpot is a registered charity governed by its Trustees, who are responsible for ensuring that the charity operates effectively and in accordance with its charitable objectives.

The Trustees who served during the year are listed below:

- Dr Helen O'Brien (Chair until 31st December 2025)
- Melinda Bell
- Dr Alan Cann
- Ben Devine
- David Gould
- Mike Higgott
- William Raymond Morris
- Dr Helen O'Brien
- Susan Timms
- Simon Bennett (Appointed 5th April 2025)
- Geoffrey Hall (Resigned 5th April 2025)

Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration for their services.

New Trustees are appointed in accordance with the charity's governing document. The Trustees seek to ensure that the Board has the appropriate skills and experience to oversee the charity's activities and future development.

A Management Group of selected Trustees, supported by the Company Secretary, meets regularly to oversee day to day activities and to address any issues or development needs that arise.

All Trustees meet to review the charity's progress, finances, risks and strategic direction.

During the year a significant decision was made (by a resolution of the Trustees on 17th November 2025) to convert NatureSpot from a Company Limited by Guarantee that also has

charitable status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This was successful and completed on 17th April 2026 (outside the reporting period for this report). Until this point, the Trustees were also Directors of the Company, but after that point they are just Trustees.

Stakeholders

Our stakeholders include registered users who submit records to our website, non-registered users who access our site for information, verifiers who verify the wildlife records submitted to our site, partner organisations such as the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and The National Forest which provide funding, donors who support our charitable work, local authorities at county, district and parish level in Leicestershire and Rutland which support our work and may make financial contributions or grants, other public bodies such as local wildlife groups and charities which publicise their work through our web platform.

Although we primarily operate in Vice-County 55 for the recording of wildlife, we attract users from a much wider geographical range.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

The charity's activities provide public benefit by:

- Increasing knowledge and appreciation of wildlife.
- Encouraging people to engage with nature.
- Supporting wildlife recording and biodiversity monitoring.
- Making information about species identification and distribution available to the public.

Through the NatureSpot website and associated activities, the charity continues to promote understanding and enjoyment of the natural world.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the financial activities of the charity during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with charity legislation.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Plans for 2026–27

The Trustees intend to build on the progress achieved during the year by continuing to strengthen NatureSpot as the leading source of information on the wildlife of Leicestershire and Rutland.

The highest priority for the coming year will be the delivery of a comprehensive redesign of the NatureSpot website. This project will modernise the appearance of the site, improve accessibility and navigation, and provide a significantly enhanced user experience while retaining the wealth of information developed over many years. The Trustees are grateful to Leicester City Council for providing grant funding to enable this important investment.

The charity also expects to formalise a three-year Service Level Agreement with Leicestershire County Council to support NatureSpot's continuing contribution to the delivery of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This agreement will provide greater financial stability while recognising the important role played by NatureSpot in supporting evidence-based nature recovery across the county.

The Trustees will continue to encourage public participation in biological recording, expand the range and quality of information available through the website, strengthen relationships with partner organisations and support the county's network of volunteer recorders and species experts.

Looking further ahead, the Trustees remain committed to ensuring that NatureSpot continues to evolve in response to changing technology and increasing public interest in nature, while remaining true to its charitable purpose of promoting the understanding, enjoyment and conservation of the wildlife of Leicestershire and Rutland.

Thank you

The Trustees would like to thank everyone who has contributed to NatureSpot during the year, including wildlife recorders, contributors, experts, volunteers and supporters. Their continued involvement enables the charity to fulfil its objectives of encouraging interest in wildlife and supporting the collection and sharing of valuable biodiversity information.

Approval of the Trustees' Annual Report

This Trustees' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and was approved by the Trustees on:

6th August 2026

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Helen O'Brien

[Name of authorised Trustee]

Date: 6th August 2026