



Essex & Suffolk Rivers Trust

ESSEX AND SUFFOLK RIVERS TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2025

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Administrative and Reference Details

| | |
|--|--|
| Legal name | Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust |
| Registered Office | Red Gables, Ipswich Road, Stowmarket, IP14 1BE |
| Registered Charity Number | 1157392 |
| Registered Company Number (England and Wales) | 08834787 |
| Website | www.essexsuffolkriverstrust.org |
| Principal Bankers | CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ |
| Independent Examiner | Alex Stone FCCA, Edmund Carr LLP, Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor, 146 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0AW |

Members of the Board

The Trustees who served during the year and the dates of their most recent election or retirement were as follows:

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------|------------|
| J M Burch | Chairman | Elected | 31/01/2025 |
| C J Whitehouse | Vice Chairman | Elected | 15/07/2025 |
| S L Morton | Treasurer | Elected | 04/10/2023 |
| A Woods | Secretary | Elected | 04/10/2023 |
| T L Arnold | Trustee | Elected | 04/10/2023 |
| A Martin-Edwards | Trustee | Elected | 17/11/2017 |
| T J Palmer | Trustee | Elected | 16/01/2025 |
| S Tiller | Trustee | Elected | 16/01/2025 |
| H C Wilkes | Trustee | Elected | 04/04/2023 |
| A C J Wood | Trustee | Elected | 07/01/2014 |
| A G Davies | Trustee | Resigned | 10/10/2024 |
| C I McArthur | Trustee | Resigned | 10/10/2024 |
| A E Ruggles-Brise | Chairman | Resigned | 31/01/2025 |
| W H Robinson | Trustee | Resigned | 15/07/2025 |

Trustees Report

The Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust is both a registered charity (number 1157392) and a registered company limited by guarantee (number 08834787). The Trustees, whose details are set out on page 3, are both Trustees of the charity and Directors of the company.

This document reports on the activities of the Trust in the year to 31 May 2025 and sets out the financial accounts of the company for the same period. It aims to satisfy the reporting requirements that apply to the Trust as both a charity and a company. This annual report also includes the requirements of a Directors' report, as required by company law.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Charities Act 2011 and The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (Financial Reporting Standard 102), effective from January 2019.

Our Objectives and Activities

The objectives for which the charity is established are:

1. To conserve, protect, rehabilitate and improve the rivers, streams, watercourses, groundwaters and water impoundments of the catchments comprising the rivers in Essex and East Suffolk, including adjacent estuarine and coastal areas, for the advancement of environmental protection or improvement for the benefit of the public.
2. To advance the education of the public, or any institution, voluntary organisation, company, local authority or public body:
 - a. The understanding of rivers, river corridors and river catchment including their fauna, flora, biodiversity, economic or social activity and river catchment management.
 - b. The need for and benefits of, conservation, protection, rehabilitation and improvement of aquatic environments.

Overview of Activities

The ambition and activity of the Trust again increased significantly this year. As hosts of two catchment partnerships (collaborative government-endorsed planning and delivery groups) covering almost all our operational area, we have continued to play an influential role in tackling both the climate and biodiversity crises.

Locally and regionally, the Trust continues to be recognised for its consistent delivery and thoughtful, considered leadership. This is exemplified by our successes in raising funds and our leading role in initiatives to improve the water environment across the East Suffolk and Combined Essex catchments.

During this very successful year we raised £963,112 in grants and donations. We have also:

- Restored over 12.5 kilometres of in-river habitat.
- Organised workshops and catchment meetings bringing together dozens of land managers and/or representatives of local authorities, conservation bodies, and government agencies to support collaborative initiatives to improve the water environment.
- Led over 100 hours of volunteer activity, including Citizen science work and invasive species control.
- Produced 8 Catchment Partnership newsletters, delivered to over 355 subscribers.
- Supported 56 surveyors under the Essex RiverWatch citizen science initiative.
- Built our online presence and increased our total follower count by 31 %: LinkedIn 20%, Instagram 34 %, Facebook and Threads 40%.

In October 2024, the Board marked the formal retirement of two inaugural Trustees, Andrew Davies (Chair to October 2023) and Chris McArthur (Vice Chair to October 2023), and initiated an open recruitment process for new Board members. Three new Trustees were appointed in January 2025: Tom Palmer, Simon Tiller and Chris Whitehouse. At the end of January, Archie Ruggles-Brise, another inaugural Trustee, and Chair since October 2023, retired from the Board and Jane Burch was appointed as Chair in his place. The Board expressed their great appreciation of all Archie's work for the Trust over the years.

Our strong and diverse Board provides advice and guidance to the staff team through the Director. Trustees come from consultancy, businesses, banking, agriculture, water companies and voluntary conservation bodies. The Board met quarterly.

Our Trustees participated in a governance course delivered by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations in October 2024 and developed a governance action plan. Several working groups have since been established to work on different aspects of governance. We engaged Infinity Accountants Ltd in July 2024 and Croner Group Ltd in April 2025 to strengthen our financial and human resources management capabilities respectively. Both companies have experience of working with charities, including Rivers Trusts in particular.

We launched our Strategy for 2024-30 at our AGM in October 2024. This sets out our vision 'for the rivers and estuaries of Essex and Suffolk to be rich in wildlife, loved and cared for by local people, and protected for future generations.' We are working with partners and communities in four areas: restoring natural processes and habitats; protecting our land and water; inspiring people to get involved; and building resilience for future generations.

We further strengthened our team in 2024-25. We have a Director (part-time, 3 days/week) and an Operations Support Officer, Natural Rivers Manager, and Project Support Officer (all full-time). An Enforcement Undertaking from Anglian Water has enabled us to employ a Volunteer and Community Involvement Officer for three years (from 19 May 2025). She will focus on Essex Riverwatch, river restoration planning and enhancing floodplain wetlands. With additional funding from the Environment Agency, we also aim to recruit a Project Officer to develop projects on the Rivers Chelmer and Wid.

We are employing a Programme Coordinator from June 2025 to lead work to implement the Action Plan for the partnership project Recovering the Deben from Source to Sea. This post has been funded by a substantial grant from the DEFRA Water Restoration Fund.

We also lead Essex & Suffolk Water's Bluespaces programme. We strengthened our delivery team by employing a Bluespaces Officer (from 27 May 2025) to support our Bluespaces Delivery Manager.

Both split their time 60:40 between Essex & Suffolk Water and the Trust. They also support the Essex Rivers hub and our wider communication work.

During the year we continued to rent offices in Stowmarket to provide a central office hub. We are investigating the availability of a shared office space for Essex-focused roles.

We remain part of the Anglian Rivers Hub, which brings together local Rivers Trusts to share ideas, work together, and provide a collective voice (e.g. on policy matters). As hosts for two catchment partnerships, for East Suffolk and the Combined Essex rivers (Essex Rivers Hub) we have worked on building capacity, catchment planning, coordinating projects, and upgrading websites. During the year, the River Deben Recovery Plan was the main focus of the Suffolk Partnership (see below). In Essex, the Rivers Hub published its Catchment Plan for 2025-30, aiming to restore rivers and wetlands, engage people in the Partnership's work, and address the impacts of climate change, including droughts and flooding.

During the year we maintained and extended our links with other bodies, including Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Anglian Water, Essex & Suffolk Water, Environment Agency, Nature Recovery Partnerships, National Landscapes, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, Affinity Water, North Essex Farm Cluster, and Water Resources East. Our Chair is a member of the Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

Project delivery

Blackwater Catchment Restoration Plan

Our Project Support Officer led a detailed survey of the River Pant and Blackwater in 2024. This provided the basis for the consultation draft of the River Pant & Blackwater Restoration Plan, published in April 2025. The plan is being finalised for implementation in 2025-26.

Bluespaces programme

This Essex & Suffolk Water (E&SW) programme aims to improve 500 km of watercourses by 2030. Projects must deliver improvements in water quality, wildlife, public access, and/or recreation. This programme enables us to engage a wider range of land managers and E&SW grants enable us to attract match funding to deliver wider benefits. Projects releasing some £100,000 of funds were developed for some 50 km of watercourses, including improving the River Gipping and the 'Tin' River in Bungay, and tackling Himalayan Balsam.

Corporate Volunteering

We developed a Corporate Volunteering brochure, offering two types of activities (litter picks and Balsam Bashing) to organisations as part of a bespoke service.

Essex Riverwatch

Following a successful pilot project on the River Brett (in the Stour catchment), we launched the Essex Riverwatch Citizen Science initiative across Essex in July 2024. By 31 March 2025, 37 surveyors had been recruited in six groups, monitoring 19 waterbodies across the Ter, Brett, Box and Chelmer catchments, with more groups waiting to be trained. Surveyors monitor dissolved solids, phosphate and ammonia levels, among other water and habitat quality parameters. Surveyors upload their findings to a dedicated website.

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) control

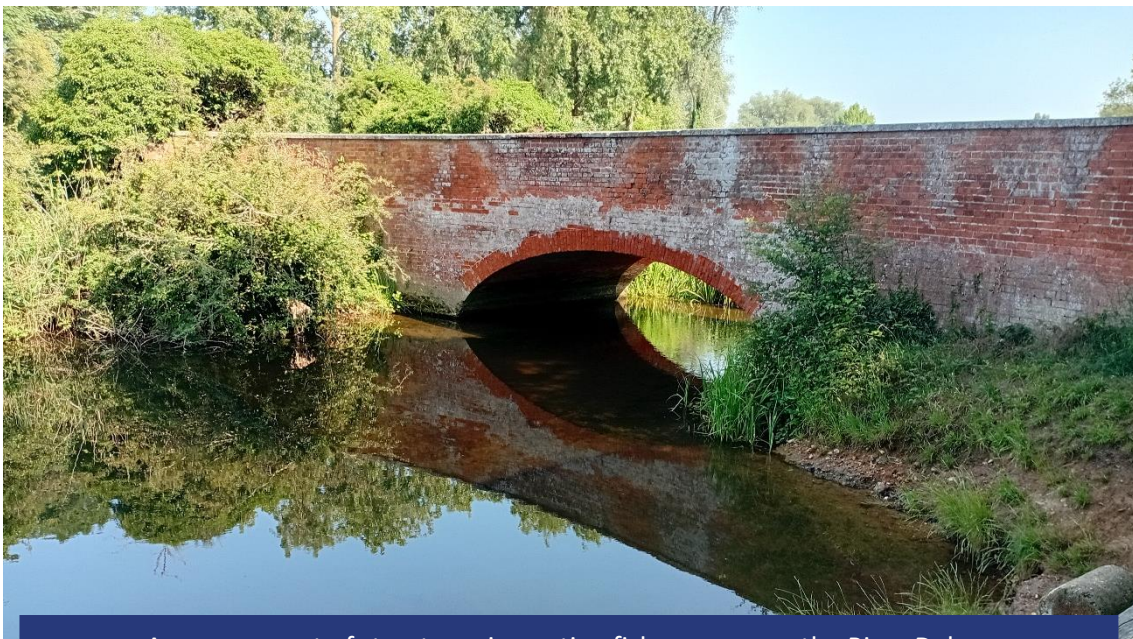
- Several kilometres of the River Fynn were cleared of Himalayan Balsam, with support from the Anglian Water INNS fund.
- Essex & Suffolk Water and National Landscapes supported continuing efforts to control Himalayan Balsam on the Brett, Stour, Box and Lavenham Brook.



ESRT staff tackling invasive, non-native Himalayan Balsam on the River Fynn

Recovering the Deben from Source to Sea

The Deben Estuary is a Wetland of International Importance but in ‘unfavourable and declining’ condition. We are working as part of a multi-stakeholder partnership to restore and enhance the River Deben and estuary.



An assessment of structures impacting fish passage on the River Deben

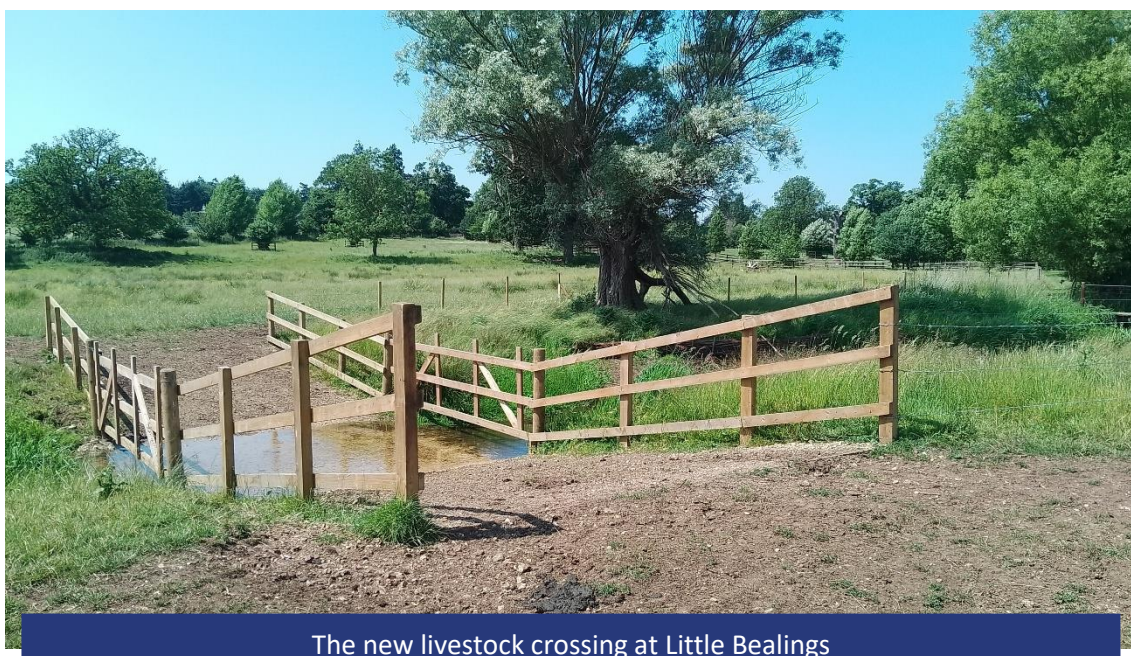
Following the launch of the partnership's Action Plan in May 2024, we are now identifying opportunities for improvement, and sourcing funds to deliver these by 2030, in five areas:

- Valuing our Water (raising awareness of water resources and the importance of water efficiency),
- Natural Edges (establishing a 50m super buffer down the length of the Deben),
- Habitat Connectivity (improving fish passage in the river Deben and creating connected woodland and wetland habitat),
- Natural Flood Management (improving resilience of the river to high flows),
- Water Quality (monitoring and improving the health of our rivers).

Water Environment Improvement Fund projects

Projects undertaken under this Environment Agency funding programme were:

- River Ore: Framlingham: Following work on designs to improve the river through the town, we applied for funding to deliver the works. A decision is awaited.
- River Alde: Bruiyard: We continued to develop plans for natural flood management measures and new wetlands on the Bruiyard estate.
- River Deben: Debenham: We continued work with the Water Management Alliance, Environment Agency and Suffolk County Council to take forward plans for two new ponds above the village with a combined flood water storage capacity of some 20,000 cubic metres, as part of the Action Plan for Recovering the Deben.
- River Fynn: Little Bealings: We installed trout spawning beds, undertook bank improvements and installed a new livestock crossing.



The new livestock crossing at Little Bealings

- River Colne: Fiddlers Hill Meadow: We continued to lead this partnership project to create a new wetland environment within the River Colne floodplain on land owned by the Woodland Trust. Additional funding from the Enover Community Trust, and other awaited match-funding, should enable work to start in September 2025.



We thank all our Trustees, volunteers, partners and funders for their ongoing support for the Trust in 2024-25.

Financial Review

Our accounts show income of £963,493 (2023-24: £323,449), expenditure of £277,276 (2023-24: £211,513), and a net surplus for the year of £686,217 (2023-24: £111,936). The income has increased in this financial year due to success in gaining multi-year partnership projects. The income will be spent over the next 5 years. The year-to-year variation in expenditure highlights the difference in on projects. Our balance sheet shows total funds of £957,522 (2023-24: £271,305) of which £903,265 is restricted (2023-24: £235,186) and £54,257 is unrestricted (2023-24: £36,119).

Our main sources of income are project grants and donations. We received all the grant income expected in the year and were able to show our funders how this had been spent. We acknowledge, with gratitude, critical funding towards core costs and/or project costs received from businesses, public bodies, charitable funders and individual donors.

Significant supporters of our work during the year included:

- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
- Essex & Suffolk Water
- Environment Agency
- The Rivers Trust
- Sharegift
- Swire Charitable Trust

We made good progress in further developing a fundraising strategy embracing consultancy, Biodiversity Net Gain, project grants, corporate fundraising and public donations. We continued to improve our website and those of the two catchment partnerships.

Expenditure was in line with our budget for the year. Costs generally increased in line with the expansion of our activities. We continue to keep our insurance requirements under review and to strengthen these where necessary (e.g. in relation to our rented office space). We shall continue to keep our core costs under close review in 2025-26.

At the year-end, the Trust is in a much stronger financial position than in previous years and we are confident that it remains a going concern. During the year we strengthened our staffing, delivered new projects, and identified new partnerships, opportunities to grow our delivery team, and significant new projects, to build on our achievements to date.

Policy on reserves

To date we have sought to maintain £20,000 of unrestricted reserves. We are confident that we can continue to maintain our reserves at this level but, given the Trust's rapid growth, will be reviewing our policy in 2025-26. Unrestricted free reserves on 31 May 2025 were £51,535.

| | £ |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Total reserves | 957,522 |
| Less: restricted reserves | (903,265) |
| Less: fixed assets | (1,873) |
| Free reserves | <u>52,384</u> |

Risk management

The Trust has a comprehensive Risk Register and the Trustees continue to monitor risks to the business. Our banking arrangements with CAF Bank are robust and accountable, with two signatories required on all significant transactions.

In our day-to-day work, we have a strong focus on staff health and safety, particularly as regards lone working, and have strengthened our risk assessment processes. The Trust undertakes dynamic risk assessments on site and staff follow the Construction Design and Management (CDM) guidelines, which are relevant to some of our bigger projects.

Croner Group Ltd undertook a thorough H&S audit in April 2025. They welcomed the Trust's approach, risk assessments and culture and recommended only some minor improvements.

Cyber security is an identified increasing risk to the organisation. We will be seeking to take out insurance to mitigate this risk in 2025/26.

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 71 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit in reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives and in planning its activities.

Small companies provision statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charitable company on17 December..... 2025 and signed on its behalf.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J Burch'.

Jane Burch
Chairman and Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Essex and Suffolk River Trust ("the Company")

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 May 2025 which are set out on pages 13 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A Stone

.....
Alex Stone FCCA
146 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0AW

Date: 12 January 2026

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 May 2025

Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust

| | Note | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2025 | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2024 |
|------------------------------------|------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Income and Endowments from: | | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 2 | 49,330 | 913,782 | 963,112 | 13,293 | 309,842 | 323,135 |
| Investment income | 3 | 381 | - | 381 | 314 | - | 314 |
| | | 49,711 | 913,782 | 963,493 | 13,607 | 309,842 | 323,449 |
| Expenditure on: | | | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 4 | 32,373 | 244,903 | 277,276 | 9,857 | 201,656 | 211,513 |
| | | 32,373 | 244,903 | 277,276 | 9,857 | 201,656 | 211,513 |
| Net income | | 17,338 | 668,879 | 686,217 | 3,750 | 108,186 | 111,936 |
| Transfers between funds | | 800 | (800) | - | 16,192 | (16,192) | - |
| Net Movement in Funds | | 18,138 | 668,079 | 686,217 | 19,942 | 91,994 | 111,936 |
| Reconciliation of Funds | | | | | | | |
| Funds brought forward | | 36,119 | 235,186 | 271,305 | 16,177 | 143,192 | 159,369 |
| Funds carried forward | | 54,257 | 903,265 | 957,522 | 36,119 | 235,186 | 271,305 |

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 May 2025

Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust

| | Note | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|--|------|-----------|-----------|
| Fixed Assets: | | | |
| Tangible fixed assets | 6 | 2,722 | 124 |
| Current assets: | | | |
| Debtors | 7 | 554,928 | 123,613 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 404,252 | 162,169 |
| Total Current assets: | | 959,180 | 285,782 |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year | 8 | 4,380 | 14,601 |
| Net current assets | | 954,800 | 271,181 |
| Total net assets | | 957,522 | 271,305 |
| Total funds of the charity | | | |
| Expendable Endowment funds | | | |
| Restricted Funds | 9,10 | 903,265 | 235,186 |
| Unrestricted Funds | 9,10 | 54,257 | 36,119 |
| Total Funds of the Charity | | 957,522 | 271,305 |

For the year ending 31 May 2025 the 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 company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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 13 to 23 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on 17 December and signed on their behalf by:



Jane Burch
Chairman and Trustee

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 May 2025

Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust

Charitable Company Status

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

1. 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

Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust 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. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the Charity and rounded to the nearest pound.

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.

Investment income

Dividends are recognised once the dividend has been declared and notification has been received of the dividend due.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charitable company in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Support costs

Support costs comprise those costs incurred in central functions and not related to direct activities.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including independent examination costs.

Notes to the Accounts continued

1. Accounting Policies continued

Taxation

The charitable company is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charitable company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Significant individual fixed assets are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Computer equipment: 33.33%

Office equipment: 10%

Trade debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid after taking account of any discounts due.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand, bank accounts and bank deposits.

Trade creditors

Creditors and accruals are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and accruals are normally recognised at their settlement amount.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the Trustees's discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charitable company. Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Pensions and other post retirement obligations

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme which is a pension plan under which fixed contributions are paid into a pension fund and the charitable company has no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions even if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods. Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when they are due. If contribution payments exceed the contribution due for service, the excess is recognised as a prepayment.

Financial instruments Classification

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Notes to the accounts continued

2. Donations and legacies

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2025 | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2024 |
|-----------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Donations | 6,076 | - | 6,076 | 11,353 | - | 11,353 |
| Grants | 43,254 | 913,782 | 957,036 | 1,940 | 309,842 | 311,782 |
| | 49,330 | 913,782 | 963,112 | 13,293 | 309,842 | 323,135 |

3. Investment Income

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2025 | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2024 |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Bank interest | 381 | - | 381 | 314 | - | 314 |
| | 381 | - | 381 | 314 | - | 314 |

4. Expenditure on charitable activities

| | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total 2025 | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total 2024 |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Direct activities | 104 | 237,922 | 238,026 | 3,882 | 171,375 | 175,257 |
| Support costs | 32,269 | 6,981 | 39,250 | 5,975 | 30,281 | 36,256 |
| | 32,373 | 244,903 | 277,276 | 9,857 | 201,656 | 211,513 |

(a) Direct Activities

| | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total 2025 | Unrestricted | Restricted | 2024 |
|---|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Programs | | | | | | |
| <i>Water quality improvements</i> | | | | | | |
| Blackwater Fluvial Audit | - | 35,638 | 35,638 | - | 14,075 | 14,075 |
| Blackwater Restoration Plans | - | 17,839 | 17,839 | - | 13,929 | 13,929 |
| Chelmer and Wid | - | 11,882 | 11,882 | - | 3,757 | 3,757 |
| Recovering Deben Source to Sea | - | 6,021 | 6,021 | - | 12,247 | 12,247 |
| | - | 71,380 | 71,380 | - | 44,008 | 44,008 |
| <i>Partnership projects</i> | | | | | | |
| East Suffolk Catchment Partnership | - | 15,000 | 15,000 | 3,882 | 15,059 | 18,941 |
| Essex Rivers Hub | - | 15,000 | 15,000 | - | 9,112 | 9,112 |
| | - | 30,000 | 30,000 | 3,882 | 24,171 | 28,053 |
| <i>Improvements to river and wetland landscapes</i> | | | | | | |
| Bluespaces access to nature | - | 12,808 | 12,808 | - | 5,148 | 5,148 |
| Suffolk Interconnected Habitats | - | 37,301 | 37,301 | - | 29,609 | 29,609 |
| Fiddlers Hill wetland creation | - | 19,727 | 19,727 | - | 49,737 | 49,737 |
| Little Bealings river restoration | - | 15,725 | 15,725 | - | - | - |
| River restoration feasibility | - | 4,895 | 4,895 | - | - | - |
| | - | 90,456 | 90,456 | - | 84,494 | 84,494 |
| <i>Community engagement</i> | | | | | | |
| Bluespaces access to nature | - | 12,809 | 12,809 | - | - | - |
| Essex River Watch Citizen Science | 104 | 9,818 | 9,922 | - | 3,812 | 3,812 |
| Community Engagement Officer | - | 4,851 | 4,851 | - | - | - |
| Volunteer Coordination Officer | - | 4,920 | 4,920 | - | - | - |
| | 104 | 32,398 | 32,502 | - | 3,812 | 3,812 |
| <i>Invasive species research and projects</i> | | | | | | |
| Suffolk Crayfish | - | - | - | - | 9,593 | 9,593 |
| Himalayan Balsam | - | 7,530 | 7,530 | - | 5,297 | 5,297 |
| Fynn Balsam | - | 6,158 | 6,158 | - | - | - |
| | - | 13,688 | 13,688 | - | 14,890 | 14,890 |
| | 104 | 237,922 | 238,026 | 3,882 | 171,375 | 175,257 |

Notes to the accounts continued

Note 5. Expenditure on charitable activities continued

(b) Support Costs

| | Unrestricted | Restricted | 2025 | 2024 |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Administration | | | | |
| Office costs | 3,000 | 2,199 | 5,199 | 13,617 |
| IT | 300 | 35 | 335 | 1,657 |
| Rent | 5,802 | - | 5,802 | 2,077 |
| Salary support | 9,276 | 516 | 9,792 | 8,513 |
| Travel and subsistence | 1,464 | 3,866 | 5,330 | 4,416 |
| Depreciation | 190 | 110 | 300 | 313 |
| | 20,032 | 6,726 | 26,758 | 30,593 |
| Governance | | | | |
| Audit and accountancy fees | 12,237 | 255 | 12,492 | 5,663 |
| | 12,237 | 255 | 12,492 | 5,663 |
| Total Support Costs | 32,269 | 6,981 | 39,250 | 36,256 |

5. Employee costs

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Salaries | 151,605 | 101,268 |
| Social Security costs | 9,600 | 3,218 |
| Pension costs | 3,595 | 2,159 |
| | 164,800 | 106,645 |

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--|------|------|
| Average number of employees (FTE equivalent) | 4.6 | 4 |
| Number of volunteers | 75 | 14 |

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000.

Trustees consider the key management personnel of the organisation to be the Trustees and Director. The total cost of key management personnel was £35,286 (2024: £28,867)

Notes to the accounts continued

6. Fixed Assets

| | Office Equipment | Computer Equipment | Total |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Cost | | | |
| At 1 June 2024 | - | 5,020 | 5,020 |
| Additions | 1,012 | 1,886 | 2,898 |
| At 31 May 2025 | 1,012 | 6,906 | 7,918 |
| Depreciation | | | |
| At 1 June 2024 | - | 4,896 | 4,896 |
| Charge for year | 69 | 231 | 300 |
| At 31 May 2025 | 69 | 5,127 | 5,196 |
| Net book value 31 May 2025 | 943 | 1,779 | 2,722 |
| Net book value 31 May 2024 | - | 124 | 124 |

2024 comparative

| | Computer Equipment | Total |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| | £ | £ |
| Cost | | |
| At 1 June 2023 | 5,020 | 5,020 |
| Additions | - | - |
| At 31 May 2024 | 5,020 | 5,020 |
| Depreciation | | |
| At 1 June 2023 | 4,583 | 4,583 |
| Charge for year | 313 | 313 |
| At 31 May 2024 | 4,896 | 4,896 |
| Net book value 31 May 2024 | 124 | 124 |
| Net book value 31 May 2023 | 437 | 437 |

7. Debtors

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | 2025 | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | 2024 |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Other debtors | 92 | 30,519 | 30,611 | - | - | - |
| Prepayments | - | - | - | - | 2,910 | 2,910 |
| Accrued Income | 1,750 | 522,567 | 524,317 | - | 120,703 | 120,703 |
| | 1,842 | 553,086 | 554,928 | - | 123,613 | 123,613 |

8. Creditors

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | 2025 | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | 2024 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Other taxation and social security | 702 | - | 702 | - | 2,073 | 2,073 |
| Other creditors | 1,248 | - | 1,248 | 674 | 9,424 | 10,098 |
| Accruals | 2,430 | - | 2,430 | - | 2,430 | 2,430 |
| | 4,380 | - | 4,380 | 674 | 13,927 | 14,601 |

Notes to the accounts continued

9. Movement of Funds

| | Opening balance | Income | Expenditure | Transfers | Closing Balance |
|--|-----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Restricted Funds | | | | | |
| Blackwater Fluvial | 35,925 | - | (35,925) | - | - |
| Blackwater Restoration | 17,499 | 500 | (17,999) | - | - |
| Bluespaces | 19,768 | 271,983 | (27,184) | - | 264,567 |
| Chelmer and Wid | 47,137 | - | (17,137) | - | 30,000 |
| East Suffolk Catchment Partnership | - | 15,000 | (15,000) | - | - |
| Enforcement Undertaking grant | - | 283,000 | (17,527) | - | 265,473 |
| Essex County Council | 509 | - | (509) | - | - |
| Essex Community Engagement | 65,000 | - | - | - | 65,000 |
| Essex River Hub | - | 15,000 | (15,000) | - | - |
| Essex River Watch (Anglian Water) | - | 2,000 | (2,000) | - | - |
| Essex River Watch (Essex Waterways) | 104 | - | (104) | - | - |
| Get River Positive Deben | 6,744 | - | (6,744) | - | - |
| Get River Positive Fiddlers Hill | 35,000 | - | (20,000) | - | 15,000 |
| Invasive Species (River Fynn/Anglian Water) | - | 13,550 | (6,775) | - | 6,775 |
| Invasive Species (River Stour/National Landscapes) | - | 1,750 | - | - | 1,750 |
| Invasive Species (Balsam/Branch Out) | 7,500 | 7,500 | (7,500) | - | 7,500 |
| Little Bealings (EA) | - | 16,000 | (16,000) | - | - |
| Mid Suffolk District Council Locality Fund | - | 1,150 | (1,150) | (800) | (800) |
| Suffolk Interconnected Habitats (EA) | - | 38,349 | (38,349) | - | - |
| Water Restoration Fund Deben (Defra) | - | 248,000 | - | - | 248,000 |
| | 235,186 | 913,782 | (244,903) | (800) | 903,265 |
| General funds | 36,119 | 49,711 | (32,373) | 800 | 54,257 |
| Total Funds | 271,305 | 963,493 | (277,276) | - | 957,522 |

An amount of £800 was transferred from MDSC to unrestricted funds relating to fixed assets purchased with the MSDC grant.

Notes to the accounts continued

9. Movement of Funds continued

2024 Comparative

| | Opening balance | Income | Expenditure | Transfers | Closing Balance |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Restricted Funds | | | | | |
| Big Give Trust | - | 1,990 | (1,990) | - | - |
| Blackwater Fluvial | - | 50,000 | (14,075) | - | 35,925 |
| Blackwater Restoration | - | 35,000 | (17,501) | - | 17,499 |
| Bluespaces | - | 25,258 | (5,490) | - | 19,768 |
| Chelmer and Wid | 61,900 | - | (4,763) | (10,000) | 47,137 |
| CSO | - | 4,000 | (4,000) | - | - |
| East Suffolk Catchment Partnership | 6,332 | 15,000 | (21,332) | - | - |
| Essex County Council | - | 1,500 | (991) | - | 509 |
| Essex Community Engagement | 75,000 | - | - | (10,000) | 65,000 |
| Essex Rivers Hub | 3,768 | 15,000 | (18,768) | - | - |
| Essex River Watch (Essex Waterways) | - | 1,000 | (896) | - | 104 |
| Get River Positive Deben | - | 20,000 | (13,256) | - | 6,744 |
| Get River Positive Fiddlers Hill | - | 35,000 | - | - | 35,000 |
| Invasive Species (Balsam/Branch Out) | - | 25,000 | (17,500) | - | 7,500 |
| Rivers Trust | - | 1,094 | (1,094) | - | - |
| WEIF Fiddles Hill | - | 50,000 | (50,000) | - | - |
| Suffolk Interconnected Habitats (EA) | - | 30,000 | (30,000) | - | - |
| WEIF | (3,808) | - | - | 3,808 | - |
| Total Restricted Funds | 143,192 | 309,842 | (201,656) | (16,192) | 235,186 |
| General Funds | 16,177 | 13,607 | (9,857) | 16,192 | 36,119 |
| Total Funds | 159,369 | 323,449 | (211,513) | - | 271,305 |

In 2024, an amount of £3,808 was transferred from unrestricted reserves for overspend on the WEIF fund in 2022/23

£10,000 was transferred from Chelmer and Wid Restoration fund and £10,000 from Essex Community Fund to general funds to support overhead costs, as permitted within the terms of the grants.

Notes to the accounts continued

9. Movement of restricted funds continued

Details of restricted funds

Blackwater Fluvial and Restoration are a continuation of funding from Northumbrian Water to support delivery of the Blackwater Restoration Plan workshop and Fluvial audit report.

Bluespaces is funding from Northumbrian Water for staff costs to support Delivery of Northumbrian Water Bluespaces projects to improve the environment and community access to rivers and beaches.

Chelmer and Wid is a donation from Anglian Water following a historic pollution incident on the River Wid. The funds are helping to support restoration work on the Chelmer and Wid and citizen science work throughout Essex.

East Suffolk Catchment Partnership is a grant from the Environment Agency for projects the charity is managing as hosts of the East Suffolk Catchment Partnership.

The Enforcement Undertaking Grant is funding from Anglian Water in relation to over-abstraction from the borehole at Southend-on-Sea Water Recycling Centre. The donation will be used towards a Volunteer and Community Involvement Officer for ESRT; clean-up of rivers including the Roach, the Essex RiverWatch Citizen Science project, river restoration plans; support funding for core ESRT Activities and wetland creation and floodplain restoration works.

Essex County Council is a match-funding donation from Essex County Council to support crowd funding for the Essex River Watch citizen science project

Essex Community Engagement is a donation from Anglian Water to support community engagement.

Essex River Hub is the continuation of a grant from the Environment Agency's Water Improvement Fund to cover the costs of running the Essex Catchment Partnership

Essex River Watch (Anglian Water) and Essex River Watch (Essex Waterways) is funding from Anglian Water and Essex Waterways for the Citizen Science Project

Get River Positive Deben is a grant from Anglian Water to support the landscape scale project 'Recovering the Deben from Source to Sea'. Get River Positive funding is used to accelerate efforts to protect and enhance rivers.

Get River Positive Fiddlers Hill is a grant from Anglian Water to deliver the wetland creation project for Fiddlers Hill Meadow in Essex.

Invasive Species (River Fynn/Anglian Water) is funding from Anglian Water and the Cambridge Community Foundation to control invasive non-native Himalayan Balsam on the River Fynn.

Invasive Species (River Stour/National Landscapes) is funding from the Dedham Vale Sustainable Development Fund to support control of invasive non native Himalayan balsam on the river Stour.

Invasive Species (Balsam/Branch Out) is a grant from the Essex and Suffolk Water Branch Out scheme for the control of invasive, non-native Himalayan Balsam.

Little Bealings (EA) is funding from the Water Environment Improvement Fund to deliver the livestock crossing, spawning bed and river restoration work on the River Fynn at Little Bealings, Suffolk.

Mid Suffolk District Council Locality Fund is funding from the Mid Suffolk District Council to purchase IT equipment needed to support new staff and expansion of the team.

Suffolk Interconnected Habitats (EA) is funding from the Environment Agency's Water Environment Improvement Fund to support Improving Habitat Connectivity in Suffolk. It includes the delivery of preliminary investigations for the Recovering the Deben NFM project at Debenham and delivery of weir investigation at Witnesham, Suffolk, with potential for physical removal of the weir. It also includes delivery of INNS Control on the River Fynn in partnership with AWS and the design and preliminary investigations for wetland features at Dennington Hall, River Alde Floodplain, Bruisyard.

Water Restoration Fund Deben (Defra) is funding from the Water Restoration Fund to be used for feasibility studies, ecological and archaeological assessments, natural capital baselining, groundtruthing, partner time, and project management on the Recovering the Deben from Source to Sea Project.

2024 restricted funds now closed

Big Give Trust is a donation raised through crowd funding for the Essex River Watch citizen science project

CSO is funding received from Anglian Water for completing surveys on combined sewer overflows within the Essex and Suffolk area.

Rivers Trust is funding from the The Rivers Trust to cover CIWEM Training costs and Bluespaces job advert recruitment costs

WEIF Fiddlers Hill is a grant from the Environment Agency to plan, design and prepare for the wetland creation project for Fiddlers Hill Meadow in Essex.

Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) is a grant from the Environment Agency for river restoration and tree planting in Suffolk.

Notes to the accounts continued

10. Analysis of Funds

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2025 | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2024 |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Fixed Assets | 1,873 | 849 | 2,722 | 124 | - | 124 |
| Debtors | 1,842 | 553,086 | 554,928 | - | 123,613 | 123,613 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 54,922 | 349,330 | 404,252 | 36,669 | 125,500 | 162,169 |
| Current Liabilities | (4,380) | - | (4,380) | (674) | (13,927) | (14,601) |
| | 54,257 | 903,265 | 957,522 | 36,119 | 235,186 | 271,305 |

11. Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions in 2025 or 2024.

12. Trustee remuneration and expenses

In 2025, two trustees were paid £105 expenses for travel and £34 for governance costs (2024: one trustee, £87 for travel).

13. Taxation

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

14. Net income/expenditure

Net income/expenditure for the year includes:

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|
| | £ | £ |
| Independent examination fee | 1,530 | 1,530 |
| Other non-audit services | - | - |
| Depreciation | 300 | 313 |

15. Commitments under operating leases

Land and Buildings

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Less than one year | 3,390 | 3,128 |
| Between two and five years | - | - |
| greater than five years | - | - |
| Total | 3,390 | 3,128 |