

LONG ASHTON NATURE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT 2024/5

CHARITY NUMBER 1203357

1. RAISING AWARENESS

Regular blogs, articles in parish magazines, facebook posts continue to update people, raise awareness and pass on relevant biodiversity news

2. ONGOING PROJECTS

A. THE GREAT HEDGE CREATION PROJECT: On-going maintenance of the Great Hedge Creation Project – just under 6,000 saplings stretching some 1.5 kms – to link two semi-ancient/ancient woodlands and create a species-rich biodiverse hedge. Since our last report, this involved planting some 270 saplings in early spring and mid-autumn 2025 with the help of approx. 50 volunteers. This facilitated one corporate group (Hewlett Packard) to boost the charitable work of their volunteers by donating an hourly rate per volunteer (approx. 12 x 6 hours) to the children's charity, Little Hearts Matter.

B. SWIFT BOXES: Eleven further boxes were made by a trustee to boost the numbers of boxes to 44. This increased the number of boxes in swift hotspot areas and were utilised for houses that needed slightly different, more weather-proof boxes. Another Swift and Walk talk drew in 25 people from Long Ashton and further afield who learnt more about the behaviour and needs of this endangered species. The project has had a ripple effect with more homeowners keen to erect, make or buy their own boxes or retro-fit swift bricks including the local church who paid for their own four boxes to install in All Saints belfry. And the Parish Council is now recommending that newly built homes or extensions could install either a swift box or brick.

3. NEW PROJECTS

A. KEEDWELL WILDLIFE GARDEN: The Trust was asked to help restore a small wildlife-friendly garden adjacent to the Church. Over 70 wildlife-friendly plants, rootlets or bulbs were grown or collected from a trustee's garden and planted in the autumn whilst earlier on, a planting plan was drawn up to create a small shrubbery with wildlife-friendly plants.

B. RECYCLING TREE PVC GUARDS: The Trust researched how best to tackle the problem of the thousands of old, unwanted spiral PVC guards that can be found across the parish and beyond. Having found there's a method to bulk recycle them, the Trust instigated a project by liaising with key stakeholders and the community to collect as many as possible in the next year. Progress has been swift thanks to the Scouts and members of the Trust.

3. DATA COLLECTION

A. RIVER-FLY MONITORING: On-going monitoring of six certified sites to check for water quality on the three streams in the parish continued through-out the year with more people getting involved either as volunteers with certified people or becoming certified volunteers themselves.

B. OTHER SPECIES Over 200 sites were surveyed as part of Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count; over 50 veteran trees were mapped as part of the Woodland Trust's initiative; key native orchid sites were recorded; and several sites were surveyed for North Somerset's Bat Survey to gather spatial distribution data on bats to minimise the impact of development on bats and on-going bird surveys continued. The data collected from initiatives such as these helps identify sites that are high value for wildlife and those that could be more effectively managed.

C. SCRUB SURVEY An on-going survey into the use by birds of several acres of scrub continues to underline how important this under-valued habitat is. Scrub like this is rare in our parish yet with the co-operation of landowners, corners of fields could easily be left to scrub ensuring a network of invaluable habitat across the parish with minimal expenditure and minimal loss of agricultural land

C. SILT POLLUTION INCIDENT: On-going work from a large development has caused considerable silt pollution. Photos and reports from several years finally resulted in the Council notifying the developer and limited remedial action taken. Silt pollution such as this reduces biodiversity downstream considerably.

4 COMMUNITY LIAISON

A. The Trust mentored a University of Bristol zoology student over the summer to introduce them to butterfly surveys for Butterfly Conservation.

B. The Trust also facilitated a Duke of Edinburgh student showing them how to identify and map ancient trees.

C. The Trust gave a talk on swifts to the local primary Eco-Council at Birdwell School.

D. THE Trust gave a talk for the eco-Church project in Flax Bourton (a neighbouring parish) on 'Learn to Love the Little Wild Things'.

E. Regular blogs on the website continue to be enjoyed by many whilst posts on facebook attract others.

D. Engagement with key stakeholders within the parish such as the Parish Council and local landowners continues.

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STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 2024/25

1st June 2024 to 31st May 2025

INCOME

	£	£
GRANTS	1,436.72	
DONATIONS	1,958.16	
VILLAGE MARKET CAFE	316.57	
TALKS	175.00	

Total Income

3,886.45

EXPENDITURE

SWIFT BOXES	911.42
RIVERFLY MONITORING	674.41
HEDGE PROJECT	549.77
MAPPING	360.00
STRIMMER	1,147.80
VILLAGE MARKET CAFE	36.99
NORTHLEAZE SCHOOL FLOWER MEADOW	350.00
BLUE HEARTS	43.50
BANK CHARGES	6.20
INSURANCE	154.00

Total Expenditure

4,234.09

Surplus/(Deficit)

(347.64)

RESERVES

Opening Current Account Balance	3,600.15
Surplus/(Deficit)	(347.64)

Closing Current Account Balance

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3,252.51
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