

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

England & Wales · Charity number 513615

Details

Other names	WEST MIDLANDS URBAN WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED, THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	01650938
Registered	1983-03-11
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Centre of the Earth 42 Norman Street Birmingham B18 7EP
Phone	01215230094
Email	info@bbcwildlife.org.uk
Website	www.bbcwildlife.org.uk

Activities

Objects: 1. FOR BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC TO ADVANCE PROMOTE AND FURTHER THE CONSERVATION MAINTENANCE STUDY AND PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE AND ITS HABITATS, PLACES OF NATURAL BEAUTY, PLACES OF ZOOLOGICAL BOTANICAL GEOGRAPHICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR SCIENTIFIC INTEREST, FEATURES OF LANDSCAPE WITH GEOLOGICAL, PHYSIOGRAPHICAL OR AMENITY VALUE. FOR FURTHER OBJECTS SEE MEMORANDUM.

Activities: The Wildlife Trust works to make the environment of Birmingham and the black country a better place for wildlife and people through environmental education, community involvement, ecological and practical work.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY URBAN AREAS
- Birmingham City
- Dudley
- Sandwell
- Walsall
- Wolverhampton

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,179,238	£1,450,950	£1,410,146	27
2024-03-31	£1,287,208	£1,512,838	£1,682,134	27
2023-03-31	£1,650,655	£1,628,889	£1,894,077	35
2022-03-31	£1,738,533	£1,293,988	£1,864,743	30
2021-03-31	£1,332,182	£1,049,085	£1,420,198	22

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Alexander Johl		2024-07-16
Alexandra Nicholson-Evans		2022-10-15
Andrew Wayro		2021-01-16
Clare Chapman		2024-07-16
David Peter Green		2021-01-16
Denise Helen McLellan		2021-01-16
Eamon Fergal Mooney		2021-01-16
Jack Daniel		2022-10-15
James David Larner		2021-01-16
Kate Foxton		2024-07-16
Mohammed Waheed Saleem		2022-10-15
Ramandeep Nijjar		2024-07-16
Richard Holmes		2024-07-16

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 513615

Accounts



**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust



Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2025



Contents

1.	Report of the Trustees Welcome	2
	1.1 Objectives and Aims	4
	1.2 Summary of the Year	5
	1.3 Financial Review	12
	1.4 Looking Ahead	13
	1.5 Structure, Governance and Management	15
	1.6 Statement of Trustees	17
2	Report of the Independent Auditors	19
3	Statement of Financial Activities	21
4	Balance Sheet	22
5	Cash Flow Statement	23
6	Notes to the Cash Flow Statement	24
7	Notes to the Financial Statements	25
8	Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	37
9	Thank you	38



Welcome to Report for

Following a year of investment and change at the senior level, this report reflects a period of positive progress for the Trust across its remit to tackle the nature and climate crises and connect more people with local wild spaces across our region.

1.1 Objectives

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham is required by charity and company law to set out its objectives in its Memorandum of Association.

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY'S OBJECTIVES ARE:

- 1. For the benefit of the public, to advance, promote and further the conservation, maintenance, study and protection of:**
 - i. wildlife and its habitats;
 - ii. places of natural beauty;
 - iii. places of zoological, botanical, geographical, archaeological or scientific interest;
 - iv. features of landscape with geological, physiological, or amenity value; in particular, but not exclusively, in ways that further biodiversity.
- 2. To advance the education of the public in:**
 - v. the principles and practice of sustainable development;
 - vi. the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation; in particular, but not exclusively, in urban areas.

OUR VISION, PURPOSE & APPROACH

In June 2022, we launched our new eight-year strategy for 2022 - 2030. A Wilder Birmingham and Black Country.



1.2 Summary of the Year

GOAL 1: Nature is in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife across Birmingham and the Black Country

Landscape scale conservation

The Trust has worked hard to continue to deliver nature recovery projects that take a strategic, landscape-scale approach. This year our work has grown and focused particularly on Dudley, the river Rea in south Birmingham, and Walsall. Within these projects we have sought to draw our landscapes together both ecologically and socially, through a focus on habitats, species, and our activities within them.

Our award-winning Dudley's Path to Nature Recovery project has been a flagship project this year. Funded by a £100,000 grant from the West Midlands Combined Authority's Community Environment Fund, it saw the Trust's nature recovery and engagement teams working collaboratively to create, restore, and engage with nature across the borough. The project was brought together around a path mapped out across Dudley's limestone hills, from the Trust's reserve at Portway Hill in the south, through to Sedgley Beacon in the north. It also benefitted from the adoption of two flagship species, the green hairstreak butterfly and the lesser horseshoe bat: both local priority conservation species. With the initial aim to work on six sites, habitat



PURPLE HORIZONS - ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY VISITING WALSALL



of gravel into the channel, will have a notable impact on the overall ecological condition of the watercourse. This type of work not only increases the availability of spawning habitat for fish species it also restores some of the natural flow dynamics to the water (enabling sediment transport) and allows fish movement.

Another of the Trust's programmes that continued to contribute to nature's recovery this year was Purple Horizons, the Natural England funded initiative aiming to re-connect the habitats of Cannock Chase and Sutton Park. The Trust's work within this centred around engagement with the landowning



DUDLEY'S PATH TO NATURE RECOVERY

There remains, however, a need for investment at Deer's Leap, and surveys, cost estimates, and letters of support from the community have been attained to support a substantial funding bid submission. A proposal has been submitted for a large grant to improve both access and habitats on the site, for which we are awaiting an outcome in the new financial year.

Also this year at Moseley Bog and Deer's Leap, we have undertaken significant tree works, including commissioning a tree safety survey for both sites. We aim to commission these every five years, to go alongside the annual monitoring surveys done by staff. The reports

We are undertaking similar works at Turner's Wood where our renewed activities are being funded by a small award from Natural England.

Thanks to Dudley's Path to Nature's Recovery, we were able to allocate additional resource to Portway Hill to oversee the meadow, as well as create a new meadow area. We were also able to plant a more diverse range of scrub species on the edge of the site. Thanks to the efforts of our volunteer recorders - including the newly established Birmingham and Black Country Invertebrates group (BIG), no fewer than 175 invertebrate species were observed at Portway Hill last year!

GOAL 2: PEOPLE ARE TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE AND THE CLIMATE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY

The Trust has engaged the people of Birmingham and the Black Country with a vibrant and wide-ranging series of events across the year. A particular focus in 2024 has been Dudley, to support our Dudley's Paths to Nature Recovery project, and we kept our engagement team busy with some very successful

the Birmingham City of Nature programme, supporting Riverside House's (Stourbridge) annual Glass Festival, holding City Nature Challenge Walks at Birmingham Botanical Gardens, an apple picking day at EcoPark, and much more.

Regarding our schoolwork, sessions at our main education site, EcoPark, have continued to be delivered with the site operating at capacity. Service Level Agreements for activity throughout the year were signed with seven local primary schools and we are delighted to note that the number of children engaging with our education sessions exceeded our initial predictions made when the site was redeveloped. We have also undertaken some outreach work visiting schools across the region, working in Walsall in particular, and this is a thread of work we are committed to developing further.

Training

The Trust has delivered a number of training courses with partners over the year. We held an accredited training course with users from Multistory arts agency, working with participants who had additional support needs. The Trust has also commenced a new outreach project in partnership with Norton Hall Women's Centre, focused on community engagement and training at Ward End Park (the WASH project). This is a National Lottery Climate Action Fund project running for four years which will feature three training courses every year.

Youth Action for Nature

This year we were able to offer an engaging series of events designed to mobilise younger communities in Birmingham and the Black Country to take action for nature. Activities



and we have since followed this with further campaigns based on a similar model. These digital promotion channels remain highly cost effective against face-to-face membership recruitment. We are pleased that these new models of membership recruitment appear to be successful. However, ongoing challenges around the cost of living do continue to present a challenge to the public and their ability to regularly give to charity.

Communications

The key focus for our communication in the early part of the year was the General Election 2024, an incredibly important moment for wildlife and wild spaces across the UK. The UK is already classified as one of the world's most nature-depleted countries, and with the support of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trust, we worked to ensure nature is given the political priority it deserves. We created an election toolkit, calling for three local priorities including protecting and cleaning up our rivers, putting nature at the heart of the community and bringing back our lost wildlife.

To support all this activity, we took a coach down to London to attend the Restore Nature Now rally on 22nd June 2024, with eight staff and around 20 Trust members on board. The rally was a fantastic, vibrant day and we were happy to make a strong showing on behalf of the region.

Otherwise, our communications channels continued to reach a wide audience with around 200k distribution of newsletters and approximately 200k website visits. In light of recent political developments, a number of other Wildlife Trusts have removed their profiles from X (formerly Twitter) and sought to engage the public through

and the protection of land through site conservation designations has become more challenging. This year the Trust has invested in our team to increase capacity in this area, and new staff led by our Head of Biodiversity Evidence and Planning, a newly created role, have been providing both support and challenge to our partners in local authority teams.

This has included detailed engagements with the development of two Local Plans. Recent government messaging has generated a surge in developers submitting proposals and nominating sites for building on. Staff at the Trust have been monitoring this situation and investigating numerous proposals with the aim of ensuring the protection of sites of conservation importance.

Community mobilisation and action is absolutely critical in this arena, and the Trust has sought to support that whenever and wherever it can. A notable success this year was the community-led campaign to protect the Clockfields area in Dudley, part of which is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. We were happy to play a small part in this action and are keen to see other communities across our region learn from the success and be empowered to protect local nature.



1.3 Financial

Financial Position

During the financial year 2025, the Trust generated a deficit of £271,988 (2024 deficit: £211,943). Income of £1,179,238 was generated (2024: £1,287,208). Actual expenditure for 2025 was £1,450,950, excluding gains on investment (2024: £1,512,838).

Trust income is split between unrestricted and restricted funds. Unrestricted income represents money raised or given to support the Trust's achievement of core charitable aims. Membership, donations, general fundraising, and some charitable trust donations were given as unrestricted income.

Restricted income is given for a specific purpose with clear outputs to be achieved. Restricted income for this period includes funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Natural England, West Midlands Combined Authority, the Environment Agency and others. Restricted income accounts for 42% (2024: 48%) of our total income for the year.

The Trust has invested in membership, as an essential income stream that enables us to deliver core charitable aims that are not always possible to fund through restricted income, such as our work to protect nature through the planning system. Membership accounts for 21% (2024: 19%) of the Trust's income and the Business Plan sets out how this will grow in coming years. Unrestricted income (including membership) is 58% (2024: 52%) of total income.

Principal Funding Sources



1.4 Looking Ahead

GOAL 1: NATURE IS IN RECOVERY WITH ABUNDANT, DIVERSE WILDLIFE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY

The coming year will see very significant work across Walsall as we enter the 'development phase' of our National Lottery Heritage Fund supported Wild Walsall project and deliver allied projects. Wild Walsall aims to contribute directly to our Goal 1 target by restoring nature across one percent of Walsall's landscape, or 55 hectares of land, over a three-year period beginning in early 2026. The work will build on our long-term efforts within the Purple Horizons initiative, but will extend the focus beyond heathland alone, to encompass woodlands, river corridors and wetlands, grasslands, and hedgerows. Our aim is for this project to also reach further into urban Walsall and its communities in most need of access to nature. The project's development has been guided significantly by EcoRecord's opportunity mapping and the Trust's long-standing efforts to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. These activities have identified specific landscapes and land parcels where nature recovery would be most valuable. Our work in the year ahead will focus therefore on consulting stakeholders across the landscape and crystallising our vision into concrete plans for approval by the funder for delivery in subsequent years.

These collaborative efforts have already paid off with significant commitments of funding by government agencies and

will carry out surveys of these sites and seek to engage members of the local community for citizen science species recording and to consult them on what improvements they would like to see in the area. Alongside this, the Environment Agency have provided £95k of funds for a project entitled Ford for the Future which will seek to improve the Ford Brook, the primary watercourse in Walsall borough and which flows through (and under) the town centre.

The Trust will be working to support Birmingham City Council's planning team in their response to development pressure on sites across the city. This will consist of, amongst other actions, a number of surveys of sites of conservation value. We will also be continuing to build on our success this year in Dudley, by continuing to deliver habitat restoration works in the borough and a summer celebration event centred around our walking route and the work that has been done through the Dudley's Path to Nature Recovery project.

GOAL 2: PEOPLE ARE TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE AND THE CLIMATE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY

We have an exciting year ahead, anchored by the major opportunities to expand our offer due to our successes with major grant programmes, especially our Wild Walsall and Championing Nature projects. Both schemes give the Trust the opportunity to increase staffing capacity and delivery of engagement activity, widening the breadth and impact of the work we do.

We will develop and expand our education offer to schools, sustaining our education offer at EcoPark whilst also developing an education outreach model as part of the Championing Nature programme, taking current material for Key Stage One and Two groups and adapting this into a format that can be used in outreach

sessions. We will promote this new outreach education offer to schools throughout Birmingham, with priority target for "red wards" (those wards with least access to nature, as per Birmingham City of Nature).

We will also enhance our programme of community events with a more regular programme of activity, aiming to deliver at least one major event a month, which will include an annual Open Day in line with the Wimbledon Championships to celebrate our Championing Nature work.

We will work on strategies that empower communities to take action for nature, developing a principles of engagement framework for the Wild Walsall project. We also remain committed to the Nature Stewards model of community empowerment, including exploring potential funding bids for the programme.

More widely, we will continue to facilitate volunteer groups both on our own nature reserves but also, as opportunities arise, around the region.

Having had success with our model of using digital engagement campaigns to drive up membership, we will commit to run a series of lead generation campaigns that engage new audiences through social media.

GOAL 3: NATURE IS PLAYING A CENTRAL AND VALUED ROLE IN HELPING TO ADDRESS LOCAL AND GLOBAL PROBLEMS

The next stage of our work seeking to facilitate nature "playing a central and valued role in helping to address local



1.5 Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is one of 46 independent charities, which form a national partnership, The Wildlife Trusts, through the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. The Trust's family membership is also part of the national environment club, Wildlife Watch, which provides projects for members and affiliated schools, involving them directly with environmental issues.

The Trust is a registered charity (No. 513615) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 1650938).

The Trust was established in 1980 to protect our local natural heritage and encourage people to engage, enjoy and get involved with the natural environment. We are a membership organisation, governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Work is carried out by a team of 27 at year end, equating to 23.8 full time equivalent posts. The Trust could not achieve the impacts we do without the commitment and hard work of a large number of volunteers.

In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

A Council of voluntary Trustees is

Organisational structure

The overall responsibility for the charity lies with the Trustee Directors who have delegated the day to day management of the charity to the Chief Executive. The Trustee Directors meet regularly to agree strategy, review progress, review financial information, and discuss policy issues. To facilitate effective operation, the Chief Executive has delegated authority within a scheme of delegation approved by the Trustees for some operational matters, including finance.

The Wildlife Trust is governed by an elected Council and is therefore directly accountable to the members of the charity.

The Articles of Association gives Council the powers to:

- i Administer the affairs of the Charity
- ii Exercise all the powers of the Charity
- iii Determine the policy of the Charity

The Council formally delegates certain functions and responsibilities to two committees which deal with specific policy and organisational issues.

The day to day management of the Charity's affairs is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is accountable exclusively to the Council for achieving, via the Business Plan, the Wildlife Trust's aims and for complying with Council policies. A team of professionally trained staff report to the Chief Executive.

further information which they may need.

Following election or co-option of a Trustee, the Chair will introduce a new Trustee at their first meeting of Council. They will also participate in a formal induction process to familiarise them with the extent and nature of the Trust's operations. After election at the Annual General Meeting Trustees serve for a period of 3 years and may be elected for a further period of 3 years.

Developments in Charity Law and Practice are monitored and important developments are brought to the notice of Trustees by the Executive.

The relationship between staff and trustees is crucial to the Trust's continuing success. Trustees bring a range of skills and experience to the responsibilities of the role which requires them to have an understanding of all aspects of the Trust's work. Trustees meet at least three times a year where they review strategy and operational performance, ratify policies and agree budgets.

Key management remuneration

None of the Trustees receive remuneration or benefit for their work with the group and charity. Any connection between Trustees and any company the Trust works with is disclosed to the Council, financial details of which are disclosed in note 9 to the accounts.

appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, regeneration and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.



1.6 Statements of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees and Directors are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business;

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and each trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

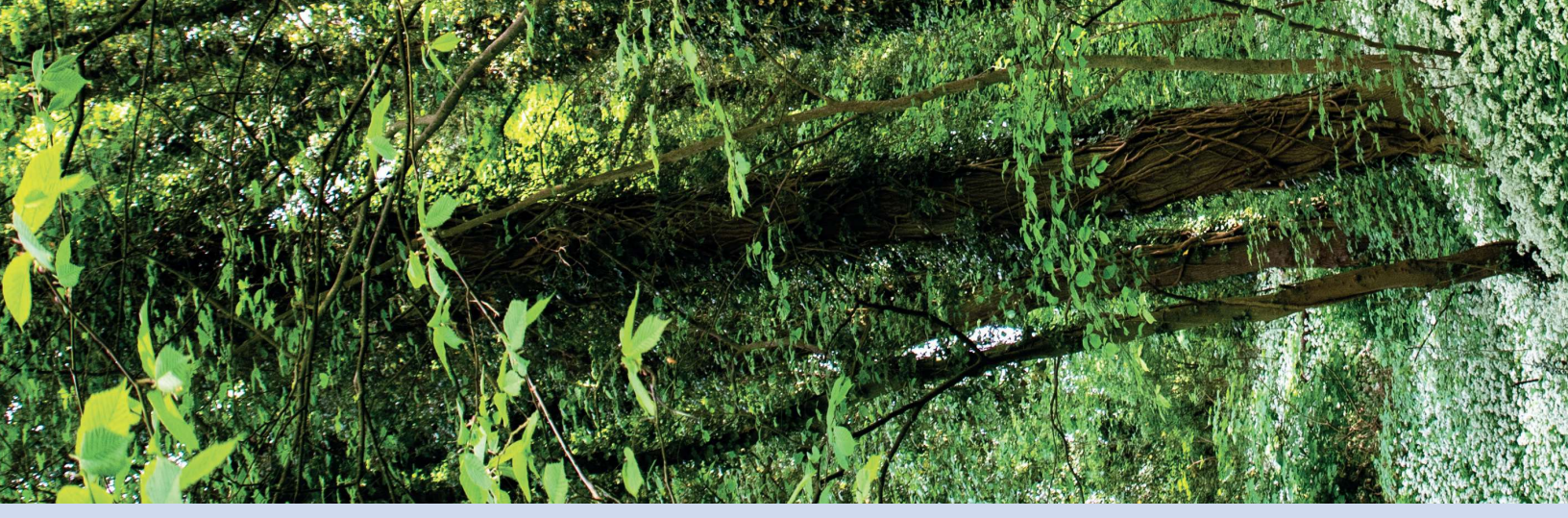
The auditors, Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The report of the Trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the Council, as the company directors, on 15/07/2025 and signed on the board's behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee



2 Independent Auditors Report

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below:

Enquiring of management and employees, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:-

- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance.
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud and,
- The internal controls established to mitigate risk relating to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

We identified areas of law and regulation that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, discussions

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the 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 Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 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 trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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

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 financial statements are 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 Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statement and, 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.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (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 March 2025 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.

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 Auditors' 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

3 Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2025

(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	412,629	-	412,629	317,543
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	3	219,660	496,274	715,934	928,762
Other income		50,675	-	50,675	40,903
Total		682,964	496,274	1,179,238	1,287,208
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	24,880	-	24,880	28,049
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	5	818,513	607,557	1,426,070	1,484,789
Total		843,393	607,557	1,450,950	1,512,838
Net (losses)/gains on investment		(276)	-	(276)	13,687
Net Expenditure		(160,705)	(111,283)	(271,988)	(211,943)
Transfers between funds	18	327	(327)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(160,378)	(111,610)	(271,988)	(211,943)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		1,400,891	281,243	1,682,134	1,894,077
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,240,513	169,633	1,410,146	1,682,134

4 Balance Sheet

FIXED ASSETS

Tangible assets
Heritage assets

CURRENT ASSETS

Debtors
Investments
Cash at bank and in hand

CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year

NET CURRENT ASSETS

TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES

NET ASSETS

FUNDS

Unrestricted funds
Restricted funds

TOTAL FUNDS

5 Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2025

6 Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	(494,044)	468,587
Net cash provided by operating activities		(494,044)	468,587
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(7,188)	(44,888)
Donation of investment portfolio		-	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(7,188)	(44,888)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(501,232)	423,699
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		1,300,384	876,685
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		799,152	1,300,384

1. Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period

Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	£
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period	(1,300,384)
Adjustments for:	
Depreciation charges	44,888
Losses/(gain) on investments	7,188
Decrease in debtors	-
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(44,888)

Net cash (used in)/ provided by operating activities

423,699

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

Net cash	£
Cash at bank and in hand	876,685
Current asset investments	423,699
Total	1,300,384

Liquid resources

Deposits included in cash
Current asset investments

Total

1,300,384

7 Notes to the Financial Statements

7.1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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) (effective 1 January 2019)'. Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. Income is generally recognised on a receivable basis, being when the charity is entitled to receive the money and is reported gross of related expenditure, where the amount is reasonably certain and when there is adequate certainty of receipt of monies. The specific bases used are as follows:

- Voluntary income includes members subscriptions, donations (including related gift aid tax) legacies and grants of a general nature.
- Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity.
- Contractual income is recorded when receivable.
- Grants received during the year which relate to the following financial year are carried forward in creditors.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis, meaning that the cost is identified as a liability awaiting payment, based on the date of the event, rather than the point that cash is paid. The expenditure is allocated to the appropriate cost heading in the financial statements.

- Costs of generating funds relate to expenditure incurred in raising voluntary income and fundraising trading costs.
- Charitable activities' expenditure relates to expenditure on meeting the charitable objects. This includes materials and bought in services, staff costs, information systems, communications, rented accommodation and general management directly chargeable

- Support costs including staff costs, information systems, communications office accommodation and general management, are fully apportioned to other cost categories, and are primarily based on direct staffing levels.

- Membership recruitment costs, where an agency charges the trust a fee based on the first years membership income for recruitment of new members, are charged to the accounts over a period of 10 months. Surplus new income is therefore only recognised in the accounts after this period has ended and this policy is viewed as being prudent.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

- Short leasehold property - 4% on cost
- Fixtures and fittings - 25% straight line
- Expenditure on fixtures, fittings and general office equipment purchased by the charity for projects is currently written off in the year in which the expenditure is incurred, expenditure incurred for administration purposes is capitalised and depreciated as stated above.

7.2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2025	2024
	£	£
Donations	412,629	317,365
Legacies	-	178
	<u>412,629</u>	<u>317,543</u>

7.3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2025	2024
	Activity, Conservation and Engagement and Influence	Total activities
	£	£
Conservation and Wildlife	715,934	928,762

7.4 RAISING FUNDS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Raising donations and legacies		
Raising voluntary income costs	24,880	28,049

7.5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs	Totals
	£	(see note 6) £	£
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	1,287,489	138,581	1,426,070

7.7 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated as
Auditor remuneration
Depreciation - owned assets
Other operating leases

7.8 Trustees' REMUNERATION

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits in kind.

Trustees' expenses
There were no Trustees' expenses paid for the year.

7.9 STAFF COSTS

Wages and salaries
Social security costs
Other pension costs

The average monthly number of employees

Direct charitable work
Administrative

7.10 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	312,543	5,000	317,543
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	311,746	617,016	928,762
Other income	40,903	-	40,903
Total	665,192	622,016	1,287,208
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	28,049	-	28,049
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	807,277	677,512	1,484,789
Total	835,326	677,512	1,512,838
Net gains on investments	13,687	-	13,687
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(156,447)	(55,496)	(211,943)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	1,557,338	336,739	1,894,077
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	1,400,891	281,243	1,682,134

7.11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

COST	
At 1 April 2024	
Additions	
At 31 March 2025	
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2024	
Charge for year	
At 31 March 2025	
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2025	
At 31 March 2024	

7.12 HERITAGE ASSETS

MARKET VALUE	
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2025	
At 31 March 2024	

If the Land had not been revalued it would cost totally £20,523. This is broken down the value of land donated. There has been

Heritage assets consist of land at Portwa

7.13 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	20,432	14,333
VAT	-	12,438
Prepayments	27,822	14,953
Accrued income	13,382	43,382
	<u>61,636</u>	<u>85,106</u>

7.14 CURRENT ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Listed investments	58,421	58,697

7.15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	59,059	326,654
Social security and other taxes	2,935	16,063
Other creditors	8,542	6,268
Accrued expenses	23,733	18,829
	<u>94,269</u>	<u>367,814</u>

Deferred income

Deferred income at 1st April
Released from previous years
Income deferred in the year

Deferred income at 31st March

	2025	2024
	£	£
	-	-
	-	-
	8,367	-
	<u>8,367</u>	<u>-</u>

7.17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS

Fixed assets
Current assets
Current liabilities

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Unrestricted funds

General fund
Designated Fund
Revaluation Reserve

Restricted funds

Other awards
South Staffordshire Water
Stourton Castle Bypass
Purple Horizons
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase
Seth Somers Donation
Wild Walsall
Ford for the Future

TOTAL FUNDS

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

Comparatives for movement in funds

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	592,964	(825,649)	(276)	(232,961)
Designated Fund	90,000	(17,744)	-	72,256
	<u>682,964</u>	<u>(843,393)</u>	<u>(276)</u>	<u>(160,705)</u>
Restricted funds				
Other awards	23,177	(23,177)	-	-
South Staffordshire Water	-	(9,227)	-	(9,227)
Reaching Communities	2,399	(2,399)	-	-
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	8,656	(8,656)	-	-
Stourton Castle Bypass	8,000	(169,975)	-	(161,975)
Purple Horizons	46,410	(49,859)	-	(3,449)
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	120,000	(121,457)	-	(1,457)
Seth Somers Donation	-	(5,000)	-	(5,000)
Youth Action	44,839	(44,839)	-	-
Wild Walsall	121,598	(61,773)	-	59,825
Ford for the Future	10,000	-	-	10,000
WMCA Community Fund	111,195	(111,195)	-	-
	<u>496,274</u>	<u>(607,557)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(111,283)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,179,238</u>	<u>(1,450,950)</u>	<u>(276)</u>	<u>(271,988)</u>

7.18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	615,852	(725,894)	13,687	(96,355)
Designated Fund	49,340	(109,432)	-	(60,092)
	665,192	(835,326)	13,687	(156,447)
Restricted funds				
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	10,572	(10,572)	-	-
Other awards	45,357	(45,030)	-	327
Reaching Communities	37,573	(37,573)	-	-
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	13,500	(13,500)	-	-
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	56,532	(94,372)	-	(37,840)
Stourton Castle Bypass	220,000	(290,134)	-	(70,134)
Purple Horizons	37,000	(33,551)	-	3,449
Team Wilder	21,519	(21,519)	-	-
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	-	(2,565)	-	(2,565)
WMCA LYRS	74,993	(99,991)	-	(24,998)
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	99,970	(28,705)	-	71,265
Seth Somers Donation	5,000	-	-	5,000
	622,016	(677,512)	-	(55,496)
TOTAL FUNDS	1,287,208	(1,512,838)	13,687	(211,943)

Transfers are made between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at the time the specific restrictions have been fulfilled.

The designated fund of £180,756 (2024: £nil) relates to the balance of funds received in the accounts for the year to 31 March 2025 remaining unspent designated by the Trustees for use on our commitments post year end.

General reserves represent free unrestricted funds that are available to spend at the discretion of the trustees. Within the general reserve are funds relating to fixed assets held which are not readily disposable and are intended to be held for the long term, hence not liquid funds that can be spent straightaway. This amount is equivalent to the net book value of the land and buildings as these assets have been secured for use within the charity for the long term.

The restricted fund represents monies receivable for projects which can only be spent on their respective activities as imposed by

Wild Walsall

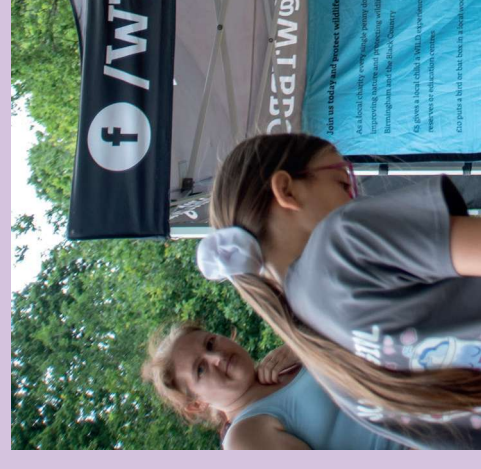
This is funding received from the National Lottery for us to deliver habitat improvement works across 54 hectares of land in Walsall, with a priority on restoring and establishing heathland but including works to river corridors, woodlands and grasslands.

Stourton River bypass

This is grants to assist with conservation and restoration activity on the river Stour, the majority of the work was completed earlier in 2024 with a small amount of work being carried into the 25-26 year end.

Ford for the future

Environment agency funding to seek to improve the Ford Brook, the primary watercourse in Walsall borough and which flows through (and under) the town centre.



8 Detailed statement of Financial Activities

	2025 £	2024 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	412,629	317,365
Legacies	-	178
Charitable activities		
Conservation & Wildlife	412,629	317,543
Other income		
Exceptional items	715,934	928,762
Total incoming resources	50,675	40,903
	<u>1,179,238</u>	<u>1,287,208</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Raising voluntary income costs	24,880	28,049
Charitable activities		
Wages	717,351	709,300
Social security	67,883	51,435
Pensions	46,227	45,907
Other operating leases	4,400	3,505
Sundries	423,885	486,160
Freehold property	22,220	21,997
Fixtures and fittings	5,523	4,333
	<u>1,287,489</u>	<u>1,322,637</u>
Support costs management		
Sundries	94,930	115,945

9 Thank you We couldn't

Our work for nature's recovery is made possible by our members, donors, volunteers and supporters. Thank you for all your support.

Schools

Eden Girls Leadership Academy
 Starbank School Starbank Road site
 Starbank School Hob Moor Road site
 Starbank School Blerton Road site
 St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
 St. Benedict's Primary School
 Marlborough Primary School
 Waverley Primary School
 Bordesley Green Primary School
 Rookery Primary School
 James Watt Primary School
 Yorkmead Primary School
 Rivers Primary Academy
 Oakham Primary School
 Sandwell College

Active Donation Box Venues

PowisVets, Stourbridge
 West Park Tea Rooms, Wolverhampton
 Bantock Park Coffee Shop, Wolverhampton
 Wisteria Hair Salon, Dudley
 The Greenery, Kings Norton
 Cake Box, Kings Heath
 The Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath
 The Patrick Kavanagh, Moseley
 Kings Heath Pet Centre, Kings Heath
 The Hop and Scotch, Kings Heath
 Central Co-op Food - Quinton
 Connaught Vets, Kingswinford
 Eco-Maniax, Stourbridge



**Birmingham &
Black Country
Wildlife Trust**

 @WTBBC  @WTBBC  @bbcwildlifetrust  BBCWildlifeTrust

Registered Charity No: 513615
Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)
Registered Address: 42 Norman Street, Birmingham, B18 7EP

PHOTO CREDIT: JAMES BENWELL



THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 513615

Accounts



**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust



Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024



Contents

	Page
1. Report of the Trustees	
1.1 Objectives and Activities	4
1.2 Summary of the Year	5
1.3 Financial Review	13
1.4 Looking Ahead	14
1.5 Structure, Governance and Management	16
1.6 Statement of Trustees	18
2. Report of the Independent Auditors	19
3. Statement of Financial Activities	21
4. Balance Sheet	22
5. Cash Flow Statement	23
6. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement	24
7. Notes to the Financial Statements	25
8. Thank you	37



Welcome to our Annual Report for 2023-24

2023-24 was the first full year of implementing our new strategy for a Wilder Birmingham and Black Country, and this report reflects a period of both change and continuity as we have invested in some of the key building blocks to support its delivery. Despite the unprecedented challenges faced globally, and against the backdrop of the ongoing cost of living crisis, we are pleased to say that the Trust has continued to make good progress across its remit to tackle the nature and climate crises and connect more people with local wild spaces across our region.

Building on previous investment to strengthen our core operations, in 2023 we invested in further new roles designed to support the Trust's development. In August, we welcomed Daniel Brown in the role of Director of Fundraising and Engagement, and in November, Dr Norman Dandy in the role of Director of Nature Recovery. Both bring significant skills and experience to the Trust which will benefit us in the coming years. Other staff changes have included the appointment of a new Conservation Manager, Jacob Williams, previously Senior Reserves Officer at the Trust.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to senior team members that moved on in 2023 after many years of work that has benefited the Trust tremendously.

In the following pages you will read of our progress in key work areas including managing our reserves and community engagement. This year we have continued to deliver significant projects which enable habitat restoration and improvements across key priority landscapes. We are particularly proud of our work along the River Stour, funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, as well as on the important heathlands of Walsall through the partnership project Purple Horizons. The positive impact of effective partnership working cannot be understated. Partnerships with all kind of different organisations: from local groups, local authorities, other environmental NGOs to national bodies are critical for enabling us to meet the huge challenges presented by the climate and ecological crises and form the bed-rock of our way of working.

Our goal of inspiring one in four people to take action by 2030 remains at the heart of our mission to get more people on nature's side. You will read that our engagement work has helped us connect more people to the natural world on their doorstep, and in ways that are meaningful and relevant to them. Mobilising local communities to take action for nature is vital if we are to achieve our goal of 30% of Birmingham and the Black Country's landscape managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.

As a membership-based organisation our members continue to provide the foundations of our success, and expanding their numbers and support for our work and campaigns remains a high priority. We are committed to growing our membership and making it more inclusive of all communities.

None of our achievements would be possible without the support of our fantastic members and volunteers who are so committed and generous with their time and resources. A special thank you to all those members who have increased their membership donations this year to help us weather the ongoing cost of living challenge.

Our efforts are augmented by the generosity of our members, volunteers, partners, donors, and grant funders, as well as by the commitment of our Council of Trustees and staff. However you chose to support the Trust in 2023-24, thank you!

Council has pleasure in presenting its report together with the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024. Council has adopted the provisions of the Charities SORP (FRS102) - 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 (effective 1 January 2019) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Lisa Pinney MBE
Chair of Trustees

Dr Delia Garratt
Chief Executive



1.1 Objectives and Aims

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Limited is required by charity and company law to act within the objects of its Memorandum of Association, which are as follows:

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY'S OBJECTIVES ARE:

1. For the benefit of the public, to advance, promote and further the conservation maintenance study and protection of:

- i. wildlife and its habitats;
- ii. places of natural beauty;
- iii. places of zoological, botanical, geographical, archaeological or scientific interest;
- iv. features of landscape with geological, physiographical, or amenity value; in particular, but not exclusively, in ways that further biodiversity.

2. To advance the education of the public in:

- v. the principles and practice of sustainable development;
- vi. the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation; in particular, but not exclusively, in urban areas.

OUR VISION, PURPOSE & APPROACH

In June 2022, we launched our new eight-year strategy for 2022 - 2030, a Wilder Birmingham and Black Country

Our Vision

A Wilder Birmingham and the Black Country with more green and wild spaces where nature thrives, and everyone has access to nature in their daily lives.

Our Purpose

Lead Nature's Recovery in Birmingham and the Black Country, empower and support people to take positive local action for the benefit of wildlife and nature, and ensure natural habitats play a key role in addressing the ecological and climate emergencies.

Our Approach

We work for nature's recovery; protecting, restoring and creating wildlife-rich, accessible spaces that benefit people and wildlife.

We are ambitious in our desire not just to slow, but to reverse the decline of wildlife.

We lead by example, using evidence based approaches to demonstrate how nature's recovery can be achieved in urban areas.

We demonstrate what is possible, and inspire, empower and enable people from all backgrounds, cultures, identities and abilities to bring about our vision with us, embracing the diversity of our society to change the natural world for the better.

We look to establish common cause and work in partnership with others, to develop new, innovative ways to do what's right for nature and deliver impact in support of our vision.

We speak with a bold and confident voice, to tell the truth about the state of nature and what needs to be done to put it into recovery.

OUR VISION IS UNDERPINNED BY THREE BOLD GOALS

1. Nature is in recovery with abundant, diverse wildlife across Birmingham and the Black Country

By 2030 we want to see 30% of Birmingham and the Black Country's landscape managed for the benefit of wildlife.

2. People are taking action for nature and the climate across Birmingham and the Black Country

By 2030 we want to see at least 1 in 4 people across Birmingham and the Black Country taking action for nature.

3. Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

By 2030 we aim for 500 hectares of land to be improved to provide nature-based solutions to the ecological and climate crises.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country exists to promote the care and protection of the environment and therefore provides a clear public benefit. The Trust's philosophy is based on the belief that the natural world deserves conserving for its own sake and, since this is widely perceived to be a worthy aim of public policy, it may fairly be regarded as a benefit to the public at large. However, the public benefits provided by The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country go much further.

Firstly, our nature reserves are used by the public. At most sites information and interpretation is provided to visitors.

Secondly, our education programmes are aimed at schools, colleges, adult groups and the wider public.

Thirdly, our information gathering and provision of expert advice and opinion to local authorities and others helps to ensure that planning decisions are made on a rational basis taking full account of the public benefit of wildlife.

Fourthly, the involvement of many volunteers in our work provides an outlet for altruistic endeavor, which is of special benefit to those involved as well as delivering benefits to the wider public.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity' (PB2).

1.2 Summary of the Year

Each year the Trust produces a detailed Business Plan which determines the activities to be carried out during the year. Results are monitored throughout the year with regular reports being produced for Trust Council. The main headlines for 2023-24 are as follows:

GOAL 1: SPACE FOR NATURE IS PROTECTED, RESTORED, CREATED AND VALUED NATURE

Landscape scale conservation

Our Wilder Birmingham and Black Country strategy commits us to significantly increasing our delivery of landscape-scale projects. This reflects our ambition to not only hang on to the nature we have, but 'scale-up' and deliver extensive habitat restoration and creation that re-connects our wild species and habitats, and re-establishes fundamental ecological processes. This year we have focused our efforts on delivering change across two landscapes: the catchment of the River Stour in the southern part of the Black Country, and the heathland landscape of Walsall and northern Birmingham.

The Love Your River Stour project, which came to a close at the end of the year, enabled our staff to work with volunteers to enhance habitats along this important wildlife corridor. We created species diverse grassland, improved woodland, by thinning out plantations and planting of native trees, shrubs and ground flora and restored ponds through de-silting them, removing invasive species, and planting them with native species. Work was also carried out on pathways to improve access across sites along the river. An extensive programme of engagement included 24 public events reaching 281 people (including 17 guided walks), two tool-use courses for 16-24 year olds, and workshops with local schools. In these, 150 students learnt about their local river, including how they can help keep it clean through the 4P's and 'sewage soup' activities.

A major project for us on the Stour is our work installing a fish bypass channel at Stourton Castle, just west of Stourbridge. This is being delivered in collaboration with the Environment Agency and our neighbours at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, and demonstrates our commitment to working in partnership to achieve nature's recovery. The project will contribute significantly to the re-naturalisation of the river by restoring the opportunity for fish to move up and down this stretch, which has been

prevented for many years by a weir. Additionally, we will create a species-rich woodland shelterbelt at the site, and improve the grassland through over-seeding with native species such as yellow-rattle, oxeye daisy, field scabious, and red clover, amongst others. This year has involved considerable scoping, planning, and design works, along with engaging JPR Environmental, a specialist wetland contractor who will deliver the in-channel works next year.



Heathland is a globally rare habitat that is created by a combination of ecological conditions and human activities, particularly tree removal followed by livestock grazing, over long periods of time. The lowland heath landscape running from south-east from Cannock Chase, through Walsall to Sutton Park also saw significant work by the Trust this year. Within the Purple Horizons initiative in this area, we have not only undertaken restoration works focused on recovering pollinator populations, but have also been engaging with the local land-management community to advise and support them with conservation works. Staff have visited numerous sites across the project area to discuss habitat improvements and to plan management options, and we have now established good working relationships with 7 farmers and 4 golf courses. Our aim is to build on this strong foundation to achieve habitat improvement and creation across the landscape, not only for heathland, but also to improve woodlands and river corridors. Also, within this initiative, our colleagues at EcoRecord have been developing and applying methods to

understand where in the landscape there is greatest potential to create heathland. This 'opportunity mapping' has brought together a large number of sources of information and data to identify the locations that are most suitable for habitat work to be undertaken.

These landscape-scale projects have enabled the Trust to take a more holistic approach to its conservation work, improving the resilience of our ecosystems and beginning to reconnect their most valuable core elements.

Nature Reserves

After the success of the previous year at Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood, installing new site infrastructure to enable better access, this year's focus was on the habitats within the reserve. Work has continued re-wetting the fen area, removing remaining willow and alder. This has had a dramatic but positive affect on the habitat with it now retaining water. This has two significant impacts: the first, is the recovery of species from the fen vegetative community, such as the regionally

uncommon wood horsetail; the second, is the cool micro-climate this creates in the site throughout the year, which is important in an urban area.

Diversification of the understory and field layer of areas of Joy's Wood continues. Use of native plants propagated and grown-on through our Growing Local Flora project is leading to the woodland areas becoming more natural, providing an even better habitat for wildlife.

At Portway Hill, we have been working closely with the UNESCO Black Country Geopark, including hosting UNESCO representatives who travelled from Uruguay and Spain. They visited a number of Geo sites, including Portway Hill, and they were hugely impressed with the sense of community pride around them. Portway Hill was also selected as a case study site, as part of a Natural England initiative, exploring the connection between geology and biodiversity, specifically around sites which are managed for both.

This year has seen a number of challenges at Deer's Leap with regular vandalism of fences and infrastructure

around the site. Conservation Officers have continued to repair these and, on a more positive note, have had really good participation in walking events hosted on the site by the community. Volunteers from corporate groups have also been making a positive impact on the site's condition by reducing the amount of invasive Himalayan Balsam along the water course.

At Turner's Wood, new interpretation has been installed to provide details about the habitat as well as communicating the history of the site. The connected St Michael's Primary School continues to make use of the site for Forest School sessions, connecting their pupils to nature from an early age. The site hosted a couple of open days including our annual bluebell day that sees over one hundred visitors to the woods.

We completed a People's Postcode Lottery funded grant for the Friends of Hill Hook, which saw a new site management plan created, moving the site towards best management practice. The funding also enabled us to install a new meadow interpretation panel and produce leaflets for the Friends of Group, which is available on our Hill Hook web page.

GOAL 2: PEOPLE ARE TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE AND THE CLIMATE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY

We have been developing our approach to community engagement through the Wildlife Trust's collective Team Wilder ethos, and we have made a significant contribution to the progression of this ethos. The underlying principle of Team Wilder is to describe "how we connect with, listen, and collaborate with a wide range of people, building reciprocal trusted relationships at a local level. We will support and facilitate individuals, communities, and stakeholders, to make meaningful changes for nature's recovery. This leads to more people influencing each other to take sustained collective action for nature and climate to achieve 30 by 30 nationally".

Youth Action for Nature

Putting the Team Wilder ethos into practice, our Youth Action for Nature Manager has continued to make connections and deliver sessions with groups around the city, building partnerships with communities. In doing so, our aim has been to give agency back to the communities we are working with and help facilitate them to develop their own meaningful relationships with wildlife. This means we are working widely throughout the region with partners whose values connect to our own. Examples have included:

- Working with community arts agency CraftSpace, holding a climate café with LGBT+ young people.
- Engaging with Sustainably Muslim to work with communities in Hodge Hill and Bromford, delivering events like a cyanotype printing workshop and wildlife walk.
- Helping set up a youth entomology group.
- Supporting St Margaret's Community Trust, helping young people set up a bird feeding station, making birdfeeders and taking part in birdwatching.
- Hosting a Lunar Campfire at our Centre of the Earth site, in partnership with *We Don't Settle*, a youth-led arts organisation that works with minoritised young people.

Education and Engagement

The Trust continues to operate the majority of our education and engagement activities out of Centre of the Earth in Winson Green and EcoPark in Small Heath. This has been the first full year of operation at EcoPark since our redevelopment project there, which saw a new building installed on site, and it has hosted an incredibly busy programme of activity over 2023 to 2024.

Both sites have offered a really wide range of events, including activities such as Bat Walks, Apple Days, Family Friendly Activity Days and Nature Tots (for pre-school age children). We have also facilitated special events with community partners, such as a growing local food project at EcoPark in partnership with the Heritage Seed Library, and a woodland dinner at Centre of the Earth in partnership with Civic Square.

Demand for schools' sessions at our two main sites has been incredibly strong. Most days of the week will see almost all available school sessions across both sites booked up, and across the year we hosted around 5,200 children for onsite visits. It is clear that the relaunch of EcoPark after our redevelopment work there has been a massive success and the provision is deeply appreciated by local schools. Feedback from our school partners is extremely positive and we are particularly delighted that the majority of schools using our education facilities are within walking distance of the site concerned, showing that we are making excellent progress at building strong and lasting partnerships with the local schools that form our priority target.

Training

The Trust successfully updated our administrative processes and policies to ensure ongoing compliance with AIM Accreditation procedures. A variety of Level 1 Training courses have been successfully delivered both at EcoPark and Centre of the Earth, but also at other sites in partnership with local organisations, such as at Birmingham Settlement's Red Shed. A new woodworking shop has been installed at EcoPark, enabling the Trust to re-introduce green woodworking sessions, but also giving us the ability to do some woodwork (such as creating fence posts from timber felled on our sites) ourselves.

Health and Well-being

We have successfully delivered a year long programme, targeting patients from local GP surgeries, in partnership with the Active Wellbeing Society. This project has been very well received and discussions have opened up about a more significant, longer term plan for developing our health and wellbeing offer.

Communications

2023 to 2024 has seen steady and positive progress in both the reach, and impact of our communications activity, with the Trust talking confidently about the importance of nature's recovery to people's lives.

We pushed up our distribution figures. Our social media channels made 2,355,502 impressions, our e-newsletter



audience increased to a quarterly distribution of 46,444 people (12.6% growth on last year), and our main website recorded 189,900 total unique visits, with the most popular page being our guide to urban foxes.

Just as important as the size of our reach, is what we are sharing with people. We have had success with before and after images, showing the changes following our habitat improvement and conservation works. For example, an image of our staff creating a meadow at Manor Farm Park in 2022, combined with a photograph showing the meadow in glorious flower in 2023, really resonated with people and the post was shared around the globe. The post has been seen by more than half a million people. It has been shared across America, Czech Republic, Sweden, Serbia, Nepal, Italy and many more countries, and the response has been absolutely fantastic, with scores of comments complimenting us and thanking us for our work.

2024 is of course an important year politically with both the West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Election and a general election in year, and we have been strongly advocating for nature's recovery to politicians of all parties. We've been collaborating closely

with local partner organisations such as Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, RSPB and Friends of the Earth to ensure our voices are speaking together strongly.

Following the sad passing of Benjamin Zephaniah in December, we uploaded to our website a series of podcasts about his own connection to nature, which he recorded at Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood in 2013.

These have not been publicly available before and remain online at www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/Moseley-Bog-Podcasts

Finally, as well as communicating through our own channels, we have made a number of appearances on live radio and TV. Items include a piece on urban foxes on BBC Radio, another BBC Radio interview to encourage people to head out to witness startling murmurations, an ITV Central News feature on EcoPark, an interview at Centre of Earth to promote participation in the City of Nature challenge, and much more.

Membership

Over the course of the year we saw a slight reduction in the number of active members of the Trust. Overall numbers for the year 2023 to 2024 are 413 gained, 472 lost, for a total movement of minus 59 members. (This compares to 2022 to 2023 figures of 530 gained, 512 lost, for a movement of plus 18 members). Our total membership now stands at 3442 memberships consisting of 6929 individual members (when joint and family memberships are included).

Though this slight reduction in members is disappointing, especially considering we had hoped to grow our membership in year, conversation with other Wildlife Trusts in the region has shown that this has been a difficult period across the movement and we are not alone in having trouble sustaining current membership levels.

To this end, we trialed a number of initiatives to test our membership recruitment models, for example testing online recruitment through a Digital Hub programme led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, and placing more points of contact into our membership renewal process.

Despite the reduction in number of members, income actually increased slightly, with membership income of £249,150 as against £246,131 the previous year. This is in part due to an upgrade campaign the Trust launched to see if existing members were willing to commit more funds to us. 90 members were kind enough to support our work by increasing their monthly donation to the Trust.

With a new Director of Fundraising and Engagement in post, the Trust will continue to review options for membership growth, as our generous and committed members remain the lifeblood of the organisation.

Volunteers

We would like to thank the volunteers who have once again made such a difference for our wild spaces across the region. Volunteers have committed time and energy to support our work across all of our nature reserves and environmental centres, community projects and our head office.

Our corporate volunteering programme continued to be successful enabling local businesses to make a difference for wildlife.





GOAL 3: NATURE IS PLAYING A CENTRAL AND VALUED ROLE IN HELPING TO ADDRESS LOCAL AND GLOBAL PROBLEMS

Throughout the year, the Trust has worked hard to deliver projects that support nature's recovery in ways that help people meet local challenges.

The evidence that nature can help communities cope with issues such as extreme weather, pollution, and flooding is overwhelming, and this is increasingly being referred to as 'nature-based solutions'. It can involve establishing natural drainage systems, such as reed beds, that 'slow the flow' of rainwater, helping to reduce flooding and associated pollution. Alternatively, it may include planting trees in public spaces to provide shade, thus reducing heat stress. 'Nature-based solutions' therefore means creating, protecting,

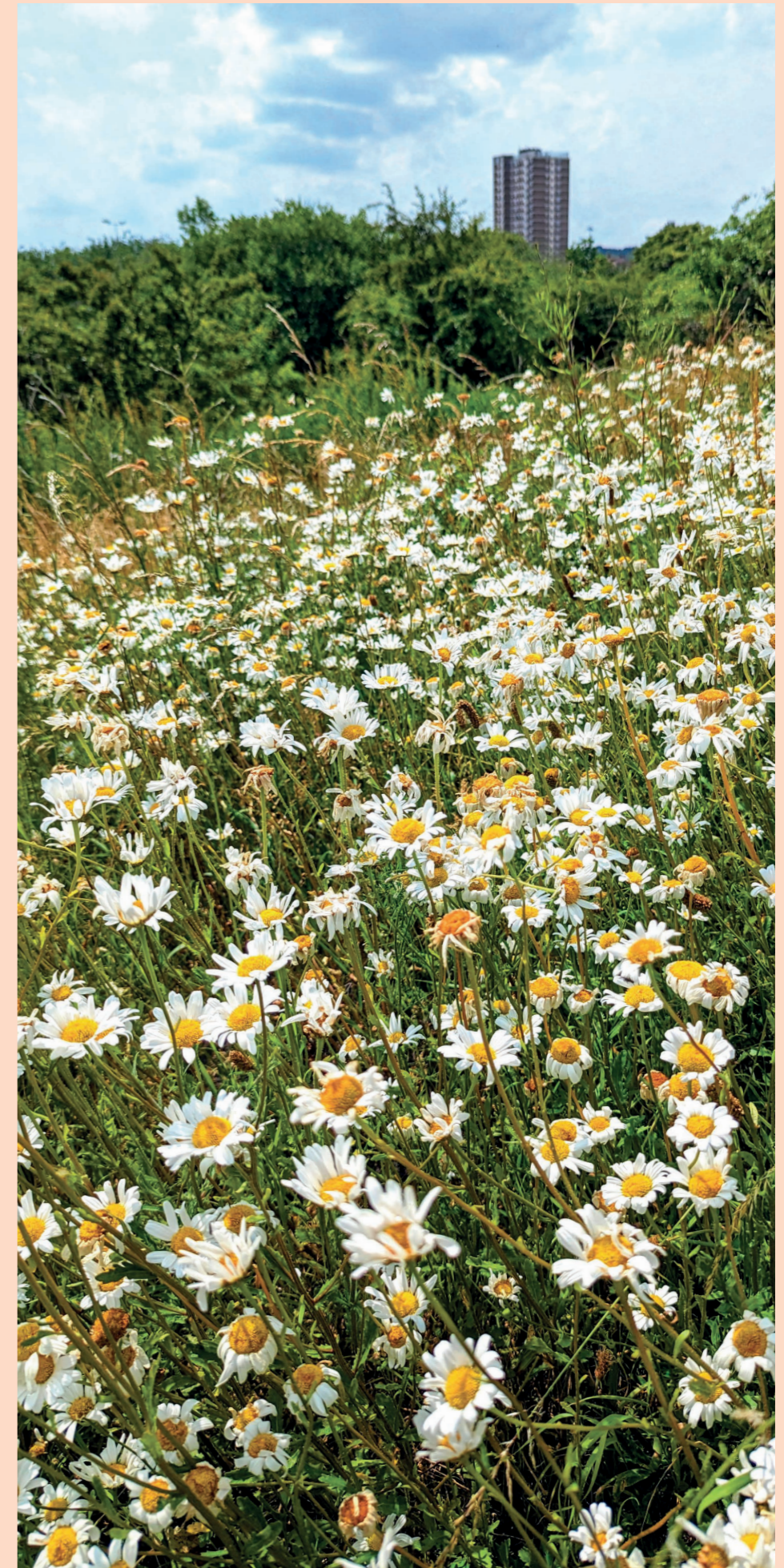
restoring, or improving urban green spaces, sometimes just small areas, that can be accessed by many people. For example, this year the Trust created two high density wildflower swards on West Bromwich High Street. Working with our partners at Multistory, the seeding and planting was done as a community day with staff from the retail park, local councillors, local colleges, nurseries, and other members of the community. This project will continue with training courses and three engagement walks.

We have also continued to support Birmingham City Council to deliver the Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) programme. This national initiative is designed to protect urban nature and ensure quality green space is accessible for everyone, now and into the future. This year we helped the city council prepare for the introduction of biodiversity net gain (BNG), by carrying out assessments of 35 of the city's parks and public open spaces. BNG legislation requires developers to increase biodiversity by 10% in relation to their building projects, and is set to become an important source of funding for nature conservation.

Our work is helping the Council develop their 'habitat bank', a catalogue of publicly accessible green spaces that can receive BNG investment for nature restoration and improvement. Further to this, we have advised Walsall Council in their efforts to draft guidance on the 'strategic significance' of local habitats and species an important element of BNG assessment. The Trust's prior work developing the interim local nature recovery strategy is being used as the basis to inform this important new work.

Planning processes continue to provide important opportunities to protect and recover nature in urban areas, and during the year the Trust responded to 58 applications across the five planning authorities we work with. Whilst the outcomes of planning processes are not always what the Trust advocates for, we play an important role in placing nature's needs in clear view of the decision-makers and ensuring the system gives all due consideration to nature.

Two of our authorities published local plans this year and the Trust submitted responses to both. In addition, the Trust considered two further masterplans under public consultation, in particular, the Sandwell Valley 10 Year Master Plan. The Trust's response strengthened the case for recognising the importance of Sandwell Valley as a critical, hugely valuable part of the Birmingham and Black Country's nature recovery network. We advocated that any development plan should not just put the protection of biodiversity at its core, but actually enhance the site's value for nature. Allied to these planning related activities, our team also provided nature recovery advice to 79 land managers, including farmers, educational establishments, sports clubs, and others.



1.3 Financial Review

Financial Position

During the financial year 2024, the Trust generated a deficit of £211,943 (2023 surplus: £29,334). Income of £1,287,208 was generated (2023: £1,650,655). Actual expenditure for 2024 was £1,512,838, excluding gains on investment (2023: £1,628,889).

Trust income is split between unrestricted and restricted funds. Unrestricted income represents money raised or given to support the Trust's achievement of core charitable aims. Membership, donations, general fundraising, and some charitable trust donations were given as unrestricted income.

Restricted income is given for a specific purpose with clear outputs to be achieved. Restricted income for this period includes Natural Prospects Traineeships and Love Your River Stour funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, other funding from Natural England, West Midlands Combined Authority, the Environment Agency and others. Restricted income accounts for 48% of our total income for the year.

The Trust has invested in membership, as an essential income stream that enables us to deliver core charitable aims that are not always possible to fund through restricted income, such as our work to protect nature through the planning system. Membership accounts for 19% (2023: 15%) of the Trust's income and the Business Plan sets out how this will grow in coming years. Unrestricted income (including membership) is 52% (2023: 69%) of total income.

Principal Funding Sources

Income

The Trust has a range of funding sources. The key sources are outlined as follows:

1. Membership, donations, legacies:

Includes income from our members, donations given at events and through our presence in the community and legacies.

2. Charitable activities:

Projects and services delivered in Birmingham & Black Country in line with the Trust's aims and objectives.

3. Trading & other income:

includes royalties received, interest income, hire income and rental income.

Expenditure

The Trust's expenditure decreased to £1,512,838 (2023: £1,628,889). Staff costs were reduced as part of the changes in the Senior Management Team and other savings were delivered with reduced income levels. Major headings are explained below:

1. Charitable Activity:

This covers our staffing costs and direct project costs to deliver projects and services so as to meet our charitable aims and objectives.

2. Fundraising Costs:

We are now responsible for our own membership recruitment although we also operate in an informal partnership with other local Trusts to maximise our use of digital membership recruitment. Our costs include recruitment through the Join Anywhere scheme via other Wildlife Trusts, online membership recruitment as well as production of membership magazines throughout the year.

3. Overheads:

These are the running costs to maintain our sites and headquarters covering areas such as rent, rates, gas, electric, telephones and insurance.

4. Pensions:

Royal London manage all pension funds on behalf of the staff members. The Trust contributes 7% in addition to staff contributions.

Every penny we receive is spent on achieving our charitable aims. Overheads include rents for our sites, running our office and insurance to ensure we are a responsible and sustainable organisation.

Reserves policy

Trustees keep the reserves of the Trust under regular review. Having regard to the increasing scale of the Trust's operations and COVID uncertainties, in 2020 the Trustees set a reserves policy to aim at reserves equivalent to nine months' core operating costs, equating to approximately £425,000. Such reserves would be held in case of any sudden decline in income or unexpected cost or risk exposure, and to ensure that the

commitments to meet contractual obligations to staff, premises and funding partners could be met.

After designated funds of £Nil (2023: £223,542) and the revaluation reserve of £59,239 (2023: £59,239), the Trustees have met this aim with current unrestricted reserves standing at £1,341,652 (2023: £1,274,557).

As this is significantly above the reserves policy the Trustees and management team are looking into where investments can be made during the following financial year to support the charitable objectives of the Trust.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed quarterly by Trustees via delegation to the Finance and Risk Committee. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol.

We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed, and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order): the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the Trustees, the charity has established resources and review systems which, under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.

1.4 Looking Ahead

GOAL 1: NATURE IS IN RECOVERY WITH ABUNDANT, DIVERSE WILDLIFE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY

The coming year will see our work across Walsall's landscape continue through the Purple Horizons initiative and we hope to secure further funds to significantly strengthen and expand that work. Whilst heathland will continue to be a priority for us in that area, we aim to broaden our conservation work to encompass woodland, grassland, and river corridor restoration across the borough. If we can secure adequate funds, we plan to co-deliver that alongside a substantial programme of community engagement.

Our focus will also expand significantly in Dudley following a funding award of £99,605 from our partners at the West Midlands Combined Authority. This will enable us to deliver the Dudley's Paths to Nature's Recovery project, which will see a wide range of activities in the town including conservation works, community engagement, community science, and nature partnership building. These will be brought together through development of a new 'green' walking route through green spaces along Dudley's landscape of limestone hills.

Our restoration work will centre on improving habitat for priority species locally, including the green hairstreak butterfly, and the lesser horseshoe bats that are found in the town's limestone caverns. This project will also support the establishment of a new Birmingham and Black Country Invertebrate Group (BIG) to grow enthusiasm and participation in invertebrate biological recording across the area.

Our river corridor conservation activities next year will centre on the landscape of the upper catchment of the river Rea, in south Birmingham. The second phase of the Natural Rivers Green Corridors project, is a long term project funded by the Environment Agency. It will see the removal of man-made barriers from the channels of the main river and its tributaries, such as the Bourn Brook, along with the



reconnection of these channels to their natural floodplains and restoration of riverside habitats. The project will also include further community engagement activities including working with local 'Friends of' groups along with citizen science monitoring. In addition to this project, the Trust will also be working in partnership to deliver further river and wetland conservation. We will be playing active roles in both the The Midlands Crayfish Partnership, convened by Buglife, and a project to Explore, Enhance, Protect and Promote Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve, being led by City of Wolverhampton Council.

The Trust will also be actively engaging with development of the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy being led by the West Midlands Combined Authority. This significant, strategic, initiative aims to agree and set out priorities for nature's recovery across the West Midlands. We will be contributing substantively to the process of mapping the most valuable existing areas for nature, as well as developing measures and specific proposals for creating, improving, or restoring habitats for nature and providing wider environmental, including climate-related, benefits.

Through these and other projects, the Trust is aiming to stimulate nature's recovery across our urban landscapes through creating, restoring, and improving heaths, woods, grasslands and river corridors for wildlife throughout Birmingham and the Black Country.

GOAL 2: PEOPLE ARE TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE AND THE CLIMATE ACROSS BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY

The Trust will continue to make significant contributions to the development and delivery of the Team Wilder ethos. This will be done both practically, through a variety of interesting and engaging events delivered to a wide and diverse audience, but also theoretically, as we will advocate for the importance of democratic dialogue with communities throughout Birmingham and the Black Country, giving everyone in the region the opportunity to forge their own meaningful connection to nature.

The Trust's two primary sites for community engagement and education activity will continue to support local people. At EcoPark we will explore new ways for the site to reach the community whilst ensuring that we remain committed to the hugely enthusiastic take-up of our provision for local schools. At Centre of the Earth, we will seek to secure the long term future of the site through lease or site ownership that will allow further investment into the site and upgrading of the building. We will look to grow community based partnerships local

to our sites such as with Birmingham Settlement and the Dolphin Centre.

We will campaign effectively throughout the general election and beyond to ensure that the Wildlife Trust's priorities for nature's recovery are communicated clearly, and that politicians from all parties hear our message and make a serious effort to ensure that work for nature's recovery becomes a priority for Government, both local and central.

The Trust retains its long term ambition to substantially grow our membership base. After a period where membership has remained fairly static, our focus for the next year is on testing different models of engagement with current members, and reaching out to potential new members, particularly attempting to leverage the best possible return from digital communication channels.

We serve a significant population in Birmingham and the Black Country and we aim to communicate the value of our work, and the benefits that come from supporting us, with more and more people regionally.

GOAL 3: NATURE IS PLAYING A CENTRAL AND VALUED ROLE IN HELPING TO ADDRESS LOCAL AND GLOBAL PROBLEMS

Developing our delivery of 'nature-based solutions' across Birmingham and the Black Country will be a priority for the Trust next year. We will be working with our partners to further our understanding of these sometimes novel forms of nature recovery, and what benefits they can deliver, and to match these to the varied needs of our diverse communities. This will enable us to prioritise which nature-based solutions to invest in to support people's attempts to cope with challenges such as: worsening mental health, air pollution, and the extreme weather caused by climate change.

Aligned with this, we will also continue working to identify the most appropriate locations for different 'nature-based solutions' and other conservation works. This not only needs to take in to account the needs of our communities and the different levels of access to nature they have, but

also the ecological constraints and opportunities generated by our land. To this end, EcoRecord will be working with the National Trust to carry out woodland creation opportunity mapping across the south of our region, specifically across large parts of Dudley and south Birmingham. This work will inform future woodland creation efforts and urban tree planting campaigns.

The emerging arena of 'green finance' is another important frontier for the Trust this coming year. Numerous forms of private finance, not least of which, biodiversity net gain, are being discussed as holding potential to support nature's recovery. This presents both risks and opportunities for our organisation as we seek to harness these new resources and direct them towards achieving genuine positive change for our local wild species, habitats, and landscapes. We will be paying particular attention to our role within biodiversity net gain processes. This will include developing how we support our partners within local council planning departments with its delivery, and ensuring that we hold all stakeholders to the very highest standards, pushing them to go above and beyond the basic levels now mandated by law.



1.5 Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is one of 46 independent charities, which form a national partnership, The Wildlife Trusts, through the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. The Trust's family membership is also part of the national environment club, Wildlife Watch, which provides projects for members and affiliated schools, involving them directly with environmental issues.

The Trust is a registered charity (No. 513615) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 01650938).

The Trust was established in 1980 to protect our local natural heritage and encourage people to engage, enjoy and get involved with the natural environment. We are a membership organisation, governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Work is carried out by a team of 27 at year end, equating to 23.8 full time equivalent posts. The Trust could not achieve the impacts we do without the commitment and hard work of a large number of volunteers.

In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

A Council of voluntary Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the Trust. The Trust's Council is elected from the membership, in accordance with its governing documents, at the Annual General Meeting: Trustees are either co-opted during the year or elected at the Annual General Meeting. Co-opted Trustees must stand for election at the Annual General Meeting immediately following their appointment. Council may co-opt additional members from time to time as it sees fit. Trustees are also Directors of the Company limited by guarantee.

Organisational structure

The overall responsibility for the charity lies with the Trustee Directors who have delegated the day to day management of the charity to the Chief Executive. The Trustee Directors meet regularly to agree strategy, review progress, review financial information, and discuss policy issues. To facilitate effective operation, the Chief Executive has delegated authority within a scheme of delegation approved by the Trustees for some operational matters, including finance.

The Wildlife Trust is governed by an elected Council and is therefore directly accountable to the members of the charity.

The Articles of Association gives Council the powers to:

- i Administer the affairs of the Charity
- ii Exercise all the powers of the Charity
- iii Determine the policy of the Charity

The Council formally delegates certain functions and responsibilities to two committees which deal with specific policy and organisational issues.

The day to day management of the Charity's affairs is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is accountable exclusively to the Council for achieving, via the Business Plan, the Wildlife Trust's aims and for complying with Council policies. A team of professionally trained staff report to the Chief Executive.

Induction and training of new trustees

The Trustee is provided with copies of the charity's key documents, including its memorandum and Articles of Association, Governance Handbook, latest Annual Report and Accounts, minutes of recent Council meetings, policy documents and further information on the role and responsibilities of charity trustees.

New Trustees are required to confirm that they have studied these documents and raised any queries or obtained

further information which they may need.

Following election or co-option of a Trustee, the Chair will introduce a new Trustee at their first meeting of Council. They will also participate in a formal induction process to familiarise them with the extent and nature of the Trust's operations. After election at the Annual General Meeting Trustees serve for a period of 3 years and may be elected for a further period of 3 years.

Developments in Charity Law and Practice are monitored and important developments are brought to the notice of Trustees by the Executive.

The relationship between staff and Trustees is crucial to the Trust's continuing success. Trustees bring a range of skills and experience to the responsibilities of the role which requires them to have an understanding of all aspects of the Trust's work. Trustees meet four times a year where they review strategy and operational performance, ratify policies and agree budgets.

Key management remuneration

None of the Trustees receive remuneration or benefit for their work with the group and charity. Any connection between Trustees and any company the Trust works with is disclosed to the board. Financial details of which are disclosed in note 9 to the accounts.

Related parties and the wider network The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county Wildlife trusts and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK Level.

Risk management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the Trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.



Reference and administrative details

Registered Company No. 01650938
(England and Wales)

Registered Charity No. 513615

Registered Office Centre Of The Earth,
42 Norman Street, Winson Green,
Birmingham, West Midlands B18 7EP

Trustees

P W Beardmore
A Bright
L C Pinney MBE
J D Lerner
D H Mclellan
E F Mooney
A Wayro
D P Green
L Besenyi (term ended 16.1.24)
J Daniel
S P Khan
J M Moran
A L Nicholson-Evans
M W Saleem

Company Secretary E F Mooney

Auditors

Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited
1110 Elliott Court,
Coventry Business Park,
Herald Avenue, Coventry
West Midlands CV5 6UB

Bankers

Nat West Plc
Chamber of Commerce House
36 Highfield Road, Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 3BJ

Key management personnel

Chief Executive
Dr Delia Garratt

Head of Conservation
Simon Atkinson (Left 14/07/2023)

Head of Education and Engagement
Gareth Morgan (Left 11/08/2023)

Head of Fundraising and Communications
Emma Thompson (Left 02/06/2023)

Interim Head of Finance and Resources
Ian Holmes (Left 03/11/2023)

Director of Fundraising and Engagement
Daniel Brown (From 14/08/2023)

Director of Nature Recovery
Norman Dandy (From 13/11/2023)

Director of Finance
Hana Chatwin (From 06/11/2023)

1.6 Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business;

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and each Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Report of the Trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 16th July 2024 and signed on the board's behalf by:

J D Lerner - Trustee



2 Independent Auditors Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (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 March 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.

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 Auditors' 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 financial statements are 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 Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters 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 Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception.

In the light of the 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 Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 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 trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Enquiring of management and employees, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:-

- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance.
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud and,
- The internal controls established to mitigate risk relating to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

We identified areas of law and regulation that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, discussions with management (as required by auditing standards) and discussed with management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations.

All identified laws and regulations were communicated throughout the audit team, and they remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.

The most significant considerations for the charitable company were as follows:-

- The Charity is subject to laws and regulations that affect the financial statements which include

financial reporting legislation (namely The Companies Act 2006), taxation legislation and the Charities Act. We assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures concerning items recorded in the financial statements.

- The charity is also subject to other operational laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have material effect on the amounts or disclosures in the financial statements through imposing fines or withdrawal of funding contracts. Areas where this would have an effect include health and safety, Bribery Act 2010, employment law, data protections and child protection legislation (DBS checks for staff and volunteers).

Auditing standards limit the audit procedures to identifying non-compliance of these laws and regulations to enquiry of management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if there is any. Therefore, if a breach of operational regulations is not disclosed to us or evident from relevant correspondence, and audit will not detect the breach.

To identify risk of material misstatement due to fraud, we carried out discussions amongst the audit team to assess areas where and how fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators. The following areas were identified:-

- Management override of controls through the posting of inappropriate accounting entries or journals
- We do not believe there is a fraud risk relating the revenue recognition as the revenue is straightforward, with limited opportunity for manipulation.

We did not identify any additional fraud risks.

We tested the appropriateness of accounting journals and other adjustments made in the accounts preparation based on a risk criteria.

Owing to the inherent limitation of the audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulation is from the events and transaction reflected

in the financial statement, the less likely in the inherently limited procedure required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of fraud, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. Our audit procedures are designed to detect material misstatement. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance or fraud and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mark Spafford FCCA ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of
Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited
1110 Elliott Court
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry
West Midlands
CV5 6UB

Date: 16th July 2024

3 Statement of Financial Activities

(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	312,543	5,000	317,543	338,585
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	3	311,746	617,016	928,762	1,271,226
Other income		40,903	-	40,903	40,844
Total		665,192	622,016	1,287,208	1,650,655
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	28,049	-	28,049	32,653
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	5	807,277	677,512	1,484,789	1,596,236
Total		835,326	677,512	1,512,838	1,628,889
Net gains on investment		13,687	-	13,687	7,568
Net Income/(Expenditure)		(156,447)	(55,496)	(211,943)	29,334
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		1,557,338	336,739	1,894,077	1,864,743
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,400,891	281,243	1,682,134	1,894,077

4 Balance Sheet March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	11	525,999	507,441
Heritage assets	12	79,762	79,762
		605,761	587,203
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	13	85,106	566,115
Investments	14	58,697	45,010
Cash at bank and in hand		1,300,384	876,685
		1,444,187	1,487,810
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(367,814)	(180,936)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		1,076,373	1,306,874
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		1,682,134	1,894,077
NET ASSETS			
		1,682,134	1,894,077
FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds	18	1,400,891	1,557,338
Restricted funds		281,243	336,739
TOTAL FUNDS		1,682,134	1,894,077

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 16th July 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee

5 Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	468,587	362,259
Net cash provided by operating activities		468,587	362,259
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(44,888)	(32,864)
Donation of investment portfolio		-	(37,442)
Net cash used in investing activities		(44,888)	(70,306)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		423,699	291,953
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		876,685	584,732
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		1,300,384	876,685

6 Notes to the cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/ income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(211,943)	29,334
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	26,330	42,647
Gain on investments	(13,687)	(7,568)
Decrease in debtors	481,009	419,963
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	186,878	(122,117)
Net cash provided by operations	468,587	362,259

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1.4.23 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.24 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	876,685	423,699	1,300,384
	876,685	423,699	1,300,384
Liquid resources			
Deposits included in cash	-	-	-
Current asset investments	45,010	13,687	58,697
	45,010	13,687	58,697
Total	921,695	437,386	1,359,081

7 Notes to the Financial Statements

7.1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income is generally recognised on a receivable basis, being when the charity is entitled to receive the money and is reported gross of related expenditure, where the amount is reasonably certain and when there is adequate certainty of receipt of monies. The specific bases used are as follows:

- Voluntary income includes members subscriptions, donations (including related gift aid tax) legacies and grants of a general nature.
- Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity.
- Contractual income is recorded when receivable.
- Grants received during the year which relate to the following financial year are carried forward in creditors.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis, meaning that the cost is identified as a liability awaiting payment, based on the date of the event, rather than the point that cash is paid. The expenditure is allocated to the appropriate cost heading in the financial statements.

- Costs of generating funds relate to expenditure incurred in raising voluntary income and fundraising trading costs.
- Charitable activities' expenditure relates to expenditure on meeting the charitable objects. This includes materials and bought in services, staff costs, information systems, communications, rented accommodation and general management directly chargeable to projects, thereby covering both internal costs and external charges for such costs. Such costs incurred internally are apportioned to projects based on direct staffing levels.
- Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the charitable company and relate to the professional costs of running the charity.

- Support costs including staff costs, information systems, communications, office accommodation and general management, are fully apportioned to other cost categories, and are primarily based on direct staffing levels.
- Membership recruitment costs, where an agency charges the trust a fee based on the first years membership income for recruitment of new members, are charged to the accounts over a period of 10 months. Surplus new income is therefore only recognised in the accounts after this period has ended and this policy is viewed as being prudent.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Short leasehold property - 4% on cost

Fixtures and fittings - 25% straight line

Expenditure on fixtures, fittings and general office equipment purchased by the charity for projects is currently written off in the year in which the expenditure is incurred, expenditure incurred for administration purposes is capitalised and depreciated as stated above.

Heritage assets

Land, classified as heritage assets, had previously been included in the accounts at cost. The trustees value the assets every 5 years (a change from the previous annual approach) as this provides more relevant information on the activities and assets held by the charity.

Where information on the cost or valuation of heritage assets is not available or the cost of providing such information significantly outweighs any benefit to the users of the accounts then heritage assets are not recognised on the balance sheet.

Acquisitions only arise when donated to the charity or if it is believed that they will further the charity's objectives.

Full details of original cost can be found in note 12 to the accounts.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The charity is partially exempt for VAT. VAT that is irrecoverable due to the partial exemption are allocated to the appropriate cost categories and funds.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes or as suggested in a letter of wishes.

The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Payments under an arrangement which is in substance of a rental nature (operating leases) are charged in the financial statements as incurred.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The trust makes payments of employers contributions into independently administered money purchase pension policies for qualifying employees. Pension costs are charged in the financial statements on an accruals basis.

Basic financial instruments

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Investments are another form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. All gains and losses are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities as they arise. Realised gains and losses on investments are calculated as the difference between sales proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year-end and their carrying value. Realised and unrealised investment gains and losses are combined in the Statement of Financial Activities.

7.2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Donations	317,365	337,885
Legacies	178	700
	<u>317,543</u>	<u>338,585</u>

7.3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024 Activity, Conservation, Engagement and Influence £	2023 Total activities £
Conservation & Wildlife	928,762	1,271,226

7.4 RAISING FUNDS

	2024 £	2023 £
Raising donations and legacies		
Raising voluntary income costs	28,049	32,653

7.5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 6) £	Totals £
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	1,322,637	162,152	1,484,789

7.6 SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	115,945	46,207	162,152

7.7 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Auditing remuneration	7,242	6,778
Depreciation - owned assets	26,330	42,647
Other operating leases	3,505	3,285

7.8 Trustees' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees' expenses

There were no Trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

7.9 STAFF COSTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	709,300	771,589
Social security costs	51,435	51,906
Other pension costs	45,907	43,513
	<u>806,642</u>	<u>867,008</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
Direct charitable work	25	33
Administrative	2	2
	<u>27</u>	<u>35</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2024	2023
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1

The key management personnel, the senior management team, received total employee benefits in the year of £166,632 (2023 - £209,107). The key management personnel comprise the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Finance & Resources, Head of Education & Engagement, Head of Conservation, Head of Fundraising & Communications, Director of Nature Recovery and Director of Fundraising and Engagement.

7.10 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	338,585	-	338,585
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	802,627	468,599	1,271,226
Other income	40,844	-	40,844
Total	<u>1,182,056</u>	<u>468,599</u>	<u>1,650,655</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	32,653	-	32,653
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	940,038	656,198	1,596,236
Total	<u>972,691</u>	<u>656,198</u>	<u>1,628,889</u>
Net gains on investments	7,568	-	7,568
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	216,933	(187,599)	29,334
Transfers between funds	(87,903)	87,903	-
Net between funds	129,030	(99,696)	29,334
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	1,428,308	436,435	1,864,743
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u><u>1,557,338</u></u>	<u><u>336,739</u></u>	<u><u>1,894,077</u></u>

7.11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Short leasehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2023	708,816	99,402	808,218
Additions	40,127	4,761	44,888
At 31 March 2024	<u>748,943</u>	<u>104,163</u>	<u>853,106</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2023	215,041	85,736	300,777
Charge for year	21,997	4,333	26,330
At 31 March 2024	<u>237,038</u>	<u>90,069</u>	<u>327,107</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2024	<u>511,905</u>	<u>14,094</u>	<u>525,999</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u><u>493,775</u></u>	<u><u>13,666</u></u>	<u><u>507,441</u></u>

7.12 HERITAGE ASSETS

	Total £
MARKET VALUE	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	79,762
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2024	79,762
At 31 March 2023	<u>79,762</u>

If the Land had not been revalued it would have been included in the accounts at the following historical cost totally £20,523. This is broken down to £10,523 being the amount paid for land and £10,000 being the value of land donated. There has been no change to these values in the last five years.

Heritage assets consist of land at Portway Hill, Pelsall Common Spinney (Turner's Wood) and Deer's Leap Wood.

Such land that has been acquired or donated to the charity is managed and preserved in accordance with the charity's objectives for wildlife and their habitat. Access to such land is available to the general public.

Other heritage assets may be purchased by, or donated to the charity, as and when circumstances permit. The number of acquisitions in the last 5 years is nil.

The Trustees have obtained a desktop valuation by an independent valuer in an attempt to understand the open market value of the heritage assets. Based on the work done, the trustees do not believe the valuation of the Heritage assets at £79,762 is materially different from the open market value of these assets. The Trustees feel no adjustment to the revaluation is required.

7.13 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	14,333	225,178
VAT	12,438	40,387
Prepayments	14,953	21,393
Accrued income	43,382	279,157
	<u>85,106</u>	<u>566,115</u>

7.14 CURRENT ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Listed investments	58,697	45,010

7.15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	326,654	107,793
Social security and other taxes	16,063	7,901
Other creditors	6,268	17,474
Accrued expenses	18,829	47,768
	<u>367,814</u>	<u>180,936</u>
	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1st April 2023	-	6,000
Released from previous years	-	(6,000)
Income deferred in the year	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Deferred income at 31st March 2024	-	-

7.16. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Within one year	11,212	2,600
Between one and five years	17,160	10,840
In more than five years	6,450	16,500
	<u>34,822</u>	<u>29,940</u>

7.17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Fixed assets	605,761	-	605,761	587,203
Current assets	1,162,944	281,243	1,444,187	1,487,810
Current liabilities	(367,814)	-	(367,814)	(180,936)
	<u>1,400,891</u>	<u>281,243</u>	<u>1,682,134</u>	<u>1,894,077</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfer between funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	1,274,558	(96,355)	163,449	1,178,203
Designated Fund	223,541	(60,092)	(163,449)	-
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	-	59,239
	<u>1,557,338</u>	<u>(156,447)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,400,891</u>
Restricted funds				
Other awards	-	327	-	327
South Staffordshire Water	9,227	-	-	9,227
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	37,840	(37,840)	-	-
Stourton Castle Bypass	240,109	(70,134)	-	169,975
Purple Horizons	-	3,449	-	3,449
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	2,565	(2,565)	-	-
WMCA LYRS	24,998	(24,998)	-	-
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	22,000	71,265	-	93,265
Seth Somers Donation	-	5,000	-	5,000
	<u>336,739</u>	<u>(55,496)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>281,243</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,894,077</u>	<u>(211,943)</u>	<u>(211,943)</u>	<u>1,682,134</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	615,852	(725,894)	13,687	(96,355)
Designated Fund	49,340	(109,432)	-	(60,092)
	<u>665,192</u>	<u>(835,326)</u>	<u>13,687</u>	<u>(156,447)</u>
Restricted funds				
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	10,572	(10,572)	-	-
Other awards	45,357	(45,030)	-	327
Reaching Communities	37,573	(37,573)	-	-
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	13,500	(13,500)	-	-
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	56,532	(94,372)	-	(37,840)
Stourton Castle Bypass	220,000	(290,134)	-	(70,134)
Purple Horizons	37,000	(33,551)	-	3,449
Team Wilder	21,519	(21,519)	-	-
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	-	(2,565)	-	(2,565)
WMCA LYRS	74,993	(99,991)	-	(24,998)
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	99,970	(28,705)	-	71,265
Seth Somers Donation	5,000	-	-	5,000
	<u>622,016</u>	<u>(677,512)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(55,496)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,287,208</u>	<u>(1,512,838)</u>	<u>13,687</u>	<u>(211,943)</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	1,161,912	206,518	(93,873)	1,274,557
Designated Fund	207,157	10,415	5,970	223,542
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	-	59,239
	<u>1,428,308</u>	<u>216,933</u>	<u>(87,903)</u>	<u>1,557,338</u>
Restricted funds				
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	(492)	492	-	-
Other awards	-	(11,998)	11,998	-
Sedgley Beacon Enforcement Undertaking	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	(30,717)	26,350	9,227
Reaching Communities	31,671	(31,671)	-	-
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	12,900	(12,900)	-	-
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	18,319	(18,319)	-	-
Nature Friendly Schools	6,300	-	(6,300)	-
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	42,652	(42,652)	-	-
Innovation Fund	2,968	(2,968)	-	-
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	-	(11,191)	49,031	37,840
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	14,789	(14,789)	-	-
Stourton Castle Bypass	248,080	(7,971)	-	240,109
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	15,654	(15,654)	-	-
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	-	(4,259)	6,824	2,565
WMCA LYRS	-	24,998	-	24,998
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	-	22,000	-	22,000
	<u>436,435</u>	<u>(187,599)</u>	<u>87,903</u>	<u>336,739</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>29,334</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,894,077</u>

7.18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	772,415	(573,465)	7,568	206,518
Designated Fund	409,641	(399,226)	-	10,415
	1,182,056	(972,691)	7,568	216,933
Restricted funds				
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	42,054	(41,562)	-	492
Natural Prospects HLF	140,824	(140,824)	-	-
Other awards	9,968	(21,966)	-	(11,998)
Sedgley Beacon Enforcement Undertaking	-	(30,000)	-	(30,000)
South Staffordshire Water	(26,350)	(4,367)	-	(30,717)
Reaching Communities	50,997	(82,668)	-	(31,671)
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	-	(12,900)	-	(12,900)
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	-	(18,319)	-	(18,319)
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	111,350	(154,002)	-	(42,652)
Innovation Fund	-	(2,968)	-	(2,968)
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	-	(11,191)	-	(11,191)
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	-	(14,789)	-	(14,789)
Stourton Castle Bypass	-	(7,971)	-	(7,971)
Purple Horizons	39,524	(39,524)	-	-
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	-	(15,654)	-	(15,654)
Team Wilder	18,534	(18,534)	-	-
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	13,200	(17,459)	-	(4,259)
Purple Horizons 2022	18,500	(18,500)	-	-
WMCA LYRS	24,998	-	-	24,998
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	25,000	(3,000)	-	22,000
	468,599	(656,198)	-	(187,599)
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,650,655</u>	<u>(1,628,889)</u>	<u>7,568</u>	<u>29,334</u>

Transfers are made between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at the time the specific restrictions have been fulfilled.

The designated fund of £Nil (2023: £223,542) relates to the balance of funds received in the accounts for the year to 31 March 2024 remaining unspent designated by the Trustees for use on our commitments post year end. This sum relates to the Project Completion Fund.

General reserves represent free unrestricted funds that are available to spend at the discretion of the trustees. Within the general reserve are funds relating to fixed assets held which are not readily disposable and are intended to be held for the long term, hence not liquid funds that can be spent straightaway. This amount is equivalent to the net book value of the land and buildings as these assets have been secured for use within the charity for the long term.

The Trustees confirm that all restricted fund balances at the year end have subsequently been spent or will be spent in the forthcoming financial year.

More detailed disclosure on description nature and purpose of the funds, reasons for restrictions etc are listed below:-

Conservation

Various areas of funded work including:

- Collaborative partnership to create a thriving nature recovery network that is resilient to climate change between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park.
- Collaborative agreement to deliver a programme of blue and green infrastructure improvement projects in the Upper Rea Catchment.
- Grant to assist with conservation and restoration activity on the river Stour.
- Small grants to support the management of our Nature Reserves.

Education and Engagement

Various areas of funded work including:

- Funding coordinated by RSWT for all Wildlife Trusts to develop a community organising approach to our work, where the Trust has focused on a youth audience.
- Partnership programme to develop a green space adjacent to Edgbaston Reservoir, where we provide training, engagement activity, health and wellbeing courses and supported volunteering.
- Programme of community engagement to complement the site developments at EcoPark.
- Interventions in Bordesley and Highgate parks as part of City of Nature Alliance programme to improve environmental justice in deprived wards.

7.19 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county wildlife trusts, and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK level. An annual contribution is payable to RSWT amounting to £11,700 (2023: £10,990).

The Trust also purchased publications and other sundries from RSWT amounting to £12,175 (2023 - £16,165), with £139 (2023 - £3,468) owed to RSWT at the year end. Sales made to RSWT were £2,215 (2023: £1,771) and amounts owed by RSWT were £nil at the year end (2023: £nil).



8 Thank you

We couldn't have done it without you!

Our work for nature's recovery is possible thanks to our wonderful members, donors, volunteers, funders and businesses partners – Thank you for all your support – you are all **wildlife heroes!**

Funders and Supporters

Birmingham City Council
 Colas Ltd
 Co-op Foundation
 Edgbaston Park Hotel
 Environment Agency
 Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
 Gowling WLG
 Highways Agency
 Hogan Lovells
 Kennedys LLP
 National Lottery Community Fund
 National Lottery Heritage Fund
 Natural England
 People's Postcode Lottery
 Schofield Lothian
 Seth Somers Trust
 Severn Trent
 West Midlands Combined Authority
 Wienerberger Limited
 Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
 WSP
 University of Birmingham

Project Partners

Birmingham and Black Country Amphibian and Reptile Group
 Birmingham and Black Country Botanical Society
 Birmingham Botanical Gardens
 Birmingham City Council
 Birmingham City of Nature Alliance
 Birmingham Museums Trust
 Birmingham Settlement
 BrumBats
 Canal & River Trust
 Cardiff University
 City of Wolverhampton Council
 Civic Square
 Community Environmental Trust
 Compost Connection
 Dolphin Women's Centre
 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
 Energy Saving Trust
 Environment Agency
 Footsteps
 Friends of Haden Hill Estate
 Friends of Pitts Wood
 Friends of Smestow Valley
 Heart of Birmingham Vocational College
 Heritage Seed Library
 MultiStory
 National Highways
 Natural England
 Nature works
 Princes' Trust
 Riverside House
 SAMPAD
 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
 Sandwell Valley Naturalists
 Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
 Staffordshire Ecological Record
 Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
 Sustainable Birmingham
 Sustainably Muslim
 The Active Well-being Society
 The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
 University of Birmingham
 Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
 Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
 West Midlands Bird Club
 West Midlands Combined Authority
 West Midlands Fungi Group
 Wildside

Significant thanks to our major funders





**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust



@WTBBC



@WTBBC



@bbcwildlifetrust



BBCWildlifeTrust

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

Registered Address: 42 Norman Street, Birmingham, B18 7EP



Registered with
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 513615

Accounts



**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust

Annual Report

For the period 1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Ltd

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity No: 513615



CONTENTS



	Page
Chair and CEO report	3
2022 - 2023 in Numbers	4
Successes and Highlights	6
1. Report of the Trustees (including the Strategic Report)	
1.1 Structure, Governance and Management	8
1.2 Objectives and Activities	11
1.3 Summary of the year	13
1.4 Looking ahead	19
1.5 Financial review	22
2. Independent Auditors Report	24
3. Statement of Financial Activities	26
4. Balance Sheet	27
5. Cash Flow Statement	28
6. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement	29
7. Notes to the Financial Statements	30



**Birmingham &
Black Country
Wildlife Trust**

Chair & CEO Report

This year has seen the delivery of two key enablers of the Trust's work for the coming decade and beyond; the launch of our strategy and a new building at EcoPark.

The Trust's new strategy A Wilder Birmingham and Black Country was formally launched on 29 June 2022. It sets out our ambitious plans to tackle the nature and climate crises and to connect more people with local wild spaces across our region. At the launch, held at the Library of Birmingham, we were delighted to be joined by some of our partners, funders and supporters, along with community leaders, and we are grateful to our first Young Ambassador, Shaan Dulay, who spoke at the event.

In May, we opened our new building at EcoPark. Hidden in the middle of a built-up urban area, EcoPark is our secret wildlife oasis in Small Heath, Birmingham. Each year thousands of visitors are inspired by the wildlife they encounter on their visits to the site. EcoPark offers opportunities for families, schools and local residents of all ages to get hands on with nature and discover the wonders of the natural world on their doorstep. Our brand new environment centre opened to the public in May 2022. An environmentally-friendly build, the centre is fundamental in enabling more people than ever to access the site. The opening event, which saw hundreds of people from the local community take part in activities across the site, was the culmination of an enormous effort by staff, trustees and volunteers. We are particularly grateful to them all for their efforts in making the project a reality, as well as for the vital support from our funders.

In addition to these key enablers, we have invested in strengthening our core operations by bringing in new roles including a Governance and Administration Officer, a People and Operations Manager, a Volunteer Co-Ordinator as well as an Individual



Giving Manager. These roles have made an important contribution towards our effectiveness this year and will provide the best foundations from which to deliver our ambitious strategy. We have also further strengthened our trustees with five trustees joining, including the Trust's first Young Trustee.

We have continued to deliver significant projects which see habitat restoration and improvements in key priority landscapes across Birmingham and the Black Country including in Stourbridge, Halesowen and Wolverhampton as part of the Love Your River Stour project, on the historic heathlands of the Walsall greenbelt, and at Sedgley Beacon in partnership with Dudley Council. We have undertaken important work to improve our own reserves including at Moseley Bog and Joy's Wood where we installed new paths, repaired steps and boardwalks and resurfaced the car park to improve the experience for those visiting the site.

Our engagement work continues to go from strength to strength, in particular we have seen the number of schools visits increase following the pandemic. On 31 March 2023, we were pleased to celebrate the end of our hugely successful four-year traineeship programme Natural Prospects. Thanks to funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Natural Prospects project has enabled 30 local people to take their first steps into careers in urban conservation. The purpose of the traineeship was to help tackle the

barriers that some individuals face when looking for work in the environmental conservation sector. The programme therefore welcomed applications from non-graduates, those in receipt of benefits or people from black or minority ethnic groups. The trainees worked towards a City & Guilds Level 2 Work Based Diploma in Environmental Conservation whilst gaining practical hands-on skills and experience from their expert mentors during their 12-month placements. All trainees who have successfully achieved their Level 2 Diplomas have moved into further education, studying environmental subjects, or secured employment within the conservation sector; five trainees have since secured roles directly with Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust.

Of course, we are very aware that none of these achievements would be possible without the support of our fantastic members and volunteers who are so committed and generous with their time. Looking forwards we will be trialing new members events and ways to celebrate and thank our volunteers for their hard work and the outcomes they help us to deliver for nature's recovery.

Lisa Pinney MBE **Dr Delia Garratt**
Chair of Trustees Chief Executive

2022-2023 in numbers

13

planning
application
responses



Volunteers donated

3,386 HOURS

to help our wild work!

4049

people attended
our events

100%

of our Natural
Prospects trainees
gained Level 2
qualifications

*Thank
You*

169

young people
attended training
courses

50+

schools worked
with us to connect
children to nature

12,687

observations in
the City Nature
Challenge

2021-2023 Successes & Highlights



Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

The first phase of our Love Your River Stour project came to its conclusion, with ecological enhancement work and community engagement undertaken at four sites across the Black Country. Our team improved habitats including woodland, grassland, hedgerows, ponds, orchards, and the river itself, as well as running a significant community involvement and engagement programme through volunteer days, events, wellbeing sessions, training courses and school sessions.

Phase one of our Natural Rivers and Green Corridors partnership project, which saw us delivering river corridor improvements in the Upper River Rea catchment, also reached its conclusion. We diversified existing habitats whilst creating new ones for the benefit of a range of fauna including birds, small mammals and pollinating insects.

We created glades within woodlands, enhanced or created new meadows through the strewing of species and seed-rich hay, planted many hundreds of field-layer plants, oversaw the creation of wetland scrapes and brought a hidden stream back into the light.

We entered into a new partnership with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Walsall Council, Lichfield District Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency to restore our lost landscape of historic heathlands. The partnership project, called Purple Horizons, will seek to form a wildlife corridor from Sutton Park to Cannock Chase, with the restored landscape having the potential to support species such as reptiles, nightjar and rare solitary bees.

Our habitat enhancement work at Sedgley Beacon saw us construct new entrances, paths and fencing to create an entirely new access point and 10,000m² of new public open space. We restored an area of rare and species-rich limestone grassland which supports diverse and specialised wildflowers, created an entirely new area of limestone grassland, planted new hedgerows and enhanced neutral grassland and plantation woodlands.

Goal 2: People are taking action for nature and the climate across Birmingham and the Black Country

The new environmental centre at EcoPark was formally opened, quickly becoming a vital hub for our community and education programmes in East Birmingham. The new building has welcomed school visits, training activities, wellbeing sessions, family activities as well as hosting our regular wild mornings for preschoolers, Nature Tots.

Our education programmes have continued to grow, with over 50 schools working with us throughout the year to connect their children with the local natural environment.

Our fourth and final cohort of Natural Prospects trainees completed their Level 2 diplomas, marking an incredibly successful conclusion to the project.



Across its four years, we upskilled the next generation of conservationists and increased the diversity of people working within the sector, with 33 trainees from black and minority ethnic, non-graduate and disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds completing their yearlong placements.

Our Level 1 training courses have continued to provide local young people with the skills to care for our natural spaces, with 43 people from across the region attaining qualifications including Tools Use and Surveying.

We launched our Youth Action for Nature project, designed to work with local young people and youth organisations to help realise their ambitions in

confronting the climate and biodiversity crises.

Along with EcoRecord, we led Birmingham and the Black Country's third entry into the global City Nature Challenge, a four-day challenge aimed at celebrating wildlife and encouraging everybody to get involved in wildlife recording. Almost 9,000 observations of more than 1,000 different species were recorded, placing us first for the number of observations across the whole of the United Kingdom, ranking 31st in the world overall.

Goal 3: Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

We have continued to support and contribute to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, covering the whole of Birmingham and the Black Country and beyond. We have produced an 'emerging'

Local Nature Recovery map for the entire region, as well as publishing reports to describe and prescribe nature recovery actions for the identified 'core landscapes'.

We undertook 25 Local Wildlife Site Assessments, identifying which of these sites should be designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC), therefore informing the allocation of housing and employment land.

An additional Local Wildlife Site survey and assessment for Corbett Meadows in Amblecote found that the site met the threshold for selection as a SINC, resulting in a planning application for 84 homes on the site being refused.

EcoRecord have continued to progress the work of reviewing and updating the national Ancient Woodland Inventory within our region. This important work will allow us to identify small woodland sites (under 2hectares) for the first time, enabling the presence and value of these places to be recognised, as well as improving the evidence we have available to protect these areas and further inform the wider nature recovery plans for Birmingham and the Black Country.



1. Report of The Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Council has pleasure in presenting its report together with the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. Council has adopted the provisions of the Charities SORP (FRS102) - 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 (effective 1 January 2019) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

1.1. Structure, Governance and Management

Registered Company No: 01650938
(England and Wales)

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Address: Centre of the Earth,
42 Norman Street, Birmingham, B18 7EP

Company Secretary: EF Mooney

Key Management Personnel

Chief Executive: Dr Delia Garratt

Head of Conservation: Simon Atkinson

Head of Education and Engagement:
Gareth Morgan

Head of Fundraising and Communication: Emma Thompson

Interim Head of Finance:
Ian Holmes

Trustees

P W Beardmore

A Bright

L C Pinney MBE

J D Larner

D H Mclellan

E F Mooney

A Wayro

D P Green

L Besenyei

J Daniel (appointed 15.10.22)

S P Khan (appointed 15.10.22)

J M Moran (appointed 15.10.22)

A L Nicholson-Evans (appointed 15.10.22)

M W Saleem (appointed 15.10.22)

Organisational structure

The overall responsibility for the charity lies with the Trustee Directors who have delegated the day to day management of the charity to the Chief Executive. The Trustee Directors meet regularly to agree strategy, review progress, review financial information, and discuss policy issues. To facilitate effective operation, the Chief Executive has delegated authority within Terms of Reference approved by the Trustees for some operational matters, including finance.

The Wildlife Trust is governed by an elected Council and is therefore directly accountable to the members of the charity.

The Articles of Association give Council the powers to:

- (i) Administer the affairs of the Charity
- (ii) Exercise all the powers of the Charity
- (iii) Determine the policy of the Charity.

The Council formally delegates certain functions and responsibilities to two committees which deal with specific policy and organisational issues.

The day-to-day management of the Charity's affairs is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is accountable exclusively to the Council for achieving,

via the Business Plan, the Wildlife Trust's aims and for complying with Council policies. A team of professionally trained staff report to the Chief Executive.

Governing document

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is one of 46 independent charities, which form a national partnership - The Wildlife Trusts through the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. Collectively we manage 2,300 nature reserves covering 102,500 hectares of land for wildlife and for people, inspiring 13 million visits to wildlife sites. Together we have 849,584 members. The Trust's family membership is also part of the national environment club, Wildlife Watch, which provides projects for members and affiliated schools, involving them directly with environmental issues.

The Trust is a registered charity (No. 513615) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 1650938).

The Trust was established in 1980 to protect our local natural heritage and encourage people to engage, enjoy and get involved with the natural environment. We are a membership organisation, governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Work is carried out by a team averaging 25.9 staff (29.0 at year end), equating to 23.6 full time equivalent posts. During the year the Trust had 9.0 trainees equating to 7.9 full time equivalents, funded through National Lottery Heritage Fund's Natural Prospects programme, who completed their traineeship in March 2023. The Trust could not achieve the impacts we do without the commitment and hard work of a large number of volunteers.

In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Wider network and related parties

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county Wildlife Trusts and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK Level.

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

A Council of voluntary Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the Trust. The Trust's Council is elected from the membership in accordance with its governing documents at the Annual General Meeting. Trustees are either co-opted during the year or elected at the Annual General Meeting. Co-opted Trustees must stand for election at the Annual General Meeting immediately following their appointment. Council may co-opt additional members from time to time as it sees fit. Trustees are also Directors of the Company limited by guarantee.

Induction and training of new Trustees

The Trustee is provided with copies of the charity's key documents, including its Memorandum and Articles of Association, Governance Handbook, latest Annual Report and Accounts, minutes of recent Council meetings, Policy documents and further information on the role and responsibilities of Charity Trustees. New Trustees are required to confirm that they have studied these documents and raised any queries or obtained further information which they may need.

Following election or co-option of a Trustee, the Chair will introduce a new Trustee at their first meeting of Council. They will also participate in a formal induction process to familiarise them with the extent and nature of the Trust's operations. After election at the Annual General Meeting Trustees serve for a period of three years and may be elected for a further period of three years.

Developments in Charity Law and Practice are monitored and important developments are brought to the notice of Trustees by the Executive.

The relationship between staff and Trustees is crucial to the Trust's continuing success. Trustees bring a range of skills and experience to the responsibilities of the role which requires them to have an understanding of all aspects of the Trust's work. Trustees meet four times a year where they review strategy and operational performance, ratify policies and agree budgets.

Key management remuneration

None of the Trustees receive remuneration or benefit for their work with the group and charity. Any connection between Trustees and any company the Trust works with is disclosed to the Council. Financial details of which are disclosed in note 9 to the accounts.

Risk management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the Trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.



Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charily SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and each Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

The auditors, Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited, will be proposed for reappointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.



1.2 Objectives and Activities

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Limited is required by charity and company law to act within the objects of its Memorandum of Association, which are as follows:

Objectives

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country's objectives are:

- 1. For the benefit of the public, to advance, promote and further the conservation maintenance study and protection of:**
 - i. wildlife and its habitats;
 - ii. places of natural beauty;
 - iii. places of zoological, botanical, geographical, archaeological or scientific interest;
 - iv. features of landscape with geological, physiographical, or amenity value; in particular, but not exclusively, in ways that further biodiversity.

- 2. To advance the education of the public in:**
 - v. the principles and practice of sustainable development;
 - vi. the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation; in particular, but not exclusively, in urban areas.

Our Approach

We work for nature's recovery; protecting, restoring and creating wildlife-rich, accessible spaces that benefit people and wildlife.

We are ambitious in our desire not just to slow, but to reverse the decline of wildlife.

We lead by example, using evidence-based approaches to demonstrate how nature's recovery can be achieved in urban areas.

We demonstrate what is possible, and inspire, empower and enable people from all backgrounds, cultures, identities and abilities to bring about our vision with us, embracing the diversity of our society to change the natural world for the better.

We look to establish common cause and work in partnership with others, to develop new, innovative ways to do what's right for nature and deliver impact in support of our vision.

We speak with a bold and confident voice, to tell the truth about the state of nature and what needs to be done to put it into recovery.

Our vision is underpinned by three bold goals

Our Vision, Purpose and Approach

In June 2022, we launched our new eight-year strategy for 2022 - 2030, A Wilder Birmingham and Black Country.

Our Vision

A Wilder Birmingham and the Black Country with more green and wild spaces where nature thrives, and everyone has access to nature in their daily lives.

Our Purpose

Lead Nature's Recovery in Birmingham and the Black Country, empower and support people to take positive local action for the benefit of wildlife and nature, and ensure natural habitats play a key role in addressing the ecological and climate emergencies.

1. Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

By 2030 we want to see 30% of Birmingham and the Black Country's landscape managed for the benefit of wildlife.

2. People are taking action for nature and the climate across Birmingham and the Black Country

By 2030 we want to see at least 1 in 4 people across Birmingham and the Black Country taking action for nature.

3. Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

By 2030 we aim for 500 hectares of land to be improved to provide nature-based solutions to the ecological and climate crises.

Public benefit

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country exists to promote the care and protection of the environment and therefore provides a clear public benefit. The Trust's philosophy is based on the belief that the natural world deserves conserving for its own sake and, since this is widely perceived to be a worthy aim of public policy, it may fairly be regarded as a benefit to the public at large. However, the public benefits provided by The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country go much further.

Firstly, our nature reserves are used by the public. At most sites information and interpretation is provided to visitors.

Secondly, our education programmes are aimed at schools, colleges, adult groups and the wider public.

Thirdly, our information gathering and provision of expert advice and opinion to local authorities and others helps to ensure that planning decisions are made on a rational basis taking full account of the public benefit of wildlife.

Fourthly, the involvement of many volunteers in our work provides an outlet for altruistic endeavour, which is of special benefit to those involved as well as delivering benefits to the wider public.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity' (PB2).



Achievements and Performance

1.3 Summary of the Year

Each year the Trust produces a detailed Business Plan which determines the activities to be carried out during the year. Results are monitored throughout the year with regular reports being produced for Trust Council. The main headlines for 2022-23 are as follows:

Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

In 2022-23 the Trust's conservation work continued to achieve significant gains for nature's recovery, with impactful projects being delivered in three strategic priority landscapes, new funding secured and our team of dedicated colleagues continuing to expand.

Landscape-scale nature conservation

The first phase of our Love Your River Stour project ran throughout 2022-23 and was completed in March. Funded by the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund to a value of £249,700, the project saw the recruitment of three full-time members of staff (in 2021-22) and two full-time trainees from April 2022. The Love Your River Stour team delivered a wide-ranging project which saw the improvement of habitats including woodland, grassland, hedgerows, ponds, orchards and the river itself at four sites in Stourbridge, Halesowen and Wolverhampton (Stambermill Open Space, Smestow Valley LNR, Seth Somers Park and Riverside House). The team also ran a significant community involvement and engagement programme. They delivered 21 sessions with vulnerable adults, 16 wellbeing sessions, 27 site-based events, River Rangers sessions for 294 school children, and 24 young people attended Level 1 training courses in environmental conservation. A total

of 115 volunteer days with 2,575 hours were donated to the project, with 50 corporate volunteers attending Wild Work Days. Through this delivery the project engaged with a range of target audiences including young people, people from black and minority ethnic communities, vulnerable adults, older adults and people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. As part of our approach to continually improve the impact of our work and to secure further investment in the catchment, we also undertook a survey of members of the community who live near to the river to understand how they benefit from the green spaces along its banks, and what can be done to encourage more use. We also commissioned a Biodiversity Valuation and Ecosystem Services Assessment which will be used to inform the Trust's long-term strategy for investment and improvement of the river catchment's natural resources, and in nature-based solutions. The Natural Rivers and Green Corridors partnership project with Birmingham City Council and the Environment Agency was completed in March. Funded by the

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the project has focused on delivering river corridor improvements in the Upper River Rea catchment in Birmingham. The Wildlife Trust's role in the project has been to diversify existing and create new habitats for the benefit of a range of fauna including birds, small mammals and pollinating insects. At sites including Woodgate Valley Country Park, Stonehouse Brook woodland, along the Bourn Brook walkway, Juggins Wood and in Senneleys Park we have created glades within woodlands, scallops along the edges of the woodlands and widened paths to create butterfly rides. We have also planted thousands of trees, sown woodland wildflower seed and planted many hundreds of woodland field-layer plants grown through our Growing Local Flora project. At four sites along the Merritt's Brook we have enhanced or created new meadows through the strewing of species and seed-rich hay harvested from a meadow we created in 2013 in Castle Vale. At Woodgate Valley, we oversaw the creation of some wetland scrapes which have been planted-up with wetland plants. We were also involved in bringing a hidden stream back out into the light at Senneleys Park by de-culverting of a section of brook

sent underground through a section of pipe many years ago. Through the project we have delivered volunteer days - including with local Friends groups - Wild Experience Days, training sessions and educational opportunities for groups such as the Inspired Choices youth group with the involvement of Natural Prospects, Love Your River Cole and Love Your River Stour trainees.

Another of the Wildlife Trust's strategic priority landscapes is the historic heathlands of the Walsall green belt. This area which forms a critical link between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park, and holds the potential to be restored to support vibrant populations of species such as reptiles, nightjar and rare solitary bees. During 2021-22 we entered into a new partnership with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Walsall Council, Lichfield District Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency called Purple Horizons. In early 2023 we recruited a new Purple Horizons Nature Recovery Project Officer to engage with farmers and other landowners, and develop projects ready for investment through Biodiversity Net Gain contributions. EcoRecord also completed the first part of a piece of

work to generate peatland and woodland habitat opportunity mapping, and we commissioned an ecosystem services assessment of the Purple Horizons area. Together these three pieces of work will help create the case for significant investment in the restoration of the landscape in the longer-term.

At Sedgley Beacon we have delivered a habitat enhancement and access improvement project in partnership with Dudley Council. The first phase of the works was completed in autumn 2022, and included the construction of new entrances, paths and fencing to create an entirely new access point and 10,000m2 of new public open space. Over the winter and early spring, we delivered the second phase of the project which focused on diversifying and increasing the area of many of the site's habitats. This included the restoration of an area of rare and species-rich limestone grassland which supports diverse and specialised wildflowers, the creation of an entirely new area of limestone grassland, the planting of new hedgerows, the enhancement of neutral grassland and the underplanting of plantation woodlands.

Nature Reserves

At Moseley Bog and Joy's Wood Nature Reserve we completed the works supported by a public fundraiser and small grants secured by the Friends and the Wildlife Trust. The work, including new paths, repaired steps and boardwalks, resurfaced car park and new interpretation panels have been well received by reserve visitors and supporters of the fundraiser. Volunteer days continue to be well-attended and have enabled significant and essential work to be undertaken throughout the year. This has included work to rewet the fen habitat through the removal of scrub, repairs to the revetment that protects the Scheduled Ancient Monument Bronze Age burnt mound, repairs to fencing to prevent erosion of sensitive areas caused by cycling, woodland coppicing, path maintenance and wildlife surveys. In partnership with the Friends a series of engagement activities and events including an archaeological walk, spring flower walks and City Nature Challenge events have been delivered.

At Portway Hill our regular volunteers have worked with the Black Country Geological Society to start to expose a new cliff face that shows two interesting geological features, as well as continue to manage the site's species-rich grassland. Early talks have taken place with other local landowners regarding wider work in the Rowley Hills on habitats including ponds, hedgerows and species-rich meadows. The Trust reported a potential illegal act of tree felling on the wider Portway Hill site and have been assisting the Forestry Commission with their investigation.

Further work to enhance the woodland habitat at Turners Wood has continued, a new interpretation panel has been installed and repairs undertaken to damaged infrastructure. A number of public open days have been well attended by residents of the local area, and local primary schools continue to use the site for Forest School activity.

The Hill Hook site management plan has now been completed and agreed with the Friends, and the design of the new site leaflets and interpretation panels completed. Volunteer day continue to be well attended, with a strong partnership with GoodGym helping to diversify the volunteer group. Work identified in the management plan including on blocks of plantation woodlands, opening up

butterfly rides and thinning areas, as well as path maintenance, has been undertaken with the volunteers.

At Deer's Leap Wood in west Birmingham the volunteer group, Friends and local residents' association have continued providing regular support in managing the site; with the brook, ponds, hedgerows and woodlands being enhanced during the year, as well as regular maintenance of fences, paths and litter picks

reserves and environmental centres, community projects and our head office. Our corporate volunteering programme continued to be successful enabling local businesses to make a difference for wildlife. We have also welcomed Natalie Burdett as our new Volunteer Coordinator.

Education and Engagement

The new Environmental Centre at EcoPark was formally opened in May, and has quickly become a vital hub for our community and education programmes in East Birmingham. The new building provides a welcoming platform for school visits, training activities, Health and Well-being in Nature courses, Nature Tots and a range of family activities. The wider site continues to evolve with new Food Forest areas, enhanced woodland habitat and new infrastructure including new tool stores and a workshop. Centre of the Earth in Winson Green also continues to provide a similar range of unique opportunities for local school children, young people and community groups to connect with the urban nature on their doorstep.

The Trust's education programmes have grown again this year with over 50 schools working with us to connect their children with their local natural environment. Regular visits from schools

Goal 2: People are taking action for nature and the climate across Birmingham and the Black Country

Volunteers

We would like to thank the volunteers who have once again made such a difference for our wild spaces across the region. Volunteers have committed time and energy - over 3386 hours - to support our work across all of our nature



local to EcoPark have resumed following the disruption of the Pandemic, and the Natural Curriculum programme has emerged to sustain the work pioneered through the Nature Friendly Schools project.

Our fourth and final cohort of Natural Prospects trainees completed their Level 2 Diplomas and were joined by RSWT CEO Craig Bennett, project partners, the team from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and a host of graduates from previous years for the end of project celebration in March. Natural Prospects, along with its affiliated training programmes, has been an incredibly successful project, upskilling the next generation of urban conservationists and increasing the diversity of people working in our sector. 33 trainees from black and minority ethnic, non-graduate and disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds completed their year-long placements with the Trust and our partners. To date, the programme has shown a 100% success rate in trainees gaining their Level 2 qualifications and 100% success rate in trainees moving into employment and/or higher education (96% in our sector).

Alongside this, as an accredited training centre with AIM, our Level 1 training courses have continued to provide local young people with the skills to care for our natural spaces, enabling 43 people from across the conurbation to attain their qualifications including Tools Use and Surveying.

The Trust's community organising work received a significant boost with support from the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to launch our Youth Action for Nature project. This project works with local young people and youth organisations to help realise the ambitions that our young people have to confront the climate and biodiversity crises.

We have also worked in partnership with Birmingham Settlement to develop their site by Edgbaston Reservoir, with the Universal Peace Federation to enable young people to create Peace Garden at EcoPark and with the Natural History Museum to train local youth workers to take their young people out into their urban wild spaces. Our Health and Well-being programmes have benefited from ongoing partnership work with Parkview Clinic, Natural England and The Active Well-being Society to help more and more people to realise the benefits of connecting with nature in the city.



In April EcoRecord and the Wildlife Trust led the 3rd annual Birmingham and the Black Country City Nature Challenge, a four-day challenge aimed at celebrating wildlife and encouraging everyone to get involved in wildlife recording. Almost 9,000 observations were made of over 1,000 different species. This was the first year that we've been able to hold in-person wildlife recording events - which included events across a number of Trust reserves and project areas such as Deer's Leap Wood, Dawberry Fields, Highbury Park, Smestow Valley and Stambermill. We once again placed 1st for the number of observations across the whole of the United Kingdom, whilst ranking 31st in the world overall. Our number of observations, species recorded and participants all increased from the previous year.

Thanks to funding from Birmingham City Council's Celebrating Communities Fund we delivered community engagement events at Moseley Bog, Hill Hook, Deer's Leap Wood and Sutton Park during the Commonwealth Games.

We designed and installed interpretation panels to celebrate the work undertaken as part of our Nature Friendly Schools project, as well as to benefit visitors to Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood.

Communications

We have partnered with five other Wildlife Trusts to develop a "Digital Innovation Hub" for excellence in delivery of digital fundraising and membership services. The Hub will aim to significantly improve digital capacity and digital fundraising results within the partnership, and pilot a systemic, agile approach with learning outcomes shared regularly to the Royal Society of

Wildlife Trusts. Ultimately, the Hub will increase the size of our digital audience whilst also recruiting new members for each of the participating Trusts. We have continued to increase our reach across digital platforms. Our Facebook audience increased by 9.8%. The gain of 1,107 new followers is a 33.2% increase on the gain in the same previous annual period. Our Twitter audience grew by 4.2%, LinkedIn by 37% and Instagram, a comparatively new account, by 70.8%. As hoped, Instagram has allowed us to reach a younger audience, with 32.2% of followers on that platform aged 18-35 years old, compared with just 15.4% of our Facebook audience in the same age bracket.

We have provided an increasing number of monthly, quarterly and ad-hoc newsletters, covering Members, Supporters, Businesses, Communities and Volunteers, as well site and project specific newsletters. These have helped to keep our supporters connected to our work in a regular and meaningful way.

We were featured in 21 media articles and interviews, with news regarding the second phase of our Love Your River Stour project in particular featuring prominently across the Express & Star, Stourbridge News, Black Country Radio, BBC Radio WM, Phoenix newspaper and Free Radio.

Membership

This year, we were fortunate to be in a position to recruit a full-time Individual Giving Manager, to maximise receipts from our generous supporters in Birmingham, the Black Country and beyond. An additional Donor Support Officer has been recruited to provide frontline support functions for the Individual Giving function at 0.6FTE,



supplementing the existing 0.4FTE Donor Support Officer (Membership), meaning that there is now the equivalent of 1 Full Time member of Support Staff, together with one long-standing volunteer, thus increasing capacity in the team and improving customer service. Memberships over the financial year grew slightly in number, and in annual value due, in part, to investment in an online digital marketing campaign coordinated between six Wildlife Trusts in the Midlands and supported financially by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. The actual number of new memberships over the year was up 16.4% year-on-year, while online memberships increased by 30.6%. Unfortunately, the number of lapsed memberships increased year-on-year by 35.4% with many members citing cost of living crises as the main driver of this. By the end of the year, there were 18 more active memberships than at the end of the previous financial year. However, the generosity of our members meant an increase in membership income of just

under 2%, to £246,131.16. Non-membership income, including a generous single donation of £10,000, but not including any corporate income, totalled £63,000, although part of this was the donation of assets from the dissolution of a natural history society.

Goal 3: Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

The Wildlife Trust's work to support and contribute to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy covering the whole of Birmingham and the Black Country

and beyond, has continued. Following on from work undertaken in the Black Country last year, we have now produced an 'emerging' Local Nature Recovery Map for the whole of the Birmingham and Black Country area, as well as published the report 'Black Country Local Nature Recovery map and strategy - an emerging approach' and 13 associated 'Ecological Sub-area Statement of Biodiversity Priorities' which describe and prescribe nature recovery actions for the identified 'Core Landscapes'.

Our work to influence strategic planning allocations in the Black Country has also continued, despite the announcement during the year that the Black Country Plan will no longer go ahead. The Local Nature Recovery Map evidence we have provided for this will instead be used by each of the Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton planning authorities in the preparation of their individual Local Plans.

In 2022-23 we provided additional evidence to the Black Country planning authorities through undertaking 25 Local Wildlife Site Assessment surveys and reports. These have identified which of these sites should be designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs), therefore informing the allocation of housing and employment land.

In the summer of 2022 we were commissioned to undertake an additional Local Wildlife Site survey and assessment for Corbett Meadows in Amblecote. Our finding that the site met the threshold for selection as a SINC was endorsed by the Local Sites Partnership and adopted by Dudley Council, resulting in a planning application for 84 homes on the site being refused in line with adopted planning policy.

The Trust was also invited by Birmingham City Council to provide

comment on their Local Plan revision Issues and Opportunities consultation. In line with the Trust strategy, our feedback aimed to bring not only conservation of existing greenspace to the fore, but also highlight the importance of the enhancement and extension of these assets. Fair and equal access to green spaces was also a core concept that we advocated for, as well as the Lawton Principles of "Bigger, Better and more Joined Up".

EcoRecord have continued to progress the work of reviewing and updating the national Ancient Woodland Inventory, focusing on the Birmingham and Black Country area and working alongside other Local Environmental Records Centres across the country. Ancient Woodland in England is defined as an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. The existing Ancient Woodland Inventory was originally compiled by the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) between

1981 and 1992, and only included sites larger than 2 hectares, so this work will allow for the inclusion of smaller remnants of Ancient Woodland which is particularly relevant in our urban context. The work was commissioned by Natural England and is supported by a Woodland Trust grant. Updating the inventory in our area is important for two main reasons as: 1) it will identify smaller woodland sites (under 2 ha) for the first time, so will allow the presence and value of these places to be recognised and 2) this improves the evidence we have available to protect these areas and further inform the wider nature recovery plans for Birmingham and the Black Country.



1.4 Looking ahead

The Trust's new strategy - A Wilder Birmingham and the Black Country 2022-2030 - sets out 3 goals with ambitions supporting targets to ensure nature is in recovery across Birmingham and the Black Country by 2030. Delivery of this strategy next year will see us focus on the following activities:

Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

During 2022 we were successful in securing further funding for our Love Your River Stour project from the West Midlands Combined Authority's Community Green Grants fund. The £100,000 we were awarded will enable us to support two of the existing full-time posts for 12 months from April 2023, and see habitat improvement works and community engagement activity focused around two sites in Lye and Cradley Heath.

Also linked to Love Your River Stour, our Stourton Castle Weir Bypass will be delivered in 2023-24. This project, which will open up the upper reaches of the River Stour and the whole of the Smestow Brook to fish passage for the first time in several hundred years, comprises the construction of a bypass channel and associated inlet and outlet structures at a site just outside of Dudley. Final designs have now been completed, permits and permissions applied for, and an invitation to tender package produced. The project is expected to commence in autumn 2023 and take up to 12 weeks to complete.

Following on from the success of Natural Rivers and Green Corridors on the Upper Rea catchment in Birmingham, the Trust have entered into a collaboration agreement with the Environment Agency for a continuation project called 'Natural Rivers and Green Corridors 2'.

Running until March 2027, the funding of £575,000 will support a member of staff and the delivery of a significant number of in-channel and river corridor restoration and enhancement projects.

Our work on the Purple Horizons partnership project will continue through a new collaboration agreement with Natural England, and we will seek further funding to extend the scope and impact of the project in future years.

A project will be delivered in West Bromwich with partners Multistorey which will see the creation of wildflower grasslands around the town centre, as well as a series of engagement activities including guided walks and a training course.

Our nature reserves remain a priority for the Wildlife Trust and we will continue to raise funds for habitat enhancements and infrastructure for our visitors such as paths and signage.



the ongoing project with Birmingham Settlement.

We will continue our Natural Curriculum programme, working with local primary schools to embed their outdoor learning provision. We will secure and deliver further contracts for the improvement of school grounds or other community spaces for the benefit of people and wildlife.

In 2023 we will continue running our Level 1 training courses in Tools Use, Surveying, Woodwork and Coppicing, delivering at least six programmes in different parts of Birmingham, and the Black Country. We will seek further ways of recruiting more training professionals and of funding a further programme of Level 2 traineeships.

The Youth Action for Nature project will continue to support young people to develop and implement their ideas for local environmental projects and campaigning, establishing a wide network of partners that will enable us to reach and support young people across the conurbation. We will also endeavour to improve member engagement and retention through member-specific events.

We will continue to nurture the growing community of people connecting with nature at EcoPark, developing innovative ways to reach and inspire new audiences. EcoPark will continue to serve as a logistical base for our work in East Birmingham, which we will extend through further partnerships and community based projects. We will continue to invest in site facilities, fitting out the new workshop and delivering woodworking volunteer sessions and training programmes to complement the established conservation and Growing Local Flora programmes.

At Centre of the Earth, we will seek to secure a long term lease (Community Asset Transfer) that will allow further investment into the site and upgrading of the building. We will look to grow both our programme of on-site activities and community based partnerships such as

Goal 3: Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

In A Wilder Birmingham and Black Country - our strategy for 2022-2030 we've set out ambitious plans to build on our successes to put nature into recovery and for nature to be playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems. It is now indisputable that the climate and ecological emergencies are inextricably linked, and that reversing the dramatic decline in nature is critical in helping to address a number of challenges faced by society on a global-scale.

Our nature conservation work has always been informed by evidence which helps us make often-difficult decisions about what is the right thing to do in the right place: for example, surveying a grassland before planting trees, or removing the weir that will have the

most benefit for migratory fish. Now, however, we will also be working to understand what other benefits our work can deliver, and are designing projects that include what are known as 'nature-based solutions' to problems such as flooding, pollution, the impacts of climate change and poor mental health.

The ecosystem services assessments we commissioned in 2022-23 - for both the Black Country Stour catchment and the Purple Horizons area - tell us where there are 'deficits' in the benefits that nature provides society such as flood regulation, water quality and recreation. This information will therefore be used to not only inform where and what work we do, but also as a tool to advocate for more and the right type of investment in nature's recovery by others.

It is the Wildlife Trust's aim to continue to play a leading role in producing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and in the partnerships that will implement it. Building on the work we have undertaken on the emerging Birmingham and Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy, we will work closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority (the LNRS responsible authority) to ensure an

evidence-informed strategy is produced that delivers significant gains for both nature and local communities.

The requirement for all new developments to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) provides an opportunity for the Wildlife Trust to increase our influence in the work of others towards nature's recovery. During 2023-24, the Trust and EcoRecord will be working with Birmingham City Council to deliver towards their 25-year vision for nature by identifying a suite of sites where investment through BNG will have the most impact, as well as helping design the habitat interventions and calculating the benefit of these for wildlife.



1.5 Financial Review

Financial Position

Trust income is split between unrestricted and restricted funds. Unrestricted income represents money raised or given to support the Trust's achievement of core charitable aims. Membership, donations, general fundraising, and some charitable trust donations were given as unrestricted income.

Total income has decreased slightly to £1,650,655 (2022: £1,738,533).

Restricted income is given for a specific purpose with clear outputs to be achieved. Restricted income for this period includes Natural Prospects and Love Your River Stour funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, other funding from Natural England, WMCA, Environment Agency and others. Restricted income accounts for 28% of our total income for the year.

The Trust has invested in membership as an essential income stream that enables us to deliver core charitable aims that are not always possible to fund through restricted income such as our work to protect nature through the planning system. Membership accounts for 15% (2022: 14%) of the Trust's income and the Business Plan sets out how this will grow in coming years. Unrestricted income (including membership) is 72% (2022: 36%) of total income. The Trust has long aimed for this to be 70% to represent a sustainable financial position.

Reserves policy

Trustees keep the reserves of the Trust under regular review. In previous years, these have been limited by the Charity's funds available. Having regard to the increasing scale of the Trust's operations and COVID uncertainties, in 2020 the Trustees set a reserves policy to aim at reserves equivalent to nine month's core operating costs, equating to approximately £425,000. Such reserves would be held in case of any sudden decline in income or unexpected cost or risk exposure, and to ensure that the commitments to meet contractual obligations to staff, premises and funding partners can be met.

After designated funds of £223,542 (2022: £207,157) and the revaluation reserve of £59,239 (2022: £59,239), the Trustees have

met this aim with current unrestricted reserves standing at £1,274,557 (2022: £1,161,912). The Trustees continue to be mindful of the requirement to operate within tight financial constraints.

Whilst there can be uncertainty in relation to the timing and amount of charitable grants and receipts, the Trustee Directors believe that the Trust's record of obtaining further funding will continue, albeit, with uncertainties as to when cash actually becomes available.

The amount of restricted funds is £336,739 (2022: £436,435)

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed quarterly by Trustees via delegation to the Finance and Risk Committee. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed, and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the Trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.



Principal funding sources

Income

The Trust's income decreased to £1,650,655 (2022: £1,738,533). Major headings are explained below:

Membership, donations, legacies - Contains income from our members, donations given at events and through our presence in the community and legacies. (we have had one legacy of £500 in 2022/23)

Charitable activities - Projects and services delivered in Birmingham & Black Country in line with the Trust's aims and objectives.

Trading & Other income - Includes Royalties received, interest income, hire income and rental income.

One of the biggest challenges for the Trust over recent years was to diversify our unrestricted income sources to provide resilience to the organisation. As mentioned, our aim was to ensure that 70% of our total income is unrestricted. The 2022/23 figures indicate an unrestricted figure of 72% of total income. We continue to focus on increasing the donations and legacies received by the Trust. Compared to other Wildlife Trusts nationally we achieve similar levels of funding through grants but are not performing as well in encouraging corporate partners and legacy donations. We will learn from our sister Trusts to improve our performance in these areas. We know we need to do more to secure our membership which is explained below.

Expenditure

The Trust's expenditure increased to £1,628,889 (2022: £1,293,988). Much of the increase was due to spending restricted sums which had been received in previous years. Major headings are explained below.

Charitable Activity - This covers our staffing costs and direct project costs to deliver projects and services so as to meet our charitable aims and objectives.

Fundraising costs - We are now responsible for our own membership recruitment although we also operate in an informal partnership with other local Trusts to maximise our use of digital membership recruitment. Our costs include recruitment through the Join Anywhere scheme via other Wildlife Trusts, online membership recruitment

as well as production of membership magazines throughout the year.

Overheads - These are the running costs to maintain our sites and headquarters covering areas such as rent, rates, gas, electric, telephones and insurance.

Pensions - Royal London manage all pension funds on behalf of the staff members. The Trust contributes 7% in addition to staff contributions.

Every penny we receive is spent on achieving our charitable aims and ensuring that we are a responsible and sustainable organisation.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 08/11/2023 and signed on the boards's behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J D Larner', written in a cursive style.

J D Larner - Trustee

2. Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of the Wildlife Trust for

Birmingham and the Black Country

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (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 March 2023 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.

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 Auditors' 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 financial statements are 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 Report of the Independent Auditors 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. 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters 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 Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the 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 Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 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 trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Enquiring of management and employees, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:-

- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance.
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud.
- The internal controls established to mitigate risk relating to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

We identified areas of law and regulation that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, discussions with management (as required by

auditing standards) and discussed with management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations. All identified laws and regulations were communicated throughout the audit team, and they remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.

The most significant considerations for the charitable company were as follows:-

- The charitable company is subject to laws and regulations that affect the financial statements which include financial reporting legislation (namely The Companies Act 2006), taxation legislation and the Charities Act. We assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures concerning items recorded in the financial statements.
- The charitable company is also subject to other operational laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have material effect on the amounts or disclosures in the financial statements through imposing fines or withdrawal of funding contracts. Areas where this would have an effect include health and safety, Bribery Act 2010, employment law, data protections and child protection legislation (DBS checks for staff and volunteers).

Auditing standards limit the audit procedures to identifying non-compliance of these laws and regulations to enquiry of management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if there is any. Therefore, if a breach of operational regulations is not disclosed to us or evident from relevant correspondence, an audit will not detect the breach.

To identify risk of material misstatement due to fraud, we carried out discussions amongst the audit team to assess areas where and how fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators. The following areas were identified :-

- Management override of controls through the posting of inappropriate accounting entries or journals.
- We do not believe there is a fraud risk relating the revenue recognition as the revenue is straightforward, with limited opportunity for manipulation.

We did not identify any additional fraud risks.

We tested the appropriateness of accounting journals and other adjustments made in the accounts preparation based on a risk criteria.

Owing to the inherent limitation of the audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulation is from the events and transaction reflected in the financial statement, the less likely in the inherently limited procedure required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of fraud, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. Our audit procedures are designed to detect material misstatement. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance or fraud and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mark Spafford FCCA ACA
(Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited
Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors
110 Elliott Court, Herald Avenue,
Coventry Business Park, Coventry,
West Midlands CV5 6UB

Date: 10/11/2023

3. Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for year ended 31st March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	338,585	-	338,585	312,022
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	3	802,627	468,599	1,271,226	1,423,596
Other income		40,844	-	40,844	2,915
Total		<u>1,182,056</u>	<u>468,599</u>	<u>1,650,655</u>	<u>1,738,533</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	32,653	-	32,653	29,605
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	5	940,038	656,198	1,596,236	1,264,383
Total		<u>972,691</u>	<u>656,198</u>	<u>1,628,889</u>	<u>1,293,988</u>
Net gains on investment		<u>7,568</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,568</u>	<u>-</u>
NET INCOME(/EXPENDITURE)					
Transfers between funds	18	<u>(87,903)</u>	<u>87,903</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>129,030</u>	<u>(99,696)</u>	<u>29,334</u>	<u>444,545</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>1,428,308</u>	<u>436,435</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>1,557,338</u></u>	<u><u>336,739</u></u>	<u><u>1,894,077</u></u>	<u><u>1,864,743</u></u>

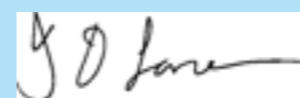
The notes form part of these financial statements

4. Balance Sheet 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	11	507,441	517,224
Heritage assets	12	79,762	79,762
		<u>587,203</u>	<u>596,986</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	13	566,115	986,078
Investments	14	45,010	-
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>876,685</u>	<u>584,732</u>
		<u>1,487,810</u>	<u>1,570,810</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(180,936)</u>	<u>(303,053)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,306,874</u>	<u>1,267,757</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>1,894,077</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>
NET ASSETS			
		<u><u>1,894,077</u></u>	<u><u>1,864,743</u></u>
FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds	18	1,557,338	1,428,308
Restricted funds		<u>336,739</u>	<u>436,435</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u><u>1,894,077</u></u>	<u><u>1,864,743</u></u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 25th July 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

The notes form part of these financial statements

5. Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	362,259	73,845
Net cash provided by operating activities		362,259	73,845
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(32,864)	(498,247)
Donation of investment portfolio		(37,442)	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(70,306)	(498,247)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			
		291,953	(424,402)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period			
		584,732	1,009,134
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period			
		876,685	584,732

The notes form part of these financial statements

6. Notes to the cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	29,334	444,545
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	42,647	23,425
Losses on investments	(7,568)	-
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	419,963	(493,099)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(122,117)	98,974
Net cash provided by operations	362,259	73,845

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1.4.22 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.23 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	584,732	291,953	876,685
	584,732	291,953	876,685
Liquid resources			
Deposits included in cash	-	-	-
Current asset investments	-	45,010	45,010
	-	45,010	45,010
Total	584,732	336,963	921,695

7. Notes to the Financial Statements

7.1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income is generally recognised on a receivable basis, being when the charity is entitled to receive the money and is reported gross of related expenditure, where the amount is reasonably certain and when there is adequate certainty of receipt of monies. The specific bases used are as follows:

- Voluntary income includes members subscriptions, donations (including related gift aid tax) legacies and grants of a general nature.
- Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity.
- Contractual income is recorded when receivable.
- Grants received during the year which relate to the following financial year are carried forward in creditors.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis, meaning that the cost is identified as a liability awaiting payment, based on the date of the event, rather than the point that cash is paid. The expenditure is allocated to the appropriate cost heading in the financial statements.

- Costs of generating funds relate to expenditure incurred in raising voluntary income and fundraising trading costs.
- Charitable activities' expenditure relates to expenditure on meeting the charitable objects. This includes materials and bought in services, staff costs, information systems, communications, rented accommodation and general management directly chargeable to projects, thereby covering both internal costs and external charges for such costs. Such costs incurred internally are apportioned to projects based on direct staffing levels.
- Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the charitable company and relate to the professional costs of running the charity.

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

- Support costs including staff costs, information systems, communications, office accommodation and general management, are fully apportioned to other cost categories, and are primarily based on direct staffing levels.
- Membership recruitment costs, where an agency charges the trust a fee based on the first years membership income for recruitment of new members, are charged to the accounts over a period of 10 months. Surplus new income is therefore only recognised in the accounts after this period has ended and this policy is viewed as being prudent.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Short leasehold property - 4% on cost

Fixtures and fittings - 25% straight line

Expenditure on fixtures, fittings and general office equipment purchased by the charity for projects is currently written off in the year in which the expenditure is incurred, expenditure incurred for administration purposes is capitalised and depreciated as stated above.

Heritage assets

Land, classified as heritage assets, had previously been included in the accounts at cost. The Trustees value the assets every 5 years (a change from the previous annual approach) as this provides more relevant information on the activities and assets held by the charity.

Where information on the cost or valuation of heritage assets is not available or the cost of providing such information significantly outweighs any benefit to the users of the accounts then heritage assets are not recognised on the balance sheet.

Acquisitions only arise when donated to the charity or if it is believed that they will further the charity's objectives.

Full details of original cost can be found in note 12 to the accounts.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The charity is partially exempt for VAT. VAT that is irrecoverable due to the partial exemption are allocated to the appropriate cost categories and funds.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes or as suggested in a letter of wishes.

The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Payments under an arrangement which is in substance of a rental nature (operating leases) are charged in the financial statements as incurred.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The trust makes payments of employers contributions into independently administered money purchase pension policies for qualifying employees. Pension costs are charged in the financial statements on an accruals basis.

Basic financial instruments

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Investments are another form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. All gains and losses are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities as they arise. Realised gains and losses on investments are calculated as the difference between sales proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year-end and their carrying value. Realised and unrealised investment gains and losses are combined in the Statement of Financial Activities.

7.2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	337,885	310,228
Legacies	700	1,794
	<u>338,585</u>	<u>312,022</u>

7.3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Conservation & Wildlife	1,271,226	1,423,596
Activity - Conservation, Engagement and Influence		

7.4 RAISING FUNDS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Raising donations and legacies		
Raising voluntary income costs	32,653	29,605

7.5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs (see note 6)	Totals
	£	£	£
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	1,421,864	174,372	1,596,236

7.6 SUPPORT COSTS

	Management	Governance costs	Totals
	£	£	£
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	108,481	65,891	174,372

7.7 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2023	2022
	£	£
Auditors remuneration	6,778	5,901
Depreciation - owned assets	42,647	23,425
Hire of plant and machinery	-	1,260
Other operating leases	3,285	4,153
	<u>52,710</u>	<u>34,739</u>

7.8 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no Trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

7.9 STAFF COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	771,589	621,568
Social security costs	51,906	49,960
Other pension costs	43,513	35,188
	<u>867,008</u>	<u>706,716</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
Direct charitable work	33	28
Administrative	2	2
	<u>35</u>	<u>30</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2023	2022
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1

The key management personnel, the senior management team, received total employee benefits in the year of £209,107 (2022 - £204,834). The key management personnel comprise the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Finance & Resources, Head of Education & Engagement, Head of Conservation and Head of Fundraising & Communications.

7.10 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	312,022	-	312,022
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	305,878	1,117,718	1,423,596
Other income	2,915	-	2,915
Total	<u>620,815</u>	<u>1,117,718</u>	<u>1,738,533</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	-	29,605	29,605
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	487,066	777,317	1,264,383
Total	<u>487,066</u>	<u>806,922</u>	<u>1,293,988</u>
NET INCOME	133,749	310,796	444,545
Transfer between funds	219,264	(219,264)	-
Net movement in funds	353,013	91,532	444,545
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	1,075,296	344,902	1,420,198
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>1,428,309</u>	<u>436,434</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>

7.11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Short leasehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2022	680,318	95,036	775,354
Additions	28,498	4,366	32,864
At 31 March 2023	<u>708,816</u>	<u>99,402</u>	<u>808,218</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2022	179,542	78,588	258,130
Charge for year	35,499	7,148	42,647
At 31 March 2023	<u>215,041</u>	<u>85,736</u>	<u>300,777</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2023	<u>493,775</u>	<u>13,666</u>	<u>507,441</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>500,776</u>	<u>16,448</u>	<u>517,224</u>

7.12 HERITAGE ASSETS

	Total £
MARKET VALUE	
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	<u>79,762</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2023	<u>79,762</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>79,762</u>

If the Land had not been revalued it would have been included in the accounts at the following historical cost totaling £20,523. This is broken down to £10,523 being the amount paid for land and £10,000 being the value of land donated. There has been no change to these values in the last five years.

Heritage assets consist of land at Portway Hill, Pelsall Common Spinney (Turner's Wood) and Deer's Leap Wood.

Such land that has been acquired or donated to the charity is managed and preserved in accordance with the charity's objectives for wildlife and their habitat. Access to such land is available to the general public.

Other heritage assets may be purchased by, or donated to the charity, as and when circumstances permit. The number of acquisitions in the last 5 years is nil.

The Trustees have obtained a desktop valuation by an independent valuer in an attempt to understand the open market value of the heritage assets. Based on the work done, the Trustees do not believe the valuation of the Heritage assets at £79,762 is materially different from the open market value of these assets. The Trustees feel no adjustment to the revaluation is required.

7.13 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	225,178	569,705
VAT	40,387	-
Prepayments	21,393	1,109
Accrued income	279,157	415,264
	<u>566,115</u>	<u>986,078</u>

7.14 CURRENT ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Listed investments	45,010	-

7.15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	107,793	486
Social security and other taxes	7,901	53,483
Other creditors	17,474	17,436
Deferred income	-	6,000
Accrued expenses	47,768	225,648
	<u>180,936</u>	<u>303,053</u>
	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1st April 2022	6,000	12,546
Released from previous years	(6,000)	(12,546)
Income deferred in the year	-	6,000
	<u>-</u>	<u>6,000</u>
Deferred income at 31st March 2023	-	6,000

Deferred income relates to grant income deferred to future periods as the income received relates specifically to the 2022/23 accounting period.

7.16 LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Within one year	2,600	3,950
Between one and five years	10,840	8,600
In more than five years	16,500	10,750
	<u>29,940</u>	<u>23,300</u>

7.17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
Fixed assets	587,203	-	587,203	596,986
Current assets	1,143,707	344,103	1,487,810	1,570,810
Current liabilities	(173,572)	(7,364)	(180,936)	(303,053)
	<u>1,557,338</u>	<u>336,739</u>	<u>1,894,077</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	1,161,912	206,518	(93,873)	1,274,557
Designated Fund	207,157	10,415	5,970	223,542
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	-	59,239
	<u>1,428,308</u>	<u>216,933</u>	<u>(87,903)</u>	<u>1,557,338</u>
Restricted funds				
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	(492)	492	-	-
Other awards	-	(11,998)	11,998	-
Sedgley Beacon Enforcement Undertaking	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	(30,717)	26,350	9,227
Reaching Communities	31,671	(31,671)	-	-
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	12,900	(12,900)	-	-
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	18,319	(18,319)	-	-
Nature Friendly Schools	6,300	-	(6,300)	-
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	42,652	(42,652)	-	-
Innovation Fund	2,968	(2,968)	-	-
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	-	(11,191)	49,031	37,840
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	14,789	(14,789)	-	-
Stourton Castle Bypass	248,080	(7,971)	-	240,109
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	15,654	(15,654)	-	-
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	-	(4,259)	6,824	2,565
WMCA LYRS	-	24,998	-	24,998
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	-	22,000	-	22,000
	<u>436,435</u>	<u>(187,599)</u>	<u>87,903</u>	<u>336,739</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>29,334</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,894,077</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Gains and losses	Movement in funds
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	772,415	(573,465)	7,568	206,518
Designated fund	409,641	(399,226)	-	10,415
	<u>1,182,056</u>	<u>(972,691)</u>	<u>7,568</u>	<u>216,933</u>
Restricted funds				
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	42,054	(41,562)	-	492
Natural Prospects HLF	140,824	(140,824)	-	-
Other awards	9,968	(21,966)	-	(11,998)
Sedgley Beacon Enforcement Undertaking	-	(30,000)	-	(30,000)
South Staffordshire Water	(26,350)	(4,367)	-	(30,717)
Reaching Communities	50,997	(82,668)	-	(31,671)
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	-	(12,900)	-	(12,900)
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	-	(18,319)	-	(18,319)
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	111,350	(154,002)	-	(42,652)
Innovation Fund	-	(2,968)	-	(2,968)
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	-	(11,191)	-	(11,191)
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	-	(14,789)	-	(14,789)
Stourton Castle Bypass	-	(7,971)	-	(7,971)
Purple Horizons	39,524	(39,524)	-	-
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	-	(15,654)	-	(15,654)
Team Wilder	18,534	(18,534)	-	-
Moseley Bog Fundraiser	13,200	(17,459)	-	(4,259)
Purple Horizons 2022	18,500	(18,500)	-	-
WMCA LYRS	24,998	-	-	24,998
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Phase 2	25,000	(3,000)	-	22,000
	<u>468,599</u>	<u>(656,198)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(187,599)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,650,655</u>	<u>(1,628,889)</u>	<u>7,568</u>	<u>29,334</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.21	Net movement in funds	Transfers between funds	At 31.3.22
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	511,605	133,748	516,559	1,161,912
Designated Fund	504,452	-	(297,295)	207,157
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	-	59,239
	<u>1,075,296</u>	<u>133,748</u>	<u>219,264</u>	<u>1,428,308</u>
Restricted funds				
Catchment (Western Park)	18,400	(18,400)	-	-
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	-	(492)	-	(492)
Natural Prospects HLF	1,423	(1,423)	-	-
Other awards	16,079	(6,429)	(9,650)	-
Veolia Grant	59,785	15,000	(74,785)	-
Birmingham LNP	4,442	(4,442)	-	-
Sedgley Beacon Enforcement Undertaking	-	-	30,000	30,000
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	-	-	13,594
National Express	15,000	(15,000)	-	-
Reaching Communities	60,743	65,928	(95,000)	31,671
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	2,825	(7,243)	17,318	12,900
River Cole Collaboration	34,941	(34,941)	-	-
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	25,000	(6,681)	-	18,319
Carbon Reduction Strategy	20,000	(7,853)	(12,147)	-
Nature Friendly Schools	40,000	(33,700)	-	6,300
Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections	32,670	(32,670)	-	-
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	-	42,652	-	42,652
Innovation Fund	-	2,968	-	2,968
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	-	14,789	-	14,789
Stourton Castle Bypass	-	248,080	-	248,080
EcoPark Development (HS2)	-	75,000	(75,000)	-
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	-	15,654	-	15,654
	<u>344,902</u>	<u>310,797</u>	<u>(219,264)</u>	<u>436,435</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,420,198</u>	<u>444,545</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	620,815	(487,067)	133,748
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	-	(18,400)	(18,400)
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	18,531	(19,023)	(492)
Natural Prospects HLF	73,672	(75,095)	(1,423)
Other awards	9,554	(15,983)	(6,429)
Veolia Grant	15,000	-	15,000
Birmingham LNP	-	(4,442)	(4,442)
National Express	1	(15,001)	(15,000)
Reaching Communities	128,702	(62,774)	65,928
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Deunlem Weir)	-	(7,243)	(7,243)
River Cole Collaboration	(9,333)	(25,608)	(34,941)
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	-	(6,681)	(6,681)
Carbon Reduction Strategy	-	(7,853)	(7,853)
Nature Friendly Schools atural Connections	68,157	(101,857)	(33,700)
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	-	(32,670)	(32,670)
Lyric Programme	124,850	(82,198)	42,652
Innovation Fund	206,032	(206,032)	-
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	12,279	(9,311)	2,968
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	14,191	(14,191)	-
Stourton Castle Bypass	20,000	(5,211)	14,789
Purple Horizons	250,000	(1,920)	248,080
EcoPark Development (HS2)	80,082	(80,082)	-
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	75,000	-	75,000
	31,000	(15,346)	15,654
	<u>1,117,718</u>	<u>(806,921)</u>	<u>310,797</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,738,533</u>	<u>(1,293,988)</u>	<u>444,545</u>

Transfers are made between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at the time the specific restrictions have been fulfilled.

The designated fund of £223,542 (2022: £207,157) relates to the balance of funds received in the accounts for the year to 31 March 2023 remaining unspent designated by the Trustees for use on our commitments post year end. This sum relates to the Project Completion Fund.

General reserves represent free unrestricted funds that are available to spend at the discretion of the trustees. Within the general reserve are funds relating to fixed assets held which are not readily disposable and are intended to be held for the long term, hence not liquid funds that can be spent straightaway. This amount is equivalent to the net book value of the land and buildings as these assets have been secured for use within the charity for the long term.

The restricted fund represents monies receivable for projects which can only be spent on their respective activities as imposed by the donor or grant making body. The Trustees confirm that all restricted fund balances at the year-end have subsequently been spent or will be spent in the forthcoming financial year. More detailed disclosure on description nature and purpose of the funds, reasons for restrictions etc are listed below:-

Conservation

Various areas of funded work including:

- Collaborative partnership to create a thriving nature recovery network that is resilient to climate change between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park.
- Collaborative agreement to deliver a programme of blue and green infrastructure improvement projects in the Upper Rea Catchment.
- Various grants to assist with conservation and restoration activity at four sites on the river Stour in Stourbridge and Wolverhampton.
- Improvement of woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and watercourses along the river Rea and its tributaries in south-west Birmingham and the river Tame in west Birmingham.
- Partnership agreement for the restoration and naturalisation of 940m of urban river catchments on the river Cole.
- Small grants to support the management of our Nature Reserves.
- Improvement of spaces for nature through the Nature Improvement Area.

Education and Engagement

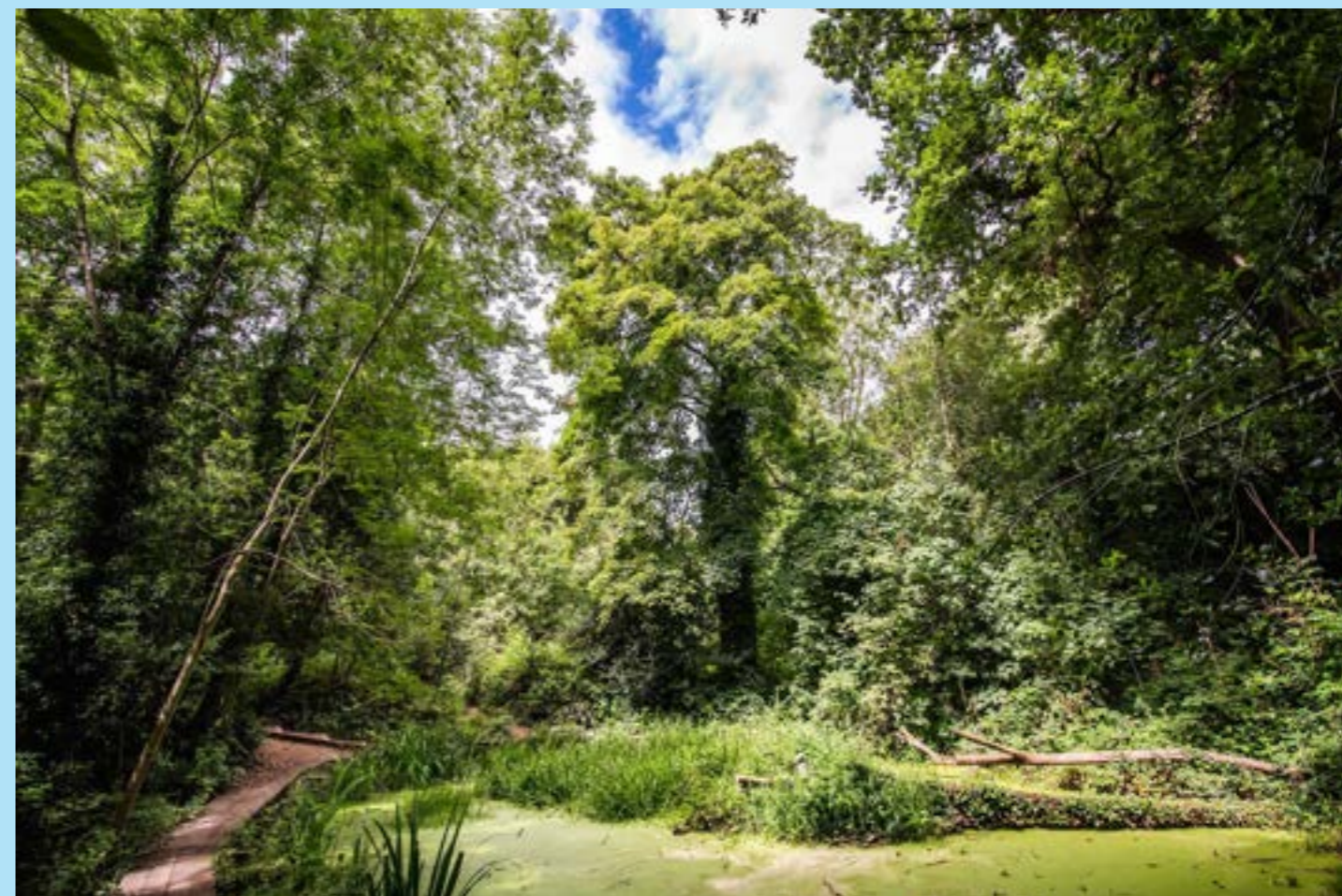
Various areas of funded work including:

- Traineeship project in partnership with local Councils and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to upskill and diversify the next generation of urban conservationists.
- Partnership project delivering Level 1 and Level 2 training programmes as well as a programme of interventions on Glebe Farm.
- Funding coordinated by RSWT for all Wildlife Trusts to develop a community organising approach to our work, where the Trust has focused on a youth audience.
- Partnership programme to develop a green space adjacent to Edgbaston Reservoir, where we provide training, engagement activity, health and wellbeing courses and supported volunteering.
- Programme of community engagement to complement the site developments at EcoPark.
- Interventions in Bordesley and Highgate parks as part of City of Nature Alliance programme to improve environmental justice in deprived wards.

7.19 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county wildlife trusts, and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK level. An annual contribution is payable to RSWT amounting to £10,990 (2022: £10,890). The Trust also purchased publications and other sundries from RSWT amounting to £16,165 (2022 - £7,322), with £3,468 (2022 - £nil) owed to RSWT at the year end. Sales made to RSWT were £1,771 (2022: £2,616) and amounts owed by RSWT were £nil at the year end (2022: £1,380).

The trust have also purchased services from Sampad Arts, a charity that has connections with both the management and trustees of the Trust. Total value of services purchased were £7,769.





**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

Registered Address: 42 Norman Street, Birmingham, B18 7EP

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 513615

Accounts



**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust



Annual Report

For the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022



BOARDWALK REPAIRS AT MOSELEY BOG & JOY'S WOOD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Contents

	Page
Chair and CEO report	3
2021 - 2022 in Numbers	4
Successes and Highlights	6
1. Report of the Trustees (including the Strategic Report)	
1.1 Structure, Governance and Management	8
1.2 Objectives and Activities	11
1.3 Summary of the year	12
1.4 Looking ahead	16
1.5 Financial review	19
2. Independent Auditors Report	21
3. Statement of Financial Activities	23
4. Balance Sheet	24
5. Cash Flow Statement	25
6. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement	26
7. Notes to the Financial Statements	27
8. Thank you	39



LISA PINNEY AND DELIA GARRATT

Chair and CEO Report

With the support of members, funders, partners and Trustees we have successfully navigated the challenges presented by the pandemic. We have been heartened by the renewed sense of the value of the natural environment and a greater appreciation for the green and wild spaces on people's doorsteps.

The Trust has been keen to support a green recovery from the pandemic, to restore nature and tackle climate change, and the support of our local groups and volunteers has been crucial as we restarted many of our work programmes at our sites and across the region this year.

Our new Green Recovery Challenge Fund project, Love Your River Stour has seen us deliver conservation and engagement work along the catchment of the River Stour, a strategic priority landscape and a vital wildlife corridor in the west. This year vital work has also been delivered in the east along the wildlife corridor that is the River Cole.

This year we have carried out critical work which will support our vision of a wilder Birmingham and Black Country for generations to come. Our Draft Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy Approach report demonstrates to planners where the most valuable sites and landscapes for wildlife are, and is being used to inform where new housing and employment land will be allocated. In addition, the Trust published a comprehensive response to the draft Black Country Plan providing detailed

comments on the policies of the plan, as well as on over 150 site allocations.

2022 sees the end of the Trust's current 5-year strategy for a Greener Future, which was launched in 2017. We have achieved a great deal during this time, but we are clear that there is much more we need to do to stop and reverse nature's decline. Our wild spaces are increasingly fragmented and wildlife is getting squeezed out. People have been increasingly disconnected from nature, and we are acutely aware that in parts of our region there is real inequality of access to nature.

Developing our new strategy – A Wilder Birmingham and the Black Country 2022-2030 - has not only given us the opportunity to think about how we build on all that has been achieved to date, but also to consider how we nurture the growing awareness of the enormous environmental challenges we face as a society, as well as consider how we can respond to the climate emergency. The next decade is crucial and the Trust is clear of the vital role it has to play in helping people everywhere to start taking meaningful action on the ecological crisis. We are grateful to our

staff, Trustees and partners for their work in developing the strategy and excited to launch and deliver it.

Work is underway to better understand our current supporters, and to consider how we extend our reach, ensuring that everyone feels welcome and able to contribute to environmental action across Birmingham and the Black Country. Work to build a new Environmental Centre at EcoPark will be key in helping us achieve this, as will our engagement programmes with schools and community groups.

This year we were delighted to welcome our first Young Ambassador, Shaan Dulay whose passion and commitment to the work of the Trust is much appreciated. Shaan is clear that as individuals, we can make small changes that will lead to big changes for our environment and our climate. Together, we know we can do even more.


Lisa Pinney MBE
Chair of Trustees

Dr Delia Garratt
Chief Executive

2021 – 2022 in Numbers

££
over
£22,000
raised in general fundraising


1,114
People attended
our events


3,534
Young people benefited from our
Education and Engagement services



1,131
hectares

Area of land worked
on or where we
provided advice



Over 300 donors
raised more than
£11,000

for infrastructure improvements
at Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood
Nature Reserve

177 people registered for Wild Walk Week
1,211 species recorded for City Nature Challenge April 2021



71
Planning
applications
reviewed and
responded to



140
people joined us at
Wild Experience Days

**344 PEOPLE TOOK
THE MAYORAL
ELECTION E-ACTION**



2021 – 2022 Successes & Highlights



RIVER RESTORATION OFFICERS SALLY AND DAVID

Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued nature

In June we secured a grant of £249,700 from the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund for our Love Your River Stour project. The recovery of the River Stour catchment is a long-term strategic priority for the Wildlife Trust, and the project builds on our Salmon in the Stour work which we have been delivering since 2017.

Love Your River Stour has enabled the recruitment of a new team of five staff and trainees, and will see the ecological enhancement of four areas of local green space, as well as a range of engagement and education activities including regular volunteering opportunities, family events, Level 1 training for young people, 'Stour Rangers' sessions with local schools and 'Wild Experience Days' with local businesses.

At Glebe Farm Recreational Ground in east Birmingham we continued our

work to restore another important river corridor, the River Cole. As part of the Love Your River Cole project two new wetland areas were created and planted by volunteers with a diverse mix of native wetland plant species, whilst 3.7 hectares of grassland was enhanced through the seeding of wildflower species including Ragged Robin, Great Burnet, Field Scabious and Yellow Rattle. The enhanced habitats will provide foraging and breeding sites for a range of birds and invertebrates associated with wetland and marshy grassland habitats in river corridors, whilst the construction of a new 230 metre path and installation of a new interpretation board has made it possible for local residents to benefit from their improved local wildlife.

The Friends of Moseley Bog and Joy's Wood Nature Reserve worked with the Wildlife Trust to run a fundraising campaign for the site which raised over £23,000 from public donations and grants. These funds have enabled the construction of new paths, repairs to the boardwalks, the design and installation of new interpretation signs, and resurfacing of the car park. Working with our group of dedicated volunteers much of this activity has begun and will be completed in 2022-23.

Goal 2: Everyone is connected to nature

Through the Nature Friendly Schools programme funded by Defra, we worked with a further 12 primary schools in disadvantaged areas, supporting teachers to embed outdoor learning across the curriculum, increasing their pupils' access to local wild spaces and improving school grounds to make them better places for wildlife.

Our third cohort of five Natural Prospects trainees completed their Level 2 Diplomas, alongside four from the Love Your River Cole project – funded respectively by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

With funding from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, National Express and Cadent Foundations, we delivered 10



COLLEAGUES ATTENDING GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION WALK FOR COP26



ECORECORD'S 30TH BIRTHDAY

Level 1 training courses in Tools Use and Surveying as an Open College Network West Midlands training centre. 94 participants, the majority aged 16-25, successfully completed these courses.

Colleagues and supporters joined us on 6th November 2021 for a Global Day of Action during COP26, with a peaceful walk through Birmingham City Centre calling for nature to play a role in the climate crisis.

We led Birmingham and the Black Country's second annual entry in the global citizen science challenge, City Nature Challenge. Despite fewer participants than in 2020, over 200 individuals made 12,687 wildlife observations of 1,211 different species over a four day period in Birmingham and the Black Country! Overall, for the number of observations, Birmingham and the Black Country ranked 1st in UK, 4th in Europe and 31st in the world.

Goal 3: The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making

Our work to influence where and how new homes are built is critical to our vision of a future Birmingham and the Black Country which has more wildlife, more wild spaces and more people with a strong connection to the natural world. We believe that strategic planning must be informed by evidence which identifies where the most valuable sites for wildlife are, and in 2021-22 we provided the four Black Country local authorities further evidence to inform the Black Country Plan. Our Draft Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy Approach report demonstrates to planners where the most valuable sites and landscapes for wildlife are, and is being used to inform where new housing and employment land will be allocated.

EcoRecord - the Local Environmental Records Centre for Birmingham and the Black Country - turned 30 during 2021. Established in 1991 with the aim to collate, store and make available information on all aspects of wildlife and habitats in Birmingham and the Black Country, EcoRecord has been and remains critical in helping to protect wildlife, informing our understanding of the landscape and in targeting where work for nature's recovery will have the most impact.

Goal 4: We are an effective organisation

A total of 177 people took part in Wild Walk Week in October 2021 alongside our colleague-led walks and raised £1,055. Colleagues Jake Williams and Gareth Morgan took on an epic 90km triathlon challenge and thanks to donations from supporters, family and friends raised £1,050.

Businesses generated over £29,000 income from Wild Experience Days, business membership and business partnerships. As social distancing restrictions eased, we saw a return to businesses booking Wild Experience Days with 140 people from five businesses joining us on Poly Roger urban canal safaris and supporting with habitat creation projects at our Nature Reserves and project sites. Bronze business members Wienerberger renewed their membership for a third year, Schofield Lothian renewed their Silver business membership for a second year and SCC re-joined as Bronze business members. We were also joined by Kennedys Law as Bronze business members. Partners included Hogan Lovells who raised over £15,000 in the second year of a three-year partnership, birdseed producer Vine House Farm who donated over £2,600, Fleming Verandas who donated over £500 and Severn Trent whose £2,000 sponsorship supported our Wild Walk Week fundraiser.



COLLEAGUES FROM HOGAN LOVELLS MAKING FESTIVE WREATHS

1. Report of The Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Council has pleasure in presenting its report together with the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022. Council has adopted the provisions of the Charities SORP (FRS102) - 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 (effective 1 January 2019) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

1.1. Structure, Governance and Management

Registered Company No: 01650938
(England and Wales)

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Address: 42 Norman Street,
Birmingham, B18 7EP

Company Secretary: EF Mooney

Key Management Personnel

Chief Executive: Dr Delia Garratt

Head of Conservation: Simon Atkinson

Head of Education and Engagement:
Gareth Morgan

Head of Fundraising and Communication: Emma Thompson

Interim Head of Finance:
Ian Holmes

Trustees

N Crombie (resigned 15/01/2022)

M Knight (resigned 15/01/2022)

A Taylor (resigned 15/01/2022)

I C Trueman (resigned 15/01/2022)

P W Beardmore (appointed 01/12/2018)

A Bright (appointed 01/12/2018)

L C Pinney MBE (appointed 21/07/2020)

J D Larner (appointed 16/01/2021)

R J Mallender (appointed 16/01/2021 and
resigned 08/11/2021)

D H McLellan (appointed 16/01/2021)

E F Mooney (appointed 16/01/2021)

A Wayro (appointed 16/01/2021)

D P Green (appointed 16/01/2021)

L Besenyei (appointed 16/01/2021)

Organisational structure

The overall responsibility for the charity lies with the Trustee Directors who have delegated the day to day management of the charity to the Chief Executive. The Trustee Directors meet regularly to agree strategy, review progress, review financial information, and discuss policy issues. To facilitate effective operation, the Chief Executive has delegated authority within Terms of Reference approved by the Trustees for some operational matters, including finance.

The Wildlife Trust is governed by an elected Council and is therefore directly accountable to the members of the charity.

The Articles of Association gives Council the powers to:

- (i) Administer the affairs of the Charity
- (ii) Exercise all the powers of the Charity
- (iii) Determine the policy of the Charity.

The Council formally delegates certain functions and responsibilities to two committees which deal with specific policy and organisational issues.

The day-to-day management of the Charity's affairs is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is accountable exclusively to the Council for achieving, via the Business Plan, the Wildlife Trust's aims and for complying with Council policies. A team of professionally trained staff report to the Chief Executive.

Governing document

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is one of 46 independent charities, which form a national partnership - The Wildlife Trusts through the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. Collectively we manage 2,300 nature reserves covering 102,500 hectares of land for wildlife and for people, inspiring 13 million visits to wildlife sites. Together we have 849,584 members. The Trust's family membership is also part of the national environment club, Wildlife Watch, which provides projects for members and affiliated schools, involving them directly with environmental Issues.

The Trust is a registered charity (No. 513615) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 1650938).

The Trust was established in 1980 to protect our local natural heritage and encourage people to engage, enjoy and get involved with the natural environment. We are a membership organisation, governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Work is carried out by a staff team of 28 individuals (at 31 March 2022) 22 full time equivalent posts. During the year the Trust had 9 funded trainees who completed their traineeship in March 2022. The Trust could not achieve the impacts we do without the commitment and hard work of a large number of volunteers.

In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding 50p.

Wider network and related parties

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county Wildlife Trusts and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK Level.

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

A Council of voluntary Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the Trust. The Trust's Council is elected from the membership in accordance with its governing documents at the Annual General Meeting. Trustees are either co-opted during the year or elected at the Annual General Meeting. Co-opted Trustees must stand for election at the Annual General Meeting immediately following their appointment. Council may co-opt additional members from time to time as it sees fit. Trustees are also Directors of the Company limited by guarantee.

Induction and training of new Trustees

The Trustee is provided with copies of the charity's key documents, including its Memorandum and Articles of Association, Governance Handbook, latest Annual Report and Accounts, minutes of recent Council meetings, Policy documents and further information on the role and responsibilities of Charity Trustees. New Trustees are required to confirm that they have studied these documents and raised any queries or obtained further information which they may need.

Following election or co-option of a Trustee, the Chair will introduce a new Trustee at their first meeting of Council. They will also participate in a formal induction process to familiarise them with the extent and nature of the Trust's operations. After election at the Annual General Meeting Trustees serve for a period of three years and may be elected for a further period of three years.

Developments in Charity Law and Practice are monitored and important developments are brought to the notice of Trustees by the Executive.

The relationship between staff and Trustees is crucial to the Trust's continuing success. Trustees bring a range of skills and experience to the responsibilities of the role which requires them to have an understanding of all aspects of the Trust's work. Trustees meet four times a year where they review strategy and operational performance, ratify policies and agree budgets.

Key management remuneration

None of the Trustees receive remuneration or benefit for their work with the group and charity. Any connection between Trustees and any company the Trust works with is disclosed to the Council. Financial details of which are disclosed in note 7.9 to the accounts.

Risk management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the Trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.



Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently; observe the methods and principles in the Charily SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and each Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

The auditors, Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited, will be proposed for reappointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.



LOCAL COMMUNITY LITTER PICKING AT SMESTOW VALLEY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

1.2 Objectives and Activities

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Limited is required by charity and company law to act within the objects of its Memorandum of Association, which are as follows:

Objectives

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country's objectives are:

1. **For the benefit of the public, to advance, promote and further the conservation maintenance study and protection of:**
 - i. wildlife and its habitats;
 - ii. places of natural beauty;
 - iii. places of zoological, botanical, geographical, archaeological or scientific interest;
 - iv. features of landscape with geological, physiographical, or amenity value; in particular, but not exclusively, in ways that further biodiversity.

2. To advance the education of the public in:

- v. the principles and practice of sustainable development;
- vi. the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation; in particular, but not exclusively, in urban areas.

We launched our five-year strategy for 2017 - 2022, A Greener Future, in November 2016.

Our Vision is for Birmingham and the Black Country to have more wildlife, more wild places and more people with a strong connection to the natural world every year.

Our Strategic Goals are:

1. Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued.
2. Everyone is connected to nature.
3. The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making.
4. We are an effective organisation

Public benefit

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country exists to promote the care and protection of the environment and therefore provides a clear public benefit. The Trust's philosophy is based on the belief that the natural world deserves conserving for its own sake and, since this is widely perceived to be a worthy aim of public policy, it may fairly be regarded as a benefit to the public at large. However, the public benefits provided by The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country go much further.

Firstly, our nature reserves are used by the public. At most sites information and interpretation is provided to visitors.

Secondly, our education programmes are aimed at schools, colleges, adult groups and the wider public.

Thirdly, our information gathering and provision of expert advice and opinion to local authorities and others helps to ensure that planning decisions are made on a rational basis taking full account of the public benefit of wildlife.

Fourthly the involvement of many volunteers in our work provides an outlet for altruistic endeavour, which is of special benefit to those involved as well as delivering benefits to the wider public.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity' (PB2).



ECOPARK CLASSROOM IN DEVELOPMENT





TYSELEY WEIR AFTER



TYSELEY WEIR BEFORE

1.3 Summary of the Year

Each year the Trust produces a detailed Business Plan which determines the activities to be carried out during the year. Results are monitored throughout the year with regular reports being produced for Trust Council. The main headlines for 2021-22 are as follows:

Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued nature

The last year has seen an increase in the Trust's nature conservation work as we emerged from the lockdowns of 2020-21, secured significant new funding and expanded our team of dedicated colleagues.

Landscape-scale nature conservation

In June we secured a grant of £249,700 from the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund for our Love Your River Stour project. The recovery of the River Stour catchment is a long-term strategic priority for the Wildlife Trust, and the project builds on our Salmon in the Stour work which we have been delivering since 2017.

At Glebe Farm Recreational Ground in east Birmingham we continued our work to restore another important river corridor, the River Cole. As part of the Love Your River Cole project two new wetland areas were created and planted by volunteers with a diverse mix of native wetland plant species, whilst 3.7 hectares of grassland was enhanced through the seeding of wildflower species including Ragged Robin, Great Burnet, Field Scabious and Yellow Rattle

Further upstream on the River Cole in Tyseley our partnership project with the Environment Agency saw us remove a large concrete weir which had been

preventing the movement of fish and natural river processes for many decades. We also worked with partners including Sanctus and Dynamic Rivers to finalise designs for the removal of a much larger weir in the nearby Ackers site, and for a river naturalisation project at Heybarnes Recreational Ground. These works are planned to go ahead in 2022 through a project led by the University of Birmingham.

The delivery of our partnership work with Birmingham City Council and the Environment Agency on the Natural Rivers and Green Corridors project picked-up again following a partial hiatus in 2020-21. The Wildlife Trust's role in the project is to deliver a large number of small interventions across open spaces along the Bourne Brook and Merritt's Brook in south-west Birmingham. These include the planting of the larval foodplants of butterflies found only in low numbers in the area - such as fritillaries, green hairstreak and brimstone, the planting of woodland wildflowers grown through our Growing Local Flora project, and the installation of barn and tawny owl boxes.

Another of the Wildlife Trust's strategic priority landscapes is the historic heathlands of the Walsall green belt. This area which forms a critical link between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park, and holds the potential to be restored to support vibrant populations of species such as reptiles, nightjar and rare solitary bees. During 2021-22 we entered into a new partnership with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Walsall Council, Lichfield District Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency under the name Purple Horizons. The partnership is in the early stages but already during the year a number of heathland restoration projects have taken place at sites like Barr Beacon and Shire Oak Park; whilst a vision, objectives and priority actions have been agreed.

Nature Reserves

During 2021-22 we created and recruited to the new role of Senior Reserves Officer. This new role will ensure that our valuable sites and the Friends groups and volunteers on which they depend will be given the support they need.

The Friends of Moseley Bog and Joy's Wood Nature Reserve worked with the Wildlife Trust to run a fundraising campaign for the site which raised over £23,000 from public donations and grants. These funds have enabled the construction of new paths, repairs to the boardwalks, the design and installation of new interpretation signs, and resurfacing of the car park. Working with our group of dedicated volunteers much of this activity has begun and will be completed in 2022-23.

Work has also been completed at our Turner's Wood nature reserve in Pelsall. Funding provided by Natural England through the Purple Horizons project has seen woodland management take place, a new hedgerow planted, owl and bat boxes installed, and the design and installation of a new interpretation sign.

The Friends of Hill Hook Local Nature Reserve secured funding for a range of important ecological surveys which the Wildlife Trust have undertaken to inform the new site management plan. Regular volunteer days have also been ongoing with work undertaken on important habitats such as wet woodland and hedgerows, and bird boxes being installed.

At Deer's Leap Wood in west Birmingham the volunteer group, Friends and local residents' association have continued providing regular support in managing the site; with the brook, ponds, hedgerows and woodlands being enhanced during the year, as well as regular maintenance of fences, paths and litter picks.



WILDFLOWER MEADOW AT DEER'S LEAP WOOD NATURE RESERVE

Esmée Fairbairn Funding

The continued funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has enabled us to deliver 32 biodiversity improvement projects across Birmingham and the Black Country, as well as supporting our planning work, our Volunteer Coordinator post and digital engagement. Additional funding from the foundation through their Funding Plus programme also enabled us to complete our Ecological Services Strategy.



Goal 2: Everyone is connected to nature

Volunteers

We would like to thank the volunteers who have supported the Trust's work throughout the pandemic, their support has been particularly vital as we returned to our normal activities. Despite all in-person activity being postponed we received 335 new volunteer registrations and volunteers committed 5,304 hours to support our work.

Education and Engagement

The new Environmental Centre at EcoPark is on track for completion in early 2022. The new building will enhance the experience of schools, youth groups and other community organisations visiting the site. New programmes including Health and Well-being in Nature, Nature Tots and a range of family activities have been established at EcoPark to complement a similar programme at the Centre of the Earth site in Winson Green.

Through the Nature Friendly Schools programme funded by Defra, we worked with a further 12 primary schools in disadvantaged areas, supporting teachers to embed outdoor learning across the curriculum, increasing their pupils' access to local wild spaces and improving school grounds to make them better places for wildlife.

With funding from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, National Express and Cadent Foundations, we delivered 10 Level 1 training courses in Tools Use and Surveying as an Open College Network West Midlands training centre. 94 participants, the majority aged 16-25, successfully completed these courses.

Our third cohort of five Natural Prospects trainees completed their Level 2 Diplomas, alongside four from the Love Your River Cole project – funded respectively by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Communications

Our 2020 Audience Research survey

provided very useful insights into the thoughts and interests of our audience, including our members. The results of the survey were shared in our autumn 2021 member magazine. We learned that under 25s were our least represented audience segment, so to improve this we launched an account on Instagram, more popular with younger audiences, and increased our programmes for 16-25 year olds. The surveys also reassuringly revealed just how much value our audience place on our work for habitat creation and protecting wildlife.

We continued to grow our reach during 2021-2022, with our e-newsletter subscriptions increasing from 7,798 to 8,509 and increasing Facebook audience by 9%, Twitter audience by 7% and LinkedIn audience by 48%. The number of people taking part in 30 Days Wild locally also grew from 2,700 in 2020 to 2,889 in 2021.

We enhanced the content in our quarterly member's magazine by including articles from guest writers and interviewing a range of people for the 'My Wild Life' articles from Trustees and trainees to award winning photographers. We also added a members' page to share member's questions and photographs.

Whilst in-person activities and events began to return, we continued to deliver

digital events; over the course of the year over 130 people booked places at our 4 digital events.

We featured in a total of 27 media articles / interviews including 2 radio and 4 television appearances including BBC Midlands Today covering the City Nature Challenge and BBC Radio WM covering our Wild Walk Week fundraiser.

Colleagues and supporters joined with other environmental charities on 6th November 2021 for a Global Day of Action during COP26, with a peaceful walk through Birmingham City Centre calling for nature to play a role in the climate crisis.

Alongside a national re-brand we took on the refreshed badger logo and branding and began to roll this out across our digital and print communications and media. We were also delighted to welcome our first ever young ambassador Shaan Dulay.

We led Birmingham and the Black Country's second annual entry in the global citizen science challenge, City Nature Challenge. Despite fewer participants than in 2020, over 200 individuals made 12,687 wildlife observations of 1,211 different species over a four day period in Birmingham and the Black Country! Overall, for the number of observations, Birmingham and the Black Country ranked 1st in UK, 4th in Europe and 31st in the world.



NATURAL PROSPECTS COHORT 3

Goal 3: The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making

Our work to influence where and how new homes are built is critical to our vision of a future Birmingham and the Black Country which has more wildlife, more wild spaces and more people with a strong connection to the natural world. We believe that strategic planning must be informed by evidence which identifies where the most valuable sites for wildlife are, and in 2021-22 we provided the four Black Country local authorities further evidence to inform the Black Country Plan. Our Draft Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy Approach report demonstrates to planners where the most valuable sites and landscapes for wildlife are, and is being used to inform where new housing and employment land will be allocated.

In addition to providing evidence, the Trust submitted and published for our supporters a 66 page comprehensive response to the draft Black Country Plan in October 2021. In this we provided detailed comments on the policies of the plan, as well as comments on over 150 site allocations.

We provided advice to over 80 landowners and managers on how to protect existing wildlife and enhance habitats for the benefit of a wide range of species. We also responded to 71 planning applications.

EcoRecord - the Local Environmental Records Centre for Birmingham and the Black Country - turned 30 during 2021. Established in 1991 with the aim to collate, store and make available information on all aspects of wildlife and habitats in Birmingham and the Black Country, EcoRecord has been and remains critical in helping to protect wildlife, informing our understanding of the landscape and in targeting where work for nature's recovery will have the most impact.



EMPLOYEES ON A WILD EXPERIENCE DAY

Goal 4: We are an effective organisation

We drew on learning from the previous year and continued to develop cost-effective methods of fundraising including membership recruitment through digital methods, including via The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts' website. As a result, online membership grew by 16.5% from the previous year. Membership income remained stable and we continue to be grateful for the support of our members. Overall we recruited 455 new members and membership grew by 2% compared to the previous year.

During this year we also delivered a range of fundraising initiatives, inspiring supporters and colleagues to take part in challenges or donate to appeals via static donation boxes, online donations and through platforms such as JustGiving and text donations, raising over £22,000 in general donations. Over 300 donors supported the public fundraising appeal to support infrastructure improvements at Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood Nature Reserve with the total raised exceeding £11,000.

A total of 177 people took part in Wild Walk Week in October 2021 alongside our colleague-led walks and raised £1,055. Colleagues Jake Williams and Gareth Morgan took on an epic 90km triathlon challenge and thanks to sponsors from supporters, family and friends raised £1,050.

Income from businesses also grew, with over £29,000 income generated from Wild Experience Days, business membership and business partnerships. As social distancing restrictions eased, we saw a return of businesses booking Wild Experience Days with 140 people from five businesses joining us on Poly Roger urban canal safaris and supporting with habitat creation projects at our Nature Reserves and project sites. Bronze business members Wienerberger renewed their membership for a third year, Schofield Lothian renewed their silver business membership for a second year and SCC re-joined as bronze business members. We were also joined by Kennedys Law as bronze business members. Partners included Hogan Lovells who raised over £15,000 in the second year of a three-year partnership, birdseed producer Vine House Farm who donated over £2,600, Fleming Verandas who donated over £500 and Severn Trent whose £2,000 sponsorship supported our Wild Walk Week fundraiser.

We continued to promote legacy giving with a campaign centred around Remember a Charity Week in September 2021 which included radio and newspaper adverts and a direct marketing campaign encouraging supporters to pledge a gift in their Will. During the course of the year, we received 65 visits to our Guardian Angel online will-writing service platform, with 10 wills started, 3 completed and 1 supporter pledging £14,000 in their will. We raised almost £6,000 in legacy giving and in-memory giving income.

In addition to income for project-focused grants, we also secured £15,000 in unrestricted grant income, supporting our legacy giving campaign and investments in fundraising.



WILD WALK WEEK 2021

Goal 2: People are taking action for nature and the climate across Birmingham and the Black Country

We will continue to nurture the growing school and community use of EcoPark and Centre of the Earth, forging links within the local communities of Small Heath and Winson Green respectively to help people connect with nature. We will further develop EcoPark with facilities such as a new Green Woodworking Zone and workshop, forest garden and pergola and enhance Centre of the Earth with further capital improvements.

We will pilot our Natural Curriculum approach to helping schools embed their outdoor learning provision, working in at least four local primary schools. We will secure and deliver further contracts for the improvement of school grounds or other community spaces for the benefit of people and wildlife. We will continue our Level 1 training courses in Tools Use, Surveying, Woodwork and Coppicing, delivering at least eight programmes in new parts of Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Dudley. We will seek funding to sustain the successful Natural Prospects traineeship programme into the future.

New partnership projects will include the Birmingham City of Nature initiative that will initially focus on Bordesley and Highgate, and support for Birmingham Settlement on their site next to Edgbaston Reservoir.

We will build on our successful track record of youth engagement and training activity to offer a youth

focused programme drawing on the community organising approach of the Wildlife Trusts' Team Wilder initiative. Through this, we will support young people to develop and implement their ideas for local environmental projects and campaigning. We will continue to increase the number of people we connect with through social media and campaigns, increase and improve our digital content, particularly targeted at younger audiences, and recruit another ambassador. All of these actions will be with the purpose of inspiring people to take action for nature, whether through practical actions or fundraising.

We will train volunteers to support us at in-person events to build engagement and help to develop fundraising and membership recruitment growth. We will deliver a photography competition to inspire our audience to connect with nature and celebrate the rich biodiversity of our local wild spaces.

1.4 Looking ahead

We will be revising the Trust's organisational strategy, setting out our ambitions up to 2030. We will launch this in early 2022. Building on the work of recent years, the new strategy - A Wilder Birmingham and the Black Country 2022-2030 - will set out 3 goals with ambitious supporting targets to ensure nature is in recovery across Birmingham and the Black Country by 2030. To begin to deliver against our revised strategy next year will see us focus on the following activities:

Goal 1: Nature is in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife across Birmingham and the Black Country

Love Your River Stour will deliver nature recovery projects at sites including Stambermill and Riverside House in Dudley, and Smestow Valley in Wolverhampton. This will see new flower-rich meadows created, woodlands diversified, hedgerows planted, ponds excavated and watercourses restored. There will be ongoing engagement with our supporters and local communities through events, activities and education sessions.

With funding from the Environment Agency we will design and create a new channel on the River Stour near Wollaston to bypass an historic weir, opening up of over 40 km of the Stour and its tributary the Smestow Brook to long-distance fish migration for the first time in several hundred years.

Our funding priorities will closely align with our new 2022-2030 strategy and we will apply for funding to continue Love Your River Stour beyond 2022-23, to begin to achieve significant impact in the Walsall heathlands area, and to deliver further nature recovery projects across Birmingham and the Black Country.

Our nature reserves remain a priority for the Wildlife Trust and we will continue to raise funds for habitat enhancements and infrastructure for our visitors such as paths and signage. Our new strategy identifies the acquisition of new nature reserves as a priority, and we will be undertaking early work to identify both potential sites and long-term funding for these.



GROWING LOCAL FLORA AT CENTRE OF THE EARTH

Goal 3: Nature is playing a central and valued role in helping to address local and global problems

The Environment Act came into force in November 2021 and with that the mandatory requirement for the production of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

It is the Wildlife Trust's aim that we will play a leading role in producing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and in the partnerships that will implement it. Building on the work we have undertaken in 2021-22 on the Draft Black Country Local Nature Recovery Map and Strategy Approach, we will work closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority (the LNRS responsible authority) to ensure the most appropriate data and analysis of this is undertaken in the creation of the LNRS, and that a strategy that can be delivered by the widest range of partners is created.

The work we have undertaken in 2021-22 on our ecological services strategy identified Biodiversity Net Gain as a key area where there are opportunities for the Wildlife Trust to increase the delivery of our work for nature's recovery. During 2022-23 we will further develop our understanding of how BNG will be put into practice and of how the Trust can most effectively invest our efforts in securing income and delivery of biodiversity gain.

In our 2022-30 strategy the Wildlife Trust have identified the delivery of nature-based solutions as key to addressing the climate and ecological crises. During the coming year we will continue to develop and seek funding to undertake projects that deliver benefits not only for biodiversity, but that also help to reduce, mitigate and reverse other issues including pollution, flooding, the impacts of climate change and poor mental health.

One of the first nature-based solutions projects that we will be delivering is M5 Clean Rivers, part of the new Network for Nature programme being undertaken by National Highways and The Wildlife Trusts. In 2021 the Trust entered secured funding to investigate the extent and type of pollution that enters the headwaters of the River Stour and Bourne Brook as run-off from the M5 motorway. During 2022-23 we will produce detailed designs for nature-based solutions (wetlands) to mitigate this pollution, with the wetlands being constructed the following year.

In order to help us deliver our conservation and education work, we will continue to grow our unrestricted income by investing in resources in the Fundraising and Communications department. Through an innovative digital membership recruitment pilot, alongside five other Wildlife Trusts and with funding from The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, we will create high quality, engaging content on social media

to recruit more members, doubling the number of new members we recruited in the previous year. We will increase the number of individuals involved in fundraising activities, encouraging donors with the propensity to do so, to increase their donations and we will provide new and improved fundraising initiatives. We will continue to celebrate our members through initiatives such as member-only events to encourage long-term support.

Through pro-active engagement activities, including networking and webinars, we will increase our outreach to prospective business supporters, and increase engagement with existing business supporters to maximize fundraising opportunities via the business directly and through employee support.

Unrestricted income will also grow threefold through applications for unrestricted grants to support our core activities.



COMMUNITY APPLE PESSING AT ECOPARK



LEVEL 1 GREEN WOODWORKING COURSE AT ECOPARK

1.5 Financial Review

Financial Position

Trust income is split between unrestricted and restricted funds. Unrestricted income represents money raised or given to support the Trust's achievement of core charitable aims. Membership, donations, general fundraising, and some charitable trust donations were given as unrestricted income.

Restricted income is given for a specific purpose with clear outputs to be achieved. Restricted income for this period includes National Prospects funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Nature Friendly Schools Funding, and several Environmental Projects.

Total income has increased to £1,738,533 (2021: £1,332,182). The Trust has invested in membership as an essential income stream that enables us to deliver core charitable aims that are not always possible to fund through restricted income such as our work to protect nature through the planning system.

Membership accounts for 14% (2021: 18%) of the Trust's income and the Business Plan sets out how this will grow in coming years. Unrestricted income (including membership) is 36% (2021: 59%) of total income.

Reserves policy

Trustees keep the reserves of the Trust under regular review. In previous years, these have been limited by the Charity's funds available. Having regard to the increasing scale of the Trust's operations and Covid uncertainties, in 2020 the Trustees set a reserves policy to aim at reserves equivalent to nine month's core operating costs, equating to approximately £500,000. Such reserves would be held in case of any sudden decline in income or unexpected cost or risk exposure, and to ensure that the commitments to meet contractual obligations to staff, premises and funding partners can be met.

After the designated fund of £207,157 (2021: £504,452) and revaluation reserve of £59,239 (2021: £59,239), the Trustees have met this aim with current unrestricted reserves standing at £1,161,912 at 31 March 2022 (2021: £511,605).

The Trustees continue to be mindful of the requirement to operate within tight financial constraints.

General reserves represent free unrestricted funds that are available to spend at the discretion of the Trustees. Some have already been designated as noted above. Within the general reserve are funds tied up in fixed assets which are not readily disposable, hence not liquid funds that can be spent straightaway. This amount would be equivalent to the net book value of the land and buildings as these assets have been secured for use within the charity for the long term.

Whilst there can be uncertainty in relation to the timing and amount of charitable grants and receipts, the Trustee Directors believe that the Trust's record of obtaining further funding will continue, albeit, with uncertainties as to when cash actually becomes available.

The amount of restricted reserves at 31 March 2022 is £436,435 (2021: £344,902).

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed, and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's

operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the Trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.

Principal Funding Sources

Income

The Trust's income increased to £1,738,533 (2021: £1,332,182), major headings are explained below:

- Membership, donations, legacies - Contains income from our members, donations given at events and through our presence in the community and legacies
- Charitable activities - Projects and services delivered in Birmingham & Black Country in line with the Trusts' aims and objectives.
- Trading & Other income - Includes Royalties received, interest income, hire income and rental income.

One of the biggest challenges for the Trust over the next few years will be to diversify our unrestricted income sources to provide resilience to the organisation. The other focus will be to increase the donations and legacies received by the Trust. Compared to other Wildlife Trusts nationally we achieve similar levels of funding through grants but are not performing as well in encouraging corporate partners and legacy donations. We will learn from our sister Trusts to improve our performance in these areas. We know we need to do more to secure our membership which is explained below.

Expenditure

The Trust's expenditure increased to £1,293,988 (2021: £1,049,085), major headings are explained below:

- Charitable Activity - This covers our staffing costs and direct project costs to deliver projects and services so as to meet our charitable aims and objectives.
- We are now responsible for our own membership recruitment. Other costs include recruitment through the Join Anywhere scheme via other Wildlife Trusts, online membership recruitment as well as production of membership magazines throughout the year.
- Overheads - These are the running costs to maintain our sites and headquarters covering areas such as rent, rates, gas, electric, telephones and insurance.
- Pensions - Royal London manage all pension funds on behalf of the staff members. The Trust contributes 7% in addition to staff contributions.

Every penny we receive is spent on achieving our charitable aims. Overheads include rents for our sites, running our office and insurance to ensure we are a responsible and sustainable organisation.

Report of the Trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 9 August 2022 and signed on the board's behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee

2. Independent Auditors Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (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 March 2022 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.

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 Auditors' 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 financial statements are 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 Report of the Independent Auditors 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. 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

Opinions on other matters 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 Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the 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 Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 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 trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Enquiring of management and employees, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:-

- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance.
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud and.
- The internal controls established to mitigate risk relating to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

We identified areas of law and regulation that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, discussions

with management (as required by auditing standards) and discussed with management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations. All identified laws and regulations were communicated throughout the audit team, and they remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.

The most significant considerations for the charitable company were as follows:-

- The Charity is subject to laws and regulations that affect the financial statements which include financial reporting legislation (namely The Companies Act 2006), taxation legislation and the Charities Act. We assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures concerning items recorded in the financial statements.
- The charity is also subject to other operational laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have material effect on the amounts or disclosures in the financial statements through imposing fines or withdrawal of funding contracts. Areas where this would have an effect include health and safety, Bribery Act 2010, employment law, data protections and child protection legislation (DBS checks for staff and volunteers).

Auditing standards limit the audit procedures to identifying non-compliance of these laws and regulations to enquiry of management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if there is any. Therefore, if a breach of operational regulations is not disclosed to us or evident from relevant correspondence, an audit will not detect the breach.

To identify risk of material misstatement due to fraud, we carried out discussions amongst the audit team to assess areas where and how fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators. The following areas were identified :-

- Management override of controls through the posting of inappropriate accounting entries or journals
- We do not believe there is a fraud risk relating the revenue recognition as the revenue is straightforward, with limited opportunity for manipulation.

We did not identify any additional fraud risks.

We tested the appropriateness of accounting journals and other adjustments made in the accounts preparation based on a risk criteria.

Owing to the inherent limitation of the audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulation is from the events and transaction reflected in the financial statement, the less likely in the inherently limited procedure required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of fraud, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. Our audit procedures are designed to detect material misstatement. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance or fraud and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mark Spafford FCCA ACA
(Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited
Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors
1110 Elliott Court, Herald Avenue,
Coventry Business Park, Coventry,
West Midlands CV5 6UB

Date: 26/08/2022

3. Statement of Financial Activities

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	2021 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	312,022	-	312,022	281,571
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	3	305,878	1,117,718	1,423,596	973,916
Other income		2,915	-	2,915	76,695
Total		620,815	1,117,718	1,738,533	1,332,182
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	-	29,605	29,605	24,324
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	5	487,066	777,317	1,264,383	1,024,761
Total		487,066	806,922	1,293,988	1,049,085
NET INCOME					
		133,749	310,796	444,545	283,097
Transfers between funds					
	17	£219,264	(219,264)	-	-
Net movement in funds					
		353,013	91,532	444,545	283,097
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		1,075,296	344,902	1,420,198	1,137,101
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,428,309	436,434	1,864,743	1,420,198

4. Balance Sheet March 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	11	517,224	42,402
Heritage assets	12	79,762	79,762
		<u>596,986</u>	<u>122,164</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	13	986,078	492,979
Cash at bank and in hand		584,732	1,009,134
		<u>1,570,810</u>	<u>1,502,113</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	14	(303,053)	(204,079)
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>1,267,757</u>	<u>1,298,034</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>
NET ASSETS			
		<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>
FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds	17	1,428,308	1,075,296
Restricted funds		436,435	344,902
		<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			
		<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 9th August 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD
Registered Company No. 01650938

5. Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	73,845	349,490
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>73,845</u>	<u>349,490</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(498,247)	(4,089)
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(498,247)</u>	<u>(4,089)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Loan repayments in year		-	(7,918)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>(7,918)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			
		<u>(424,402)</u>	<u>337,483</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period			
		<u>1,009,134</u>	<u>671,651</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period			
		<u>584,732</u>	<u>1,009,134</u>

6. Notes to the cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	444,545	283,097
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	23,425	21,357
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(493,099)	19,568
Increase in creditors	98,974	25,468
Net cash provided by operations	<u>73,845</u>	<u>349,490</u>

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1.4.21 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.22 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>1,009,134</u>	<u>(424,402)</u>	<u>584,732</u>
	1,009,134	(424,402)	584,732
Total	<u>1,009,134</u>	<u>(424,402)</u>	<u>584,732</u>

7. Notes to the Financial Statements

7.1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income is generally recognised on a receivable basis, being when the charity is entitled to receive the money and is reported gross of related expenditure, where the amount is reasonably certain and when there is adequate certainty of receipt of monies. The specific bases used are as follows:

- Voluntary income includes members subscriptions, donations (including related gift aid tax) legacies and grants of a general nature.
- Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity
- Contractual income is recorded when receivable.
- Grants received during the year which relate to the following financial year are carried forward in creditors.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis, meaning that the cost is identified as a liability awaiting payment, based on the date of the event, rather than the point that cash is paid. The expenditure is allocated to the appropriate cost heading in the financial statements.

- Costs of generating funds relate to expenditure incurred in raising voluntary income and fundraising trading costs.
- Charitable activities' expenditure relates to expenditure on meeting the charitable objects. This includes materials and bought in services, staff costs, information systems, communications, rented accommodation and general management directly chargeable to projects, thereby covering both internal costs and external charges for such costs. Such costs incurred internally are apportioned to projects based on direct staffing levels.
- Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the charitable company and relate to the professional costs of running the charity.

- Support costs including staff costs, information systems, communications, office accommodation and general management, are fully apportioned to other cost categories, and are primarily based on direct staffing levels.
- Membership recruitment costs, where an agency charges the trust a fee based on the first years membership income for recruitment of new members, are charged to the accounts over a period of 10 months. Surplus new income is therefore only recognised in the accounts after this period has ended and this policy is viewed as being prudent.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Short leasehold property – 4% on cost

Fixtures and fittings – 25% straight line

Expenditure on fixtures, fittings and general office equipment purchased by the charity for projects is currently written off in the year in which the expenditure is incurred, expenditure incurred for administration purposes is capitalised and depreciated as stated above.

Heritage assets

Land, classified as heritage assets, had previously been included in the accounts at cost. The Trustees value the assets every 5 years (a change from the previous annual approach) as this provides more relevant information on the activities and assets held by the charity.

Where information on the cost or valuation of heritage assets is not available or the cost of providing such information significantly outweighs any benefit to the users of the accounts then heritage assets are not recognised on the balance sheet.

Acquisitions only arise when donated to the charity or if it is believed that they will further the charity's objectives.

Full details of original cost can be found in note 8 to the accounts.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The charity is partially exempt for VAT. VAT that is irrecoverable due to the partial exemption are allocated to the appropriate cost categories and funds.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes or as suggested in a letter of wishes.

The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Payments under an arrangement which is in substance of a rental nature (operating leases) are charged in the financial statements as incurred.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The trust makes payments of employers contributions into independently administered money purchase pension policies for qualifying employees. Pension costs are charged in the financial statements on an accruals basis.

Basic financial instruments

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

7.2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Donations	310,228	280,571
Legacies	1,794	1,000
	<u>312,022</u>	<u>281,571</u>

7.3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2022	2021
	Conservation, Engagement and Influence	Total activities
	£	£
Conservation & Wildlife	1,423,596	973,916

7.4 RAISING FUNDS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Raising donations and legacies		
Raising voluntary income costs	29,605	24,324

7.5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs (see note 6)	Totals
	£	£	£
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	1,151,576	112,807	1,264,383

7.6 SUPPORT COSTS

	Management	Governance costs	Totals
	£	£	£
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	86,285	26,522	112,807

7.7 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2022 £	2021 £
Auditing of accounts	5,901	7,850
Depreciation - owned assets	23,425	21,357
Hire of plant and machinery	1,260	1,468
Other operating leases	4,153	2,254
	<u>706,716</u>	<u>590,302</u>

7.8 Trustees' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Trustees' expenses

There were no Trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

7.9 STAFF COSTS

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	621,568	515,010
Social security costs	49,960	43,141
Other pension costs	35,188	32,151
	<u>706,716</u>	<u>590,302</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2022	2021
Direct charitable work	28	20
Administrative	2	2
	<u>30</u>	<u>22</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2022	2021
£60,001 - £70,000	1	-

The key management personnel, the senior management team, received total employee benefits in the year of £204,834 (2021 - £222,983). The key management personnel comprise the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Finance & Resources, Head of Education & Engagement, Head of Conservation and Head of Fundraising & Communications.

7.10 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	281,571	-	281,571
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	431,254	542,662	973,916
Other income	76,695	-	76,695
Total	<u>789,520</u>	<u>542,662</u>	<u>1,332,182</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	24,324	-	24,324
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	571,150	453,611	1,024,761
Total	<u>595,474</u>	<u>453,611</u>	<u>1,049,085</u>
NET INCOME	194,046	89,051	283,097
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	881,250	255,851	1,137,101
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>1,075,296</u>	<u>344,902</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>

7.11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Short leasehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2021	195,038	82,069	277,107
Additions	485,280	12,967	498,247
At 31 March 2022	680,318	95,036	775,354
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2021	164,045	70,660	234,705
Charge for year	15,497	7,928	23,425
At 31 March 2022	179,542	78,588	258,130
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2022	500,776	16,448	517,224
At 31 March 2021	30,993	11,409	42,402

The Centre Of The Earth is built on land which is leased from Birmingham City Council on a twenty five year lease from 24 March 1998. The net book value as at 31 December 1997 is being written off over the term of the lease by equal annual instalments.

7.12 HERITAGE ASSETS

	Total £
MARKET VALUE	
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	79,762
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2022	79,762
At 31 March 2021	79,762

If the Land had not been revalued it would have been included in the accounts at the following historical cost totally £20,523. This is broken down to £10,523 being the amount paid for land and £10,000 being the value of land donated. There has been no change to these values in the last five years.

Heritage assets consist of land at Portway Hill, Pelsall Common Spinney (Turner's Wood) and Deer's Leap Wood.

Such land that has been acquired or donated to the charity is managed and preserved in accordance with the charity's objectives for wildlife and their habitat. Access to such land is available to the general public.

Other heritage assets may be purchased by, or donated to the charity, as and when circumstances permit. The number of acquisitions in the last 5 years is nil.

The Trustees have obtained a desktop valuation by an independent valuer in an attempt to understand the open market value of the heritage assets. Based on the work done, the Trustees do not believe the valuation of the Heritage assets at £79,762 is materially different from the open market value of these assets. The Trustees feel no adjustment to the revaluation is required.

7.13 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	569,705	468,562
Prepayments	1,109	24,417
Accrued income	415,264	-
	986,078	492,979

7.14 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	486	127,521
Social security and other taxes	53,483	29,998
Other creditors	17,436	16,751
Deferred income	6,000	12,546
Accrued expenses	225,648	17,263
	303,053	204,079

	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1st April 2021	12,546	19,500
Released from previous years	(12,546)	(19,500)
Income deferred in the year	6,000	12,546
Deferred income at 31st March 2022	6,000	12,546

Deferred income relates to grant income deferred to future periods as the income received relates specifically to the 2022/23 accounting period.

7.15. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Within one year	3,950	7,976
Between one and five years	8,600	10,761
In more than five years	10,750	12,900
	23,300	31,637

7.16 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022 Total funds	2021 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	596,986	-	596,986	122,164
Current assets	1,133,883	436,927	1,570,810	1,502,113
Current liabilities	(302,561)	(492)	(303,053)	(204,079)
	<u>1,428,308</u>	<u>436,435</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>

7.17 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.21	Net movement in funds	Transfers between funds	At 31.3.22
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	511,605	133,748	516,559	1,161,912
Designated Fund	504,452	-	(297,295)	207,157
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	-	59,239
	<u>1,075,296</u>	<u>133,748</u>	<u>219,264</u>	<u>1,428,308</u>
Restricted funds				
Catchment (Western Park)	18,400	(18,400)	-	-
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	-	(492)	-	(492)
Natural Prospects HLF	1,423	(1,423)	-	-
Other awards	16,079	(6,429)	(9,650)	-
Veolia Grant	59,785	15,000	(74,785)	-
Birmingham LNP	4,442	(4,442)	-	-
Sedley Beacon Enforcement Undertaking	-	-	30,000	30,000
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	-	-	13,594
National Express	15,000	(15,000)	-	-
Reaching Communities	60,743	65,928	(95,000)	31,671
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	2,825	(7,243)	17,318	12,900
River Cole Collaboration	34,941	(34,941)	-	-
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	25,000	(6,681)	-	18,319
Carbon Reduction Strategy	20,000	(7,853)	(12,147)	-
Nature Friendly Schools	40,000	(33,700)	-	6,300
Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections	32,670	(32,670)	-	-
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	-	42,652	-	42,652
Innovation Fund	-	2,968	-	2,968
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	-	14,789	-	14,789
Stourton Castle Bypass	-	248,080	-	248,080
EcoPark Development (HS2)	-	75,000	(75,000)	-
Stourton Castle Desgin (Environment Agency)	-	15,654	-	15,654
	<u>344,902</u>	<u>310,797</u>	<u>(219,264)</u>	<u>436,435</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,420,198</u>	<u>444,545</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,864,743</u>

7.17 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	620,815	(487,067)	133,748
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	-	(18,400)	(18,400)
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	18,531	(19,023)	(492)
Natural Prospects HLF	73,672	(75,095)	(1,423)
Other awards	9,554	(15,983)	(6,429)
Veolia Grant	15,000	-	15,000
Birmingham LNP	-	(4,442)	(4,442)
National Express	1	(15,001)	(15,000)
Reaching Communities	128,702	(62,774)	65,928
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 Dunelm Weir)	-	(7,243)	(7,243)
River Cole Collaboration	(9,333)	(25,608)	(34,941)
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	-	(6,681)	(6,681)
Carbon Reduction Strategy	-	(7,853)	(7,853)
Nature Friendly Schools	68,157	(101,857)	(33,700)
Cadent Foundation Natural Connections	-	(32,670)	(32,670)
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	124,850	(82,198)	42,652
Lyric Programme	206,032	(206,032)	-
Innovation Fund	12,279	(9,311)	2,968
Network for Nature M5 Clean Rivers	14,191	(14,191)	-
Smestow Catchment (Environment Agency)	20,000	(5,211)	14,789
Stourton Castle Bypass	250,000	(1,920)	248,080
Purple Horizons	80,082	(80,082)	-
EcoPark Development (HS2)	75,000	-	75,000
Stourton Castle Design (Environment Agency)	31,000	(15,346)	15,654
	<u>1,117,718</u>	<u>(806,921)</u>	<u>310,797</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,738,533</u>	<u>(1,293,988)</u>	<u>444,545</u>

7.17 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	498,461	13,144	511,605
Designated Fund	323,550	180,902	504,452
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	59,239
	881,250	194,046	1,075,296
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	23,400	(5,000)	18,400
Salmon in the Stour (18-19)	6,528	(6,528)	-
River Cole	69,000	(69,000)	-
Natural Prospects HLF	-	1,423	1,423
Other awards	15,250	829	16,079
Veolia Grant	57,785	2,000	59,785
Birmingham LNP	-	4,442	4,442
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	-	13,594
National Express	15,000	-	15,000
Reaching Communities	33,794	26,949	60,743
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	21,500	(18,675)	2,825
River Cole Collaboration	-	34,941	34,941
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	-	25,000	25,000
Carbon Reduction Strategy	-	20,000	20,000
Nature Friendly Schools	-	40,000	40,000
Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections	-	32,670	32,670
	255,851	89,051	344,902
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,137,101</u>	<u>283,097</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>

7.17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	608,618	(595,474)	13,144
Designated Fund	180,902	-	180,902
	789,520	(595,474)	194,046
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	-	(5,000)	(5,000)
Salmon in the Stour (18-19)	-	(6,528)	(6,528)
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	10,779	(10,779)	-
River Cole	-	(69,000)	(69,000)
Natural Prospects HLF	69,038	(67,615)	1,423
Other awards	31,000	(30,171)	829
Veolia Grant	2,000	-	2,000
Birmingham LNP	21,000	(16,558)	4,442
Reaching Communities	34,440	(7,491)	26,949
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	-	(18,675)	(18,675)
River Cole Collaboration	56,000	(21,059)	34,941
Biodiversity SLAs	25,000	(25,000)	-
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	25,000	-	25,000
EcoRecord	42,001	(42,001)	-
Carbon Reduction Strategy	20,000	-	20,000
Nature Friendly Schools	173,734	(133,734)	40,000
Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections	32,670	-	32,670
	542,662	(453,611)	89,051
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,332,182</u>	<u>(1,049,085)</u>	<u>283,097</u>

Transfers are made between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at the time the specific restrictions have been fulfilled.

The designated fund of £207,157 (2021: £504,452) relates to the balance of funds received in the accounts for the year to 31 March 2022 remaining unspent designated by the Trustees for use on our commitments post year end. This sum relates to the Project Completion Fund.

General reserves represent free unrestricted funds that are available to spend at the discretion of the Trustees. Within the general reserve are funds relating to fixed assets held which are not readily disposable and are intended to be held for the long term, hence not liquid funds that can be spent straightaway. This amount is equivalent to the net book value of the land and buildings as these assets have been secured for use within the charity for the long term.

The restricted fund represents monies receivable for projects which can only be spent on their respective activities as imposed by the donor or grant making body.

The Trustees confirm that all restricted fund balances at the year end have subsequently been spent or will be spent in the forthcoming financial year.

More detailed disclosure on description nature and purpose of the funds, reasons for restrictions etc are listed below:-

Conservation

Restricted Funds for the Trust's conservation work delivery against Goal 1 and includes

- Managing our Nature Reserves (many smaller awards)
- Improving spaces for nature through the Nature Improvement Area
- Ecological surveys (Environment Agency and other smaller awards)
- Development of water catchment improvement works along the River Stour (Salmon in the Stour and Severn Trent Resilience Project)
- Natural Rivers project will improve woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and watercourses along the River Rea and its tributaries in south-west Birmingham and the River Tame in west Birmingham. (Natural Rivers)
- River Cole Partnership with the Environment Agency for the restoration and naturalisation 940 m of urban river catchments (River Cole and River Cole Collaboration Funds)

People and Wildlife

- HLF skills for the Future - delivery of the Natural Prospects trainee programme
- Nature Friendly Schools - Nature England Funding delivered by RSWT to help teachers run outdoor learning classes.
- Funding from "Reaching Communities" Community Lottery Fund to help build a community hub at at EcoPark.

EcoPark

- Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections - to deliver nature wellbeing courses to people at risk of isolation.

Resources

- Carbon Reductions Strategy Funding - to complete a Carbon reduction and activity plan.

7.18 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county wildlife trusts, and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK level. An annual contribution is payable to RSWT amounting to £10,890 (2021: £9,740).

The Trust also purchased publications and other sundries from RSWT amounting to £7,322 (2021 - £7,322), with £nil (2021 - £nil) owed to RSWT at the year end. Sales made to RSWT were £2,616 (2021: £4,595) and amounts owed by RSWT were £1,380 at the year end (2021: £nil).

8. Thank you We couldn't have done it without you

Our work for nature's recovery is possible thanks to our wonderful members, donors, volunteers, funders and businesses partners - Thank you for all your support - you are all **wildlife heroes!**

Community Groups

Deers Leap Residents Association
Friends of Deer's Leap Wood
Friends of Dawberry Fields
Friends of Hill Hook
Friends of Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood
Friends of Rowley Hills

Schools

Barcroft Primary School
Chivenor Primary School
Conway Primary School
Corpus Christi Primary School
North Walsall Academy
Oasis Academy Barford
Oasis Academy Foundry
Oasis Academy Woodview
Rookery Primary School
Somerville Primary School
St Giles Primary School
Timberley Primary School
Selly Oak Trust School
Chandos Primary School
St Patricks Primary School
Fairway Primary School
Chandos Primary School
Hawbush Primary School
Bantock Primary School
St Edmunds Primary School
Our Lady & St Rose of Lima Primary School
Fallings Park Primary School
Hillstone Primary School
Chilwell Croft Primary School
St Mary's Primary School
Nelson Mandela Primary School

Active Donation Box Venues

Paul's Florist, West Bromwich
EcoManiax, Stourbridge
Bantock Park Tea Room, Wolverhampton

Project Partners

The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
Birmingham City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
City of Wolverhampton Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Natural England
Riverside House
Environment Agency
National Highways
Wetland Engineering
JBA Consulting
Dynamic Rivers
Sanctus
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
University of Birmingham
Sandyfields Ltd.
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
Staffordshire Ecological Record
Parkview Clinic
Heart of Birmingham Vocational College
Princes Trust
SAMPAD
Birmingham Settlement
Birmingham City of Nature Alliance
Footsteps
The Active Well-being Society
Tandem Consulting
McCarthys
Lucas Architects

Business Members

SCC International (Bronze)
Wienerberger (Bronze)
Schofield Lothian (Silver)
Kennedys Law (Bronze)

Business Supporters

Nick Groves
Vine House Farm
Hogan Lovells
Fleming Verandas
Severn Trent Water
WSP
Arup
University of Birmingham
Vegan Society
Cadent Gas
Leaflovers
IM Properties

Funders

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
National Lottery Heritage Fund
Cadent Foundation
People's Postcode Lottery
Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
Saintbary Charitable Trust
Roughley Charitable Trust
National Express Foundation
Cooperative Foundation
Greener Recovery Challenge Fund
National Lottery Community Fund
National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund
Veolia Environmental Fund
High Speed Two Community and Environmental Fund
Joyce Farley Education Trust
29th May 1961 Trust
Patrick Trust
CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust
Cole Charitable Trust
Secombe Trust
Charles Brotherton Trust
Arts Council
Edward and Dorothy Cadbury Trust
GJW Turner
Limoges Charitable Trust
Neighbourly - Seeds of Change



TRAINING COURSE AT CENTRE OF THE EARTH

Significant thanks to
our major funders





Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust



CANADA GEESE, COTTERILLS
LANE RECREATION GROUND

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

Registered Address: 42 Norman Street, Birmingham, B18 7EP



Registered with
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 513615

Accounts



THE *wildlife*
TRUSTS

Birmingham &
Black Country

Annual Report

For the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021



NATURAL PROSPECT TRAINEES SURVEYING AT MOSELEY BOG AND JOY'S WOOD

Contents

	Page
2020- 2021 in Numbers	4
Successes and Highlights	6
Chair Report	8
CEO Report	9
1. Report of the Trustees comprising:	
1.1 Structure, Governance and Management	10
1.2 Objectives and Activities	13
1.3 Summary of the year	14
1.4 Looking ahead	17
1.5 Financial review	18
2. Independent Auditors Report	20
3. Statement of Financial Activities	23
4. Balance Sheet	24
5. Cash flow Statement	25
6. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement	26
7. Notes to the Financial Statements	27
8. Thank you	39

2020 – 2021 in Numbers

30

Planning applications reviewed and responded to



400

Young people benefited from our Education and Engagement services

84 People signed up for Wild Walk Week



1,300

Species recorded for City Nature Challenge April 2020



2,700

People took part in 30 Days Wild



335

New volunteers registered



236

People joined us at events including 4 online events

31

Schools registered for Nature Friendly Schools Programme



1,905 hectares

Area of land worked on or where we provided advice



£20,891.51

Raised through our 40-year appeal

2020 – 2021 SUCCESSES & HIGHLIGHTS



IMPROVEMENTS ON THE RIVER COLE

GOAL 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

We delivered 22 biodiversity improvement projects including hedgerow restoration at Smestow Valley in Wolverhampton, river naturalisation on the River Cole and building a wildlife pond at Riverside House in Stourbridge. Our Growing Local Flora project also continued to expand and provide thousands of native wildflowers for our woodland diversification projects.

The River Cole improvement project was set up in partnership with Birmingham City Council and the Environment Agency to improve habitat quality and resilience of the river through habitat

re-naturalisation in three distinct areas; Stechford Ponds, Burbury Brickworks Nature Reserve and Bordsley Green Recreation Ground.

On 10th July 2020 the Black Country became a UNESCO Global Geopark; a uniquely urban Geopark including our Portway Hill site on the Rowley Hills.

In December, Our Salmon in the Stour project was chosen as one of 21 finalists from more than 750 projects across Europe to potentially win £150,000 of funding from Ecover's Fertilise the Future initiative. Although, we did not win we were delighted to finish in second place, with our #BBCWildlifexEcover hashtag being shared 2,217 times, reaching over 350,000 people (despite having a significantly smaller social media audience than other applicants). A huge thank you to everyone who voted for us.

Goal 2: Everyone is connected to nature

At our AGM in January 2021, we welcomed 8 new voluntary trustees including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and said goodbye to former Treasurer Martin Smith and Chairperson Simon Needle whose terms came to an end.

Our Nature Friendly Schools programme, funded by Defra, continued after 31 primary schools registered. The programme supports primary schools to embed outdoor learning across the curriculum, increasing pupils' access to local wild spaces and improving school grounds to make them better for wildlife.

Our second cohort of Natural Prospects trainees completed their Level 2 Diplomas in summer 2020, with 6 going



NATURAL PROSPECTS TRAINEES COHORT 2

onto find jobs in the sector or to secure places at University. We recruited a third cohort of 5 Natural Prospects trainees, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and a further 6 trainees on the Love Your River Cole project funded by the Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Thanks to funding from People's Postcode Lottery, we created four educational films on bats, pollinators, badgers and hedgehogs. We also shared three films on nature-based craft that can all be viewed on YouTube!

We also delivered a range of digital events to help us connect with audiences, these included a Spotlight on Urban Wildlife with guests David Lindo and Kate Bradbury and Wildlife Heroes – celebrating people such as Mike Bloxham, Alison Millward, Chris Baines and Peter Shirley, just some of the people who helped form the Trust 40 years ago. We also held our first ever digital AGM and a photography workshop.

We led Birmingham and the Black Country's first ever entry in the global citizen science challenge, City Nature Challenge. 377 residents took part between 24th – 27th April 2020 recording over 1,300 species – more than any other European city area. The area ranked 13th out of 244 city areas that took part demonstrating the biodiversity value of our urban area.

Award-winning photographer Verity Milligan joined, CEO Delia Garratt and trustee Sandy Taylor in judging the 55 entries in our 2020 photography competition with 6 winners receiving vouchers donated by WEX Photo Video.



We want the 2021 elected WMCA Mayor to commit to:

- ✓ Support the green transformation of the West Midlands
By ensuring the delivery of a local green recovery strategy with ambitious targets to benefit the Midlands for wildlife and people, with lots of local development projects.
- ✓ Provide access to high quality green space for all
and champion the benefits of an improved environment to the health, wellbeing and happiness of all. Invest in accessible green spaces and blue spaces, and create new green spaces through 'green' regeneration of brown land and residential areas, helped by funding through local development corporations.
- ✓ Help create a healthy natural environment to mitigate the ecological and climate crisis
By working to restore natural habitats and green infrastructure that supports local wildlife and people, and helps to reduce carbon emissions in urban areas.
- ✓ Boost employment opportunities in the environmental sector
By working to create job opportunities for the next generation of green sector professionals to support local SMEs to create a green economy that is resilient to local economic and employment market shifts to create a positive economic, social and environmental future.
- ✓ Improve environmental standards for new housing
By setting a higher standard for new developments to create homes that are good for people and wildlife. Protect all wildlife and green spaces from development and ensure the highest standards for the built environment. Encourage local authorities to set higher standards for new developments to ensure all new developments are wildlife rich and green spaces and ensure all new developments are wildlife rich.
- ✓ Reduce the negative impacts of HS2
By securing natural environmental sites, Green Corridor and publishing an HS2's 'no net loss' strategy. Support local authorities to take an integrated approach for the development of the West Midlands. Ensure all new developments are wildlife rich and green spaces and ensure all new developments are wildlife rich.

bbewildlife.org.uk/2021Mayor

Goal 3: The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making

Alongside Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Woodland Trust and Friends of the Earth, the Trust called on Mayoral Candidates to support our Manifesto for Green Recovery across the West Midlands. Over 200 people took the e-action and 150 people joined the hustings event where questions from the public were put to the candidates.

Our work to influence where and how new homes are built is critical to our vision of a future Birmingham and the Black Country which has more wildlife, more wild spaces and more people with a strong connection to the natural world.

In 2020 we provided evidence to the four Black Country local authorities for the Black Country Plan.

We were commissioned by the local authorities to undertake an Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. This identifies areas of high ecological value and demonstrates how damaging developments in the wrong places would be.

Goal 4: We are an effective organisation

With crowd funding via text to donate and Just Giving, over 77 donors raised £2,360 via JustGiving for the Dawberry Fields Reptile Project on Brandwood End in Birmingham to improve habitats for slow worm and common lizard in partnership with Naturally Birmingham Future Parks Accelerator Programme.

Over £20,000 was raised by over 300 donors through our 40-year appeal including £11,965.25 through a range of fundraising initiatives organised by the Mayor of Dudley's Charity appeal.

Bronze business members Wienerberger renewed their membership for a 2nd year and Schofield Lothian joined as silver business members. Bird seed producer Vine House Farm donated 4% of sales from customers within the Birmingham and Black Country totalling £2,615. Property company IM Properties donated £1,000 to the Dawberry Fields Reptile Project. Legal firm Hogan Lovells chose the Wildlife Trusts as their charity partner for a 3-year period and successfully raised £19,000 in 2020 through employee fundraising initiatives. WEX Photo Video donated £1,000 in vouchers for the photography competition.



DRAGONFLY BY PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION WINNER ALICE WHITEHOUSE

Chair's Report

I am delighted to have been appointed as Chair of the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country and to be writing my first foreword for this Annual Report. The story of last year is dominated by the pandemic, which has impacted our lives in so many ways. So I want to start by thanking all of our members and supporters for their hugely valued and continuing support over this very difficult period. I also want to express my appreciation and sincere thanks to the staff for their dedication, commitment and resilience, as well as their ability and willingness to accept and adjust to new ways of working. In spite of the challenging year, the Trust has made progress against its charitable objectives, protecting and restoring wildlife and wild spaces across Birmingham and the Black Country, as well as providing outstanding education and training opportunities for residents of the region.

In this, the Trust's 40th anniversary year we have been reminded sharply that maintaining a connection with the natural world is more important than ever. One legacy of the pandemic has been to make us all realise just how vital it is to ensure that people have access to green, wildlife rich spaces wherever they live. The Trust is committed to tackling inequality of access through its programmes such as the Natural Prospects traineeships and by ensuring that the Trust becomes even more representative of the communities that it serves.

I want to express my thanks to those Trustees that stepped down at the last AGM, including outgoing Chair Simon Needle. I am proud to be supporting the Trust alongside new and existing Trustees, and to be working with a strong team across the entire Trust all of whom have the necessary ambition and determination to tackle the urgent nature and climate crisis and to ensure nature's recovery.

Lisa Pinney MBE
Chair of Trustees



LISA PINNEY, MBE, CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Chief Executive's Report

In its fortieth year, the Trust has faced a year like no other. We have been tested on all fronts. I am very proud of the way that staff and volunteers have responded and adapted helping us to navigate the challenging times and enabling us to deliver despite the challenges. We can only deliver what we do because of our great people. We are committed to learning from the ways of working over the past year to become even more flexible and dynamic in the future.

We are incredibly grateful for the continued support of our members and supporters, as well as for the emergency funds received which enabled us to navigate this challenging year.

Highlights this year have included a move to increased digital engagement including the Wildlife Heroes event which celebrated the contributions of people such as Mike Bloxham, Alison Millward, Chris Baines and Peter Shirley

- some of the people who helped form the Trust 40 years ago. We held our first ever digital AGM, and we also trialled digital fundraising through crowdfunding initiatives such as that for Dawberry Fields.

We continued to deliver our engagement and training work such the Natural Prospects Traineeship programme, as well as work with Primary Schools across the region through the Nature Friendly Schools programme. We also became a key partner in The Love Your River Cole project, led by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust supported by the Nature Recovery Challenge Fund. The project sees us provide training for local people to look after this natural river corridor.

We took some significant steps in our work towards a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Birmingham and the Black Country. EcoRecord and partners developed an approach to satellite-derived habitat mapping, creating the first ever habitat map for the whole of the conurbation. Our Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt was also published as evidence informing the Draft Black Country Plan. This method of mapping the ecological network will form the basis of a Birmingham and Black Country-wide approach in 2021-22.

It was also a great pleasure to look back at the history of the Trust in the special edition Autumn magazine and to recognise all that has been achieved for nature during this time.

Dr Delia Garratt
CEO



DELIA GARRATT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Report of The Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

Council has pleasure in presenting its report together with the audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021. Council has adopted the provisions of the Charities SORP (FRS102) - 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 (effective 1 January 2019) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

1.1. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Registered Company No: 01650938
(England and Wales)

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Address: 42 Norman Street,
Birmingham, B18 7EP

Auditors: Luckmans Duckett Parker
Limited, Chartered Accountants /
Statutory Auditors, 1110 Elliott Court
Herald Avenue, Coventry Business Park,
Coventry, West Midlands, CV5 6UB

Bankers: Nat West Plc, Chamber of
Commerce House, 36 Highfield Road,
Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3BJ

Company Secretary: EF Mooney

Key Management Personnel

Chief Executive: Dr Delia Garratt

Head of Conservation: Simon Atkinson

Head of Education and Engagement:
Gareth Morgan

**Head of Fundraising and
Communication:** Emma Thompson

Head of Finance and Resources:
Atul Thaker

Trustees

Lisa Pinney MBE, Chair

David Green, Vice Chair

James Larner, Treasurer

Eamon Mooney, Secretary

Nicholas Crombie, Trustee

Alexander Taylor, Trustee

Ian Trueman, Trustee

Melanie Knight, Trustee

Philip Beardmore, Trustee

Anna Bright, Trustee

Denise Mclellan, Trustee

Jill Mallender, Trustee

Lynn Besenyei, Trustee

Andy Wayro, Trustee

Simon Needle (resigned 16.01.2021)

Martin Smith (resigned 16.01.2021)

Organisational structure

The overall responsibility for the charity lies with the Trustee Directors who have delegated the day to day management of the charity to the Chief Executive. The Trustee Directors meet regularly to agree strategy, review progress, review financial information, and discuss policy issues. To facilitate effective operation, the Chief Executive has delegated authority within terms of reference approved by the Trustees for some operational matters, including finance.

The Wildlife Trust is governed by an elected Council and is therefore directly accountable to the members of the charity. **The Articles of Association gives Council the powers to:**

- (i) Administer the affairs of the Charity
 - (ii) Exercise all the powers of the Charity
 - (iii) Determine the policy of the Charity
- Council formally delegates certain functions and responsibilities to several committees which deal with specific policy and organisational issues. The day to day management of the Charity's affairs is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is accountable exclusively to the Council for achieving, via the Business Plan, the Wildlife Trust's aims and for complying with Council policies. A team of professionally trained staff report to the Chief Executive.

Governing document

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is one of 46 independent charities, which form a national partnership - The Wildlife Trusts through the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. Collectively we manage 2,300 nature reserves covering 102,500 hectares of land for wildlife and for people, inspiring 13 million visits to wildlife sites. Together we have 849,584 members. The Trust's family membership is also part of the national environment club, Wildlife Watch, which provides projects for members and affiliated schools, involving them directly with environmental Issues.

The Trust is a registered charity (No. 513615) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 1650938). The Trust was established in 1980 to protect our local natural heritage and encourage people to engage, enjoy and get involved with the natural environment. We are a membership organisation, governed by a memorandum and Articles of Association.

Work is carried out by a staff team total of 20 individuals (at 31 March 2021) equating to 16 full time equivalent posts. During the year the Trust had 7 trainees funded through Heritage Lottery Fund's Natural Prospects programme who will complete their traineeship in August 2020. The Trust could not achieve the impacts we do without the commitment and hard work of a large number of volunteers.

In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding 50p.

Wider network and related parties

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county wildlife trusts and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK level.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

A Council of voluntary Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the Trust. The Trust's Council is elected from the membership in accordance with its governing documents at the Annual General Meeting. Trustees are either co-opted during the year or elected at the Annual General Meeting. Co-opted Trustees must stand for election at the Annual General Meeting immediately following their appointment. Council may co-opt additional members from time to time as it sees fit. Trustees are also Directors of the Company limited by guarantee.

Induction and training of new trustees

The Trustee is provided with copies of the charity's key documents, including its memorandum and Articles of Association, Governance Handbook, latest Annual Report and Accounts, minutes of recent Council meetings, policy documents and further information on the role and responsibilities of charity trustees. New Trustees are required to confirm that they have studied these documents and raised any queries or obtained further information which they may need.

Following election or co-option of a Trustee, the Chair will introduce a new Trustee at their first meeting of Council. They will also participate in a formal induction process to familiarise them with the extent and nature of the Trust's operations. After election at the Annual General Meeting Trustees serve for a period of 3 years and may be elected for a further period of 3 years.

Developments in Charity Law and Practice are monitored and important developments are brought to the notice of Trustees by the Executive.

The relationship between staff and trustees is crucial to the Trust's continuing success. Trustees bring a range of skills and experience to the responsibilities of the role which requires them to have an understanding of all aspects of the Trust's work. Trustees meet four times a year where they review strategy and operational performance, set policies and agree budgets.

Key management remuneration

None of the Trustees receive remuneration or benefit for their work with the group and charity. Any connection between Trustees and any company the Trust works with is disclosed to the board. Financial details of which are disclosed in note 9 to the accounts

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and each trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

The auditors, Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 9th November 2021 and signed on the board's behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee



1.2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Limited is required by charity and company law to act within the objects of its Memorandum of Association, which are as follows:

Objectives

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country's objectives are:

- 1. For the benefit of the public, to advance, promote and further the conservation maintenance study and protection of:**
 - i. wildlife and its habitats;
 - ii. places of natural beauty;
 - iii. places of zoological, botanical, geographical, archaeological or scientific interest;
 - iv. features of landscape with geological, physiographical, or amenity value; in particular, but not exclusively, in ways that further biodiversity.

2. To advance the education of the public in:

- v. the principles and practice of sustainable development;
- vi. the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation; in particular, but not exclusively, in urban areas.

We launched our five-year strategy for 2017 - 2022, A Greener Future, in November 2016.

Our Vision is for Birmingham and the Black Country to have more wildlife, more wild places and more people with a strong connection to the natural world every year.

Our Strategic Goals are:

1. Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued.
2. Everyone is connected to nature.
3. The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making.
4. We are an effective organisation.

Public benefit

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country exists to promote the care and protection of the environment and therefore provides a clear public benefit. The Trust's philosophy is based on the belief that the natural world deserves conserving for its own sake and, since this is widely perceived to be a worthy aim of public policy, it may fairly be regarded as a benefit to the public at large. However, the public benefits provided by The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country go much further.

Firstly, our nature reserves are used by the public. At most sites information and interpretation is provided to visitors. Secondly, our education programmes are aimed at schools, colleges, adult groups and the wider public. Thirdly, our information gathering and provision of expert advice and opinion to local authorities and others helps to ensure that planning decisions are made on a rational basis taking full account of the public benefit of wildlife. Fourthly the involvement of many volunteers in our work provides an outlet for altruistic endeavour, which is of special benefit to those involved as well as delivering benefits to the wider public.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity' (PB2).



CHILDREN ORIENTEERING AS PART OF OUR NATURE FRIENDLY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME



HEDGE LAYING AT SMESTOW VALLEY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

1.3 SUMMARY OF THE YEAR

Each year the Trust produces a detailed Business Plan which determines the activities to be carried out during the year. Results are monitored throughout the year with regular reports being produced for Trust Council. The pandemic has had a significant impact on achievements and performance throughout the year. As it became apparent that many of our plans would be difficult to deliver, the annual plan was revised accordingly.

The main impacts of the pandemic have been:

- Several funded projects were paused or delayed
- Face to face recruitment of new members was not possible
- Face to face engagement with our audiences was only possible for limited periods during the year
- The funding environment became harder resulting in fewer new projects

Despite these challenges, the Trust has achieved a good proportion of the objectives as set out in the revised business plan.

Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

Landscape-scale nature conservation

Despite the challenges of lockdown and colleagues being on furlough we continued to look after and manage 6 nature reserves and 2 education centres, and delivered 22 biodiversity improvement projects including hedgerow restoration at Smestow Valley in Wolverhampton, river naturalisation on the River Cole and building a wildlife pond at Riverside House in Stourbridge. Our Growing Local Flora project also continued to expand and provide thousands of native wildflowers for our woodland diversification projects.

The River Cole improvement project was set up in partnership with Birmingham City Council and the Environment Agency to improve habitat quality and resilience of the river through habitat re-naturalisation in three distinct areas; Stechford Ponds, Burbury Brickworks Nature Reserve and Bordseley Green Recreation Ground.

The Love Your River Cole project, led by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, was awarded funding from the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund. As a key partner, training local people to look after this natural river corridor, the project will see us deliver a significant biodiversity enhancement project at Glebe Farm Recreation Ground in 2021-22.

We were commissioned by Bournville Village Trust to produce an Ecological Management Plan for their green spaces and undertook a survey as part of a public consultation. 92% of respondents stated they wanted public green space to be managed for people and wildlife.

On 10th July 2020 the Black Country became a UNESCO Global Geopark; a uniquely urban Geopark including our Portway Hill site on the Rowley Hills. Graham Worton, Keeper of Geology, Dudley MBC shared the fascinating insights of the geology of the Black Country in an article in our winter 2020 magazine and also via a presentation at our January 2021 AGM.

In December, Our Salmon in the Stour project was chosen as one of 21 finalists from more than 750 projects across Europe to potentially win £150,000 of funding from Ecover's Fertilise the Future initiative. Although, we did not win we were delighted to finish in second place, with our #BBCWildlifexEcover hashtag being shared 2,217 times, reaching over 350,000 people (despite having a significantly smaller social media audience than other applicants). A huge thank you to everyone who voted for us.

Esmee Fairbairn Funding

The continued funding from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation has enabled us to deliver 20 biodiversity improvement projects across Birmingham and the Black Country, as well as supporting our planning work, our Volunteer Coordinator post and digital engagement. During 2020 we secured additional funding from the foundation through their Funding Plus programme for an Ecological Services Development Strategy.



Goal 2: Everyone is connected to nature

Volunteers

We would like to thank the volunteers who supported us remotely with membership processing, communications and marketing. Despite all in-person volunteer activity being postponed we received 335 new volunteer registrations and volunteers committed 5,304 hours to support our work.

At our AGM in January 2021, we welcomed 8 new voluntary trustees including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and said goodbye to former Treasurer Martin Smith and Chairperson Simon Needle whose terms came to an end.

Education and Engagement

Our Nature Friendly Schools programme, funded by Defra, continued after 31 primary schools registered. The programme supports primary schools to embed outdoor learning across the curriculum, increasing pupils' access to local wild spaces and improving school grounds to make them better for wildlife.

We secured funding from the National Express and Cadent Foundations to develop and deliver a range of training courses for 16-25 year olds. These were prepared, but all delivery was suspended due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Our second cohort of Natural Prospects trainees completed their Level 2 Diplomas in summer 2020, with 6 going onto find jobs in the sector or to secure places at University. We recruited a third cohort of 5 Natural Prospects trainees, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and a further 6 trainees on the Love Your River Cole project funded by the Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Thanks to funding from People's Postcode Lottery, we created four educational films on bats, pollinators, badgers and hedgehogs. We also shared three films on nature-based craft that can all be viewed on YouTube!

Communications

Despite the challenges of furlough, social distancing and home-working, we maintained external communications with supporters and members through e-newsletters, social media and quarterly magazines. We invited guest writers to share their stories for articles in *Wildlife* magazine including an article on Overlooked urban spaces at Woodthorpe Road Allotments and the Geology of the Black Country.

We also delivered a range of digital events to help us connect with audiences, these included a *Spotlight on Urban Wildlife* with guests David Lindo and Kate Bradbury and *Wildlife Heroes* – celebrating people such as Mike Bloxham, Alison Millward, Chris Baines and Peter Shirley, just some of the people who helped form the Trust 40 years ago. We also held our first ever digital AGM and a photography workshop.

Our social media and e-newsletter audiences grew as people found solace in nature and pleasure in connecting with nature on their doorsteps. The number of local registrations for 30 Days Wild rose from 1,688 in 2019 to 2,700 in 2020.

We led Birmingham and the Black Country's first ever entry in the global citizen science challenge, City Nature Challenge. 377 residents took part between 24th – 27th April 2020 recording over 1,300 species – more than any other European city area. The area ranked 13th out of 244 city areas that took part demonstrating the biodiversity value of our urban area.

Award-winning photographer Verity Milligan joined, CEO Delia Garratt and trustee Sandy Taylor in judging the 55 entries in our 2020 photography competition with 6 winners receiving vouchers donated by WEX Photo Video.

We were interviewed on Radio WM about City Nature Challenge and Wild Walk Week and on Black Country Radio about the Dawberry Fields Reptile Project.

Goal 3: The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making

Alongside Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Woodland Trust and Friends of the Earth, the Trust called on Mayoral Candidates to support our Manifesto for Green Recovery across the West Midlands. Over 200 people took the e-action and 150 people joined the hustings event where questions from the public were put to the candidates.

Our work to influence where and how new homes are built is critical to our vision of a future Birmingham and the Black Country which has more wildlife, more wild spaces and more people with a strong connection to the natural world. We believe that strategic planning must be informed by evidence which identifies where the most valuable sites for wildlife are, which is why in 2020 we provided evidence to the four Black Country local authorities for the Black Country Plan. The Government require every local planning authority to produce a plan to steer future development, and over a 15-year period the Black Country Plan needs to allocate land for 76,000 new homes and 560 hectares of land for new places of employment. We were commissioned by the local authorities to undertake an Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. This identifies areas of high ecological value and demonstrates how damaging developments in the wrong places would be.

The Wildlife Trust are advocating for the Black Country Plan to include a Nature Recovery Network map and strong environmental policies, to recognise the value of brownfield sites to wildlife and to take account of our evidence when allocating sites for development.

We provided advice to over 70 landowners and managers on how to protect existing wildlife and enhance habitats for the benefit of a wide range of species. We continue to respond to planning applications and 37 of these with a combined area of over 50 hectares were either refused or improved for wildlife.

Goal 4: We are an effective organisation

The beginning of the pandemic brought great uncertainty and pressure to make swift decisions balancing the need to meet our charitable objects while ensuring staff safety. In March and April, immediate risk management measures were put in place including closing our offices and ceasing work undertaken by volunteers. The Trust was able to draw support from the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, with the number of staff on furlough peaking in July and August.

Despite being successful in securing emergency support from the National Lottery Heritage Emergency Fund, receiving support from the Esmee Fairburn Foundation, halting certain projects and reviewing the necessity of other operations, the Trust had to make two people redundant following consultation. We also froze recruitment of a number of vacancies until later in the year when we were sure of our finances.

The planned termination of our contract with face-to-face membership recruitment agency Wildlife Fundraising Central effectively ended a little earlier than anticipated due to the national lockdown in March 2020, and with all other face-to-face recruitment suspended for much of the year we recruited just 6% of new memberships via these methods compared to the previous year. However, we carried out planned pilots in digital membership recruitment which proved to be both efficient and more cost effective, and we almost doubled the number of new memberships recruited online. The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts also piloted a successful national membership recruitment programme which boosted new memberships to the Trust.

We anticipated a loss in membership income and a rise in cancellations due to the economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic, however we are pleased to report that membership income remained stable and we had 21% less memberships cancelled than in the previous year. We are grateful to our members who have continued to support us, some of whom



DUDLEY MAYOR DAVID STANLEY AT PORTWAY HILL NATURE RESERVE

increased their regular donation value, during this challenging year.

In response to the suspension of in-person events and activities, we switched our fundraising onto digital platforms where possible, with crowd funding via text to donate and Just Giving. Over 77 donors raised £2,360 via JustGiving for the Dawberry Fields Reptile Project on Brandwood End in Birmingham to improve habitats for slow worm and common lizard in partnership with Naturally Birmingham Future Parks Accelerator Programme.

Over £20,000 was raised by over 300 donors through our 40-year appeal including £11,965.25 through a range of fundraising initiatives organised by the Mayor of Dudley's Charity appeal.

Our corporate partners continue to support us despite the challenges they face due to COVID-19. We are extremely grateful for their support. Bronze business members Wienerberger renewed their membership for a 2nd year and Schofield Lothian joined as silver business members. Bird seed producer Vine House Farm donated 4% of sales from customers within the Birmingham and Black Country totalling £2,615. Property company IM Properties donated £1,000 to the Dawberry Fields Reptile Project. Legal firm Hogan Lovells chose the Wildlife Trusts as their charity partner for a 3-year period and successfully raised £19,000 in 2020 through employee fundraising initiatives. WEX Photo Video donated £1,000 in vouchers for the photography competition.

1.4 LOOKING AHEAD

Goal 1: Space for nature is protected, restored, created and valued

Our Salmon in the Stour project has already demonstrated the impact we can have for the ecology of this key wildlife corridor. In 2021 we will be applying to the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund for the resources to employ a dedicated team, undertake a wide-range of engagement activity and deliver habitat restoration and creation projects in the green spaces along the river's banks.

We will be working with partners including Walsall Council, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England to develop a large-scale project in another one of our key landscapes, namely the north Walsall heathlands. Historically a key area of heathland that linked Sutton Park to Cannock Chase, most of the heathland has been lost since the 18th century. We will be following the evidence that EcoRecord have led on producing to target where heathland associated habitat creation will have the most impact, aiming to create a stepping-stone corridor for wildlife.

Our nature reserves remain a priority for the Wildlife Trust and we will continue to raise funds for habitat enhancements and infrastructure for our visitors such as paths and signage. 2020 saw our sites used more than ever before, and Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood has been identified as our site which is most in need of investment.

Early in the new financial year we plan to work with the Friends of Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood on a public fundraiser to repair the boardwalk, construct a new path and replace damaged signage.

At the beginning of 2021 we successfully ran our first ever crowdfunder campaign, raising funds for a reptile project at Dawberry Fields in Birmingham. In 2021, with the support of the local community, we will be installing reptile refugia as well as creating flower-rich grassland for the benefit of pollinating insects.

Goal 2: Everyone is connected to nature

Our in-person volunteering and activities will re-commence in line with Covid-19 restrictions easing. We will continue to deliver online events as well as explore other forms of digital engagement such as the creation of 'virtual tours' of some of our nature reserves.

We will build our new classroom/ community space at EcoPark, providing indoor facilities for nature-based education and engagement programmes and improving the facility for local residents looking to connect with the nature on their doorstep.

In 2021 we will begin running our Level 1 training courses in Tools Use, Surveying, Woodwork and Coppicing. Thanks to funding from the Cadent Foundation, National Express Foundation and the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, up to 120 young people will learn valuable skills to help conserve our local natural environment.

Nature Friendly Schools will enter its final year, and we will seek to build on the great success of this project by signing up more schools to embrace outdoor learning. We also look forward to re-engaging with the local schools around EcoPark and Centre of the Earth after a year of disruption.

In April 2021, we will be entering the City Nature Challenge for the second year with a view to inspiring even more people to take part and support our biological records database growth to monitor species populations.

Goal 3: The natural environment is at the heart of planning, policy and decision-making

We will play a leading role in producing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and in the partnerships that will implement it. Building on the approach that has been developed to undertake the ecological evaluation of the Black Country green belt, we will continue to both map the ecological network and identify where investment in nature will have the biggest impact for wildlife and people. Our ecological network mapping to date has already helped us to identify two priority landscapes where we will seek to secure funding for investment in nature's recovery – the River Stour catchment and the heathlands of north Walsall.

We will seek to further develop our ecological services offer in response to a number of developing areas in nature conservation. These include the requirement for biodiversity net-gain in all new developments as proposed in the Environment Bill, emerging techniques for measuring environmental value and impact (ecosystem services), and an awareness amongst businesses and developers of their need to provide natural solutions to environmental problems. The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation funding which we secured in 2020 will fund the development of the ecological services strategy.

Following the Mayoral Elections on 4th May 2021, we will work closely with the elected West Midlands Mayor to continue to urge priorities around the ecological and climate crises, and influence the West Midlands Combined Authority's emerging plans and strategies.



Goal 4: We are an effective organisation

We will be developing the Trust's Organisational Strategy, setting out our ambitions up to 2030. We will launch this in early 2022.

We will learn from digital recruitment pilots in the previous year to inspire and encourage more members of the public to connect with us digitally, as well as raise vital funds through digital channels. For example, a crowd funder will be launched to raise funds for infrastructure repairs at flagship nature reserve Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood alongside grant applications.

Donations from gifts left in wills are a vital source of unrestricted income to support the Trust's strategic objectives and to support this, we will launch a legacy campaign to encourage supporters to pledge a gift in their will.

To ensure that we communicate with our members and supporters about the things they want, in the ways they want, we will carry out a marketing preferences project – offering all members and supports the opportunity to update their marketing preferences including exploring the potential to provide a digital version of the quarterly membership magazine.

1.5 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Trust income is split between unrestricted and restricted funds. Unrestricted income represents money raised or given to support the Trust's achievement of core charitable aims. Membership, donations, general fundraising, and some charitable trust donations were given as unrestricted income.

Restricted income is given for a specific purpose with clear outputs to be achieved. Restricted income for this period includes National Prospects funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Nature Friendly Schools funding, EcoRecord Service Level Agreements with local authorities and several Environmental Projects.

The Trust has invested in membership as an essential income stream that enables us to deliver core charitable aims that are not always possible to fund through restricted income such as our work to protect nature through the planning system.

Membership accounts for 18% (2020: 16%) of the Trust's income and the Business Plan sets out how this will grow in coming years. Unrestricted income (including membership) is 59% (2020: 56%) of total income. The Trust aims for this to be 70% to represent a sustainable financial position.

Reserves Policy

Trustees keep the reserves of the Trust under regular review. In previous years, these have been limited by the Charity's funds available. Having regard to the increasing scale of the Trust's operations and Covid uncertainties, in 2020 the Trustees set a reserves policy to aim at reserves equivalent to nine month's core operating costs, equating to approximately £500,000. Such reserves would be held in case of any sudden decline in income or unexpected cost or risk exposure, and to ensure that the commitments to meet contractual obligations to staff, premises and funding partners can be met.

After designated funds of £504,452 (2020: £323,550) and the revaluation reserve of £59,239 (2020: £59,239), the Trustees have met this aim with current unrestricted reserves standing at £511,605 at 31 March 2021 (2020: £498,461). The Trustees continue to be mindful of the requirement to operate within tight financial constraints.

Whilst there can be uncertainty in relation to the timing and amount of charitable grants and receipts, the Trustee Directors believe that the Trust's record of obtaining further funding will continue, albeit, with uncertainties as to when cash actually becomes available.

The amount of restricted reserves at 31 March 2021 is £344,902 (2020: £255,851).

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy, reviewed annually by Trustees. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed, and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

The Trustees have examined the principal areas of the charity's operations and considered the major risks which may arise in each of these areas. In the opinion of the trustees the charity has established resources and review systems which under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified by them to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.

Principal Funding Sources Expenditure

Income

The Trust's income decreased to £1,322,182 (2020: £1,499,483), major headings are explained below:

- Membership, donations, legacies - Contains income from our members, donations given at events and through our presence in the community and legacies.
- Charitable activities - Projects and services delivered in Birmingham and the Black Country in line with the Trusts aims and objectives.
- Trading & Other income - Includes royalties received, interest income, hire income and rental income.

One of the biggest challenges for the Trust over the next few years will be to diversify our unrestricted income sources to provide resilience to the organisation. As mentioned, our aim is to ensure that 70% of our total income is unrestricted. The other focus will be to increase the donations and legacies received by the Trust.

Compared to other Wildlife Trusts nationally we achieve similar levels of funding through grants but are not performing as well in encouraging corporate partners and legacy donations. We will learn from our sister Trusts to improve our performance in these areas. We know we need to do more to secure our membership which is explained below.

The Trust's expenditure increased to £1,049,085 (2020: £1,025,600), major headings are explained below:

- Charitable Activity - This covers our staffing costs and direct project costs to deliver projects and services so as to meet our charitable aims and objectives.
- Fundraising costs – Our agreement with WFC came to an end in March 2020 with the loan repaid. We are now responsible for our own membership recruitment. Other costs include recruitment through the Join Anywhere scheme via other Wildlife Trusts, online membership recruitment as well as production of membership magazines throughout the year. The trust uses a part-time Door to Door membership recruiter to help diversify membership recruitment methods
- Overheads - These are the running costs to maintain our sites and headquarters covering areas such as rent, rates, gas, electric, telephones and insurance.
- Pensions - Royal London manage all pension funds on behalf of the staff members. The Trust contributes 7% in addition to staff contributions.

Every penny we receive is spent on achieving our charitable aims. Overheads include rents for our sites, running our office and insurance to ensure we are a responsible and sustainable organisation.



NATURAL PROSPECT TRAINEES, DAVID AND AARON, CONDUCTING A MEADOW SURVEY

2. Independent Auditors Report

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (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 March 2021 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.

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 Auditors' 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 financial statements are 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 Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

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.



WORK TO RENATURALISE THE RIVER COLE

Opinions on other matters 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 Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the 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 Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 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 trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small company's exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statement

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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: **Enquiring of management and employees, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:**

- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance.
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud and.
- The internal controls established to mitigate risk relating to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

We identified areas of law and regulation that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, discussions with management (as required by auditing standards) and discussed with management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations.

All identified laws and regulations were communicated throughout the audit team, and they remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit. **The most significant considerations for the charitable company were as follows:**

- The Charity is subject to laws and regulations that affect the financial statements which include financial reporting legislation (namely The Companies Act 2006), taxation legislation and the Charities Act. We assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures concerning items recorded in the financial statements.
- The charity is also subject to other operational laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have material effect on the amounts or disclosures in the financial statements through imposing fines or withdrawal of funding contracts. Areas where this would have an effect include health and safety, Bribery Act 2010, employment law, data protections and child protection legislation (DBS checks for staff and volunteers).

Auditing standards limit the audit procedures to identifying non-compliance of these laws and regulations to enquiry of management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if there is any. Therefore, if a breach of operational regulations is not disclosed to us or evident from relevant correspondence, and audit will not detect the breach.

To identify risk of material misstatement due to fraud, we carried out discussions amongst the audit team to assess areas where and how fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators. **The following areas were identified:**

- Management override of controls through the posting of inappropriate accounting entries or journals
- We do not believe there is a fraud risk relating the revenue recognition as the revenue is straightforward, with limited opportunity for manipulation.

We did not identify any additional fraud risks.

We tested the appropriateness of accounting journals and other adjustments made in the accounts preparation based on a risk criteria.

Owing to the inherent limitation of the audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulation is from the events and transaction reflected in the financial statement, the less likely in the inherently limited procedure required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of fraud, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. Our audit procedures are designed to detect material misstatement. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance or fraud and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Mark Spafford FCCA ACA
(Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of Luckmans Duckett
Parker Limited Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors
1110 Elliott Court
Herald Avenue
Coventry Business Park
Coventry
West Midlands
CV5 6UB

Date: 22/12/2021

3. Statement of Financial Activities

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	281,571	-	281,571	457,838
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	3	431,254	542,662	973,916	1,035,238
Other income		76,695	-	76,695	6,407
Total		789,520	542,662	1,332,182	1,499,483
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	24,324	-	24,324	37,324
Charitable activities					
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	5	571,150	453,611	1,024,761	988,276
Total		595,474	453,611	1,049,085	1,025,600
NET INCOME		194,046	89,051	283,097	473,883
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		881,250	255,851	1,137,101	663,218
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,075,296	344,902	1,420,198	1,137,101

4. Balance Sheet March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	11	42,402	59,670
Heritage assets	12	79,762	79,762
		<u>122,164</u>	<u>139,432</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	13	492,979	512,547
Cash at bank and in hand		1,009,134	671,651
		<u>1,502,113</u>	<u>1,184,198</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	14	(204,079)	(186,529)
		<u>1,298,034</u>	<u>997,669</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>1,420,198</u>	<u>1,137,101</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>1,420,198</u>	<u>1,137,101</u>
NET ASSETS			
FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds	18	1,075,296	881,250
Restricted funds		344,902	255,851
		<u>1,420,198</u>	<u>1,137,101</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 9th November 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:



J D Larner - Trustee

5. Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	349,490	157,085
		<u>349,490</u>	<u>157,085</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(4,089)	(1,274)
		<u>(4,089)</u>	<u>(1,274)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Loan repayments in year		(7,918)	(24,000)
		<u>(7,918)</u>	<u>(24,000)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			
		<u>337,483</u>	<u>131,811</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period			
		<u>671,651</u>	<u>539,840</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period			
		<u>1,009,134</u>	<u>671,651</u>

6. Notes to the cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	283,097	473,883
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	21,357	21,151
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	19,568	(361,684)
Increase in creditors	25,468	23,735
Net cash provided by operations	<u>349,490</u>	<u>157,085</u>

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1.4.20 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.21 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	671,651	337,483	1,009,134
	<u>671,651</u>	<u>337,483</u>	<u>1,009,134</u>
Debt			
Debts falling due within 1 year	(7,918)	7,918	-
	<u>(7,918)</u>	<u>7,918</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	<u>663,733</u>	<u>345,401</u>	<u>1,009,134</u>

7. Notes to the Financial Statements

7.1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income is generally recognised on a receivable basis, being when the charity is entitled to receive the money and is reported gross of related expenditure, where the amount is reasonably certain and when there is adequate certainty of receipt of monies. **The specific bases used are as follows:**

- Voluntary income includes members, subscriptions, donations (including related gift aid tax) legacies and grants of a general nature.
- Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity.
- Contractual income is recorded when receivable.
- Grants received during the year which relate to the following financial year are carried forward in creditors.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis, meaning that the cost is identified as a liability awaiting payment, based on the date of the event, rather than the point that cash is paid. **The expenditure is allocated to the appropriate cost heading in the financial statements.**

- Costs of generating funds relate to expenditure incurred in raising voluntary income and fundraising trading costs.
- Charitable activities' expenditure relates to expenditure on meeting the charitable objects. This includes materials and bought in services, staff costs, information systems, communications, rented accommodation and general management directly chargeable to projects, thereby covering both internal costs and external charges for such costs. Such costs incurred internally are apportioned to projects based on direct staffing levels.
- Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the charitable company and relate to the professional costs of running the charity.

- Support costs including staff costs, information systems, communications, office accommodation and general management, are fully apportioned to other cost categories, and are primarily based on direct staffing levels.
- Membership recruitment costs, where an agency charges the trust a fee based on the first years membership income for recruitment of new members, are charged to the accounts over a period of 10 months. Surplus new income is therefore only recognised in the accounts after this period has ended and this policy is viewed as being prudent.

Heritage assets

Land, classified as heritage assets, had previously been included in the accounts at cost. The trustees value the assets every 5 years (a change from the previous annual approach) as this provides more relevant information on the activities and assets held by the charity.

Where information on the cost or valuation of heritage assets is not available or the cost of providing such information significantly outweighs any benefit to the users of the accounts then heritage assets are not recognised on the balance sheet.

Acquisitions only arise when donated to the charity or if it is believed that they will further the charity's objectives.

Full details of original cost can be found in note 7.12 to the accounts.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The charity is partially exempt for VAT. VAT that is irrecoverable due to the partial exemption are allocated to the appropriate cost categories and funds.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes or as suggested in a letter of wishes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Payments under an arrangement which is in substance of a rental nature (operating leases) are charged in the financial statements as incurred.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The Trust makes payments of employers contributions into independently administered money purchase pension policies for qualifying employees. Pension costs are charged in the financial statements on an accruals basis.

Basic financial instruments

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

7.2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2021 £	2020 £
Donations	280,571	277,259
Legacies	1,000	180,579
	<u>281,571</u>	<u>457,838</u>

7.3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2021 Conservation, Engagement and Influence £	2020 Total activities £
Conservation & Wildlife	<u>973,916</u>	<u>1,035,238</u>

7.4 RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	2021 £	2020 £
Raising voluntary income costs	<u>24,324</u>	<u>37,324</u>

7.5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 7.6) £	Totals £
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	<u>916,725</u>	<u>108,036</u>	<u>1,024,761</u>

7.6 SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	<u>90,890</u>	<u>17,146</u>	<u>108,036</u>

7.7 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2021	2020
	£	£
Auditing of accounts	7,850	5,400
Depreciation - owned assets	21,357	21,151
Hire of plant and machinery	1,468	1,381
Other operating leases	2,254	7,898
	<u>52,929</u>	<u>36,830</u>

7.8 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

7.9 STAFF COSTS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	515,010	636,413
Social security costs	43,141	44,298
Other pension costs	32,151	35,416
	<u>590,302</u>	<u>716,127</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
Direct charitable work	20	31
Administrative	2	2
	<u>22</u>	<u>33</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000. The key management personnel, the senior management team, received total employee benefits in the year of £222,983 (2020 - £177,251). The key management personnel comprise the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Finance & Resources, Head of Education & Education, Head of Conservation and Head of Fundraising & Communications.

Redundancy payments of £20,861 were paid in the year (2020: £nil). These payments represent the statutory, contractual payments due to any employee if redundancy is necessary.

7.10 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	457,838	-	457,838
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	538,315	496,923	1,035,238
Other income	6,407	-	6,407
Total	<u>1,002,560</u>	<u>496,923</u>	<u>1,499,483</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	37,324	-	37,324
Charitable activities			
Conservation, Engagement and Influence	581,240	407,036	988,276
Total	<u>618,564</u>	<u>407,036</u>	<u>1,025,600</u>
NET INCOME	383,996	89,887	473,883
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	497,254	165,964	663,218
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>881,250</u>	<u>255,851</u>	<u>1,137,101</u>

7.11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Short leasehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2020	195,038	77,980	273,018
Additions	-	4,089	4,089
At 31 March 2021	195,038	82,069	277,107
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2020	151,081	62,267	213,348
Charge for year	12,964	8,393	21,357
At 31 March 2021	164,045	70,660	234,705
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2021	30,993	11,409	42,402
At 31 March 2020	43,957	15,713	59,670

The Centre of The Earth is built on land which is leased from Birmingham City Council on a twenty five year lease from 24 March 1998. The net book value as at 31 December 1997 is being written off over the term of the lease by equal annual instalments.

7.12 HERITAGE ASSETS

	Total £
MARKET VALUE	
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	79,762
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2021	79,762
At 31 March 2020	79,762

If the Land had not been revalued it would have been included in the accounts at the following historical cost totally £20,523. This is broken down to £10,523 being the amount paid for land and £10,000 being the value of land donated. There has been no change to these values in the last five years.

Heritage assets consist of land at Portway Hill, Pelsall Common Spinney (Turner's Wood) and Deer's Leap Wood. The land has been valued by the trustees at the year end using standard prices based on the current value in the area for woodlands (14 acres or less) of £6,000 per acre.

Such land that has been acquired or donated to the charity is managed and preserved in accordance with the charity's objectives for wildlife and their habitat. Access to such land is available to the general public.

Other heritage assets may be purchased by, or donated to the charity, as and when circumstances permit. The number of acquisitions in the last 5 years is nil.

The Trustees are aware that the valuation of the heritage assets has been increasing in recent years, and this has not been reflected in the financial statements. Due to the current Covid restrictions, assessing a fair value at this time has its difficulties and uncertainties. The Trustees will conduct a full valuation exercise to provide a fully updated valuation for the 2022 accounts.

7.13 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	468,562	466,158
Prepayments	24,417	46,389
	<u>492,979</u>	<u>512,547</u>

7.14 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Other loans (see note 15)	-	7,918
Trade creditors	127,521	62,637
Social security and other taxes	29,998	82,071
Other creditors	16,751	6,483
Deferred income	12,546	19,500
Accrued expenses	17,263	7,920
	<u>204,079</u>	<u>186,529</u>

The bank overdraft is secured by a legal mortgage over the Centre Of The Earth and a debenture charge over all other assets of the charity.

7.15 LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Other loans	-	7,918
	<u>-</u>	<u>7,918</u>

7.16 LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Within one year	7,976	7,976
Between one and five years	10,761	14,006
In more than five years	12,900	15,050
	<u>31,637</u>	<u>37,032</u>

7.17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2021 Total funds	2020 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	122,164	-	122,164	139,432
Current assets	1,157,211	344,902	1,502,113	1,184,198
Current liabilities	(204,079)	-	(204,079)	(186,529)
	<u>1,075,296</u>	<u>344,902</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>	<u>1,137,101</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.20	Net movement in funds	At 31.3.21
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	498,461	13,144	511,605
Designated Fund	323,550	180,902	504,452
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	59,239
	<u>881,250</u>	<u>194,046</u>	<u>1,075,296</u>
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	23,400	(5,000)	18,400
Salmon in the Stour (18-19)	6,528	(6,528)	-
River Cole	69,000	(69,000)	-
Natural Prospects HLF	-	1,423	1,423
Other awards	15,250	829	16,079
Veolia Grant	57,785	2,000	59,785
Birmingham LNP	-	4,442	4,442
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	-	13,594
National Express	15,000	-	15,000
Reaching Communities	33,794	26,949	60,743
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	21,500	(18,675)	2,825
River Cole Collaboration	-	34,941	34,941
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	-	25,000	25,000
Carbon Reduction Strategy	-	20,000	20,000
Nature Friendly Schools	-	40,000	40,000
Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections	-	32,670	32,670
	<u>255,851</u>	<u>89,051</u>	<u>344,902</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,137,101</u>	<u>283,097</u>	<u>1,420,198</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS CONTINUED

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	608,618	(595,474)	13,144
Designated Fund	180,902	-	180,902
	<u>789,520</u>	<u>(595,474)</u>	<u>194,046</u>
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	-	(5,000)	(5,000)
Salmon in the Stour (18-19)	-	(6,528)	(6,528)
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	10,779	(10,779)	-
River Cole	-	(69,000)	(69,000)
Natural Prospects HLF	69,038	(67,615)	1,423
Other awards	31,000	(30,171)	829
Veolia Grant	2,000	-	2,000
Birmingham LNP	21,000	(16,558)	4,442
Reaching Communities	34,440	(7,491)	26,949
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	-	(18,675)	(18,675)
River Cole Collaboration	56,000	(21,059)	34,941
Biodiversity SLAs	25,000	(25,000)	-
Severn Trent Resilience Funding	25,000	-	25,000
EcoRecord	42,001	(42,001)	-
Carbon Reduction Strategy	20,000	-	20,000
Nature Friendly Schools	173,734	(133,734)	40,000
Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections	32,670	-	32,670
	<u>542,662</u>	<u>(453,611)</u>	<u>89,051</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,332,182</u>	<u>(1,049,085)</u>	<u>283,097</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS CONTINUED

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.20 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	278,256	220,205	498,461
Designated Fund	159,759	163,791	323,550
Revaluation Reserve	59,239	-	59,239
	<u>497,254</u>	<u>383,996</u>	<u>881,250</u>
Restricted funds			
Catchment (Western Park)	23,400	-	23,400
Salmon in the Stour (17-18)	14,664	(14,664)	-
Salmon in the Stour (18-19)	40,000	(33,472)	6,528
River Cole	75,000	(6,000)	69,000
Other awards	12,900	2,350	15,250
South Staffordshire Water	-	13,594	13,594
National Express	-	15,000	15,000
Reaching Communities	-	33,794	33,794
Veolia Capital Funding	-	57,785	57,785
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	-	21,500	21,500
	<u>165,964</u>	<u>89,887</u>	<u>255,851</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>663,218</u>	<u>473,883</u>	<u>1,137,101</u>

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS CONTINUED

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	577,711	(357,506)	220,205
Designated Fund	424,848	(261,057)	163,791
	<u>1,002,559</u>	<u>(618,563)</u>	<u>383,996</u>
Restricted funds			
Salmon in the Stour (17-18)	-	(14,664)	(14,664)
Salmon in the Stour (18-19)	-	(33,472)	(33,472)
Natural Rivers & Green Corridors	40,464	(40,464)	-
River Cole	-	(6,000)	(6,000)
Natural Prospects HLF	135,221	(135,221)	-
Birmingham City Council - EcoRecord	20,500	(20,500)	-
Other awards	79,543	(77,193)	2,350
Birmingham LNP	12,000	(12,000)	-
South Staffordshire Water	13,594	-	13,594
National Express	20,000	(5,000)	15,000
Reaching Communities	34,440	(646)	33,794
Veolia Capital Funding	60,000	(2,215)	57,785
Salmon in the Stour (19-20 - Dunelm Weir)	27,500	(6,000)	21,500
People Postcode Lottery (Nature Schools)	53,662	(53,662)	-
	<u>496,924</u>	<u>(407,037)</u>	<u>89,887</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,499,483</u>	<u>(1,025,600)</u>	<u>473,883</u>

Transfers are made between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at the time the specific restrictions have been fulfilled.

The designated fund of £504,452 (2020: £323,550) relates to the balance of funds received in the accounts for the year to 31 March 2021 remaining unspent designated by the Trustees for use on our commitments post year end. £185,472 relates to the EcoPark Capital Fund and £318,980 to the Project Completion Fund. The restricted fund represents monies receivable for projects which can only be spent on their respective activities as imposed by the donor or grant making body.

The Trustees confirm that all restricted fund balances at the year end have subsequently been spent or will be spent in the forthcoming financial year.

More detailed disclosure on description nature and purpose of the funds, reasons for restrictions etc are listed below:

Conservation

Restricted Funds for the Trust's conservation work delivery against Goal 1 and includes

- managing our Nature Reserves (many smaller awards)
- Improving spaces for nature through the Nature Improvement Area
- Ecological surveys (Environment Agency and other smaller awards)
- Development of water catchment improvement works along the River Stour (Salmon in the Stour and Severn Trent Resilience Project)
- Natural Rivers project will improve woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and watercourses along the River Rea and its tributaries in south-west Birmingham and the River Tame in west Birmingham. (Natural Rivers)
- River Cole Partnership with the Environment Agency for the restoration and naturalisation 940 m of urban river catchments (River Cole and River Cole Collaboration Funds)

Planning and Advocacy

- Biodiversity - service level agreements with local authorities supporting biodiversity improvement activities including surveying sites and advising planners

EcoRecord

- Service Level Agreements or provide ecological records and services from the biological record centre for Birmingham and the Black Country

People and Wildlife

- HLF skills for the Future - delivery of the Natural Prospects trainee programme
- Nature Friendly Schools - Nature England Funding delivered by RSWT to help teachers run outdoor learning classes.
- Funding from "Reaching Communities" Community Lottery Fund to help build a community hub at EcoPark
- Cadent Foundation - Natural Connections - to delivery nature wellbeing courses to people at risk of isolation.

Resources

- Carbon Reductions Strategy Funding - to complete a Carbon reduction and activity plan

7.19 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

The Trust is affiliated to The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), a registered charity that acts as an umbrella group for county wildlife trusts, and provides assistance and co-ordination of activities and campaigning at a UK level. An annual contribution is payable to RSWT amounting to £9,740 (2020: £10,000). The trust also purchased publications and other sundries from RSWT amounting to £7,322 (2020 - £9,195), with £nil (2020 - £1,696) owed to RSWT at the year end. Sales made to RSWT were £4,595 (2020: £4,511) and amounts owed by RSWT were £nil at the year end (2020: £1,380).

Donations of £nil (2020: £20,000) were received without conditions from charitable trusts in which trustees of this charity are also trustees of the donor charitable trusts.

8. Thank you

We couldn't have done it without you

Our work for nature's recovery is possible thanks to our wonderful members, donors, volunteers, funders and businesses partners - Thank you for all your support - you are all **wildlife heroes!**



Community Groups & Schools

Deers Leap Residents Association
 Friends of Deer's Leap Wood
 Friends of Fibbersley Nature Reserve
 Friends of Hill Hook
 Friends of Manor Park
 Friends of Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood
 Friends of Rowley Hills
 Barcroft Primary School
 Chivenor Primary School
 Conway Primary School
 Corpus Christi Primary School
 North Walsall Academy
 Oasis Academy Barford
 Oasis Academy Foundry
 Oasis Academy Woodview
 Rookery Primary School
 Somerville Primary School
 St Giles Primary School
 Timberley Primary School
 Selly Oak Trust School

Funders

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
 National Lottery Heritage Fund
 Cadent Foundation
 People's Postcode Lottery
 Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
 Saintbury Charitable Trust
 Roughley Charitable Trust
 Severn Trent Water
 South Staffs Water
 National Express Foundation
 Children in Need
 Cooperative Foundation
 Greener Recovery Challenge Fund
 National Lottery Community Fund

Business Partners

Nick Groves
 Vine House Farm
 Hogan Lovells
 Morgan Sindall

Business Members

SCC International (Silver)
 Wienerberger (Bronze)

Project Partners

The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
 Birmingham City Council
 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
 City of Wolverhampton Council
 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
 Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
 Environment Agency
 Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
 Severn Rivers Trust
 Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
 Bourneville Village Trust
 West Midlands Trains
 Parkview Clinic
 Heart of Birmingham Vocational College
 Princes Trust
 SAMPAD

Donation Box hosts

Powis & Partners, Stourbridge
 Paul's Florist, West Bromwich
 Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath
 Kings Heath Pet Centre
 Connaught Vets, Kingswinford
 EcoManiax, Stourbridge





**Birmingham &
Black Country**



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

Registered Charity No: 513615
Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)
Registered Address: 42 Norman Street, Birmingham, B18 7EP



Join the conversation

Say hello on [facebook.com/WTBBC](https://www.facebook.com/WTBBC)
or on Twitter [@WTBBC](https://twitter.com/WTBBC)

Search for us on **YouTube**

SWANS ON THE WYRLEY AND ESSINGTON CANAL