



Worcestershire
Wildlife Trust



OUR IMPACT 2025/26

Protecting wildlife where we live

Introduction



Against a backdrop of geopolitical turbulence, market volatility and some worrying national policy changes, the Trust has performed well over the past year. Considerable progress has been made against our strategic goals, and the

organisation remains on a secure financial footing.

The policy landscape continues to be extremely challenging as the Government persists in weakening regulation in an attempt to boost growth. Policies are being introduced or amended so quickly that it can be hard to navigate the changes. As the Wildlife Trusts collectively sustain pressure on Whitehall to adopt a more pro-environmental approach, our Trust will continue to advocate loudly for nature at every opportunity.

More positively, the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the South Worcestershire Development Plan were adopted in early 2026 and will help guide our conservation, land management and planning work in the coming years.

The Trust's senior leadership team, newly established in 2025, quickly became a cohesive unit and has deftly implemented beneficial changes. For a small organisation, a huge amount of work gets done and this reflects the fact that we have an industrious, knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff team who make the Trust not only effective but also a nice place to be.

Against our strategic goal of bringing more land into recovery for nature, we completed the purchases of 18 hectares of land adjacent to Hanley Dingle and 14 hectares of land on Longdon Marsh. The hugely successful Natural Networks programme, run collaboratively with Worcestershire County Council, concluded after seven years, having supported habitat improvements across 350 sites. Although the partnership has ended, the Trust will run Natural Networks for at least three more years, continuing to offer advice and support to landowners. Having contributed to the production of the Worcestershire

Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the Trust is now chairing the delivery group, responsible for translating the strategy into practice.

Our second strategic goal focuses on encouraging people to take action for nature, which we do through our engagement and education teams, planning, policy and advocacy work, and communications activity. The first year of our three-year schools strategy was successfully implemented and helped improve primary teachers' ability to provide outdoor learning. The Wilder Worcestershire – Neighbourhoods Nurturing Nature team made more excellent progress, supporting 100 community groups to transform their local spaces. And our communications team had a great year, increasing our online presence, launching our Wild Worcestershire podcast and expanding our media coverage.

The Trust's third strategic goal is to ensure a sustainable future. We have continued to invest in developing our people, expanding the conservation trainee team and creating our first education trainee role. We have also improved the employee benefits package, training and development provision and well-being measures to ensure our people can thrive. We still aim to be carbon neutral by 2030 and continue to reduce our emissions. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work has progressed further, with implementation of our third three-year plan now underway; improvements this year have included accessibility enhancements across several nature reserves.

It has been another busy and productive year. While we are incredibly fortunate to have a truly outstanding staff team, we would not be able to achieve anywhere near as much as we do without the help of our volunteers, members, membership recruiters, supporters, donors, legators, funders and partners. On behalf of the Council of Trustees, I offer my sincere thanks to all who contribute to the vital work we do to help nature recover – you really are helping us to make a difference.

Christianne Tipping
Chair

Our strategy in action

Who we are

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust is the county's leading local charity working to achieve a Wilder Worcestershire. We are one of 46 Wildlife Trusts working across the UK.

With the support of our 500 volunteers and 21,000 members, we manage over 1,300 hectares of nature reserves across Worcestershire.

We work with other organisations and landowners to create, protect and connect habitats across the county and with other Trusts on cross-boundary landscape-scale nature restoration.

We also work with and inspire local communities and young people to care for wildlife where they live, work and study.

Worcestershire's wildlife

From the iconic Malvern Hills to a rich mosaic of woodlands, meadows and streams; from the Wyre Forest heaths in the north to the Severn and Avon vales in the south, Worcestershire has some fantastic landscapes and townscapes, many containing nationally important species and habitats.

Worcestershire has around a quarter of all remaining traditional hay meadows in England. Our orchards are internationally important for noble chafer beetles. Our ponds have important populations of great crested newts. The city of Worcester is slow-worm central and we have the most northerly breeding populations of Bechstein's bats. We have the UK's first inland breeding avocets and the centre of the only population of brown hairstreak butterflies in the West Midlands. It is a special place with wildlife that depend on all of us.

Our strategy

Our strategy for 2023-2030 considers the external environment in which we operate, where we are now and what will enable us to become more effective in tackling the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.

We review the strategy regularly to adapt to the world around us, learn from our work and respond to longer term changes.

- 1 Nature in recovery – 30% of land in recovery for nature by 2030.
- 2 Action for nature – one in four people taking action for nature by 2030.
- 3 Sustaining our future – more diversity, more funding, carbon zero by 2030.

You'll find out more about what we've done to achieve these goals over the next few pages.



Goal 1: Nature in recovery

30% of land in recovery for nature by 2030

Key achievements within the year included:

- Managed **c. 3,300 acres/1,335 hectares of land for nature** across **75+ nature reserves** thanks to our reserves team and hundreds of volunteers. This equates to around **0.7%** of the land in Worcestershire.
- Continued our long-term heathland restoration at Dropping Well Farm, near Kidderminster, the **largest area of heathland restoration** in Worcestershire at **40 hectares**.
- Completed the **purchase of 18 hectares** of land to extend Hanley Dingle, The Colin Raven Nature Reserve, near Tenbury Wells.
- Completed the **purchase of 14 hectares** of land at Lower Swell Farm, offering increased protection of Hill Court Farm and The Blacklands, the Andrew Fraser Nature Reserve, in the far south of the county.
- Took on management of land at Trench Farm with fundraising underway to enable its purchase and extend Trench Wood nature reserve.
- Wildlife highlights at the Trust's nature reserves included common cranes at Hill Court Farm, **61 lesser horseshoes** at The Knapp and Papermill (the highest count since 2018), violet helleborines at Blackhouse Wood and willow emerald damselflies at Feckenham Wylde Moor.
- Celebrated Natural Networks, a partnership between the Trust and Worcestershire County Council, which came to an end after seven years with over **350 sites improved for nature**. The Trust has committed to continuing Natural Networks for at least three years, building on the achievements to date.
- Continued to deliver Severn Treescapes in partnership with Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Wildlife Trusts, securing funding to allow the project to grow and continue until at least March 2029. During 2025/26, the **project planted 12,373 trees**.
- Delivered advice to land managers across the county, including on more than **60 sites** through Natural Networks (covering 345 ha) to help make improvements for nature.
- Continued to influence the production and evidence for Worcestershire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) led by Worcestershire County Council, which was published in March 2026. The Trust now chairs the LNRS delivery group, which is working to turn the strategy into practical actions.
- Continued to deliver updated interpretation and literature for our nature reserves, with signage upgraded at Newbourne Wood, Gwen Finch, Duke of York and Dropping Well Farm in addition to new a **new trail guide** for The Knapp & Papermill.
- Oversaw the growth of the citizen science project Wildlife Sightings, now having received almost **2,700 species records**, with our volunteer team. This evidence, often from gardens, is providing biological recording data that helps better understand changes to species range and distribution.
- The Natural England supported Facilitation Fund group in the east of the county came to an end during the year but we continue to work with and advise over **100 farms** and landholdings that contribute to **nature's recovery**.

Goal 2: Action for nature

One in four people taking action for nature by 2030

Key achievements within the year included:

- Supported by **c. 500 volunteers** across all areas of our work who contribute around **45,000 volunteer hours a year**, which is valued at an estimated **£900,000**. Volunteers support practical conservation, local groups, administration, education programmes and much more.
- Completed year one of the Trust's expanded work with primary schools, focusing on improving teacher's ability and confidence to deliver outdoor learning and nature education alongside and as part of everyday curriculum. **Recruited six new core schools** to participate in year two of the project as well as expanded the network for schools to share best practice and offer support to each other in delivering nature-based learning.
- Launched the development phase of our a Network for Nature project, a **418 km² landscape-scale project** around the Forest of Feckenham and its catchment in the east of the county.
- Continued to deliver the Trust's Wilder Worcestershire: Neighbourhoods Nurturing Nature project across Droitwich and Worcester. We have supported almost **100 community groups** with advice and guidance, with 25% receiving ongoing help to transform their local spaces to benefit nature and their communities. The project has also built on our work with young people, delivering 30 sessions and **engaging with over 600 children and young people**.
- Continued to stand up for nature by influencing the planning process with the aim of both protecting sensitive areas and influencing the best possible outcome for nature.
- Provided wetland advice** for 12 land managers/owners – helping them to make informed decisions around management of existing and creation of new features.
- Campaigned for nature** through debates around the Planning and Infrastructure Act and other policy issues by engaging with MPs and other stakeholders across Worcestershire.
- Continued to engage with community groups, schools, colleges and youth organisations in the wonders of heathlands through the penultimate year of our ambitious **Saving Worcestershire's Heathlands project** in and around Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport.
- Increased our presence digitally and in the media, expanding our reach, with over **100,000 engagements** and over **20,400 followers** on our social media platforms and **15 radio and television interviews**. We also launched a podcast series to share more a more in-depth look at nature and our work with a new audience.



Goal 3: Securing our future

More diversity, more funding, carbon zero by 2030

Key achievements within the year included:

- Expanded our conservation trainee team from four to five each year, giving those trainees the skills and knowledge to prepare them for a career in the conservation sector.
- Created our first non-conservation trainee role, with an education trainee joining on a six-month placement to gain the skills to enable them to deliver learning to school-aged children and inspire their interest and love for nature.
- Tracked and monitored our carbon emissions with the aim of being carbon neutral by 2030. We have continued efforts to reduce our emissions, which has included seeking opportunities to plant trees where the Trust can both sequester carbon while providing opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
- Invested in our employee benefits, training, development and wellbeing to create an environment where employees can thrive and fulfill their potential.
- Committed to invest in training and development opportunities offered for our volunteers.
- Continued to seek funding and other support for our work from a range of sources to diversify our funding and strengthen the Trust's work. This year we welcomed support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, charitable trusts and foundations, legacies, major donors and corporate supporters.
- Invested in regular repairs and maintenance of properties to ensure ongoing suitability of and maintaining a safe working environment whilst preventing more significant issues.
- Developed and begun implementation of the third iteration of the Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plan, which has supported various actions across the Trust. This has included improving accessibility across a number of our nature reserves, including improved pathways at Lower Smite Farm and upgrading a doorway to improve accessibility.

Summary of Trust finances

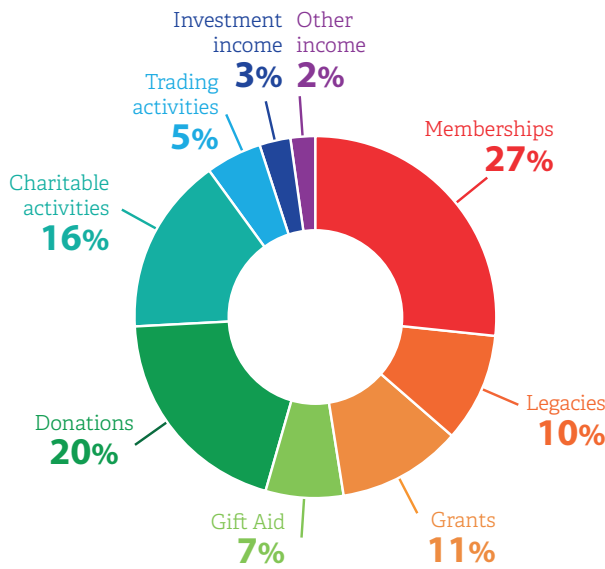
Financial performance

A surplus of £63,066 (2025: deficit of £534,785) was recorded in the year before gains and losses. Net assets stand at £17,428,357 (2025: £17,166,988) of which £14,604,431 (2025: £13,862,241) represents the value of our nature reserves and other fixed assets, and £2,410,036 (2025: £3,214,825) the value of our investments. At 31 March 2026, £3,587,210 (2025: £3,638,778) was designated for use in conservation and development projects.

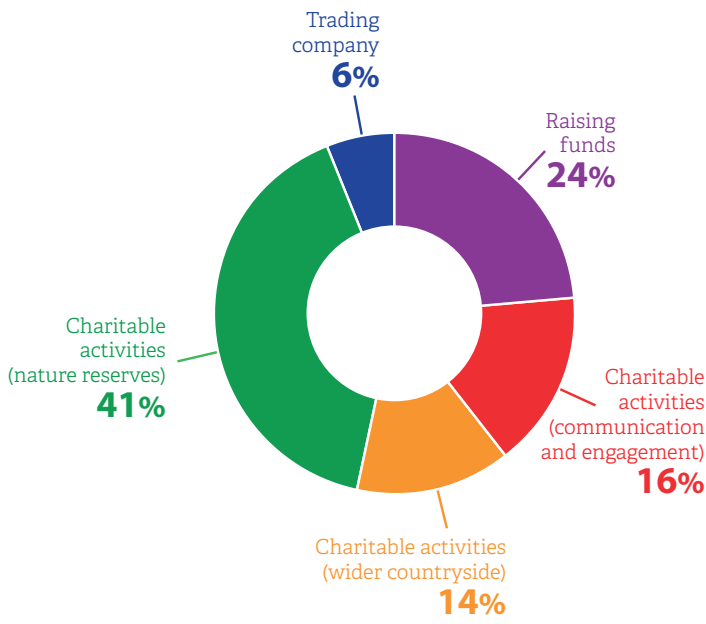
Auditors' Report

Independent auditors' report to the members and Trustees of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. Due to the increasing length of auditors' reports required by today's accounting standards, it is not possible to include the report in this brief financial summary. However, the auditors' report from Thorne Widgey is included in the Trust's published accounts, which will be available at or immediately after the AGM. For the purposes of this impact report, the Trustees are pleased to confirm that the audit was successfully completed and the information in the Trustees' Annual Report, from which this information is extracted, is consistent with the financial statements.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's income in 2025-26
Total £2,794,856



Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's expenditure in 2025-26
Total £2,731,790



Members and supporters

Thank you to all members, supporters and partners of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust who contribute to the future of wildlife in our county.

Legacies for wildlife

Gifts left to us in Wills have been critical for purchasing nature reserves, assisting with their development and for other specific uses as agreed by our Council of Trustees. We are indebted to those who have left gifts to the Trust this year: John Alexander, Philip Brown, Keith Green, Irene Hart, Harry Hickman, Sylvia Hickman, Donald Hull, Michael Jeeves, Brenda Jones, Ian Lennox, Margaret Maggs, Bryony Moore.

We are also grateful for those who have donated to the Trust in memory of loved ones.

Grants and donations

Thank you to the organisations who have provided us with a grant or donation during the year. These include: The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Biffa Award, Quantum Mouldings Ltd, Norman and Evelyn Proffitt Trust, OCM Business Systems Ltd, Bespoke Advice, Margaret Westwood Memorial Charity, Martin & Carr Vets and Wilder Plan.

WNCT Enterprises

This wholly owned independent company encompasses Worcestershire Wildlife Consultancy, which provides high quality independent ecological services to individuals and commercial clients. Profits from these services together with those from facilities hire and sales activities are covenanted directly to support the charitable activities of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

To find out more please visit
www.worcestershirewildlifeconsultancy.org

The Worcestershire Wildlife Medal 2026

The Worcestershire Wildlife Medal is awarded 'For dedicated services to nature conservation in Worcestershire'.

In 2026, the Worcestershire Wildlife Medal is awarded to Steve Bloomfield. The full citation will be available at www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/worcestershire-wildlife-medal after the October AGM.

Council, Officers & Staff at 31 March 2026

President: Harry Green MBE

Hon. Vice Presidents: Linda Butler, Tessa Carrick, Roger Jackson, Prof. Graham Martin, David Mortiboys, Mervyn Needham, Roger Pannell, Colin Raven, Geoff Trevis, Rob Stanton, Sandra Young

Council of Trustees: John Blakiston (Hon. Treasurer), Lyndon Bracewell (Hon. Secretary), Julie Button, Richard Cory, John Douglass, Dr John Dutton, Andrew Forecast, Gail Devries (Hon. Officer Business Operations), Pat Gildea, Chris Greensmith (Hon. Officer for Conservation), Dr Peter Holmes, Tom Meikle (Vice Chair), Andrew Muir, Carrie Pawley (Hon. Officer for Fundraising and Engagement), Katey Stephen, Christianne Tipping (Chair)

Staff Team: Rob Allen (Reserves Team Leader) Karen Baxter (Finance and Administration Officer), Cesca Beamish (Ecologist), Mary Bendall (Sessional Tutor), Steve Bloomfield (Head of Conservation), Becky Bradshaw-King (Senior Fundraising Officer), Becca Bratt (Natural Networks Officer), Janet Bridger (Sessional Tutor), Andy Bucklitch (Practical Land Management Officer), Niamh Burchell (Communications and Digital Officer), Wendy Carter (Communications Lead), Moira Conn (Finance and Administration Officer/Meetings and Conference Organiser), Caroline Corsie (Senior Land Officer), Dom Cragg (Project Development Officer – Network for Nature), Chris Doncaster (Sessional Tutor), Kate Doyle (Supporter Insight Officer), Amy Fleming (Project Officer – Saving Worcestershire's Heathlands), Pauline Gardner (Administration Assistant), Rhona Goddard (Senior Landscape Recovery Officer), Julie Grainger (Project Manager – Wilder Worcestershire), Andy Harris (Reserves Officer – North), Annabel Hoeffler (Senior Ecologist), Tomos Holloway (Reserves Officer – South), Catharine Jarvis (Ecologist), Tom Jenkins (Head of Finance and Operations), Emily Jones (People and Operations Officer), Anna Josiffe (Project Assistant – Wilder Worcestershire), Jo Kelly (Membership Officer), Simone Mansi (Severn Treescape Tree and Woodland Advisor), Connor McGoldrick (Project Officer – Wilder Worcestershire), Liz McGuinness (Sessional Tutor), Bethany Norris (Wildlife and Water Officer), Nick Packham (Engagement Team Leader), Liz Painter (Senior Membership Officer), Mike Perry (Chief Executive), Hayley Probert (Wilder Schools Officer), Eleanor Reast (Reserves Officer – East), Finley Reynolds (Natural Networks Officer), Ion Riley (Community Wildlife Warden), Caitlin Stuart (Fundraising Officer), Cat Terry (Senior Wilder Schools Officer), Lucy Thirkell (Wilder Learning Development Officer), Ally Tideswell (Head of Fundraising and Engagement), Ellie Trow (Consultancy Business Manager), Jasmine Walters (Wildlife and Farming Officer), Thomas Watkins (Reserves Officer – Central), Ellie Watton (Reserves Officer – West), Alison Winters (Sessional Tutor)

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

Lower Smite Farm, Hindlip, Worcester, WR3 8SZ

Web: www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk • Tel: 01905 754919

E-mail: enquiries@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org

Registered charity number 256618

A company limited by guarantee number 929644

