

# Our year for wildlife

The Wildlife Trusts  
impact report 2017/2018





# Thank you!

Our vision is of people close to nature, with land and seas rich in wildlife. Yet never before has society been more isolated from nature; and our wildlife so depleted. We are committed to putting nature into recovery.

The Wildlife Trusts movement is founded upon the belief that people taking action in the places closest and most important to them is a powerful force for change. So wherever you live, there are people saving wild places and standing up for wildlife through a Wildlife Trust near you.

If you share our belief that the natural world is valuable in its own right and that everyone deserves to live in a healthy wildlife-rich natural world, please join us. And a **big thank you** to all the members, partners and supporters who helped us during 2017-18.



Peta Foxall, Chair



Stephanie Hilborne OBE, Chief Executive



Domouse © Claire Pengelly



Nature Festival Newington Green © Abi March

Cover image: Children playing © Helena Dolby





Cows © Matthew Roberts



Children learning © Helena Doley



Volunteer © Matthew Roberts



Coral © Linda Pkitt/2020VISION



Gill volunteering © Penny Dale



Save Smithy Wood © Sheffield & Rotherham WT



# A year for wildlife



APRIL

## Hickling Broad saved for future generations

One of the most wildlife-rich wetlands in the UK has been saved. A successful appeal by Norfolk Wildlife Trust means that over 655 acres of land were added to the existing Hickling Broad nature reserve, protecting more of this unique place – and its kingfishers, cranes, otters and butterflies – for the future.



MAY

## Cornwall gets its beavers back after 400 years

Beavers have returned to Cornwall in a trial reintroduction project, based on a working dairy farm. Farmer Chris Jones has teamed up with Cornwall Wildlife Trust and the University of Exeter to release two beavers into an enclosure where their impact on habitats and water quality will be studied.



JUNE

## Thousands spend 30 Days Wild

In June, The Wildlife Trusts called on the nation to do something wild every day, for 30 days. Over 68,000 people answered, as well as 9,000 schools and 1,500 businesses. Research shows that 30 Days Wild helps to improve people's connection to nature and their likelihood to help nature.



JULY

## Kids deliver 1,500 friendship bracelets to 10 Downing Street

We delivered over 1500 personal messages from children to Theresa May. The messages were written on friendship bracelets and asked the Prime Minister to protect the sea for their future by designating Marine Conservation Zones.



AUGUST

## A successful year for Scottish ospreys

The two osprey chicks from this year's brood at Loch of the Lowes successfully set off on their migration to Africa. This summer marked the third successful year of the Scottish Wildlife Trust's osprey project in Perthshire. This project is ensuring these stunning birds can thrive in Scotland once again.



SEPTEMBER

## More young leaders for nature in Northern Ireland

Working with seven Secondary schools in the Larne and Carrickfergus area, Ulster Wildlife has encouraged young people to care for their environment and take action for wildlife in their communities. This has been supported by corporate partner AES.





OCTOBER

## New research on impact of nature volunteering

New research showed that 95% of people with poor mental health improved significantly after 12 weeks of volunteering with Wildlife Trusts. The results were documented in a new research paper published jointly with the University of Essex.



NOVEMBER

## Gwent volunteers win Environmental Award

A group of long-term Gwent Wildlife Trust volunteers received an award for their wildlife conservation work in the Living Valleys area. Volunteers help with shepherding, butterfly recording, office work and more. Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations gave the award.



DECEMBER

## Almost 2,000 seal pups born in Lincolnshire

2017 was a record year for the seal colony at Donna Nook which is looked after by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. Almost 2,000 seals were born at the nature reserve, which stretches for six miles along the Lincolnshire coast. It's part of chain of nature reserves along the coast managed by the Wildlife Trust.



JANUARY

## Homes for people and wildlife guidelines launched

The Wildlife Trusts published guidelines to show how new housing can provide greener homes for people and wildlife. Developments can reverse the declines in wildlife, creating a better future for us all. Some housebuilders are already using these guidelines.



FEBRUARY

## New report shows water voles need urgent help

A 10 year study by The Wildlife Trusts shows a 30% decline in water vole numbers in areas where they used to live. Wildlife Trusts are working to restore water vole populations in rivers where they have become extinct but we need more support to scale up this work.



MARCH

## A warm welcome for visitors to Yorkshire

A new visitor centre opened at one of Yorkshire's most special wild places – Spurn Point. This narrow finger of sand that curves into the Humber Estuary is home to special wildlife, military remains and a lighthouse. The centre will help more people to enjoy Spurn's wildlife and explore its past.



# The Wildlife Trusts



Otter © Andy Rouse/2020VISION



The Wildlife Trusts is a grassroots movement that believes we need nature and it needs us.

Nearly 850,000 members and 35,000 volunteers work together through their Wildlife Trust to make their local area wilder and make nature part of life, for everyone.

There are Wildlife Trusts across the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney. Every Wildlife Trust is an independent charity.

Over  
**50**  
coastal  
and marine  
conservation  
projects

**850,000**  
members

**1** Wildlife Trust  
movement

**35,000**  
volunteers

**2,300**  
nature  
reserves

**46**  
Wildlife  
Trusts

• = Wildlife Trust nature reserves





# Bringing people closer to nature



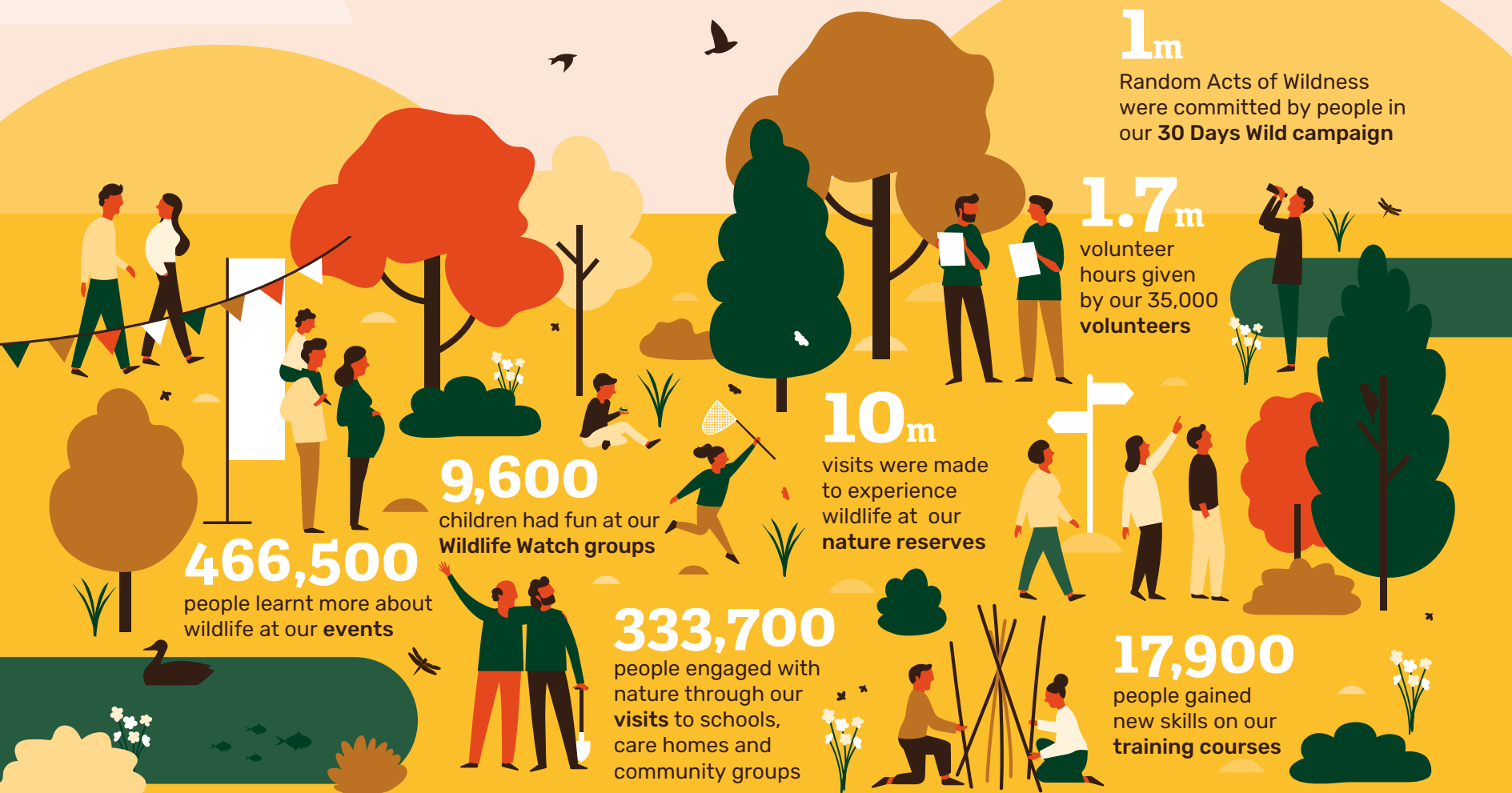
Volunteering at  
Attenborough,  
Nottinghamshire.

Volunteering © Matthew Roberts



# Our impact

How many people experienced nature  
with The Wildlife Trusts in 2017/18?





# Meet Sue, the sea- watcher

Sue used to work in medical sales, travelling thousands of miles a week. But eventually the travelling took its toll and she made the decision to give up full time work.

At first Sue wasn't sure what she would do with her time. She wanted to be outdoors and somewhere that would keep time in the car to a minimum. Volunteering seemed to be the perfect option. But little did she know the impact that contacting North Wales Wildlife Trust would have.

Sue was invited to join North Wales Wildlife Trust's Living Seas project which trains people to become local champions for sea-life. Sue attended training days and learnt how to identify shells, birds, dolphins, rock pool creatures, shark egg cases and even seaweed.

The Wildlife Trust runs pop-up educational events on the beaches of north Wales where Sue talks to families, inspiring adults and children alike with her wildlife skills. Sue is helping people build connections with coastal wildlife that will last a lifetime.



## *Sue is helping people build connections with coastal wildlife that will last a lifetime*

This year she volunteered at roadshows organised by North Wales Wildlife Trust to celebrate the Year of the Sea. Sue helped people to swim with dolphins through virtual reality and showed them natural treasures she collected from the beach. New projects Sue is involved with include shore surveys and the Memory Pod, a project that involves recording people's memories of the sea.

Sue's dedication to wildlife has led to her becoming a Living Seas Champion. She will now be going it solo, leading her own events at her local beaches, helping more people to learn about their local seas and their wildlife.

Sue loves volunteering with North Wales Wildlife Trust. For her every day is a school day. A chance to learn, have fun and make a difference.



# Meet Eddie, the wildlife farmer

Eddie had been unemployed for three years after leaving college. One day he spotted a poster for the Tomorrow's Natural Leaders programme with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. A career in conservation hadn't interested him before, but his employment coach encouraged him to apply. So he did.

For the next year Eddie became a trainee at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust learning how to look after some of Yorkshire's finest wildlife and wild places. This meant learning how to care for nature reserves, survey habitats and learning how to drive a tractor.

The programme also involved taking on a self-led project. For this Eddie took down and restored a dry stone wall sheep pen in the Yorkshire Dales. Eddie and his project partner also taught a team of young people from the National Citizenship Scheme how to do dry stone walling as part of this.

Eddie has found that he enjoys working outside on the farm. It has helped him develop his confidence, skills and experience for a future career outdoors.



Eddie © Paul Thompson

*Overall my mental well-being is a lot better than it was.  
I've got more of an idea of where I want to go as a job now*

He says, "My confidence has improved massively, after three years of unemployment I was cut off. Overall my mental well-being is a lot better than it was. I've got more of an idea of where I want to go as a job now and I can use the wealth of knowledge I have learned".

"I will probably head into the agricultural industry. It is something I have always wanted to do but

never had the confidence. Working here on this farm I've gained more of an interest in this kind of work. It's pushed me over the tipping point."

Eddie is now interested in conservation and hopes to continue his career working in environmentally friendly farming.



# Standing up for wildlife and wild places

Willow warblers



Coopers Hill, near  
Leighton Buzzard.  
One of **2,300** Wildlife  
Trust nature reserves

Adders

Tiger beetles

Coopers Hill © Josh Fisher



# Our impact

How much land do Wildlife Trusts help save for nature?

The illustration here shows the land area Wildlife Trusts directly impact through management and advice. We indirectly impact a much bigger area of land and sea by influencing national policy. In 2017-18 we fought off a government proposal to reduce protection for 43,000 Local Wildlife Sites in the planning system, and we campaigned for 41 new Marine Conservation Zones to protect areas of the seabed. We work locally and nationally to create land and seas rich in wildlife.

Seabed in new Marine Conservation Zones:

**11,700km<sup>2</sup>**

Area of land in our own nature reserves:

**102,157ha**

Area of land we provide advice on:

**144,704ha**

Area of land protected by influencing planning decisions:

**19,508ha**

Area of land in our Biodiversity Benchmark scheme:

**8,700ha**

Length of watercourses Trusts provided advice on:

**2,078km**

Length of watercourses managed:

**6,920km**





# Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds, Norfolk

## Saving a special undersea reef

The seas surrounding the UK are filled with a diversity of life. But our marine environment is at risk. Intensive fishing, plastic pollution and development continues to threaten the delicate balance of life at sea.

Proposals to build an offshore windfarm off the Norfolk coast threatened part of a precious chalk reef. It's part of the longest chalk reef in the world which is home to some of the most diverse marine life in the UK. Its importance as a habitat had been recognised through the designation of the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone – making the area a nature reserve under the sea.

The Wildlife Trusts were determined to stop this threat. Our influencing work resulted in two developers rerouting the cables from the offshore wind farm to avoid the destructive impacts on the chalk reef. To do this we used data on the reef that Wildlife Trust divers had collected in undersea surveys. Seeing this fragile and unique habitat being protected is a brilliant success for wildlife.



# Bodenham Lake, Herefordshire

## Saving local wildlife sites

Herefordshire's landscapes are defined by farmland fields and hilly uplands, but the clear, still waters of Bodenham Lake are a hidden gem.

Bodenham Lake, created from gravel pits in the Lugg Valley, covers an area of over 20 ha. It's Herefordshire's biggest lake, banked by meadows and an ancient orchard whilst the river Lugg runs close by.

In winter, birds visit the lakes and flooded fields along the valley. On arrival they're exhausted and starving. Bodenham Lake is a place where they can rest and feed free of disturbance.

The Lake is designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Herefordshire Wildlife Trust plan to make the most of this wonderful landscape by creating a varied habitat to benefit as much wildlife as possible.

Local Wildlife Sites, like Bodenham Lake, are vital refuges for wildlife. There are more than 43,000 Local Wildlife Sites across the UK. Most are privately owned and the only formal protection they have is through national planning policy

where they should be protected from development. In 2018, government removed this protection in new planning guidance for councils. The Wildlife Trusts ran an emergency campaign in response. 25,000 people contacted the Government, we met with MPs and policy advisors, secured media coverage and finally achieved a reinstatement of protection for thousands of places like Bodenham Lake.

***Local Wildlife Sites, like Bodenham Lake, are vital refuges for wildlife***



Lake and trees © Herefordshire WT



# Partnerships



Siemens volunteers at Whisby Nature Park, Lincolnshire. 75% of employees reported improved mental wellbeing afterwards.



# Our impact

The Wildlife Trusts work with thousands of businesses. At a UK level our relationships are many and varied, and include a small number of formal partnerships.





# Biodiversity Benchmark

We believe that by working together people can change the natural world for the better. The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark certification has recognised the contribution of business landowners since 2007. There are 13 organisations that have achieved this award with 53 sites between them, covering 8,700 hectares.

## Center Parcs

Center Parcs has been certified to Biodiversity Benchmark for ten years. Management of the Forest Holiday Villages has continually created and enhanced habitat, supporting more wildlife including at Longleat in Wiltshire where otters and dormice have moved in. Being in a natural place and experiencing wildlife is a core element of Center Parcs' offer to its guests and the business is thriving.

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Sites belonging to the following organisations retained their certification in 2017-18 following an annual assessment: Center Parcs UK, Heathrow Airport Ltd, Aggregate Industries UK, Tarmac Ltd, EDF Nuclear Generation, Lilly UK, Viridor UK, Veolia, Met Office, Network Rail HS1, Wrigley, Gatwick Airport, Green Park. Both Aggregate Industries UK and Center Parcs UK have added a new site to their certification.





# Funders

Our work relies on the financial support of our members, donors, and legators. The majority of our income comes from these supporters. We are also very grateful for the grants that make many of our individual projects possible. These are received from local authorities, statutory agencies, governments, charitable trusts, lotteries and funds like the Landfill Communities Fund whose support is vital to our efforts to secure nature's recovery and bring people closer to nature.

## People's Postcode Lottery

Players of People's Postcode Lottery continue to support our Forest Schools in 11 major cities. This year, 20,000 children and young people benefited from regular time in nature and 237 teachers received training and improved their confidence in teaching lessons outdoors.

## Big Lottery Fund

The Our Bright Future partnership programme is led by The Wildlife Trusts. It brings together the youth and environmental sectors thanks to £33 million from the Big Lottery Fund. It is formed of 31 projects across the UK and has recently celebrated beating its target of engaging with 80,000 11-24 year olds.

## Heritage Lottery Fund

Many Wildlife Trusts benefit from funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A vast new wild landscape will be created in the Suffolk Broads thanks to £4m from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabling Suffolk Wildlife Trust to buy 348 acres of land and create a new visitor centre.



Young people outdoors @ Yorkshire Dales Park, Autumn



# About us



The Wildlife Trusts have **2,500** staff around the UK. Here's the team that look after our nature reserves in Devon and their dogs, Lottie and Sparky



Devon Wildlife Trusts reserves team @Matt Austin



## Demonstrate

the value of wildlife, wild places and the natural world to society

## Enable

people to act for wildlife, wild places and the natural world

# How we work

More wildlife, more wild places and people closer to nature

A healthy, wildlife rich natural environment that benefits society

Thriving communities that are connected to the natural world

A motivated society that supports investment in, and action for, wildlife and the natural world

## Inspire

people to connect with wildlife, wild places and the natural world

## Empower

people to champion wildlife, wild places and the natural world

Collecting, analysing and sharing evidence  
Pioneering natural solutions  
Evaluating impact

Saving and nurturing wild places  
Providing wild experiences  
Telling wild stories

Supporting volunteering  
Pooling funds and investments  
Providing guidance and advice

Supporting learning  
Promoting membership  
Speaking out and encouraging influence



# Our collective finances

Individual Trusts  
**£143.1m**

**Income**

Income at a UK  
and England level

**£5.1m**

Individual Trusts  
**£129.2m**

**Expenditure**

Spend on Wildlife Trust  
activity at a UK and  
England level

**£6m**

\* Income for 2017-18 does not include £5.8m from Biffa for Biffa Award and £6.9m from Big Lottery Fund for Our Bright Future

\* Figures exclude inter-Trust grants and contributions



# The Wildlife Trusts

## Key People and Supporters

### Patron

HRH The Prince of Wales

### President

Tony Juniper CBE

### Presidents Emeritus

Simon King OBE

Sir David Attenborough OM CH CVO CBE FRSE

Prof Aubrey Manning OBE FRSE

### Chair

Peta Foxall

### Vice Presidents

Prof J Chris Baines

Nick Baker

Prof David Macdonald CBE

Bill Oddie OBE

Julian Pettifer OBE

Prof Sir Robert Worcester KBE

### Chief Executive

Stephanie Hilborne OBE







## Make wildlife part of your story:

- Join us as a member
- Volunteer your time
- Speak up for wildlife
- Remember us in your will
- Work with us

Find out more at:  
**[wildlifetrusts.org/support-us](https://wildlifetrusts.org/support-us)**

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