



giving  
nature  
a home

# Trustees' report and accounts

for the year ended  
31 March 2016

**The RSPB**  
**Trustees' Report and Accounts**  
**for the year ended**  
**31 March 2016**



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## RSPB accounts in context

The accounts are presented here in a format that gives the reader an insight into the main numbers with some explanatory comments.

### Raising money for charitable purposes:

	Income	Cost	2016 Available for charitable purposes	2015 Available for charitable purposes
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Trading income	22.5	(20.1)	2.4	2.9
Membership subscriptions & donations	47.7	(12.3)	35.4	34.2
Grants, corporate & trusts	23.8	(3.3)	20.5	23.7
Legacies	34.1	(0.9)	33.2	29.7
Land income and fees for services	7.6	(0.0)	7.6	7.2
Financial income and investment gains	1.7	(0.1)	1.6	3.1
Total income	<u>137.4</u>	<u>(36.7)</u>	<u>100.7</u>	<u>100.8</u>

- Within Trading income, the majority of products sold, such as bird food and feeders, optics, wildlife books and videos, relate directly to our charitable objectives.
- The number of RSPB members has continued to grow over the past year. We ended the year with 1,187,839 – an all time high. In a year that has seen media and political challenges over the role and activity of charities, these results are a powerful statement of commitment to our cause.

**£100.7 million available  
for charitable purposes**

### Expenditure on charitable purposes:

	2016 £m	2015 £m
Research, policy and advisory	(37.4)	(38.1)
Managing RSPB nature reserves	(34.0)	(34.2)
Education and inspiring support	(21.5)	(19.6)
Supporter care	(4.4)	(4.5)
Total expenditure	<u>(97.3)</u>	<u>(96.4)</u>
Surplus	<u>3.4</u>	<u>4.4</u>

- Our world class conservation work is rooted in sound science and evidence. We lead partnerships and encourage policy-makers to take the right decisions for nature – to have impact at scale.
- We have active management plans to protect and enhance habitats and species across all our nature reserves.
- We inspire and enable everyone to do their bit – especially our members – because the challenge is too big to do alone.
- We look after our million+ members and other supporters, keeping contact details up to date and informing them about our work.
- Within each category, we allocated the essential costs of running the charity: financial stewardship, looking after our staff, security of our systems and many other activities.
- The surplus excludes expenditure on the acquisition of nature reserves and other assets.

**In addition to generating  
income and spending  
on our work, we are also  
responsible for the  
assets shown overleaf.**

**Assets and liabilities:**

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>£m</b>	£m
Nature reserves	<b>194.3</b>	189.8
Equipment	<b>4.3</b>	4.1
Total long-term assets	<b>198.6</b>	193.9
Pension liability	<b>(59.0)</b>	(86.5)
Cash and investments	<b>32.3</b>	41.1
Stock, debtors and creditors	<b>11.9</b>	4.2
Total representing Available financial reserves	<b>44.2</b>	45.3
Total	<b>183.8</b>	152.7

- During the year we added 1,042 hectares at a cost of £2.7m to our nature reserves.
- Of the nature reserves, at £194.3m, is specified land with a fair value of £57m which, under a Contingent Asset Agreement with the RSPB Pension Scheme, would pass to the Pension Fund in the unlikely event of the RSPB being unable to meet its obligations to the Scheme.
- The amount owed to us by our debtors increased by c£2m and the amount owed by us to our creditors decreased by c£5m. These amounts vary throughout the year and whilst they are large numbers they represent just two weeks of expenditure. Our free financial reserves mean that we are able to manage cashflow variations such as these.
- An increase in long-term interest rates reduced the pension deficit by £27.5m to £59.0m. A number of steps have been taken over the years to reduce the long-term cost and risk of pension provision, such as closing the final salary section of the scheme to new entrants, reducing the rate at which benefits are accrued, increasing staff contribution rates, increasing normal retirement age and sharing with scheme members the cost of future increases in life expectancy.

**Available financial  
reserves are held for  
the following  
purposes.**

**Amount held for future purposes:**

	<b>2016</b>	2015
	<b>£m</b>	£m
Available financial reserves	<b>44.2</b>	45.3
Held for specific purposes	<b>(31.7)</b>	(31.3)
Free financial reserves	<b>12.5</b>	14.0
Representing future expenditure cover of	<b>8 weeks</b>	9 weeks

- The RSPB is committed to putting its income and financial reserves to work as soon as possible. Free financial reserves are held at a modest level to maximise the funds available for immediate conservation needs. At the end of the year, we held just eight weeks' worth of expenditure in free financial reserves. In addition, funds held for specific purposes includes money required for future working capital and a threat fund to help safeguard our most important work programmes against uncertainty.



## Trustees' report

### Reference and administrative details of the charity, its advisers and trustees

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (the RSPB) originated in 1889. Our membership now stands at 1,187,839, including 251,234 in our junior membership Wildlife Explorers. This makes us one of the largest voluntary wildlife conservation organisations in the world. Within Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, we are known as RSPB Scotland, RSPB Northern Ireland and RSPB Cymru respectively.

#### Registration

Charity registered in England and Wales number 207076, in Scotland number SC037654.

#### Registered office

The Lodge  
Sandy  
Bedfordshire SG19 2DL

#### Principal professional advisers

##### Bankers

Co-operative Bank plc  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
9 Prescott Street  
London E1 8BE

Lloyds Bank plc  
249 Silbury Boulevard  
Secklow Gate West  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire MK9 1NA

##### Independent auditors

Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP  
Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors  
St. Bride's House  
10 Salisbury Square  
London EC4Y 8EH

##### Insurance brokers

Griffiths & Armour  
Drury House  
19 Water Street  
Liverpool L2 0RL

##### Investment advisers

Cambridge Associates  
80 Victoria Street  
Cardinal Place  
London SW1E 5JL

##### Actuaries

Mercers  
One Christchurch Way  
Woking GU21 6JG

##### Legal advisers

Clifford Chance LLP  
10 Upper Bank Street  
London  
E14 5JJ

Hewitsons  
Shakespeare House  
42 Newmarket Road  
Cambridge CB5 8EP

Mills & Reeves  
Botanic House  
100 Hills Road  
Cambridge CB2 1PH

Turcan Connell  
Princes Exchange  
1 Earl Grey Street  
Edinburgh EH3 9EE

Withers LLP  
16 Old Bailey  
London EC4M 7EG

##### Pension administrators

Lane Clark Peacock LLP  
95 Wigmore Street  
London  
W1U 1DQ

## Management, Council and Directorate

### Patron:

Her Majesty the Queen

### President:

Mrs Miranda Krestovnikoff

### Vice Presidents:

Dr Elizabeth Andrews MBE DL  
 Sir David Attenborough OM CH CVO CBE FRS  
 Mr Nick Baker  
 Viscount Blakenham  
 Mr Adrian Darby OBE  
 Mr Ian Darling FRICS OBE  
 Ms Kate Humble  
 Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS

The Earl of Lindsay  
 Sir John Lister-Kaye Bt  
 Professor Ian Newton OBE FRS FRSE  
 Mr Bill Oddie OBE  
 Mr Chris Packham  
 Mr Julian Pettifer OBE  
 Sir Graham Wynne CBE  
 Baroness Young of Old Scone

### Trustees:

#### Council Chairman

Professor Steve Ormerod FIEEM

#### Committees:

##### Treasurer and Chairman – Finance and Audit Committee:

Mr Graeme Wallace BA Econ  
 Dr Andrew Brown CBE (retired 10 Oct 2015)

##### Chairman – Conservation Committee:

Mr David Baldock (appointed as Chairman 10 Oct 2015)  
 Mr Nick Cross

##### Chairman – Communications Committee:

#### Country Advisory Committees:

##### Chairman – Committee for Northern Ireland:

Mr Clive Mellon LLB (Hons)

##### Chairman – Committee for Scotland:

Professor Colin Galbraith BSc PhD

##### Chairman – Committee for Wales:

Dr Havard Prosser

#### Other Council Members:

Professor Andrew Balmford FRS  
 Mr John Bullock \*  
 Mr Paul Cooke (retired 10 Oct 2015) \*  
 Mrs Sal Cooke OBE  
 Mr Kevin Cox \*  
 Mr David Cramp

Professor David Macdonald CBE DSc FRSE  
 Mr Stephen Moss (appointed 10 Oct 2015)  
 Sir John Randall (appointed 10 Oct 2015)  
 Mr Neal Ransome \*  
 Ms Jennifer Ullman \*

\*Council members who are also members of the Finance and Audit Committee

### Management Board:

Chief Executive  
 Director, Conservation  
 Director, Finance and Information Systems  
 Director, Fundraising & Communications  
 Director, People  
 Director, International Operations  
 Director, Operations  
 Director, Scotland

Dr Mike Clarke  
 Mr Martin Harper  
 Mr Alan Sharpe  
 Ms Beth Thoren  
 Ms Ann Kiceluk  
 Dr Tim Stowe  
 Mr Shaun Thomas  
 Mr Stuart Housden OBE

## Structure, governance and management

### Legal structure

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds ('the RSPB' or 'the charity') is a non-statutory body incorporated by Royal Charter. The Charter was originally granted in 1904 and, together with the Statutes, provides the rules and guidelines under which the RSPB operates. Supplemental Charters were granted by Her Majesty the Queen in 1957, 1996 and 2014. Amendments to the Charter and the Statutes were approved by the Privy Council on 16 July 2014.

The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and balance sheet consolidate, on a line-by-line basis, the financial statements of the charity and its subsidiary undertakings. Detailed information on the group structure is given in Accounting policies (Note 2, page 17).

The charity trustees are members of Council, which is the ultimate governing body. Council sets policy and is responsible for the conduct of the RSPB's affairs and for ensuring that the charity operates in accordance with the Royal Charter, the Statutes and the law. Council meets four times each year. Policy is also influenced by the Country Advisory Committees. The trustees have a responsibility to consider the effectiveness of Council and its Committees. An effectiveness review allows for each trustee to comment confidentially and the results are considered in the light of best practice in the charity sector. A review was undertaken during the year; no significant areas of improvement were identified.

The RSPB Council comprises 18 charity trustee posts. The charity trustees (also referred to as Council Members) include the Chairman of the Council, the Treasurer, the Chairmen of the Country Advisory Committees for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, 3 general Council Members and 10 ordinary Council members.

The RSPB also has a President and Vice-Presidents nominated by Council. The President and Vice-Presidents are not Council members. Council has three committees, each reporting directly to Council: Finance and Audit, Conservation, and Communications. There is also a Pensions subcommittee and Trustee nominations panel, each accountable directly to Council.

The role of the Finance and Audit Committee is to review financial performance, the financial plan and the internal and external audit processes, to act as the conscience of the RSPB in probity terms, and to report on these to Council. The Finance and Audit Committee further considers the overall approach to risk management and has oversight of a detailed risk register.

The role of the Conservation Committee is to approve conservation policy, consider and approve conservation objectives and to monitor progress.

The role of the Communications Committee is to consider and recommend to Council policies and strategies concerning the public reputation of the RSPB, its education activities and its communications,

including the role and development of adult and junior membership, and to monitor progress.

Remuneration: to continue to ensure clear governance and transparency, the remuneration of the CEO is determined by a committee comprising the Treasurer and Chairs of Conservation and Communication, chaired by the Chairman of Council. The performance of the CEO is subject to formal appraisal by the committee against previously agreed measures and is discussed at an annual appraisal meeting. Based on that assessment and taking account salaries paid in comparable organisations, remuneration is set and the outcome reported back to Council. Any recommendation is made in line with the RSPB's pay policy for all employees. Council is ultimately responsible for setting and reviewing the salary of the Chief Executive, who in turn is responsible for setting and reviewing the salaries of the Management Board (Note 10, page 24).

The Pension subcommittee, comprising up to seven members, the majority of whom are trustees, considers and makes recommendations to Council on pension related matters. It is chaired by an independent expert.

The Trustee nominations panel, consisting of the Chairman, three other trustees and two members of the Management Board, reviews the pattern of charity trustee retirement, identifies the skills and experience required to ensure Council's effectiveness, and scrutinises the applications and nominations received.

The day-to-day management of the Charity is delegated by Council to the Chief Executive and carried out by directors, within the Management Board.

New general Council Members are nominated by Council and new ordinary Council Members are nominated by RSPB Members or Council. New Council Members are elected for a five-year term of office by the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Trustee nominations panel, consisting of the Chairman, the Chairs of the three Council Committees and two members of the Management Board, review the pattern of charity trustee retirement, identify the skills and experience required to ensure Council's effectiveness, and scrutinise the applications and nominations received.

Following their election to Council, each charity trustee receives a briefing pack outlining their role and accountabilities, together with information about the RSPB, its policies, structures and work. Each new charity trustee completes a register of interests and related party transactions. This register is updated annually and whenever any changes occur. An induction day, taking a strategic look at the roles and responsibilities of trustees and management, is offered to each new charity trustee. All charity trustees are offered opportunities to learn more about specialist areas of the RSPB's work, through individual meetings with staff and site visits to the RSPB's nature reserves throughout the UK. A special weekend event, to which all charity trustees are invited, is held each year in an area of high nature conservation importance, focusing on species and habitat management work that the RSPB is undertaking. Similar events are held for the Country Advisory Committees.

The RSPB's main UK headquarters is in Sandy, Bedfordshire, with country headquarters for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales in Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff, respectively; and regional offices in England, Scotland and Wales. The RSPB has UK-wide operations with nature reserves located across all four countries

The RSPB is the UK Partner of BirdLife International, the global partnership of bird conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity and works with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources.

### Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with FRS102 – The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The law applicable to charities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the charity trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statements of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The charity trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that:

- are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions;
- disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity; and
- ensure that the financial statements comply with the reporting and legal regulations and the provisions of the charity's constitution as set out in the Charter and Statutes.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

### Risk management

The charity trustees are responsible for identifying and managing the major risks facing the charity. Risk management is well established and is considered in every aspect of our work. Managing large areas of countryside, much of it visited by many people, entails risk and demands constant attention. In response to the recommendations set out in the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the charity trustees consider the risk register on an annual basis. In undertaking this work, the charity trustees review risk in its broadest sense and consider

anything that might alter or undermine the capacity of the charity to fulfil its charitable objectives.

The register provides a comprehensive view of the following areas of risk:

- responsibility to staff, supporters, volunteers and visitors;
- reputation;
- physical assets (including data and financial assets);
- retaining and maintaining know-how;
- the external environment;
- sources of income.

This annual risk review assesses each of the major risks and the effectiveness of the arrangements for managing them. The review is scrutinised by Council. Following the most recent review in June 2016, the charity trustees confirm that they are satisfied with such arrangements and identified a number of strategic risks which are explained in Achievements, Challenges and Future Plans.

### Objectives, activities and public benefit

The objectives of the RSPB, as set out in our Charter, are to:

- 1) promote the conservation of biological diversity and the natural environment for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively by:
  - (a) conserving wild birds and other wildlife, and the environment on which they depend; and
  - (b) protecting, restoring and re-creating habitats. This includes raising public understanding and awareness of, and providing information on, such matters.
- 2) advance education of the public about conserving the natural environment.

The charity trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing objectives and activities which are described in Achievements, Challenges and Future Plans.

The RSPB has a range of means of achieving these objectives and its public benefit, combining them to best effect. For the purposes of preparing the RSPB's accounts, these means are grouped under the following main headings:

#### *Managing RSPB nature reserves*

- We manage nature reserves which support a diverse range of wildlife and habitats – we have recorded over 13,300 species on our reserves, about a quarter of the UK's total complement of terrestrial species.
- We acquire new reserves, following a Council-agreed strategy, and devote resources to safeguarding and recreating habitats.
- We provide facilities, including classrooms and viewing areas, to enhance the visitor experience on our reserves.

#### *Research, policy and advisory*

- All of our conservation work is underpinned by research and investigation, much of which is carried out by our scientists and specialist advisers.
- Birds and their habitats are affected by a wide range of human activity. The RSPB's policy work therefore covers a broad range of issues, from agriculture to

energy, transport, overseas aid, education and the economy.

- We seek to influence land-use and economic policies so that the environment is at the heart of all Government decisions.
- We defend and promote the implementation of laws and policies designed to protect wildlife.

#### *Education and inspiring support*

- We work with the support of our members and other supporters to use their voice most effectively to benefit nature conservation.
- We seek to connect young people to nature at all stages of their development through their formal education and their leisure time.

#### *Supporter care*

- We provide services to our members and supporters and respond to more than 270,000 enquiries each year.
- We administer our relationship with around two million individuals including members, supporters and volunteers.
- We send our members a magazine to keep them aware of and involved with, the work of the RSPB.
- Our website received nearly 19 million visits in 2015-16.

#### *Generating funds*

- We receive most of our financial support from individuals through a range of activities. RSPB supporters are the foundation of everything we do and we endeavour to increase the level of support each year.
- We aim to build lasting support from institutional bodies. These include statutory grant funders, trusts and corporate businesses.
- Much of what we do to deliver conservation also generates income. This ranges from land and farming income through to the sale of research to other appropriate organisations.
- Our trading operation focuses on the sale of bird care products, optics and educational material to support its work.

#### **Fundraising activities**

Our work to give nature a home is only possible because of the generosity of supporters and members, to whom: *Our promise is to do our utmost to fulfil our charitable objectives and act within our powers to conserve and protect birds, wildlife and the natural world.* To achieve this we raise vital funds from our supporters; fundraising is carried out by our staff with the help of professional fundraisers and commercial participators.

- Professional fundraisers are fundraising agencies or third party service providers who act as agents in raising funds on a charity's behalf.
- Commercial participators are usually businesses who encourage the sale of goods or services on the basis that the charity will receive funding as a result.

In all cases, we have contractual arrangements in place with these fundraising partners to set the standards and obligations that must be met in the fundraising activities.

We work closely with all our fundraising partners to ensure that they act in accordance with the high standards that the RSPB and the public expect. For example, we regularly monitor the quality of outbound telephone marketing calls and conduct mystery shopping with our face-to-face fundraisers. We seek feedback from new members to understand their experience of joining us, thus identifying any areas where we can make further improvements.

As part of our promise, we ensure that fundraising is conducted to the highest standards and that practices and procedures are in place and closely adhered to; particularly to protect people in vulnerable circumstances. All RSPB fundraisers are trained to the highest standards and have clear guidance in place to help them when encountering someone in a vulnerable situation.

The RSPB is a member of the Institute of Fundraising, the Direct Marketing Association, the Fundraising Standards Board and the Public Fundraising Association. Alongside our high standards we ensure we follow their Codes of Practice to ensure that fundraising meets the highest standards and supporters have the best possible experience.

The RSPB complies with the Data Protection Act and the Information Commissioner's guides and code. Whilst we endeavour to provide an exemplary service we don't always get it right. Last year we received 407 complaints about our fundraising from over 14 million conversations by phone, post, email or face-to-face. Each complaint was fully investigated and improvements made so we continue to retain supporter trust, and together fight to save nature.

#### **Volunteers**

In all activities, we receive extensive assistance from volunteers, who are at the heart of what we do and achieve. Without their help, the RSPB's work would be greatly diminished.

Volunteers founded the RSPB in 1889 and they are still fundamental to our work. They carry out a variety of roles, from practical conservation and field surveys, to support for office and retail activities. In addition, the RSPB has hundreds of thousands of people who put time and enthusiasm into our citizen science projects, such as the Big Garden Birdwatch.

For further information about the RSPB, please request a copy of our leaflet *Introducing the RSPB*, or visit the RSPB's website: [rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk)

## Achievements, challenges and future plans

The RSPB has a long track record of winning for wildlife, and right now the struggle to save nature is happening on an unprecedented scale. This is a global challenge, at every level, from gardens to grand landscapes.

The causes are many, but what's clear is that human activity is putting tremendous pressure on our wildlife and wild places. From habitat loss to climate change, the global environment has changed. Nature's home has been built on, drained, dug up, felled and polluted. And that's why the RSPB is fighting to give it back, and to find ways to help people appreciate how the quality of their lives is intimately connected with the health of the natural world.

Our strategy recognises that, to save the home we share with wildlife, we need to continue our programme of rigorous conservation projects while empowering people to be caretakers and ambassadors of nature.

Of course the scale of this work is beyond the means of any single organisation. That's why we will continue to work in partnership, contributing our knowledge and skills to the wider conservation world, spearheading the global effort with numerous pioneering projects.

We conduct our work assiduously and scientifically, measuring and analysing our achievements each year as we pursue our vision of a world richer in nature. As we proceed, our trustees carefully consider any possible risks and uncertainties we might face, and any factors that might affect our financial position and ability to sustain the charity. Risk management is well established at the RSPB and this is considered in every aspect of our work. The assessment of these potential risks will of course have an impact on the overall outcomes of the RSPB's work, and as such they are disclosed within this section of the trustees' report.

It's not possible to convey in just a few pages the full depth and detail of all the work involved in each activity across the RSPB, so instead we offer a brief summary of the key successes, the challenges facing us, and our future plans.

For further details on our achievements, please refer to the RSPB's Annual Review 2015–16, available from Supporter Services, The RSPB, UK Headquarters, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL. Telephone 01767 693690, email [membership@rspb.org.uk](mailto:membership@rspb.org.uk), or see our website [rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk).

### Nature conservation: achievements

Nature conservation is at the heart of everything we do, whether it's working to save our threatened species, restoring habitats, or protecting our finest wildlife sites. As the threats to biodiversity operate at an increasingly globalised level, we've also got to think beyond our reserves network if we want to meet our conservation target: 20% of the land and 10% of the sea in the UK and UK Overseas Territories to be managed for wildlife by 2025.

We've acquired some amazing new places for wildlife over the last financial year, which will allow us to build upon and develop our existing reserves network. Through our long-running and successful relationship with CEMEX, we've taken on Lade Pits – a new 70-hectare extension to our Dungeness nature reserve in Kent. With grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we were able to purchase a nature reserve at Dunnet Head, North Scotland, which will allow us to give a home to thousands of endangered birds, including puffins, kittiwakes, guillemots, razorbills and fulmars. And we led a consortium to win a once-in-a-generation opportunity to develop and manage the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve in Nottinghamshire, signing a contract to take over the management of Sherwood Forest Country Park. The site brings in over 350,000 visitors a year, and we are working on developing a new first-class visitor facility there. The project will help us to give nature a home on a big scale while connecting more people with the diverse wildlife there.

Managing our network of nature reserves is at the heart of our work to give nature a home in the UK. These places are vital to threatened species, and our latest surveys have shown just how valuable they are: RSPB reserves hold over 16,000 different species, including many populations that are considered important on a national and international scale.

It's been an extraordinary year for breeding successes on our reserves, including an abundance of rare birds such as red-necked phalaropes and roseate terns. In 2015, we saw our highest ever numbers of both nightjars and woodlarks. Black grouse numbers reached an all-time high at Geltsdale in Cumbria, and our lowland wet grassland reserves saw their highest ever numbers of breeding lapwings and redshanks.

Our Bempton Cliffs nature reserve in Yorkshire has one of the UK's largest seabird colonies and is protected under the EU Nature Directives. In June, we were excited to open a new seabird centre there, which has already welcomed 35,000 visitors and created 750 new RSPB members. This gives a huge boost to our conservation work at Bempton, protecting the seabirds both on the reserve and out at sea when they head out to feed.

It's been a fantastic year for nature at RSPB Hope Farm in Cambridgeshire. While operating a commercially successful farm, growing wheat, oilseed rape and pea crops, we have used wildlife-friendly techniques that boosted the number of breeding birds on the site by 190%, and our butterfly population by 160%.

Our Futurescapes programme continues to flourish, giving homes to nature on a landscape-scale. Through this project, we now work with landowners, farmers, local authorities and communities on over 166,000 hectares in the UK.

To achieve the maximum positive impact for nature, we work to get nature high up on the political agenda. And to this end, we launched Vote for Bob in 2014. The campaign, to ask people to remind their politicians just why nature is important, had terrific support from the

public and MPs, and in June 2015, was nominated for an Insight in Fundraising Award in the 'Most Powerful Insight through Research' category, coming Highly Commended in the strong field of contestants. Vote for Bob had support from over 1,000 MPs and prospective parliamentary candidates by the end of his campaign, and through Bob's hard work we have made great progress with our MP Species Champions Programme, launched in 2016 and first tried in Scotland. In this programme, we have joined forces with Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Bat Conservation Trust, Buglife, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation and Plantlife to encourage politicians to step up for threatened species in the UK and use their voices to support nature. MPs around England are currently championing a range of species, from smooth snakes and tansy beetles, to nightingales and swifts.

The RSPB's Centre for Conservation Science continues to go from strength to strength in pioneering new research. This year, it produced a record number of 136 peer-reviewed publications. To date, all our peer-reviewed literature has been cited nearly 42,156 times. The launch of the new David Attenborough building provides a unique hub for collaboration between Cambridge University and other research-based conservation organisations, allowing us to share knowledge and expertise and develop better ways of saving nature.

Between 1940 and 1985, the stone-curlew population declined by 85%, with fewer than 100 pairs left in the Brecks, on the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk, by the end of the 1980s. In 2015, we celebrated 30 years of successful partnership with landowners in the region, closely monitoring and protecting stone-curlews during day-to-day farming operations. Thanks to this work, the population of stone-curlews has now trebled there.

In October, working in coalition with more than 30 other conservation organisations, we published our *Response for Nature* report at four simultaneous events in London, Cardiff, Belfast and Edinburgh. The report outlines key recommendations made to Governments in order to restore nature in the UK and follows on from the *State of Nature* report published in 2013.

Much of the work the RSPB does also involves finding ways to inspire and educate local communities about the benefits of the nature around them. This approach has been essential to our efforts to save the Gola Rainforest in Sierra Leone with our partners over the last 25 years. The Gola Rainforest is a unique habitat, rich in biodiversity but under serious threat from deforestation and hunting. So far, we've helped 24,000 indigenous people in Gola to develop sustainable agricultural projects that both improve their standard of living and protect the forest. In order for this work to continue, we set up an appeal to raise a further £750,000, which will help save Gola's precious wildlife.

While the RSPB is best known for its bird conservation, we work to create homes for *all* nature. A flourishing wildlife site is of course only possible when the complex interdependent system of species is considered and provided for. So it's no surprise that our nature reserves provide refuge for many important populations of

non-bird species. We have a priority list of 83 of these species to which we devote conservation resource. One of these species is the critically endangered European eel. Through a \$25,000 grant from the Disney Fund, we have made significant improvements for eels at several of our freshwater wetland reserves such as Minsmere in Suffolk and Leighton Moss in Lancashire. The grant has also enabled us to promote eel conservation to school children around the UK.

Giving nature a home is something best done together and through innovative means. We have begun a major three-year partnership with Barratt Developments to pioneer nature-friendly housing developments. As part of this, we have created a well-received 'Wildlife Garden' show home. The first flagship development of the project is the Kingsbrook site near Aylesbury, and in 2015 permission was granted for the details of 'Village 2', which will incorporate many wildlife-friendly features, such as hedgehog highways and nectar-rich flowerbeds for bumblebees. As the Kingsbrook development progresses, RSPB scientists will monitor and assess how wildlife uses the site and also the benefits it brings to the local community. We will share the results and use them to inform future partnerships with the building and construction industries.

In the last year, our successful three-year RESTORE partnership came to an end. Funded by the INTERREG IVB NWE Programme, the project promoted the restoration of quarries for the benefit of wildlife, people and local economies across north-west Europe. It generated a wealth of valuable information and insight into the ecosystem benefits of biodiversity-led restorations. These include flood alleviation, income generation from green tourism, enhanced health and wellbeing for local people, and improved water quality and carbon storage.

The RSPB is the UK partner of BirdLife International – a partnership of conservation organisations working to give nature a home around the world. Together with our BirdLife Partner the Bombay Natural History Society, India, our vulture team made a fantastic breakthrough in the fight to save Indian vultures from extinction. In August 2015, the Indian Ministry of Health banned multi-dose vials of the drug diclofenac, which is used illegally to treat animals such as cattle and is responsible for the death of tens of millions of Asia's vultures. The RSPB is a core member of SAVE (Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction), and through this partnership we will continue to raise awareness of vulture conservation and the use of suitable alternative drugs for veterinary use.

## Nature Conservation: challenges and future plans

Our natural world is facing increased pressure from the depletion of its resources. Intensified agriculture and climate change continue to threaten nature, reducing populations of wildlife in the UK and overseas. If we are to succeed in overcoming this challenge, we must continue to maintain and develop new and innovative partnerships both within and outside the conservation sector, sharing our knowledge and inspiring more people to work with us to save nature.

The current economic climate has reduced Government funding for conservation projects, and traditional funding streams are changing. So we are working hard with our partners to find new ways of financing our conservation programme. One example is the 'Back from the Brink' project, a partnership with a group of fellow conservation organisations to save 20 species from extinction and to shift 118 other species from a state of emergency to stable populations. For this project we have been awarded a development grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund – the first big step towards making this vital work a reality.

After many years of research and planning, the new wind turbine at our headquarters in Sandy, Bedfordshire, became fully operational. It will generate more than half of the RSPB's electricity needs across our 127 locations. The project supports our commitment to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from RSPB buildings by 50% by 2020 – just one of the ways we're striving to tackle climate change wherever we can.

We have revised our list of priority species and habitats, based on new assessments of species extinction risks in the UK and overseas, as well as the latest information from the *Birds of Conservation Concern 4* report. The data clearly shows that we need to increase our attention on migrant birds, seabirds, and upland species. These will be a focus of our future work.

## Education and inspiring support: achievements

Saving Nature isn't something we can do on our own. To have maximum impact, we need to grow support for nature among politicians, businesses, other organisations, and, critically, the millions of people across the UK who together can be a powerful force for change.

Fostering a love of nature in the next generation is vital, and in July 2015, we launched a brand new partnership project with Aldi to help achieve this. The supermarket is donating funds to the RSPB, raised through their England and Wales carrier bag levy, to support our youth education programme. The first year of the partnership has already generated over £775,000 and will help us to reach more than 50,000 primary school and early years children. Many more children and families across the UK will also benefit from the additional Wild Challenge online resources supported by the project. The project aims to bring in donations in excess of £2m over a three-year period, and continues to gather pace, now delivering outreach in primary schools and greenspaces across 15 UK cities.

In November 2015, we published our report *The Impact of Children's Connection to Nature* led by the University of Derby's Nature Connectedness Research Group and kindly funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. This pioneering piece of research showed that only one in five children are connected to nature. The results demonstrated the overall health and wellbeing benefits for children raised with a sense of kinship and responsibility for the natural world.

In November, our Conservation Science Team published a new report: *The Nature of Climate Change*. It reveals how the intensifying effects of climate change are already affecting Europe's wildlife and causing populations to move, diverge and colonise new areas in order to survive. Since 1900, 120 new species have colonised the UK. The report makes it clear that we need to create and maintain enough suitable habitat to help our new arrivals flourish. We published the report just ahead of the United Nations climate change conference in Paris, which resulted in 196 nations signing up to a new global climate change agreement. This agreement will come into effect from 2020. The nations agreed to a target to try to limit increases in temperature to less than 1.5 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels. Crucially, the deal recognises the importance of the protection and integrity of the world's biodiversity, oceans and ecosystems, and how we can best conserve and enhance our global sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, such as forests and peatlands.

The Climate Coalition, of which the RSPB is a partner, launched the Show the Love campaign in time for Valentine's Day, and saw some terrific results. Our short film *I wish for you*, created by director and producer Ridley Scott's team and written by award-winning author Michael Morpurgo, received more than five million views and generated more than 2,600 pledges of support. Hundreds of thousands of people made, wore and shared green hearts around the UK, with astronaut Tim Peake even tweeting his support from outer space.

We had another tremendous year hosting *Springwatch* in 2015, which for the second time was based at RSPB Minsmere in Suffolk. More than 13,500 people visited the site during the three-week broadcast period, and 298 people became RSPB members. Minsmere's Twitter pages also received 11,000 new followers.

We worked with 14 celebrities in a new partnership project with Intu Shopping Centres, who helped design giant birdhouses for an interactive tour of 15 shopping centres across the UK. The Big Birdhouse Tour encourages local communities to give nature a home where they live, and it raises awareness of our conservation work. The tour concludes in October 2016.

In 2015, we also set up a new partnership with adventure travel company Hurtigruten. Over the next three years, the partnership aims to raise £100,000 in support of our work to conserve declining seabird populations around the world, such as puffins, guillemots and penguins.

Our work to help raise awareness about the illegal persecution of Britain's most threatened bird of prey, the hen harrier, continues. A new partnership with the cosmetic store Lush has raised an astonishing £100,000 through sales of a hen harrier shaped bath bomb. The store has donated all profits from sales of over 30,000 bath bombs to help satellite-tag as many hen harrier chicks as possible over the coming years. This forms part of our Hen Harrier Project which we are running with support from the EU's LIFE+ funding scheme and

underpins our determination to tackle the continuing threats to this bird.

The commitment and dedication of our extraordinary volunteers is the driving force behind our work. We value all of our volunteers equally, but at the RSPB AGM in October, we provide special recognition of the tireless efforts of a few individuals for their continued and outstanding support of the RSPB and their local communities.

## Education and inspiring support: challenges and future plans

In recent years, the legislation put in place to protect nature has been targeted for reform by governments across the European Union, in the belief that doing so will be good for business. The RSPB is fighting hard, alongside our supporters, to protect these Nature Directives and the strong foundation for nature conservation they provide for the UK. Investing in our digital communications resources gave us the power to reach out nationally to our supporters who contributed to a terrific show of force: more than half a million people stood up to defend the Nature Directives to the European Commission. At the time of writing, we are still awaiting the final outcome.

We are proud of our long campaigning heritage, and we will continue to empower our partners and supporters to influence change where it's needed most, whether it be campaigning for the Nature Directives, or our policy and advocacy work on renewable energy and climate change. We will encourage governments to implement long-term and sustainable planning measures which support economic growth while working in harmony with nature.

In order to face the scale of the current problems facing nature in the UK and beyond, we must continue to connect with new partners and supporters, empowering them to act locally. We will work hard to become relevant to decision-makers in each of the UK's four countries, and within these invest appropriately at regional and community levels where we can have the biggest conservation impact.

## Supporter care: achievements

Our organisation depends upon our supporters, and so we're thrilled that our member numbers have grown by over 100,000 in the last three years, reaching an all-time high of 1.19 million. It has also been a record-breaking year for our legacy income, with our generous supporters donating almost £34 million.

Our incredible volunteers have been busy raising funds for the RSPB in their local communities and have had their best ever year with over £1 million brought in from lapel pin badge sales. We also achieved another all-time-high in our trading operation, with RSPB shops, cafes and our web shop bringing in sales of circa £20 million.

Donations received from visitors to our reserves increased by 50%, with reserve events bringing in more than £260,000, and more than £450,000 generated from our entrance fees and car park use on our reserves. We create experiences designed to give people a deeper connection with nature, including events on reserves, face-to-face activities, and schools outreach work. Last year, the number of people enjoying these experiences increased by 47% to 317,464.

The results from the year demonstrate the continuing public support for our work, and they show the concern and ambition of people who give their financial, political and social support for nature. It's this generous support that allows us to protect and restore the best places for nature, stop threatened species going extinct, and continue to work with others to save the natural home that wildlife and humans share.

## Supporter care: challenges and future plans

The role and remit of charities continues to be scrutinised. For many organisations, including the RSPB, this has naturally posed a risk, but it has also served as an opportunity to ensure that we retain the highest level of trust with our members and supporters in both the way we operate and in what we do.

New regulations on fundraising practices and new limitations on how the charity sector as a whole interacts with its supporters presents a challenge, but it's also an exciting opportunity to look across the organisation and further improve our internal ways of working and the ways we communicate with our audiences. We welcome the increased analysis and regulation of the sector and have set up a charity fundraising review initiative, which aims to ensure our fundraising practices continue to reach the highest standards. Internally, this has also helped us to develop more efficient and innovative ways of working. We want to ensure we stay ahead of the curve, maintain our understanding of the regulations, and grow the RSPB as a deeply trusted organisation. To do this, we will continue devoting resource to this area in order to pioneer best practice, transparency and compliance in all the RSPB's operating and fundraising activities.

We are committed to telling the RSPB story in a clear and coherent way. This year, we've changed the sequence of our reporting with *Nature's Home* magazine, publishing our results in the October issue to enable a new and deeper understanding of our achievements and provide better coverage of our biggest successes spanning the last financial year.

Nature conservation and species recovery are long-term endeavours, and in any given year we have many projects underway, from which the highlights are captured and illustrated through our *Annual Review*, *Trustees Report* and AGM. We will continue to find new and better ways to communicate all of our successes and biggest impacts, showcasing the actions we've taken and demonstrating our ethical credentials.

## Financial review

The accounts, which form part of this report, comply with the requirements of FRS102 – The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland. The trustees consider that in preparing these accounts, they have consistently applied appropriate accounting policies supported by reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates where required.

In preparing the accounts, the trustees have considered whether, in applying the accounting policies required by FRS102 and the Charities SORP FRS102, the restatement of comparative items was required. At the date of the transition, in applying the requirement to recognise liabilities arising from employee benefits, a liability was recognised for the holiday entitlement carried forward and for the entitlement arising in the year which was due, but not taken. A revaluation of land was also undertaken and its fair value at the date of the transition was treated as a deemed cost.

An explanation and reconciliation of how the transition to FRS102 has affected the reported financial position and financial performance is provided in Note 22.

A resolution to re-appoint the firm Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP as auditors to the organisation was passed at the Annual General Meeting on 10 October 2015.

### Financial reserves policy

The RSPB holds financial reserves to be applied to future activities in a number of categories:

- Unrestricted – are available to be applied, at the discretion of the trustees, to any of the RSPB's charitable purposes.
- Restricted – are to be applied to the specific purpose(s) intended by the donor.
- Endowment – are restricted funds that are to be retained for the benefit of the RSPB as a capital fund. Permanent endowments require the capital to be maintained and only the income and capital growth can be utilised. With expendable endowments the capital may also be utilised.

Each year the trustees consider the appropriate level of free reserves. They review the RSPB's requirements and consider a sustained fall in income of 10–15% to be a reasonable basis for setting a minimum level. It is the intention of the trustees to hold sufficient reserves to enable expenditure to be reduced in a managed fashion, should the need arise, avoiding the need to halt work abruptly. The trustees have agreed that free reserves should normally be within a range of 8–16 weeks' of expenditure.

### Investment policy and powers

Investment powers are as set out in the RSPB's governing documents, the Charter and Statutes, and are wider than those contained in the Trustees Investment Act 2000.

The RSPB's primary investment objective is to maintain the real value of its investments. However, as a proportion of the financial reserves are likely to be held in the longer term it is appropriate to invest conservatively a proportion of the funds to generate income and/or real growth.

Investment properties arising from legacies are managed until disposal.

In managing investments, wherever possible, we follow the principles of Socially Responsible Investing (SRI). These principles are to:

- invest in companies that make a positive contribution to society.
- use influence as an investor to encourage best practice management of social responsibility issues.
- avoid investing in companies whose activities conflict strongly with RSPB objectives.

The trustees rely upon specialist advisers for fund selection and allocation. Investment performance is compared to an independent benchmark and the target for investment returns is to outperform this composite benchmark by at least 1% per annum over a rolling three-year period.

One key area of focus is to minimise the potential impact on the environment of our investments. Through our managers, we aim to minimise exposure to fossil fuel. As measured by the Carbon Underground 200 index (maintained by Fossil Free Indexes, LLC) we have a de minimis exposure to fossil fuels (less than 1%) and our medium term goal is to reduce this to zero. We are actively engaging with our existing managers to further reduce our potential exposure and engaging with the industry to encourage a wider range of investment options to be made available.

## Financial report on the year

### Introduction

It is difficult to capture the essence of 2015/16 in just a few words. Certainly there was much to celebrate; RSPB membership reached an all time high and provided a solid foundation for current and future finances. Although financial support is only one of several ways in which members help to save nature, it is no coincidence that net income also reached record levels, allowing expenditure on charitable objects to increase for the 15th successive year. This result was achieved with only a modest (£1.2 million) drawdown from Available financial reserves, leaving the RSPB well positioned to address the challenges of the future.

This leads neatly to the second part of the introduction; things that give cause for reflection rather than celebration. For example, the erosion of trust in the charity sector generally as a result of some fundraising practices and the impact on grant funding prospects due to the continuing pressures on public finances. There is also the continuing need to deal with residual consequences of final salary pension arrangements – in spite of the fact that the scheme has been closed to new entrants for many years.

On balance, there is much to be optimistic about for the future. Our recently refreshed medium-term strategy builds on recent successes in promoting the importance (and delights) of nature conservation and our financial outlook provides the resources to achieve that strategy thanks in large measure to the commitment of members and other supporters.

### Outcome for the year

It is very pleasing to be able to report an increase in all of our income streams, with the exception of grants, which fell back to more 'normal' levels after an exceptional year in 2014/15 – more on this later. Expenditure was also higher than last year and in addition we spent £2.7 million on acquiring new nature reserves (1,042 hectares) and

we added £4.2 million worth of visitor facilities. The net result reduced our funds available for future conservation to £44.2 million.

#### Expenditure

At the beginning of the 2015/16 financial year the trustees were mindful that we were entering an economic period of low growth. The complexity of financial planning for a charity of the RSPB's size involves trying to predict income and plan our work to maximise the use of the funds entrusted to us.

One of the questions that the trustees consider in their planning is how much should be spent on conservation now (for example, research or creating and managing habitats) and how much should be invested to ensure that future generations are knowledgeable about, and committed to conservation. The trustees believe that it is vital to invest in future generations to increase awareness of nature, the issues that it faces and the work that we undertake. In addition, they believe that future generations will rely more on digital communications and this is an essential area to invest in if we are to be successful in our long-term aims to save nature.

The scale of our incoming sources (detailed below) gave us the capacity to increase expenditure on charitable activities in the year by £1 million to £97.3 million. We spent a further £6.9 million on acquiring land and investing in visitor facilities. This allowed us to expand our nature reserves at Hesketh (*"Instead of featureless fields, we now have a thriving tidal wetland full of wildlife"*), Berney Marshes (*"Explore a classic Broadland landscape with wide-open skies and windmill"*), and Geltsdale (*"Wild fells, stunning views, peaceful walks under big skies"*). We also made significant investment in the infrastructure on our reserves including new facilities at Forsinard, Field Centre & Observatory and visitor centres at Arne, Sandwell Valley and Bempton Cliffs.

The amount that we spend on our nature reserves covers a wide range of activities from habitat restoration and management to improving the visitor experience. This category of expenditure includes both the running costs that are incurred every year to maintain the conservation status of our reserves, and project expenditure, which varies from one year to the next, to improve the status. One such project was work undertaken to limit the impact of storm surges at our Minsmere reserve. Thanks to a sponsorship arrangement with Scottish and Southern Electric plc, we have also been able to install solar panels at seven nature reserve locations to reduce our carbon footprint.

Whilst managing our own nature reserves is a vitally important part of achieving our conservation objectives, influencing the way conservation takes place off our reserves, both in the UK and overseas, is equally important. During the year we paid £6.1 million in grants to other organisations to support conservation work both in the UK and overseas. This includes £1.4 million awarded to our BirdLife Partners throughout the world. Of financial (as well as environmental) significance in the year, we supported rainforest conservation projects in Sumatra and Gola, restoring global seabird populations and helping SAVE (Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction).

The amount we spent on education and inspiring support was £1.9 million higher as we continue to improve our website and our communication infrastructure to allow us to engage more effectively with our supporters. As mentioned earlier, we see this as an essential platform for building relationships with all supporters but especially the young, technologically astute generation. We continued with our Giving Nature a Home television advertising campaign to build broad awareness of the RSPB to reach new audiences and further increase support and engagement.

Financial reports can only ever give a partial picture. Our staff and volunteers are just as vital as the financial resources. Staff salaries are included in our expenditure but the enthusiasm and energy that they bring to our cause is vast but immeasurable. Volunteers bring the same commitment, but of course are unpaid; their efforts during the year contributed the equivalent of 548 full-time staff. We are thankful for their tremendous efforts and the significant contribution they make.

#### Net income

Public trust in charities has been the subject of much scrutiny in the media during the year including some widely reported cases of charities unsolicited mailings to potential supporters. The RSPB is built on its reputation and relies on the support of our members from one year to the next. Our retention rate for adults renewing their membership each year is around 88%. For this reason the RSPB plans its fundraising activities to the highest standards and, for example, does not sell members details to other organisations. Whilst the RSPB never takes this loyalty for granted, we are pleased that it allows us to build our expenditure plans with certainty.

Net income (money available for charitable purposes) grew to just over £100 million. Achieving this milestone for the first time is largely due to the continued generosity of our members, but also to other supporters whether they are individuals or corporate bodies.

Income from individuals consistently contributes around 75% of the total available to be spent on conservation. The range of financial support includes: member subscriptions, donations through appeals, pin badges, collection boxes, purchasing products and using our catering facilities on reserves, and of course legacies.

Underpinning the growth in income from membership subscriptions and donations is an increase in the number of members to an all time high of 1.19 million. We are grateful to all who have commenced or renewed membership – and particularly to those who chose to increase their monthly commitment.

Grant income on the surface appears to be a little disappointing. A high proportion of our grant-funded projects are multi-year undertakings and the year in which the income is recognised can vary and cause fluctuations in the sums reported in the annual accounts. With this type of support we have been able to deliver projects such as our superb visitor centre at Bempton Cliffs (*"Towering chalk cliffs home to 250,000 seabirds"*) and Inner Forth Landscape Initiative (*"The landscape of the Inner Forth is host to nationally and internationally important wildlife, both coastal and land-based"*) to name but two.

Gifts of every size left in people's wills are vital to the ongoing success of the RSPB, with legacies making up around a third of our net income. In 2015/16 legacy income was £34 million. This type of support is crucial to our success; not only is it financially important but it gives a strong sense of our supporters wanting to invest in conservation for the benefit of future generations.

The bulk of our commercial trading income comes from mail order, retail and catering. Overall, trading income was up £0.7 million with strong demand for goods from both our retail and catering facilities on reserves and our mail order operation. Unlike many other charities, we do not sell donated products. Our trading strategy is built around developing a quality range of products that support our charitable aims and underpin our sustainable and ethical standards. We are delighted that so many of our supporters share the same beliefs and continue to buy from us year after year.

Net income is shown after deducting £36.7 million cost of generating funds. This includes the cost of goods for resale of £14.6 million. The increase in the cost of generating funds reflects the investment in increasing awareness and digital communications mentioned earlier.

#### Nature reserves

The adoption of FRS102 (the new accounting standard) has given the trustees a one-off opportunity to redefine the deemed cost of our Nature Reserves as shown on our Balance Sheet. We decided to use this opportunity to bring balance sheet values closer to current market values (or 'fair' values). To have revalued the entire estate would have been costly and time consuming and therefore we limited the scope of the exercise to those properties for which we already have a current valuation. The revalued properties are primarily those covered by the Contingent Asset Agreement under which the Pension Trustees were given charge over assets by way of security for the pension fund deficit.

#### Financial reserves

We hold financial reserves to be applied to future activities in a number of categories:

- Unrestricted- available to be applied, at the discretion of the trustees, to any of the RSPB's charitable purposes.
- Restricted – to be applied to the specific purpose(s) intended by the donor.
- Endowment- restricted funds to be retained for the benefit of the charity as a capital fund.

Further information on our reserves, including amounts held in each category, can be found in notes 20 and 21.

Much of our work does not fit neatly into an accounting period. With this in mind trustees endeavour to plan the finances knowing that our free financial reserves exist to balance the many timing issues that we face.

At the 31 March 2016, our free financial reserves stood at £12.5 million. This level, 8 weeks' worth of prospective expenditure, is low when compared to some other charities. However, the breadth of income streams and the stability afforded by our loyal supporters gives the trustees the confidence to utilize the money entrusted to us as soon as possible.

#### Pension

Pension matters have featured in this report in recent years and 2015/16 is no exception. In common with many other organisations, we have found recent external conditions to have been unfavourable for defined benefit pension arrangements. The trustees have taken many steps over the years to reduce cost and risk. In 2016, we are able to report a £27.5 million reduction in the pension deficit.

This movement partly reflects the effectiveness of the steps mentioned but mainly due to external conditions (in this case, bond yields) moving in the right direction.

#### Outlook for the future

When considering our sources of income we are not complacent. We continually strive to develop new relationships and build on 1.19 million existing ones. We do this to ensure the continuing support but also because we believe passionately in building long-term alliances to tackle the long-term issues that conservation faces.

However, the financial outlook also brings challenges; for example, the impact of the economic difficulties that began in 2008 is continuing to work its way through the system and affect our grant income. This source of funds, often from both UK and EU statutory bodies, finances both existing and new work. It is under constant pressure as economic development continues to take priority over conservation and the environment.

Needless to say, the demands of nature conservation outstrip resources available and therefore we need to set priorities and drive efficiency.

Donors, staff, volunteers, supporters and members; we will all strive together to give nature a home.



Signed on behalf of the Council  
Professor Steve Ormerod  
Chairman.

## Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

We have audited the financial statements of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for the year ended 31 March 2016 which comprise the Group Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Charity Balance Sheets, the Group Statement of Cash flows and the related notes numbered 1 to 26.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and FRS102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 154 of the Charities Act 2011 and section 44(1c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

We have been appointed as auditor under section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and section 44(1c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with those Acts.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

### Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Trustees' Annual Report to identify

material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

### Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2016 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Act 2011 or the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Trustees Annual Report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept by the parent charity; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

*Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP*

27 September 2016

**Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP**

Statutory Auditor

**London**

Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

**Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2016**

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</b>	Note	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Endowment funds £'000	<b>2016 Total £'000</b>	<b>2015 Total £'000</b> <small>(as restated)</small>
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>						
<b>Voluntary income</b>						
Membership subscriptions and donations	3	44,013	3,709	-	<b>47,722</b>	45,612
Grants, corporate and trusts	4	1,236	22,654	(84)	<b>23,806</b>	26,701
Legacies	5	29,817	4,245	-	<b>34,062</b>	30,579
<b>Total voluntary income</b>		<b>75,066</b>	<b>30,608</b>	<b>(84)</b>	<b>105,590</b>	102,892
Commercial trading		22,543	-	-	<b>22,543</b>	21,813
Investment income and interest	6	200	-	12	<b>212</b>	268
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Fees and grants for services		1,698	-	-	<b>1,698</b>	2,160
Land and farming income		2,146	2,815	-	<b>4,961</b>	3,893
Events and media sales		966	-	-	<b>966</b>	1,093
<b>Total income from charitable activities</b>		<b>4,810</b>	<b>2,815</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,625</b>	7,146
<b>Other income</b>						
Net gains on disposals of fixed assets	6	1,024	-	-	<b>1,024</b>	753
<b>Total income</b>		<b>103,643</b>	<b>33,423</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>136,994</b>	132,872
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>						
<b>Cost of raising funds</b>						
Costs of generating voluntary income		16,547	-	-	<b>16,547</b>	15,229
Costs of commercial trading		20,086	-	-	<b>20,086</b>	18,928
Investment management costs		107	-	-	<b>107</b>	104
<b>Total cost of raising funds</b>		<b>36,740</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>36,740</b>	34,261
<b>Net resources available for charitable activities</b>		<b>66,903</b>	<b>33,423</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>100,254</b>	98,611
<b>Charitable Activities</b>						
Managing RSPB nature reserves		17,582	16,500	-	<b>34,082</b>	34,240
Research, policy and advisory		25,607	11,794	-	<b>37,401</b>	38,073
Education and inspiring support		20,415	1,051	-	<b>21,466</b>	19,589
Supporter care		4,375	-	-	<b>4,375</b>	4,472
<b>Total expenditure on charitable activities</b>		<b>67,979</b>	<b>29,345</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>97,324</b>	96,374
<b>Total expenditure</b>	7	<b>104,719</b>	<b>29,345</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>134,064</b>	130,635
Net gains on investments		471	-	-	<b>471</b>	2,146
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>		<b>(605)</b>	<b>4,078</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>3,401</b>	4,383
Actuarial gains/(losses) on pension scheme	25	27,688	-	-	<b>27,688</b>	(24,159)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>27,083</b>	<b>4,078</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>31,089</b>	(19,776)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		<b>10,973</b>	<b>140,239</b>	<b>1,531</b>	<b>152,743</b>	172,519
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>38,056</b>	<b>144,317</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>183,832</b>	152,743

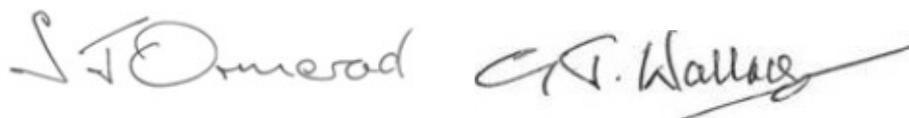
All the above results arise from continuing activities. Detailed comparative information is provided in the note 26. Notes 1 to 26 form an integral part of these accounts.

Charity and consolidated balance sheets  
as at 31 March 2016

	Note	Charity £'000	2016 Consolidated total £'000	Charity £'000	2015 Consolidated total £'000 (as restated)
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Nature reserves	11	193,772	194,322	189,243	189,793
Other tangible assets	11	4,329	4,329	4,080	4,080
Investments	12	21,727	21,727	32,772	32,772
Investment in subsidiary companies	12	3,801	-	3,801	-
		<u>223,629</u>	<u>220,378</u>	<u>229,896</u>	<u>226,645</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock		694	3,209	503	3,097
Debtors	13	22,608	20,462	20,316	18,363
Short-term cash		6,440	10,583	4,295	8,371
		<u>29,742</u>	<u>34,254</u>	<u>25,114</u>	<u>29,831</u>
<b>Creditors</b> amounts falling due within one year	14	(9,653)	(10,948)	(14,845)	(16,343)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>20,089</u>	<u>23,306</u>	<u>10,269</u>	<u>13,488</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u>243,718</u>	<u>243,684</u>	<u>240,165</u>	<u>240,133</u>
<b>Creditors</b> amounts falling due in more than one year	16	(840)	(840)	(868)	(868)
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		<u>242,878</u>	<u>242,844</u>	<u>239,297</u>	<u>239,265</u>
Pension scheme liability	25	(59,012)	(59,012)	(86,522)	(86,522)
<b>Net assets including pension liability</b>		<u>183,866</u>	<u>183,832</u>	<u>152,775</u>	<u>152,743</u>
<b>Represented by</b>					
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds		35,586	35,552	36,610	36,578
Designated funds		61,516	61,516	60,917	60,917
Pension reserve	25	(59,012)	(59,012)	(86,522)	(86,522)
		<u>38,090</u>	<u>38,056</u>	<u>11,005</u>	<u>10,973</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>		<u>144,317</u>	<u>144,317</u>	<u>140,239</u>	<u>140,239</u>
<b>Endowment funds</b>		<u>1,459</u>	<u>1,459</u>	<u>1,531</u>	<u>1,531</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>	20 & 21	<u>183,866</u>	<u>183,832</u>	<u>152,775</u>	<u>152,743</u>

Notes 1 to 26 form an integral part of these accounts.

Authorised for issue by RSPB Council on 27 September 2016 and signed on behalf of the Council by:



Steve Ormerod  
Chairman

Graeme Wallace  
Treasurer

**Application of net incoming resources  
for the year ended 31 March 2016**

	<b>2016</b> <b>£'000</b>	2015 £'000 (as restated)
Net resources available for charitable purposes	<b>100,254</b>	98,611
Less Total expenditure on charitable activities	<b>(97,324)</b>	(96,374)
Net incoming resources before gains/(losses)	<b>2,930</b>	2,237
Gains/(losses) on investments and pension scheme	<b>28,159</b>	(22,013)
Net movement in funds as per Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities	<b>31,089</b>	(19,776)
Application of net funds for charity use:		
Nature reserves	<b>4,529</b>	4,666
Other tangible assets	<b>249</b>	(276)
Movement on stock, debtors and creditors	<b>7,634</b>	2,343
Movement on pension scheme	<b>27,510</b>	(24,091)
	<b>39,922</b>	(17,358)
Movement in cash and investments available for future activities	<b>(8,833)</b>	(2,418)
Cash and investments available at start of year	<b>41,143</b>	43,561
Cash and investments available at end of year	<b>32,310</b>	41,143

**Consolidated statement of cash flows  
for the year ended 31 March 2016**

	Note	<b>2016</b> <b>£'000</b>	2015 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	24	<b>(1,679)</b>	2,711
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest and dividends received		<b>212</b>	268
Additions to Nature reserves		<b>(6,968)</b>	(7,066)
Purchase of Other tangible fixed assets		<b>(2,034)</b>	(1,510)
Proceeds from disposals of fixed assets		<b>1,165</b>	1,033
Purchase of investments		<b>(286)</b>	(171)
Sale of investments		<b>261</b>	222
Net cash used in investing activities		<b>(7,650)</b>	(7,224)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting periods		<b>(9,329)</b>	(4,513)
Cash and cash equivalents at start of the year		<b>22,441</b>	26,954
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year		<b>13,112</b>	22,441
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents:			
Cash in hand		<b>10,583</b>	8,371
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)		<b>2,529</b>	14,070
Cash and cash equivalents		<b>13,112</b>	22,441

## Notes to the accounts

### 1 Charity information

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is a non-statutory body incorporated by Royal Charter and a charity registered in England and Wales (number 207076) and in Scotland number (SC037654). The address of the registered office is The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL.

### 2 Accounting policies

#### Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the 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 (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 rather than the previous Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities, which was effective from 1 April 2005 but which has since been withdrawn. Other standards applied in preparation of these financial statements include the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

The RSPB meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

In preparing the accounts, the trustees have considered whether in applying the accounting policies required by FRS102 and the Charities SORP FRS102 the restatement of comparative items was required as at 1 April 2014. In applying the requirement to recognise liabilities arising from employee benefits, a liability was recognised for the holiday entitlement carried forward and for the entitlement arising in the year which was due but not taken. An exercise to revalue certain categories of land was also undertaken and the fair value at the date of the transition was treated as a deemed cost.

An explanation and reconciliation of how the transition to FRS102 has affected the reported financial position and financial performance is provided in Note 22.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis and having considered future plans and forecasts including a review of financial reserves as detailed in the Trustees' report, the trustees believe it appropriate to continue to do so.

The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and balance sheet consolidate, on a line-by-line basis, the financial statements of the Charity and its subsidiary undertakings.

The RSPB's commercial activities are undertaken by its wholly-owned trading subsidiary, RSPB Sales Limited which was incorporated as a company in 1992 to conduct trading activities in support of the RSPB's charitable objectives. The principal activity is the sale of goods by mail order and through retail outlets. The

company is registered under company number 02693778.

March Farmers (Washland) Limited, company registration number 01039814, is a wholly-owned subsidiary acquired in 2008 to secure the leasehold interest in land in Cambridgeshire.

Farming for Nature, a company limited by guarantee, registration number 07982175, was incorporated in 2012. This entity is being used in relation to land leased from United Utilities at Haweswater in Cumbria.

On 5 October 2015 Cayman Islands Nature Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary and a company limited by shares, registration number 304647, was established in order to acquire a parcel of freehold land in the Cayman Islands to support the protection of biodiversity.

The group also includes four wholly-owned dormant companies limited by shares: RSPB Farmers Limited, RSPB Farmers (North) Limited, RSPB Farmers (South) Limited and RSPB Farmers (West) Limited.

The Charity holds a 33% joint venture interest in Yayasan Konservasi Ekosistem Hutan a non-profit organisation registered in Indonesia and established to facilitate the acquisition and management of the Harapan Rainforest in Sumatra. The results have not been included in these accounts; to do so would not materially alter them.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is a registered charity and as such is potentially exempt from taxation on its income and gains to the extent that they are applied to its charitable purposes. No tax charge arises in its subsidiaries, due to their donating, under Gift Aid, all taxable profits to the Charity each year.

#### Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an on-going basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described in the accounting policies and are summarised below:

- Residuary legacies – The charity recognises residuary legacies once probate has been granted which therefore requires an estimation of the amount receivable (Note 5).
- Pension liabilities – The charity recognises its liability to its defined benefit pension scheme which involves a number of estimations as disclosed in note 25.

## 2 Accounting policies (continued)

- Valuation of land— Certain types of the charity's land are stated at their estimated fair value based on professional valuations as disclosed in note 11.

### Funds

Unrestricted funds:

General funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds, which have been applied or reserved by the trustees for a specific purpose. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the accounts.

Restricted funds:

Restricted funds are those which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions of the donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The purpose for which restricted funds are held is analysed in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds:

Endowment funds are restricted funds that are held for the benefit of the Charity as a capital fund. Permanent endowments require the capital to be maintained and only the income and part of capital growth can be utilised. With expendable endowments the capital may also be utilised. The purpose for which endowment funds are held is analysed in the notes to the accounts.

### Capital expenditure

Purchased assets, individually exceeding £2,500 at cost, are included on the balance sheet at historic cost less depreciation and any impairment in accordance with FRS102 'Property, Plant and Equipment'. Certain types of land are stated at their estimated fair value (note 11). Donated assets are included at market value as determined by the trustees. Expenditure on fixed assets is capitalised in the year of acquisition and depreciation is charged annually.

### Depreciation

Nature reserves, either owned as freehold land or held as leasehold land where the lease is held in perpetuity, are considered to have an indefinite useful life and are not depreciated. Other fixed assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their anticipated useful lives as follows:

Freehold buildings	50 years
Leasehold land and buildings with a fixed term	Period of lease or 50 years whichever is shorter
Other fixed assets	4 years

### Investments

The investments in the subsidiary undertakings are stated at cost less provision for impairment. All other investments are stated at fair value with gains and losses being recognised within income and expenditure. Properties included in investments are those assigned under legacy bequests, awaiting disposal at a future date, and are stated at their fair value on 31 March 2016. The SOFA includes the net gains and losses

arising on revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

Investment cash is held for investment purposes only. It is the intention of the trustees that fixed asset investments will not be drawn upon within the following year.

### Stocks

Stocks, which include livestock and products for resale, are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

### Financial Instruments

The RSPB has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise trade and other creditors.

### Incoming resources

Incoming resources are included in the SOFA when the RSPB is entitled to the income, the receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. If these conditions are not met then the income is deferred. The following specific policies apply to categories of income:

- Membership income is treated as a donation and is accounted for when received.
- Legacies are accounted for based on settlement of the estate or receipt of payment, whichever is earlier.
- Grants received in advance of the associated work being carried out are deferred only when the donor has imposed preconditions on the expenditure of resources (see Note 16).
- Gifts in kind are valued at their realised amount, or the amount equivalent to an alternative commercial supply, and are included in the SOFA and balance sheet as appropriate.

### Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to that category. Costs incurred that relate to multiple purposes are analysed and allocated to the appropriate categories in line with the joint cost allocation principles in the Charities SORP (FRS102).

- Costs of generating voluntary income do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.
- Commercial trading includes the cost of goods sold in mail order, retail and catering activities.
- Costs of managing RSPB nature reserves are those incurred in managing the network of nature reserves including land management, habitat restoration and visitor facilities.
- Research, policy and advisory includes the costs associated with scientific research and our advocacy work to influence public policy to benefit nature.
- Education and inspiring support includes the costs of activities to inspire children, young people and families to connect with nature.

## 2 Accounting policies (continued)

- vi) Supporter care includes the costs of providing information to our members and supporters including a quarterly magazine providing information on the work being done by the RSPB and its partners.
- vii) Support costs have been allocated to the SOFA on the basis of salary percentage. This applies to office facilities and accommodation, finance, information technology, human resources, management and governance.
- viii) Grants are awarded to other organisations, at trustees' discretion, on a project basis where such projects meet the RSPB's charitable objectives and contribute towards the Strategic outcomes. In making awards, consideration is given to the most effective and efficient use of resources.

### Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are charged to the SOFA on a straight-line basis over the length of the lease.

### Foreign currency

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated at rates prevailing at the date of the transaction. Balances denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange prevailing at the year-end, in accordance with FRS102. Any gains or losses arising on translations are reported as part of the transaction within the SOFA and are not material; they are therefore not disclosed separately.

### Pensions

For the defined benefit scheme the amounts charged in resources expended are the current service costs and gains and losses on settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period until vesting occurs. The interest cost and interest income on assets are shown as a net amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Re-measurements are recognised immediately in "Other recognised gains and losses".

Defined benefit schemes are funded, with the assets of the scheme held separately from those of the group, in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent currency and term to the scheme liabilities. The resulting defined benefit asset or liability is presented separately after other net assets on the face of the balance sheet. Full actuarial valuations are obtained triennially.

In the view of the trustees, no assumptions concerning the future or estimation uncertainty affecting assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date are likely to result in a material adjustment to their carrying amounts in the next financial year.

**3 Membership subscriptions and donations**

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Membership subscriptions	41,167	38,645
Donations	6,555	6,967
	<u>47,722</u>	<u>45,612</u>

**4 Grants, corporates and trusts**

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Grants	20,754	24,182
Corporates	2,088	1,971
Trusts	964	548
	<u>23,806</u>	<u>26,701</u>

Major grants received during the year include the following:

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
<b>UK</b>		
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	6,144	7,047
Landfill Communities Fund	2,968	2,621
Scottish Natural Heritage	1,619	1,022
Scottish Government	1,150	1,493
Natural Resources Wales	719	513
Natural England	233	644
Department of Environment, Northern Ireland	189	209
Forestry Commission	178	111
Environment Agency	109	356
Department for International Development	-	114
	<u>13,309</u>	<u>14,130</u>
<b>Overseas</b>		
European Union	2,024	3,411
KfW	-	90
	<u>2,024</u>	<u>3,501</u>
<b>National Lottery: Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund</b>	3,647	3,737
<b>Local councils and other</b>	1,774	2,814
	<u>20,754</u>	<u>24,182</u>

**4 Grants, corporates and trusts (continued)**

The Coastal Communities Fund Grant provided funding of £798,937 towards projects to enhance and develop the visitor facilities and visitor experience at our reserves: Arne - 'Wild about Dorset' (£523,794), South Stack - 'South Stack Cliffs Reserve Visitor Improvements' (£149,409), Bempton Cliffs - 'Seabird Discovery Centre' (£60,088) and Loch Strathbeg (£55,646). This income has been included within our restricted funds. All funds received were spent in the year.

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Grants received were for the following purposes:		
Managing RSPB nature reserves	13,862	16,539
Research, policy and advisory	4,817	5,490
Education and inspiring support	195	725
	<u>18,874</u>	<u>22,754</u>
Acquisition of nature reserves	1,880	1,428
	<u>20,754</u>	<u>24,182</u>

**5 Legacies**

The estimated value of legacies notified but neither received nor included in income is £18,845,000 (2015: £17,041,000).

**6 Investment income and interest**

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Income received from:		
Interest on cash	92	109
Listed Stock Exchange investments	117	157
Property	3	2
	<u>212</u>	<u>268</u>
Other income:		
Net gains on disposals of fixed assets	1,024	753

Included above is investment income of £12,040 (2015: £12,749), which relates to the Hanson Environment Fund. This treatment has been agreed with the donor and the fund is held as an expendable endowment.

## 7 Total expenditure

	Direct costs £'000	Support costs £'000	<b>2016</b> <b>Total</b> <b>£'000</b>	<b>2015</b> <b>Total</b> <b>£'000</b> <small>(as restated)</small>
<b>Cost of raising funds:</b>				
Costs of generating voluntary income:				
Membership subscriptions and donations	11,659	678	<b>12,337</b>	11,363
Grants, corporates and trusts	2,952	336	<b>3,288</b>	3,030
Legacies	874	48	<b>922</b>	836
Total cost of generating voluntary income	<u>15,485</u>	<u>1,062</u>	<b><u>16,547</u></b>	<u>15,229</u>
Commercial trading	19,663	423	<b>20,086</b>	18,928
<b>Investment management costs</b>	107	-	<b>107</b>	104
<b>Total cost of raising funds</b>	<u>35,255</u>	<u>1,485</u>	<b><u>36,740</u></b>	<u>34,261</u>
<b>Charitable activities:</b>				
Managing RSPB nature reserves	32,748	1,334	<b>34,082</b>	34,240
Research, policy and advisory	34,389	3,012	<b>37,401</b>	38,073
Education and inspiring support	20,362	1,104	<b>21,466</b>	19,589
Supporter care	4,311	64	<b>4,375</b>	4,472
	<u>91,810</u>	<u>5,514</u>	<b><u>97,324</u></b>	<u>96,374</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>127,065</u></u>	<u><u>6,999</u></u>	<b><u><u>134,064</u></u></b>	<u><u>130,635</u></u>

Research, policy and advisory includes grant payments amounting to £5,764,402 with support costs of £335,601 (2015: £6,442,276; £320,939). Grants were awarded to 128 (2015: 179) organisations; no grants were made to individuals. A full list is available on request.

**Future commitments:**

Future commitments relating to charitable work carried out by other organisations on behalf of the RSPB, amount to £556,593 (2015: £534,705). These represent contracts signed before 1 April 2016 for payments in future years.

**8 Support costs**

	Premises £'000	Finance & IT £'000	Human resources £'000	Mgmt & other £'000	Gover- nance £'000	<b>2016</b> <b>Total</b> <b>£'000</b>	<b>2015</b> <b>Total</b> <b>£'000</b> <small>(as restated)</small>
Generating incoming resources	368	529	331	165	92	<b>1,485</b>	1,319
Charitable expenditure:							
Managing RSPB nature reserves	331	476	297	148	82	<b>1,334</b>	1,252
Research, policy and advisory	746	1,074	671	336	185	<b>3,012</b>	2,946
Education and inspiring support	274	394	246	123	67	<b>1,104</b>	955
Supporter care	16	23	14	6	5	<b>64</b>	60
Total Charitable Expenditure	1,367	1,967	1,228	613	339	<b>5,514</b>	5,213
Total support costs	1,735	2,496	1,559	778	431	<b>6,999</b>	6,532

Support costs are included in the expenditure reported in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities and have been allocated on the basis of salary percentage. The cost allocation includes an element of judgement and the RSPB has had to consider the cost benefit of detailed calculations and record keeping.

Governance costs include audit, legal advice for trustees and the costs associated with constitutional and statutory requirements, such as trustees' meetings.

**9 Audit fees**

The total audit fees were:

	<b>2016</b> <b>£'000</b>	<b>2015</b> <b>£'000</b>
Charity	<b>45</b>	41
RSPB Sales Limited	<b>29</b>	28
March Farmers (Washland) Limited	<b>3</b>	3
Farming For Nature	<b>3</b>	3
	<b>80</b>	75

**10 Staff costs**

The average number of employees during the year was 2,212 (2015: 2,195).

Staff numbers by activity:	<u>2016</u> No.	<u>2015</u> No.
Generating incoming resources	440	399
Managing RSPB nature reserves	629	678
Research, policy and advisory	859	859
Education and inspiring support	228	203
Supporter care	56	56
	<u>2,212</u>	<u>2,195</u>

The nature of work undertaken by individual staff traverses the above categories; therefore, the allocation includes an element of judgement.

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Remuneration	48,101	47,472
National Insurance	3,778	3,643
Pension contributions	6,135	5,344
	<u>58,014</u>	<u>56,459</u>

Pension contributions are made in line with the payment schedule recommended by the scheme actuary at the last triennial valuation (see Note 25).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Directors, including the Chief Executive, as detailed on page 2.

- The Trustees do not receive any employee benefits. The total reimbursement of travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses incurred by 17 (2015: 16) trustees on Council business amounted to £38,194 (2015: £30,713).
- The total employee benefits (including Pension contributions) of the 8 (2015: 8) Directors were £901,399 (2015: £892,762) of which, £141,639 (2015: £140,169) was for the Chief Executive. The total travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses reimbursed to them was £50,491 (2015: £50,718).

The total salary of all higher paid employees earning in excess of £60,000, including Directors, are shown in bands of £10,000 below:

	<u>2016</u> No.	<u>2015</u> No.
£60,001 – £70,000	8	9
£70,001 – £80,000	1	1
£80,001 – £90,000	5	3
£90,001 – £100,000	-	-
£100,001 – £110,000	1	1
£110,001 – £120,000	1	2
£120,001 – £130,000	2	1
	<u>18</u>	<u>17</u>

Under the RSPB's pension scheme, which is open to all eligible staff, benefits are accruing for 18 (2015: 17) higher paid employees including Directors. There are no enhanced pension benefits for any employees or Directors. No other benefits were paid during the year.

Indemnity insurance premiums paid by the RSPB amounted to £3,049 (2015: £2,400).

**11 Tangible fixed assets – charity and consolidated (as restated)**

	Nature reserves			Other tangible assets			Total
	Freehold land	Leasehold land	Buildings	Other properties	Motor vehicles	Equipment, fixtures and fittings	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Cost</b>							
At 1 April 2015	156,535	1,692	45,067	3,662	4,287	15,125	<b>226,368</b>
Additions	2,688	2	4,279	-	625	1,409	<b>9,003</b>
Disposals	(40)	-	(73)	-	(592)	(596)	<b>(1,301)</b>
At 31 March 2016	<u>159,183</u>	<u>1,694</u>	<u>49,273</u>	<u>3,662</u>	<u>4,320</u>	<u>15,938</u>	<b><u>234,070</u></b>
<b>Depreciation</b>							
At 1 April 2015	-	447	13,055	1,883	3,370	13,740	<b>32,495</b>
Charge for the year	-	16	2,346	85	600	1,037	<b>4,084</b>
Disposals	-	-	(36)	-	(582)	(542)	<b>(1,160)</b>
At 31 March 2016	<u>-</u>	<u>463</u>	<u>15,365</u>	<u>1,968</u>	<u>3,388</u>	<u>14,235</u>	<b><u>35,419</u></b>
Net book amount:							
<b>At 31 March 2016</b>	<u>159,183</u>	<u>1,231</u>	<u>33,908</u>	<u>1,694</u>	<u>932</u>	<u>1,703</u>	<b><u>198,651</u></b>
At 31 March 2015	<u>156,535</u>	<u>1,246</u>	<u>32,012</u>	<u>1,779</u>	<u>916</u>	<u>1,385</u>	<b><u>193,873</u></b>
<b>Net book amount:</b>							
						<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
						<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Nature reserves:							
Freehold land						<b>159,183</b>	156,535
Leasehold land						<b>1,231</b>	1,246
Buildings						<b>33,908</b>	32,012
						<b>194,322</b>	189,793
Other tangible assets:							
Other properties						<b>1,694</b>	1,779
Motor vehicles						<b>932</b>	916
Equipment, fixtures and fittings						<b>1,703</b>	1,385
						<b>4,329</b>	4,080
						<b>198,651</b>	193,873

In 2013 the RSPB entered into a Contingent Asset Agreement with the RSPB Pension Scheme. Under this agreement, specified land and buildings, with a market value of c£57,000,000, would pass to the Pension Scheme in the unlikely event of the RSPB being unable to meet its obligations to the Scheme. The land selected is unencumbered by any legal charges or funding restrictions.

The Net book amount of the Charity's Tangible fixed assets is £198,651,000 (2015: £193,873,000). Within this amount are Nature reserves, which were previously held at historic cost of £138,944,000. In 2016, as part of the process of transitioning to FRS102, the land values of selected reserves with a historic cost of £42,401,000 have been restated to £97,779,000 by reference to fair values. This represents an uplift of £55,378,000 (see Note 22). The reserves selected for revaluation were primarily those subject to the Contingent Asset Agreement. The revaluation was carried out by a RICS Qualified Rural Practice Surveyor at RSPB.

The wholly owned subsidiary March Farmers (Washland) Limited holds Leasehold land of £550,000 (2015: £550,000); the leases for this land are held in perpetuity and no depreciation arises.

**12 Investments – charity and consolidated**

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Investments at fair value:		
Investment cash	2,529	14,070
Equities, bonds and other stocks:		
Equities *	13,164	12,855
Corporate bonds *	2,298	2,296
Government bonds *	3,235	3,176
Listed Stock Exchange investments	5	5
	<u>18,702</u>	<u>18,332</u>
Properties within the UK**	496	370
	<u>21,727</u>	<u>32,772</u>

\* Equities and bonds are held in unit trusts.

\*\* Investment properties were revalued at 31 March, based on their fair value on that date. The revaluation was carried out internally by a professional land surveyor.

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Movement during the year:		
Fair value at 1 April 2015	32,772	35,721
Disposals	(174)	(143)
Fees	(87)	(79)
Additions	244	103
Dividends reinvested	42	68
Net gain on revaluation at 31 March 2016	471	2,146
Movement in investment cash	(11,541)	(5,044)
<b>Fair value at 31 March 2016</b>	<u>21,727</u>	<u>32,772</u>
Historical cost as at 31 March 2016	<u>15,004</u>	<u>14,910</u>

The Charity investments in its wholly owned subsidiaries are held at cost and represent the aggregate amount of the subsidiaries' assets, liabilities and funds. The subsidiary investments are:

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
RSPB Sales Limited	3,250	3,250
March Farmers (Washland) Limited	551	551
Farming for Nature	-	-
	<u>3,801</u>	<u>3,801</u>

**13 Debtors – charity and consolidated**

	<u>2016</u> Charity	<u>2016</u> Consolidated total	<u>2015</u> Charity	<u>2015</u> Consolidated total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Trade debtors	2,663	4,077	3,401	4,619
Other debtors	3,490	3,668	2,464	2,479
Legacies	2,862	2,862	2,848	2,848
Prepayments and accrued income	9,432	9,855	8,187	8,417
Amounts due from subsidiaries	4,161	-	3,416	-
	<u>22,608</u>	<u>20,462</u>	<u>20,316</u>	<u>18,363</u>

**14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year – charity and consolidated**

	<u>2016</u> Charity	<u>2016</u> Consolidated total	<u>2015</u> Charity	<u>2015</u> Consolidated total
	£'000	£'000	£'000 (as restated)	£'000 (as restated)
Trade creditors	3,239	3,620	4,466	5,251
Other creditors	646	648	271	271
Deferred income (see Note 16)	1,075	1,375	4,668	4,917
Accruals	4,693	5,305	5,440	5,904
	<u>9,653</u>	<u>10,948</u>	<u>14,845</u>	<u>16,343</u>

**15 Commitments**

Capital expenditure:

Commitments for capital expenditure at 31 March 2016 not provided for in the accounts were £1,464,647 (2015: £602,086).

Forward exchange contracts:

Contracts to sell Euro are taken out in order to hedge forward currency exposure on future income.

At 31 March 2016, two forward exchange contracts with a combined sales value of €430,000 were outstanding. Each contract is for up to two years in duration, at Euro/GBP rates between 1.3178 and 1.3142. The contracts were not revalued at 31 March 2016 to do so would not have a material impact on these financial statements.

**16 Deferred income – charity and consolidated**

Movement during the year:	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Creditors amounts falling due in more than one year:		
Balance at 1 April 2015	868	4,372
Amount released to incoming resources	(14)	(14)
Amounts due within one year	(14)	(3,490)
Balance at 31 March 2016	<u>840</u>	<u>868</u>
Creditors amounts falling due within one year:		
Balance at 1 April 2015	4,917	1,831
Amount released to incoming resources	(4,917)	(1,831)
Amount deferred in the year	1,361	1,427
Amounts transferred from creditors due in more than one year	14	3,490
Balance at 31 March 2016	<u>1,375</u>	<u>4,917</u>
Deferred income: Balance at 31 March 2016	<u><u>2,215</u></u>	<u><u>5,785</u></u>

Deferred income includes lease premiums of £854,000 (2015: £868,000) received and amortised over the life of the leases. Income of £1,361,000 (2015: £1,427,000), was deferred in the year; this amount comprised grants of £1,033,000 (2015: £1,169,000) and commercial trading of £328,000 (2015: £258,000).

**17 Operating leases – commitments and contracted income**

Commitments:

Properties and equipment are leased by the RSPB for defined periods. The full cost of these over the lease period is shown below:

	Land and buildings £'000	Other £'000	<u>2016</u> Total £'000	<u>2015</u> Total £'000
Length of lease remaining:				
Less than 1 year	424	9	433	635
2-5 years	1,852	99	1,951	1,714
Over 5 years	9,762	-	9,762	9,233
	<u>12,038</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>12,146</u>	<u>11,582</u>

Lease payments of £1,966,621 (2015: £2,333,000) were charged to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities during the year.

Contracted income:

	<u>2016</u> Total £'000	<u>2015</u> Total £'000
Length of lease income remaining:		
Less than 1 year	225	450
2-5 years	360	678
Over 5 years	2,828	3,145
	<u>3,413</u>	<u>4,273</u>

Lease income of £3,636,550 (2015: £2,120,768) was credited to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities during the year. All lease income relates to land and buildings.

**18 Contingent liabilities**

The trustees have given indemnities to Executors under the standard terms for legacies received; they believe the chance of significant claims arising as a result of these to be negligible.

**19 Financial instruments**

	Fair value £'000	Amortised cost £'000	Non financial Instruments £'000	<b>Total £'000</b>
<b>Assets</b>				
Tangible assets	-	-	198,651	<b>198,651</b>
Investments	21,727	-	-	<b>21,727</b>
Debtors	-	19,367	1,095	<b>20,462</b>
Cash at bank and in hand	-	10,583	-	<b>10,583</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Creditors due within one year	-	(9,586)	(1,362)	<b>(10,948)</b>
Creditors due after one year	-	-	(840)	<b>(840)</b>
	<u>21,727</u>	<u>20,364</u>	<u>197,544</u>	<u><b>239,635</b></u>

The income, expenditure and net gains and losses recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities during the period to 31 March 2016 by category are shown below:

	Fair value £'000	Amortised cost £'000	<b>Total £'000</b>
Investment income	120	92	<b>212</b>
Investment management fees	(87)	-	<b>(87)</b>
Foreign exchange gains on evaluation	-	82	<b>82</b>
Net gains on investments	471	-	<b>471</b>
	<u>504</u>	<u>174</u>	<u><b>678</b></u>

**20 Statement of funds – charity and consolidated**

The purpose for which funds are held can be analysed as follows:

<b>Consolidated</b>	1 April 2015 (as restated)	Incoming	Outgoing	Other recognised gains	Transfers	<b>31 March 2016</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Unrestricted funds:</b>						
General funds	36,578	103,821	(104,719)	471	(599)	<b>35,552</b>
Designated land fund	60,917	-	-	-	599	<b>61,516</b>
Pension Liability	(86,522)	(178)	-	27,688	-	<b>(59,012)</b>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>10,973</u>	<u>103,643</u>	<u>(104,719)</u>	<u>28,159</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>38,056</b></u>
<b>Restricted funds:</b>						
Nature reserves	131,727	4,034	-	-	119	<b>135,880</b>
Other tangible assets	231	448	(265)	-	-	<b>414</b>
Managing RSPB nature reserves	4,404	16,848	(16,235)	-	(129)	<b>4,888</b>
Research, policy and advisory	3,821	10,786	(11,794)	-	10	<b>2,823</b>
Education and inspiring support	56	1,307	(1,051)	-	-	<b>312</b>
Total restricted funds	<u>140,239</u>	<u>33,423</u>	<u>(29,345)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>144,317</b></u>
<b>Endowment funds</b>	1,531	(72)	-	-	-	<b>1,459</b>
Total funds	<u><b>152,743</b></u>	<u><b>136,994</b></u>	<u><b>(134,064)</b></u>	<u><b>28,159</b></u>	<u><b>-</b></u>	<u><b>183,832</b></u>
<b>Charity</b>	<u><u>152,775</u></u>	<u><u>112,758</u></u>	<u><u>(109,826)</u></u>	<u><u>28,159</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u><b>183,866</b></u></u>

<b>Subsidiaries</b>	<b>Farming for Nature</b>	<b>March Farmers (Washland) Ltd</b>	<b>RSPB Sales Ltd</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Incoming	371	188	29,708
Outgoing	(251)	(168)	(23,826)
Profit	<u>120</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>5,882</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2016	<u>(32)</u>	<u>551</u>	<u>3,250</u>

**Charity only results:**

	£'000
Incoming	112,758
Outgoing	(109,826)
Other recognised gains	28,159
Net movement in funds	<u>31,091</u>

All profits are paid to the RSPB under Gift Aid.

A review of funds during the year resulted in the net transfer of £599,000 from the General fund to the Designated land fund; a net transfer of £129,000 from the Managing RSPB nature reserves fund to Nature Reserves and Research, policy and advisory of £119,000 and £10,000 respectively.

**20 Statement of funds – charity and consolidated (continued)**

The Charity holds a 33% joint venture interest in Yayasan Konservasi Ekosistem Hutan, a non-profit organisation registered in Indonesia and established to facilitate the acquisition and management of the Harapan Rainforest, Sumatra. Based on the latest financial statements available for the year ending 31 December 2015, the Charity's share of the net assets, income and surplus were £519,314, £447,756, and £60,469 respectively (December 2014: £665,846, £150,816, and £52,906). We are not aware of any transactions that would significantly alter these figures for the year ending 31 March 2016. The results have not been consolidated into the core financial statements; to do so would not materially alter them.

During the year ended 31 March 2016, the Charity paid £380,000 (2015: £959,050) to Yayasan Konservasi Ekosistem Hutan.

Unrestricted funds include free and general funds that are not designated for particular purposes.

Designated funds comprise the Land Fund which represents land and buildings purchased using unrestricted funds including the investment in March Farmers (Washland) Limited.

Restricted funds comprise:

- The Nature reserves fund represents the cost (as restated) of nature reserves acquired using restricted funds and a further £3,074,000 (2015: £2,851,000) held for future acquisitions.
- The other funds held for charitable objectives include grants received of £1,429,076 (2015: £2,352,812) in advance of the associated work being carried out.

Endowment funds comprise the following expendable and permanent endowments:

- The Hanson Environment Fund granted an endowment of £1,000,000 in 2002 for the creation and management of Needingworth wetland nature reserve. Investment income, net of fees, for this endowment is currently accruing to the fund. During the year, £83,666 (2015: £99,804) was expended on the nature reserve.

**21 Analysis of net assets between funds**

The trustees consider that sufficient resources are held in a suitable form to enable them to be applied in accordance with any restrictions imposed, as set out below:

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds £'000	Endowment funds £'000	Total funds £'000
	General £'000	Designated £'000			
<b>Asset type:</b>					
Nature reserves	-	61,516	132,806	-	<b>194,322</b>
Other tangible assets	3,915	-	414	-	<b>4,329</b>
Investments	15,871	-	4,397	1,459	<b>21,727</b>
Current assets	25,990	-	8,264	-	<b>34,254</b>
Current liabilities	(9,384)	-	(1,564)	-	<b>(10,948)</b>
Long term liabilities	(840)	-	-	-	<b>(840)</b>
Net assets excluding pension liability	<u>35,552</u>	<u>61,516</u>	<u>144,317</u>	<u>1,459</u>	<u><b>242,844</b></u>
Pension liability	(59,012)	-	-	-	<b>(59,012)</b>
Net (liabilities)/assets	<u>(23,460)</u>	<u>61,516</u>	<u>144,317</u>	<u>1,459</u>	<u><b>183,832</b></u>

Free reserves which are available to be applied at the discretion of the trustees are held as investments or working capital:

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds £'000	Endowment funds £'000	Total funds £'000
	General £'000	Designated £'000			
Net assets excluding pension liability	35,552	61,516	144,317	1,459	<b>242,844</b>
<i>Less: Operating assets:</i>					
Nature reserves	-	(61,516)	(132,806)	-	<b>(194,322)</b>
Other tangible assets	(3,915)	-	(414)	-	<b>(4,329)</b>
Available reserves	<u>31,637</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,097</u>	<u>1,459</u>	<u><b>44,193</b></u>
<i>Less: Held for specific purposes:</i>					
Restricted and endowment	-	-	(11,097)	(1,459)	<b>(12,556)</b>
Working capital requirements	(8,181)	-	-	-	<b>(8,181)</b>
Threat fund	(10,896)	-	-	-	<b>(10,896)</b>
Free reserves	<u>12,560</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>12,560</b></u>

**22 Transition to FRS102**

	2015		2014	
	Charity £'000	Consolidated £'000	Charity £'000	Consolidated £'000
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Funds as previously stated	98,084	98,052	117,861	117,828
Land revaluation	55,378	55,378	55,378	55,378
Holiday pay accrual	(687)	(687)	(687)	(687)
Funds as restated	<u>152,775</u>	<u>152,743</u>	<u>172,552</u>	<u>172,519</u>

Following the changes introduced by FRS102 in relation to pension costs, there was an adjustment in the year ended 31 March 2015, which resulted in an amount of £2,442,000 being moved from Actuarial gains/(losses) on pension scheme to Expenditure on charitable activities. These changes did not, however, affect the overall result for the year ended 31 March 2015.

The adoption of FRS102 has not resulted in any adjustments to the 2015 Net movement in funds previously reported.

### 23 Connected charities & related party transactions

The RSPB is one of the global partners in BirdLife International (registered charity number 1042125), an umbrella organisation for entities with similar objectives throughout the world. Further information about this organisation can be obtained by writing to BirdLife International at The David Attenborough Building, Pembroke Street, Cambridge, CB2 3QZ.

During the year, donations of £2,218 were received from trustees and persons related to them.

#### Transactions with subsidiaries during the year:

Subsidiaries	Farming for Nature £'000	March Farmers (Washland) Ltd £'000	RSPB Sales Ltd £'000
Balance at 1 April 2015			
Gift aid paid	68	35	3,313
Gift aid due	(68)	(32)	(6,764)
Net expenditure paid on behalf of subsidiaries	120	20	5,882
	202	121	1,264
Balance at 31 March 2016	<u>322</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>3,695</u>

### 24 Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000 (as restated)
<b>Net income for the year:</b>	<b>3,401</b>	4,383
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation on fixed assets	4,083	3,906
Gains in investments	(471)	(2,146)
Interest and dividends received	(212)	(268)
Profit on sale of tangible assets	(1,024)	(753)
Increase in stocks	(112)	(107)
Increase in debtors	(2,099)	(2,687)
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	(5,424)	452
	<u>(1,858)</u>	<u>2,780</u>
Movement in pension scheme	179	(69)
Net cash inflow (used in)/provided by operating activities	<u>(1,679)</u>	<u>2,711</u>

### 25 Pensions

The RSPB operates a defined benefit scheme for the benefit of eligible employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the RSPB, being invested by professional fund managers, in accordance with guidelines issued by the trustees of the pension fund.

A full actuarial valuation is undertaken by the Pension trustees and their advisers every three years. The valuation as at April 2015 is currently in progress. As part of the valuation the RSPB's contributions to the Scheme are agreed with the trustees, certified by the Scheme Actuary and recorded in a Schedule of Contributions. The current Schedule of Contributions is dated 31 October 2013.

The RSPB runs a Salary Sacrifice Scheme where members can opt to reduce their salaries by the amount of their pension contribution and in return the RSPB will pay their contribution to the Pension Fund. Contribution rates are: 7% of pensionable salary for members of the Final Salary Section and 6% for members of the Cash Balance Section.

## 25 Pensions (continued)

## Amounts recognised in the Balance sheet:

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Defined benefit obligations	(218,519)	(240,114)
Fair value of scheme assets	159,507	153,592
Net defined benefit liability	<u>(59,012)</u>	<u>(86,522)</u>

## Changes in the present value of the defined obligation:

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000 (as restated)
Defined benefit obligation at start of year	240,114	196,077
Current service cost	6,135	5,344
Interest expense	8,100	8,923
Member contributions	82	73
Remeasurements	(32,167)	33,886
Benefits paid	(3,745)	(4,189)
Defined benefit obligation at end of year	<u>218,519</u>	<u>240,114</u>

## Changes in scheme assets:

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Fair value of scheme assets at start of year	153,592	133,646
Interest income	5,309	6,239
Remeasurements	(4,479)	9,727
Employer contribution	8,748	8,096
Member contributions	82	73
Benefits paid	(3,745)	(4,189)
Fair value of scheme assets at end of year	<u>159,507</u>	<u>153,592</u>

## Cost relating to defined benefit plans:

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Current service cost	6,135	5,344
Interest expense	8,100	8,923
Interest income	(5,309)	(6,239)
Amount charged within net movement of fund	<u>8,926</u>	<u>8,028</u>
Total remeasurements	(27,688)	24,159
Total amount recognised on the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities	<u>(18,762)</u>	<u>32,187</u>

**25 Pensions (continued)**

The major categories of scheme assets as a percentage of total scheme assets:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Equities, hedge funds and commodities	72.6%	71.9%
Bonds	16.7%	16.6%
Property	9.4%	9.7%
Cash	1.1%	1.6%
Insured policies	0.2%	0.2%

	<u>2016</u> £'000	<u>2015</u> £'000
Actual return on the scheme assets during the year	830	15,966

Principal assumptions expressed as weighted averages:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Discount rate	3.60%	3.40%
Rate of increase in salaries	2.67%	3.00%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment:		
Pre 1997 (pre 97 excess over GMP)	3.00%	3.00%
Post 1997/pre 2007 pension	3.00%	3.00%
Post 2007 pension	1.70%	1.70%
Rate of increase of pensions in deferment	1.90%	2.00%
RPI Inflation	2.90%	3.00%
CPI inflation	1.90%	2.00%

Weighted average life expectancy for mortality tables used to determine benefit obligations:

	<u>2016</u> Years	<u>2015</u> Years
Member aged 65 (current life expectancy) – male	23.0	23.4
Member aged 45 (life expectancy at 65) – male	24.8	25.3
Member aged 65 (current life expectancy) – female	25.1	26.0
Member aged 45 (life expectancy at 65) – female	27.0	27.9

## 26 Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2015

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</b>	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Endowment funds £'000	<b>2015 Total £'000</b>
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>				
<b>Voluntary income</b>				
Membership subscriptions and donations	41,467	4,145	-	45,612
Grants, corporate and trusts	892	25,908	(99)	26,701
Legacies	25,335	5,244	-	30,579
<b>Total voluntary income</b>	67,694	35,297	(99)	102,892
Commercial trading	21,813	-	-	21,813
Investment income and interest	256	-	12	268
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Fees and grants for services	2,160	-	-	2,160
Land and farming income	2,804	1,089	-	3,893
Events and media sales	1,093	-	-	1,093
<b>Total income from charitable activities</b>	6,057	1,089	-	7,146
<b>Other income</b>				
Net gains on disposals of fixed assets	753	-	-	753
<b>Total income</b>	96,573	36,386	(87)	132,872
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>				
<b>Cost of raising funds</b>				
Costs of generating voluntary income	15,229	-	-	15,229
Costs of commercial trading	18,928	-	-	18,928
Investment management costs	104	-	-	104
<b>Total cost of raising funds</b>	34,261	-	-	34,261
<b>Net resources available for charitable activities</b>	62,312	36,386	(87)	98,611
<b>Charitable Activities</b>				
Managing RSPB nature reserves	19,239	15,001	-	34,240
Research, policy and advisory	24,552	13,521	-	38,073
Education and inspiring support	18,695	894	-	19,589
Supporter care	4,472	-	-	4,472
<b>Total expenditure on charitable activities</b>	66,958	29,416	-	96,374
<b>Total expenditure</b>	101,219	29,416	-	130,635
<b>Net gains on investment</b>	2,146	-	-	2,146
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>	(2,500)	6,970	(87)	4,383
Actuarial gains/(losses) on pension scheme	(24,159)	-	-	(24,159)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	(26,659)	6,970	(87)	(19,776)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	37,632	133,269	1,618	172,519
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	10,973	140,239	1,531	152,743

**How you can help the RSPB**

There are many ways you can help and this section outlines the most common ways people support us – just choose whatever suits you.

**Join the RSPB**

Whether you want membership for yourself or someone else, why not join today?

**Remember nature in your will**

If you have had a lifetime's pleasure from nature, why not help ensure its future by leaving a legacy to the RSPB in your will? Any amount, large or small, will be put to excellent use.

**Campaigns and appeals**

Support our campaigns and appeals and you can help our work to secure a healthy environment for birds and wildlife. We need your support to help wild birds and the wild places they live in – and to demand better laws to protect them.

**Shopping**

Buy your gifts, bird food, binoculars and a range of other products. Or support us through RSPB Energy, holidays and more. All sales benefit the RSPB.

**Get involved**

Writing letters and e-mails direct to your MP and other decision-makers can really make a difference for birds and wildlife. Join other RSPB campaigners and make sure your voice is heard.

**Fundraise for wildlife**

Have fun and meet like-minded people. Learn new skills, put old ones to good use and help birds and wildlife while you do it.

**Local groups**

An RSPB local group is a great way to meet new friends and help out the RSPB where you live. They are open to all and you will receive a very warm welcome.

**Volunteering for the RSPB**

Looking for an exciting and interesting way to make a difference for wild birds and the environment? Why not consider volunteering? You don't have to know anything about birds to volunteer with the RSPB.

**For more information on how you can support the RSPB please visit our website [rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk) or telephone Membership Services on 01767 693680.**

## Acknowledgements 2015-16 – thank you for supporting us

### Members and supporters

The support and loyalty of our members is critical to the success and achievements of the RSPB. Meeting the rigorous conservation targets that we set would not be possible without the enormous contributions that members make. Members help in many ways, all of them equally important, including: financially, through volunteering, by supporting RSPB campaigns through letter writing, and by helping to deliver RSPB projects on the ground through local groups. We would also like to thank all of the supporters who contribute generously through in memoriam, raffles, lotteries, payroll giving, regular gifts, appeals and other forms of support.

### Legacies

Legacy income makes a vital impact on our conservation work each year. Whilst it is impossible to thank every single one of our generous benefactors here, we would like to mention the following:

Mrs Sylvia Ross Amner  
 Mrs Hazel Carter  
 Mrs Joyce Gillian Curzon  
 Mrs Lois Dodwell  
 Mr Robin Edwards  
 Mrs Cynthia Daphne Figg  
 Mrs Joan Elizabeth Franks  
 Miss Elsie Rosevear Frost  
 Mr Peter Frank Harvey  
 Mrs Jean Howard  
 Mr Derek Frank Kneller Howes  
 Mrs Ruth Mary Hughes  
 Mrs Gisela Jones  
 Mr Brian William Kyle  
 Mrs Brenda Frances Nesbitt  
 Mr Peter Foulger Quick  
 Mr Peter Robertson  
 Mrs Irene Mary Townsend  
 Mr Alfred Charles Vinall  
 Mrs Margaret Walker  
 Mrs Mary Edwina Anne Watkinson  
 Mr Stanley Harry White  
 Mr John Whittle  
 Mrs Eileen Julia Wilks  
 Miss Bertha Doreen Worswick

### Community groups

RSPB local groups, RSPB Wildlife Explorer groups and RSPB Phoenix groups worked unstintingly over the year. Our local groups provide a great focus for us in local communities, involve many people in our work, and raised over £350,000 for RSPB conservation projects.

### Volunteers

The RSPB enjoyed the support of 11,878 volunteers last year, giving the RSPB a gift of time of 936,219 hours. This is equivalent to an extra 548 full-time staff working for nature conservation.

These volunteers helped with virtually every aspect of the RSPB's work, and we cannot thank them enough for their generous support. Additionally, 519,600 people gave an hour of their time to participate in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch.

### Heritage Lottery Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has provided essential support for RSPB projects to restore our natural heritage and bring nature into people's everyday lives. The RSPB is indebted to HLF for their continued support for our work.

**Charitable trusts, non-governmental organisations and individual donors**

We are grateful for the support received and would particularly like to acknowledge the following:

African Bird Club	The Gerald Micklem Charitable Trust
Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)	Dr A Musset
Mr J K Allen	National Birds of Prey Trust
A J H Ashby Will Trust	The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Dr M Baker-Schommer	The National Trust
Mr Geoff Ball	The Nature Trust (Sandy) Ltd
The Banister Charitable Trust	Northwick Trust
Basel Zoo – Across the River	Oceans 5
Mr D G Benham	Mr H and Mrs S Oldham
BirdLife Europe	The Orr Mackintosh Foundation (Sharegift)
Miss D E Blake	The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
British Birdwatching Fair	Friends of Pagham Harbour
British Trust for Ornithology	The Peacock Trust
Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI)	Mr and Mrs Pentland
Sir Charles Chadwyck-Healey	Per Undeland
Charities Aid Foundation	Mr M Percival
Charities Trust	Mr C Pettiward
The Edith Mary Clark Foundation	Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation
Dr Marie Clough Discretionary Trust	Postcode Community Trust
Mark Constantine and The Sound Approach	Kathleen Postlethwaite Discretionary Will Trust
Miel de Botton	Mr N Prentice
E Desmond	Anthony Rae Foundation
E Desmond and A Davison	Rainforest Alliance
Devon Birds	Rainforest Trust
Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund	Renewables Grid Initiative, Stiftung Mercator and the European Climate Foundation
Philip Dorn Discretionary Trust	Ridgeback Charitable Trust
Dream Fund – People's Postcode Lottery	Mr J M B Robertson
The Pamela Edmundson/Connolly Charitable Trust	The Rufford Foundation
John Ellerman Foundation	Save Our Species (SOS)
The ERM Foundation	ScottishPower Foundation
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	Mr N Sherwin
Fondation Segré	The Barnett and Sylvia Shine No 1 Charitable Trust
Mr John Foster	Size of Wales
E M and M R Frisby Charitable Trust	Miss Kathleen Beryl Sleigh Charitable Trust
The Gannochy Trust	St Aidans Trust Fund
Warren Gilchrist	Nini Isabel Stewart Trust
Gillman Charitable Trusts	Sussex Ornithological Society
The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation	Sustrans
Susan H Guy Charitable Trust	Elizabeth Shirley Thomas Discretionary Will Trust
The Hasluck Charitable Trust	Vetwork UK
Andrew Charles Oliver Hawcutt	Franziska Vogel
The Hawthorn Trust	Michael and Rosemary Warburg
Mr G and Mrs C E Huckle	The Waterloo Foundation
International Eco Fund	Whitley Animal Protection Trust
International Seafood Sustainability Foundation	Elsie May Wilks
Mr D W Lamont	Woodland Trust
The A G Leventis Foundation	Woodpeckers Trust
Mrs A Lewis	Sophia Elizabeth Wrightson
Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens/Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association	Yorkshire and Clydesdale Bank Foundation
Miss J A Matthews	

### Landfill Communities Fund

We are grateful for funding support from the following organisations through the Landfill Communities Fund:

Alpha Resource Management Ltd	Groundwork Northern Ireland
Angus Environmental Trust	Highland Council
Biffa Award	Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust
Caird Bardon Community Programme	Impetus Environmental Trust
Caird Peckfield Community Fund	Lafarge-Tarmac Ltd
Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust	Lancashire Environmental Fund
Derbyshire Environmental Trust	Mick George Community Fund
Falkirk Environment Trust	Scottish Water
FCC Environment through WREN	SUEZ Communities Trust Ltd (formerly SITA Trust)
Fife Environment Trust	Teesside Environmental Trust
GrantScape	Veolia Environmental Trust
	Veolia North Thames Trust
	Viridor Credits Environmental Company

### Business supporters

The RSPB enjoys successful partnerships with business supporters to our mutual benefit. We would particularly like to acknowledge the following:

ALDI Stores Ltd	Tesco Stores Ltd
Anesco Ltd	Thames Tideway Tunnel
Appleby (Cayman) Ltd	TNS Research International
Ardmore Whisky	Turcan Connell
Barratt Developments plc	United Utilities plc
Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica GmbH	Walkers Shortbread Ltd
Brookfield Drinks Ltd	Weird Fish Clothing Ltd
The Caravan Club	Wyndham Vacation Rentals
CEMEX UK Ltd	Yorkshire Water
Clifford Chance LLP	
Co-operative Bank	
Credit Suisse	
Crossrail Ltd	
Ecotricity Group Ltd	
The Famous Grouse	
Hanson UK Ltd	
Hartley Anderson Ltd	
HSBC Water Programme	
Hurtigruten Ltd	
intu Properties plc	
Kettle Produce Ltd	
Kingfisher plc	
Lush Ltd	
Marks & Spencer Farming for the Future Innovation	
Marshalls	
Network Rail	
PwC	
R&A Championship Ltd	
Rohan Designs Ltd	
SABIC	
Scottish Power and Scottish Power Renewables	
Scottish and Southern Energy plc	
Smiths & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd	
South West Trains	
South West Water Ltd	
Swarovski Optik	
TAQA	
Tarmac	

### Support from statutory sector and other public bodies

We are grateful for co-operation and support from organisations of many kinds, and would especially like to thank the following:

Aberdeen Harbour Community Action Fund	Forestry Commission England
Allen Valleys Landscape Partnership through North Pennines AONB Partnerships	Forestry Commission Scotland
Arts Council of Wales	The German Ministry for the Environment (BMU), via the German State Development Bank KfW
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	Government of Tristan da Cunha
Belfast Harbour Commissioners	Heritage Lottery Fund
Big Lottery Fund	Heritage Lottery Fund – Heritage Grants
Big Lottery Fund – Awards for All	Heritage Lottery Fund – Landscape Partnerships
Cairngorms National Park Authority	Heritage Lottery Fund – Our Heritage
Clackmannanshire Council	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Coastal Communities Fund Grant	Highlands Council
The Crown Estate	Historic Environmental Scotland
Danish Development Assistance Programme (DANIDA)	Historic England
The Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (NI)	Historic Scotland
Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	Natural England
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)	Natural England – Action for Birds in England partnership
Defra – Darwin Initiative	Natural Environment Research Council
Defra – Darwin Plus	Natural Resources Wales Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Department for International Development (DfID) – Commonwealth Scholarship Commission	North Ayrshire Council
East Lothian Council	North Pennines AONB (SDF)
Environment Agency	Northern Ireland Environment Agency – Natural Environment Fund
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
European Commission – BEST	Orkney Islands Council
European Commission – DG Environment	Renfrewshire Council
European Commission – DG Justice	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)
European Commission – Erasmus+	SEPA Water Environment Fund
European Commission – LIFE	Scottish Government
European Commission – LIFE+	Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate
European Commission – Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, including energy (ENRTP)	Scottish Natural Heritage
European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	Scottish Natural Heritage Peatland Action Fund
ERDF – Europe & Scotland, Investing in your Future	Scottish Rural Development Scheme
ERDF – INTERREG IVA 2 Seas Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007–2013	Solways Wetlands Landscape Partnership through Allerdale Borough Council
ERDF – INTERREG IVA administered by the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB)	Somerset County Council
ERDF – INTERREG IVA France (Channel) England Cooperation Programme 2007– 2013	Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)
ERDF – INTERREG IVB Atlantic Area Transnational Programme 2007–2013	Sport England
ERDF – INTERREG IVB North West Europe Transnational Programme 2007–2013	Sport Scotland
Falkirk Council	Stirling Council
	Teesdale Area Action Partnership Fund via Mid Teesdale Project Partnership
	The US Fish and Wildlife Service – Wildlife Without Borders
	VisitAberdeenshire
	Welsh Government – Core Funding
	Welsh Government – Glastir
	Welsh Government – The Nature Fund
	West Sussex County Council
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[rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk)

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The RSPB is a member of BirdLife International, a partnership of nature conservation organisations working to give nature a home around the world.



giving  
nature  
a home

**Annual review  
2015–2016**



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Starling (RSPB)



**Mike Clarke**  
RSPB Chief Executive

# Welcome

Looking back over the 2015–6 period, it was a time of highs, but also uncertainty.

We aim to inspire everyone to give nature a home, across the whole breadth of our charity's work. Thanks to our supporters, we've managed to secure even more land for nature on RSPB reserves, including in The Broads National Park, in Norfolk; Lade Pits, adjacent to our Dungeness reserve in Kent, and we've just taken on the management of Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve.

Turn to page 13 to read how we're helping farmers give nature a home, and the staggering success of the techniques pioneered on RSPB's Hope Farm, where numbers of yellowhammers increased from just two when we took on the farm in 2002, to an estimated 723 in December 2015.

Of course, the RSPB works to give nature a home all over the UK, so you can find out all about what's happening in England (page 35), Scotland (page 39), Wales (page 45) and NI (page 53). You'll also be pleased to hear that our hard-working red squirrel campaigner, Bob, returned to put nature on the political agenda during the run-up to the devolved elections. Find out more on page 15.

Offshore, we're still fighting for species that wander the oceans, such as seabirds. I'm proud to announce the opening of Bempton's newly refurbished seabird centre, where we've been trialling new remote GPS tags. Find out more on page 11.

Our membership has grown by over 100,000 in the last three years, and again numbers are at an all-time high, now standing at 1,187,839 members. This is great news, as it shows

that more people than ever care about nature. Charity fundraising practices have been under the spotlight, and we remain committed to the highest fundraising standards possible. There's more on page 33.

One of the greatest threats to the natural world is young people's disconnection from it, so that's why I'm really pleased about our partnership with the supermarket chain Aldi. Head to page 25 to discover how the partnership aims to connect thousands of children with nature, in primary schools and public green spaces.

Our international programmes with our BirdLife International partners have seen considerable success. Read about vultures in South Asia (page 18) and the Gola Rainforest in Sierra Leone (page 21), through to our campaigning to safeguard the world's most effective nature conservation laws (page 23) and to influence the climate change agenda (page 27). I'm proud of the RSPB's role in the lead-up to the Paris Agreement, which seeks to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit global temperature increases by 2020.

Regardless of the challenges ahead, including the implications of the EU referendum result, rest assured that we'll continue to work hard with others around the world to save nature.

Of course, the fantastic work of the RSPB is only possible with the help of our supporters, staff, volunteers and partners. Thank you so much for all that you do.

*Mike Clarke*



Find out more about the work we're doing to help European eels on page 19.

Jack Perks (rspb-images.com)



Grahame Madge (rsfb-images.com)

**Professor Steve Ormerod**  
RSPB Chairman

# Giving nature a home is what we do

As we face the implications of the EU referendum, I look back on a successful year.

Yet again, your support has provided the unshakeable foundation for a successful RSPB year. Thanks to you, we continue to make a difference for birds and wildlife: every story in this annual review demonstrates the positive outcomes for nature that become possible when we work together.

Even though the result of the EU referendum has left the conservation world in an uncertain state, we are well used to fighting nature's corner in difficult conditions. As always, we will face these challenges positively and constructively.

We are working now to influence the post-referendum situation, fostering the spirit of collaboration and shared action that will win the day. We have confidence in the enormous capability of our members, our workforce, and our partners in the UK and overseas. Global UN imperatives still drive us, but whichever side of the EU boundary the four UK countries eventually land on, wildlife does not recognise borders, and new initiatives to give nature a home must transcend them too.

Giving Nature a Home is much more than a campaign. It's an ideal that is at the heart of everything we do: in growing our nature reserves network, which is home now to no fewer than 16,000 species; in our fight to protect nature's home from damaging development proposals, and in the way we work with a great many partners and

individuals, often at a landscape-scale, to improve the prospects for nature.

There are many good reasons why the RSPB is seen as the leading charity saving nature. At a time when the charity sector has been under the spotlight, we continue to operate with the highest integrity, always building our capacity to do more for nature: our member numbers are at an all-time high; we've built huge momentum in our work to help children connect with nature; our income and legacy donations are up again this year, and we have successfully galvanised more people than ever to take action for nature, as demonstrated by the hundreds of thousands of you who got behind our partnership campaign to protect the EU Nature Directives.

Of course, the tangible effects of how well we're doing are in our impact on individual species and habitats. And in that regard, we've had some terrific successes to celebrate over the past 12 months. You can read about them in the following pages.

In all my years of association with the RSPB, I have never doubted our ability to do the best for nature, to engage people in the cause to save it, and to get behind it as volunteers, supporters and employees. Every year my faith is justified. And every year, we find a new level of solidarity in the face of difficulty that helps us to deliver the best outcomes. I thank you profoundly for being the source of our courage, strength and momentum.

Ladybird spiders are gaining ground again, after almost becoming extinct in the 1990s. We've reintroduced a colony to RSPB Arne, in Dorset.

Ladybird spider © Fritz Geller  
Grimm, CC-BY-SA-3.0





Andy Gibb

**Jo Gilbert**  
Head of Reserves Ecology



# The wealth of wildlife on our reserves

Here's an update on our work to help nature thrive on our reserves over the last 12 months.

## New land for nature

This has been a significant and successful year for land acquisitions. Thanks to funding of nearly £1 million from WREN, we've been able to purchase an area of 120 hectares, equivalent to 100 football pitches, in the Broads National Park, Norfolk, bringing life to this beautiful place. The newly-purchased land sits alongside RSPB Berney Marshes and Breydon Water, and will create vital marshes that will be grazed by cattle, adding to the Broads landscape, and will serve as a crucial habitat for wading birds such as lapwings and redshanks. By creating carefully-designed habitat features such as shallow pools, we'll provide suitable conditions for breeding birds such as lapwings, avocets, redshanks and yellow wagtails, and bring a richness of wildlife back to this grassland area.

In Wales, work is underway on the Lake Vyrnwy estate in Powys to nurture healthy upland heath and woodland, and develop farming practices that will benefit the environment and encourage wildlife to thrive. This new long-term agreement means that we can invest in the area in ways that have been impossible before, and secure the long-term future of hen harriers, black grouse and curlews. The new site also includes woodland species such as wood warblers and pied flycatchers. For more details, see page 45.

At Rathlin Island, County Antrim, the West Light Seabird Centre re-opened in March 2016. We count seabirds using sample plots, and at just

one plot in Rathlin, seabird numbers increased from 62 in 2014 to 165 in 2016.

Another exciting new acquisition is Lade Pits, adjacent to our Dungeness reserve in Kent, a former site of our partner CEMEX UK that was sold to the RSPB for £1. This site is unusual in that it contains three sound mirrors – concrete structures that were used to listen to enemy aircraft prior to World War II and before the invention of radar. They became obsolete very quickly, and are now listed due to their historical significance. Our team are now investigating whether they can listen out for migrant birds using the sound mirrors, and will continue their popular open days to celebrate the historical significance of the site.

In partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council, the Sherwood Forest Trust, landowner Thoresby Estate and Continuum Attractions, the RSPB will take over the management of the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve, including designing a new visitor centre. The current visitor centre, built in 1977, is surrounded by ancient oaks on land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Replacing the new visitor centre gives the partnership a once-in-a-generation opportunity to start a new and exciting phase for the forest and the RSPB. The RSPB contract was signed in front of the 1,000-year-old Major Oak. Michael Coplestone is the Reserves Area Manager for the North Midlands. He said that he's looking forward

David Tipling (rspb-images.com)





Steve Knell (rspb-images.com)

to enhancing the conservation of the nature reserve, and developing a first-class visitor facility for the people of Nottinghamshire and beyond. The new visitor centre is planned to open in Spring 2018.

### 16,000 species on our reserves

Our work to give nature a home on our reserves is certainly paying dividends.

The fen raft spider, a rare spider species and a priority species for conservation under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, used to be found at fewer than five sites in the UK. Thanks to a highly successful translocation project with these spiders in the Yare Valley in the East of England, the population there is now thriving.

At Geltsdale in Cumbria, we recorded the highest ever number of lekking black grouse: 59, up from 55 in 2014. Black grouse males gather at traditional open spaces to perform their flamboyant displays, called "leks", peaking in April to May, and mainly in the early morning or at dusk. The females, known as grey hens, select a mate, and afterwards leave to rear their chicks alone. At Geltsdale, we have spent the past ten years introducing a new way of grazing the area, with an increase in hardy cattle who leave a more varied vegetation structure which benefits these birds.

2015 was also the year when we recorded the highest numbers of booming bitterns in living memory, and they are also spreading to new areas, including Ouse Fen, a partnership project with Hanson, in the East of England. In 2011 there were no booming bitterns here at all, but in 2015 Ouse Fen was home to ten. To date, the peak nest count has been six (in 2014).

Lapwings and redshanks have shown fantastic successes on lowland wet grassland, and are now at their highest ever numbers on RSPB reserves. They are doing extremely well at RSPB Malltraeth March in Anglesey, where productivity, which needs to be at an average of 0.6–0.7 young produced by each pair each year

to maintain a stable population, is now at 2.44. This is mostly due to our usage of anti-predator electric fencing that keeps foxes and badgers out of areas where lapwings and redshanks are nesting.

Avocets also had a record-breaking year. 172 pairs were counted at Cliffe Pools in Kent, an area once threatened by an airport development.

On the brink of extinction in the 1990s, we're pleased to say that ladybird spiders are slowly gaining ground again. At our Arne reserve in Dorset, we've been taking steps to reintroduce a new colony. In 2015, we had our first evidence of breeding with five new webs recorded outside of the release area.

We've also had success with our field cricket reintroduction to Farnham Heath in Surrey. In 2015 there were 72 males heard calling, exceeding our five-year target of 50, and they are spreading into adjacent areas of newly-restored heathland on the reserve.

### Giving nature a home on our reserves

Once again, we've shown how, if we can create the right habitats, often working in partnership, wildlife will flourish. Red-necked phalaropes, for example, had a phenomenal year, and there are now 31 males on Fetlar in the Shetland Islands. 2015 was also the best breeding season for little terns in 22 years at Pagham Harbour, West Sussex. Little terns were also found nesting in three former colony sites, thanks to an EU LIFE+ funded little tern project. Dungeness, in Kent, is now home to one of the largest populations of Sussex emerald moths, and Winterbourne Downs in Wiltshire now has soaring rare butterfly populations, due to the addition of butterfly banks erected in partnership with Butterfly Conservation. At Sutton Fen in Norfolk, we've had great fen orchid success too, working with Plantlife.

At Coquet Island, just off the coast of Northumberland, we now have 111 pairs of roseate terns, the highest number in 40 years. We're proud that the vast majority of roseate terns make their home on RSPB-managed land.

Finally, we've got some really thrilling news. Common cranes aren't really common at all – they were lost as a breeding bird 400 years ago due to losing their nesting sites and being hunted for food. Whilst a small population re-established themselves in Eastern England in the late 1970s, the Great Crane Project, of which we are a partner, along with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT), The Pensthorpe Conservation Trust and Viridor Credits, can now boast the successful rearing of crane chicks in the West Country, for the first time in 400 years: a real milestone for the project. Nine pairs of cranes made breeding attempts, and four chicks fledged in total. The project is now moving into its next phase, with increased effort in protection and monitoring of breeding pairs through local volunteer teams.



Chris Gomersall (fspb-images.com)

There are now 111 pairs of roseate terns on Coquet Island. This is the highest number in 40 years.



An amazing new Seabird Centre is now open at Bempton Cliffs in Yorkshire.

Kevin Sawston (rspb-images.com)



(RSPB)

**Euan Dunn**  
Principal Policy Officer

# Saving our seabirds and our seas



We've put science into practice to safeguard our seabirds.

Bempton Cliffs, at Flamborough Head in Yorkshire, lies at the heart of the UK's largest mainland seabird colony and, between March and September, provides one of the UK's top wildlife spectacles. Now, thanks to the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Coastal Communities Fund, we've opened a new, award-winning Seabird Centre, with fully accessible footpaths, six viewing decks perched on top of the 100-metre high chalk cliffs, self-guided trails, live CCTV footage, family activities, educational visits and a picnic area. This makes it the UK's most accessible place to see puffins, guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes, fulmars and shags, as well as the largest seabirds in the UK: gannets. It's a fantastic gateway to the seabird city.

We've been using GPS tags to help us understand where seabirds go, and where they look for food, at Bempton Cliffs and more than 30 other sites across the British Isles. On the Shiant Islands in the Outer Hebrides, one of the most important seabird breeding sites in Europe, GPS tags were attached to 17 guillemots and 31 razorbills, and a boat-based survey was carried out simultaneously, enabling the seabird scientists to make a direct comparison between the GPS tracks and the boat observations.

This seabird tracking technology was also instrumental for us in fighting against the development of the Hornsea Project 2 wind farm, scheduled to be built 56 miles (90 km) east of Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs Special Protection Areas (SPA), and the Flamborough and Filey Coast potential SPA. Through our tracking, we demonstrated that the proposed site is within the areas where breeding gannets and kittiwakes search for food. Based on known foraging ranges, puffins,

guillemots and razorbills from Bempton are also likely to feed in these areas.

We were concerned that a wind farm in this location could have serious impacts on these protected sites and their species. Natural England also campaigned against Hornsea Project 2, but withdrew their final objection in December 2015 after the developers agreed to remove 60 of the turbines and raise the height of the remaining ones. Although these changes should reduce the numbers of gannet and kittiwake collisions, the number of casualties is still predicted to be high. These changes also do not fully address our concerns for the feeding guillemots, puffins and razorbills that are displaced.

The RSPB supports the need for renewable energy, but it is vital that renewable developments are located away from important wildlife sites. Hornsea Project 2 is located in an important wildlife site. Sadly, Government consented Hornsea Project 2 in August 2016, but we will continue to work hard to protect seabirds from any future offshore developments within sensitive seabird areas; and we can't do this without an evidence base.

In January 2016, we had the extremely positive news that an area of 85,000 square miles (220,000 square kilometres) around the UK Overseas Territory of Ascension Island will be protected as a marine reserve. The island lies 1,000 miles from West Africa, in the Atlantic Ocean. Ascension Island is home to the second largest green turtle nesting site in the Atlantic, and unique fish species such as the resplendent angelfish. The RSPB played a key role in getting this area designated as a marine reserve. As just 3% of the global seas have any form of protection, this is a vital step.

Grahame Mudge (rspb-images.com)



Hope Farm, Cambridgeshire, is an example of how farming for business and wildlife can work hand in hand.

Andy Hay (sps-images.com)



(RSPB)

**Richard Winspear**  
Head of Technical Advice

# Giving nature a home on farms

The RSPB wants the UK's farms to be profitable and productive – and teeming with wildlife.

We know it's possible to achieve efficient food production whilst giving nature a home, because we have witnessed it on some wildlife-friendly farms including on our own Hope Farm in Cambridgeshire. The national farmland breeding bird index has fallen by 10% since we bought Hope Farm in 2000, but on Hope Farm, it has risen by 194%. The breeding population of yellowhammers on Hope Farm has doubled; starlings, linnets and reed buntings have tripled and skylarks have quadrupled. Grey partridges, lapwings and yellow wagtails are now also regular breeding birds, having been absent 16 years ago. We had a remarkable count of 723 yellowhammers last winter, and we've also increased numbers of butterflies, moths and bees.

We've teamed up with other wildlife organisations to form Farm Wildlife, an advisory partnership which works with the farming industry. The partnership has identified six steps which will have the most positive impact for wildlife on arable farmland:

- Look after established wildlife habitats such as woods and trees, as these are particularly valuable for wildlife.
- Make the most of hedges, ditches and margins, as these areas are often where most wildlife is found.
- Create wet features, such as ponds, providing important habitat for many species.
- Create flower-rich habitats on 2% of your arable land for pollinators and other insects.
- Create seed-rich habitats on 2% of your arable land to help wildlife through the winter.

- Include spring crops or in-field features such as fallow plots to provide opportunities for wildlife in the middle of the field. Visit [farmwildlife.info](http://farmwildlife.info) for details.

In addition, RSPB advisors provide targeted advice for farms in focus areas where there are nationally-important populations of farmland birds. This is the most efficient way to help declining populations in arable landscapes. Hopefully, these core areas will boost numbers sufficiently that the birds will re-populate the wider landscapes. We also work with farmers who have populations of wading birds to support them in giving nature a home.

We have farming enterprises on 60 of our reserves, many of which are managed to support wading birds and give us the experience to advise other farmers.

Our research into farm wildlife conservation is paying dividends. We've learned about the migration route of our fastest-declining farmland bird: turtle doves. We tagged one bird, Titan. He travelled 5,600 km, at an average speed of 55 km per hour. One night, he travelled 700 km. We know that, after making a 2,000 km crossing of the Sahara desert, he stopped for a couple of weeks to refuel. We know more about where the doves spend winter, and what they eat. This information allows us to work out how to help these birds, and they need help as they've declined by 96% in recent decades. Our farmland bird research and experience from managing our own sites underpins all of the advice that our advisors give to farmers.

David Trilling (rspb-images.com)





Puffins have recently joined the IUCN Red List as a threatened species. The MP Species Champion for puffins is Kevin Hollinrake, MP for Thirsk and Malton.

Genevieve Leaper (rspl-images.com)



(RSPB)

**Steven Roddy**  
Head of Parliamentary Campaigns

# Engaging politicians to help save nature

We report on two ways in which we've been taking a creative approach to campaigning with politicians.

Our red squirrel campaigner, Bob, was launched in September 2014, with the aim of getting nature back on the political agenda during the 2015 UK General Election. He was hard at work again in the lead-up to the 2016 devolved elections, on the campaign trail in Scotland, Wales and NI. More than 6,500 people in NI, Wales and Scotland asked their political candidates what they intended to do for wild places, the countryside and wildlife, and 268 of those candidates came on board: a great result for a small red squirrel.

## MP Species Champions

We've been engaging with politicians, in a light-hearted and friendly way through our MP Species Champions programme. This was first launched successfully in Scotland in 2013, by Scottish Environment LINK, and its England launch marks the next stage. In this programme, we have joined forces with Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Bat Conservation Trust, Buglife, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation and Plantlife. Twenty-seven Westminster MPs and four MEP Species Champions have been recruited. The species championed are varied,

and include birds, plants, beetles, bees and fish. The MPs have been carefully matched to those species that are found in their respective constituencies. A similar scheme was launched in Wales in June 2016, and the RSPB were involved as a part of Wales Environment Link. On March 1 2016, the Champions attended an event at Westminster where they were presented with a factsheet on their species. A number have also been on visits to RSPB reserves, to give them a real-life experience with their species. For example, Kelly Tolhurst, Conservative MP for Rochester and Stroud, has visited the nightingales at Lodge Hill, and Jess Phillips, Labour MP for Birmingham Yardley, has been introduced to the dunnocks at Sheldon Country Park.

The hope is that, where appropriate, they will champion their species at Westminster. Beyond that, becoming Species Champions will engage them with nature conservation more broadly, and we hope that they will support us in our other challenges, such as halting and reversing the loss of habitats.

Squirrel (Stock)





Sir David Attenborough © Toby Smith, Cambridge Conservation Initiative



Stone-curlew by David Tipling (rspb-images.com)

## Science leads the way

A new collaborative initiative opened in Cambridge in 2015. The David Attenborough Building now houses the largest group of nature conservation organisations and university researchers in the world: the Cambridge Conservation Initiative. Staff from our Conservation and International Directorates are now at the heart of this fantastic environment for collaborative working. It was opened by Sir David Attenborough, who marked the occasion by abseiling down the reception's plant wall! Our RSPB Centre for Conservation Science had a record-breaking year, producing 136 peer-reviewed publications. To date, our literature has been cited 42,156 times, demonstrating our commitment to rigorous scientific research.

2015 also marked the second year of the annual RSPB Centre for Conservation Science awards. The award for 'Outstanding PhD' went to Gurutzeta Guillera-Arroita from the University of Kent. Senior Conservation Scientist Dr Jennifer Smart won the award for Outstanding RSPB Conservation Scientist for launching the RSPB Centre for Conservation Science. The award for scientific paper of high conservation importance went to Bojana Bajželj.

## Saving stone-curlews

This year we celebrated 30 years of work to save stone-curlews in East Anglia and Wessex, helping to bring these intriguing birds back from the brink of UK extinction. Since 1985 farmers, landowners, gamekeepers and conservationists have worked together to protect nest sites, recovering the population from fewer than 150 breeding pairs in the 1980s to around 400 today.

We're now in the third year of the EU LIFE+ stone-curlew project, and farm conservation advisers are helping land managers to create enough safe nesting habitat to sustain the population. This should ease the reliance of stone-curlews on direct nest protection.

The number of stone-curlews nesting on safe habitat has already increased, and more habitat will be created through the new Countryside Stewardship scheme, which opened to farmers this year. Community engagement officers are raising local awareness of the species, and our 2020 transition strategy and vision for stone-curlews should ensure that these birds are back for good.



Yellow-bellied toad (RSPB)



Bee eater, Hanson Quarry (RSPB)

## RESTORE project makes a difference

The RESTORE project, a three-year partnership project promoting the restoration of quarries for the benefit of wildlife, people and local economies across north-west Europe, ended in 2015.

It was co-financed by the EU's European Regional Development Fund through the INTERREG IVB NWE Programme, and involved us working with six co-partners in the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.

During the life of the project, we teamed up with the minerals industry and stakeholders right across north-west Europe, to: assess the value to society of creating new priority habitat in quarries, create and manage approximately 500 hectares of such habitat and advise on the appropriate restoration of around a further 2,300 hectares.

This work helped several key species, including white-clawed crayfish, bittern, turtle dove, otter and twite in the UK, and yellow-bellied toad, eagle owl and midwife toad in mainland Europe. For details on the RESTORE project, visit [restorequarries.eu](http://restorequarries.eu)

## Bee-eaters breed at Hanson quarry

During the summer of 2015, two pairs of bee-eaters nested at the Hanson Aggregates Quarry in Brampton, Cumbria. They were first seen by the quarry foreman, who noticed their brightly-coloured plumage amongst the nesting sand martins.

This is very exciting, as although bee-eaters have bred in the UK on three occasions since 2002, they are still a very rare breeding bird and their nests are at risk from disturbance and egg collectors. Normally, bee-eaters nest in southern Europe.

The RSPB set up a 24-hour protection scheme and viewpoint at the Hanson site, so that members of the public could get great views of the birds as they successfully raised their young. The bee-eaters nested by burrowing tunnels in the quarry banks. Sightings of bee-eaters in the UK have been on the increase in recent years, and this is the second consecutive summer that they have bred here. It's likely they are being pushed northwards by climate change, and may become more regular breeders in the UK in the future.



Kingsbrook (RSPB)



Vulture chicks by Chris Bowden (RSPB)

## Giving nature a home with Barratt Developments

The UK's largest house builder, Barratt Developments, is working with us to improve the prospects for wildlife on future housing developments. Barratt's first project, Kingsbrook, a large development near Aylesbury, is already underway. The design work was recognised in the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence where it was a finalist in the Natural Environment category. The new development will incorporate swift bricks, (bricks with spaces for swifts to nest in), plus hedgehog highways, newt ponds, bat and owl boxes and orchards.

With hundreds of thousands of homes needed in the next few years, this development means that conservationists and housebuilders can pull together to ensure wildlife is boosted rather than ousted in the process.

We're monitoring the changes in wildlife during and after construction at Kingsbrook, and we hope that the project will inspire developers to build homes with wildlife in mind.

## Breakthrough for the SAVE Partnership

The Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction (SAVE) partnership had a breakthrough in August 2015, when the Indian Ministry for Health announced a ban on multi-dose vials of the human formulations of diclofenac, a painkiller responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of vultures. It had earlier been banned for veterinary use, but availability in these larger vials meant it continued to be used on cattle illegally. This ban will further discourage its veterinary use, and so reduce the risk to vultures feeding on dead cattle.

SAVE now needs to ensure that safe alternative drugs are used by vets. Some alternatives are also not vulture safe.

The SAVE partnership was set up in 2011 and has 17 partners, including the RSPB, national and international NGOs and government organisations in the relevant countries. The aim is to review and co-ordinate scientifically agreed conservation priorities, helping channel and implement actions and funding where they are most urgently required.



Nature close-up event at Leighton Moss (RSPB)



Response for Nature (RSPB)

## Disney helps European eels

Thanks to a \$25,000 Disney Conservation Fund grant, we've been working on a project to help eels on our reserves.

Eels' incredible journeys take them from the Sargasso Sea, in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean, to the UK in search of freshwater habitats. This epic journey takes around two years. Once they arrive, they gather in large river mouths. One issue that young eels (known as elvers) face is the obstacles they encounter whilst trying to reach suitable areas of wetland habitat, where they feed and grow.

The Disney funding has enabled us to install eel passes at our Leighton Moss, Minsmere and Ham Wall reserves, enabling them to move over the water control structures to find the wetland areas on these reserves.

Children in particular seem to find eels fascinating. We've run Exciting Eel trail events at Leighton Moss, Minsmere and Ham Wall reserves, where almost 1,000 visitors, including 400 children, took part in eel-related activities.

## Response for Nature

In 2013, the *State of Nature* report set out the state of the UK's wildlife, with alarming clarity. It showed that 60% of the species assessed had declined over the previous 50 years, and 30% had declined strongly.

In response to *State of Nature*, in 2015 we worked in partnership with 33 conservation organisations across the four countries in the UK. In October 2015, this resulted in the publication of four country-specific reports, called *Response for Nature*. The documents make key recommendations to governments on what's needed to restore nature in the UK.

The priorities in each report reflect the different parts of the UK, but there are common themes. We want to see governments delivering an inspiring vision for nature. Specific programmes should be targeting our core threatened species; existing nature laws need to be fully implemented and defended, and governments should identify and protect an effective network of special places for wildlife. Read the reports at [rspb.org.uk/responsefornature](http://rspb.org.uk/responsefornature)



We've reached some important milestones in our efforts to save seabirds.

Chris Gomersall (@spb-images.com)



Gola Forest by Caroline Thomas (spsb-images.com)



Storm petrel by Steve Round (spsb-images.com)

## Working with communities in Gola Rainforest

The Gola Rainforest is the largest remaining area of Upper Guinean Tropical Rainforest left in Sierra Leone. Covering an area of 70,000 hectares, it's equivalent in size to just under half the area of London, with more than 330 bird species. We've been working in Sierra Leone for 25 years and our project has continued through civil war and the Ebola crisis.

The 122 Forest Edge Communities living around the Gola Rainforest National Park have a very high unemployment rate, particularly amongst the young. We recently piloted a Community Youth Conservation Volunteer programme, to encourage their involvement in nature conservation, specifically by protecting pygmy hippos and the white-necked picathartes. Also, we've helped 24,000 people develop sustainable agricultural projects that increase their standard of living and protect the forest. We hope to strengthen the sense of local ownership and pride through community-based activities, which include monitoring community areas for signs of pygmy hippos. We set up an appeal this financial year which aims to raise £750,000 to help Gola's wildlife.

## Helping seabirds recover across the world

We've reached some important milestones in our efforts to save seabirds this year. In February, the Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project team and local people celebrated as St Agnes and Gugh were officially declared rat-free. Seabirds are already benefiting, with Manx shearwaters and storm petrels successfully breeding on the islands for the first time in living memory.

This year also saw the start of a rat eradication programme on the Shiant Isles off north-west Scotland. These islands are among the most important places for seabirds in Europe; the project is already helping puffins, common guillemots and razorbills and it is hoped that breeding Manx shearwaters and storm petrels may return.

Overseas, the recovery of Ascension frigatebirds on Ascension Island is strong following the island restoration project. There are now over 100 pairs on this small island in the South Atlantic, up from two pairs in 2013.



The UK has some fantastic places for wildlife, such as Abernethy Forest.

David Tipling (rspb-images.com)



(RSPB)

**Kate Jennings**

Head of Site Conservation Policy

# What's next for the Nature Directives?

The EU laws that protect our nature were under threat. Here's the next part of the story.

In 2015, the world's most effective cross-border nature protection laws came under threat. You've helped us fight back to defend the laws that protect our nature. We're fortunate that in the UK we have fantastic places for wildlife, from the Scilly Isles to Abernethy, from Lough Neagh to Lake Vyrnwy and the Norfolk Broads. These homes for nature, and the wildlife within them, are protected thanks to key legislation: the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive, collectively known as the Nature Directives.

They are the foundation of nature conservation across Europe, providing the highest available levels of protection for species or habitats. They ensure our wildlife has the same level of legal protection across the EU, especially important for our migratory species. But the most important thing about them is that, when implemented properly, they work: numerous scientific and practical studies attest to their effectiveness.

In a political climate hostile to regulation, however, these laws came under attack. A "regulatory fitness check" of the Nature Directives, to ensure they were still fit for purpose, provided detractors with a perfect opportunity to try to undo decades of conservation progress.

The RSPB and BirdLife International were quick to act. In the UK, we led over 100 other environmental groups to pull together a single response: the laws work – for wildlife, for people and for business. Partners across the EU did the same. Then we asked for

your help. We created a joint campaign with hundreds of other environmental groups across Europe, and from May to July 2015 over 520,000 people spoke up against weakening the Nature Directives. Over 100,000 responses came from the UK, and more than 65,000 were from RSPB supporters. The response was over three times the previous record response to an EU consultation, and the strength of your voices became a key point in every subsequent discussion about the laws.

As the technical aspects of the review continued, RSPB supporters got involved to back our politicians in both the UK and European parliaments to join the Defend Nature campaign. Your efforts ensured Environment Ministers from across Europe – including the UK Minister at the time Rory Stewart – and the European Parliament both spoke up in defence of the Nature Directives, starting to tip the scales of political support in favour of these vital laws.

The future is not yet secured, but the science is compelling, the evidence is clear, and people who love nature have spoken in unprecedented numbers – the Nature Directives must be protected and their implementation must be improved. Whatever the outcome of negotiations following the UK referendum, they will remain vital for the protection of wildlife across Europe (including migratory species that move between the UK and other EU countries). It will be essential that nature protection law in the UK remains at least as strong as that currently provided by the Nature Directives. Find out more at [rspb.org.uk/DefendNature](https://www.rspb.org.uk/DefendNature)

Crested tit by Edwin Kats (rspb-images.com)





Our partnership with Aldi has enabled us to connect more children with nature.

Gift by David Tipling (ispb-images.com)



(RSPB)

**Martyn Foster**  
Head of Education, Families and Youth



Pipistrelle bat (Fotolia)

# Inspiring a love of nature in children

Encouraging and inspiring children to enjoy and value nature is vital for conservation, now and in the future.

Sadly, the current generation of children spend far less time out in nature than previous generations did. Fewer than 10% of children now play regularly in natural places. The RSPB believes that connecting with nature should be a part of every child's life, and that doing so helps to develop deeply-held feelings and attitudes towards wildlife and the natural world.

## Connecting children with nature

We need to develop our efforts in connecting children with nature. We're focusing on providing children with first-hand experiences of nature, where they learn something and have fun. This has long been at the core of what we do across our work with young people, but we have renewed focus to deliver those experiences to many more children, be it directly, or through facilitation or partnership.

Connection to nature is the bond with the natural world that means people care about nature and want to protect it. It is most often developed in childhood and if young people develop this connection, they're much more likely to support nature conservation in the future. Nature is in trouble, and children's connection to nature is linked to this. The *State of Nature* report (2013) shows that nature in the UK is being lost – 60% of species assessed have declined over recent decades. Not only can children take action to help turn this around, but they will also benefit from having more contact with nature. Children need nature and nature needs children.

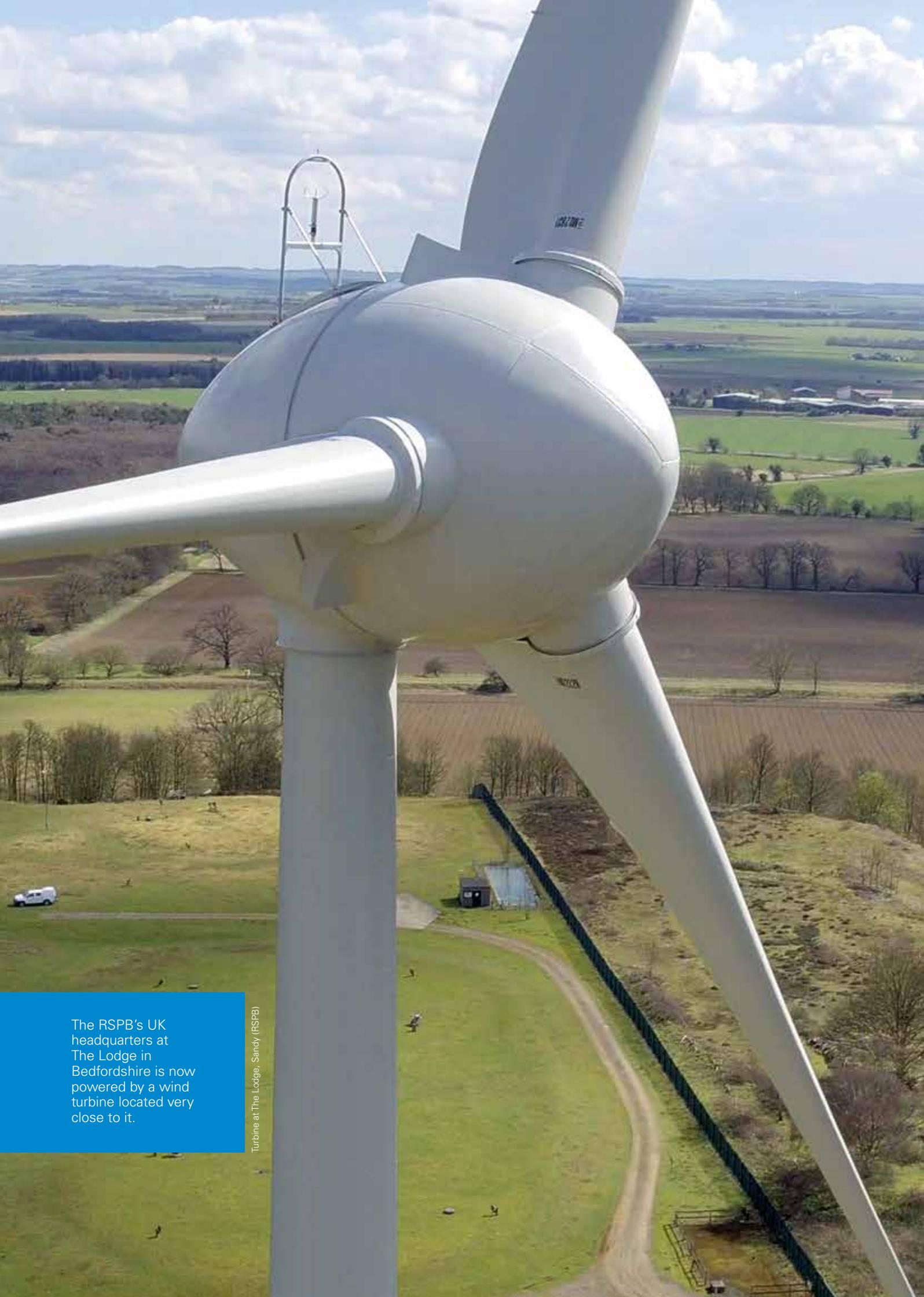
We have lots of routes to reach young people and help better connect them to nature. From our schools on reserves programme and our Big Schools Birdwatch campaign to our family events on reserves.

## Our Aldi partnership

A pioneering partnership between the RSPB and food retailer Aldi is also inspiring hundreds of thousands of children to build a stronger connection with nature. Now in its second year, our partnership with Aldi is proving truly transformational. Driven by the ambition to inspire a generation of children, and funded by the UK-wide carrier bag levy of 5p per bag, we are working with Aldi to run programmes in urban schools, provide family activities in city parks and lots more. As Aldi's exclusive charity partner for the UK bag levy, they are providing more than £2 million to fund our ground-breaking education and family engagement work and enabling us to reach out to schools, families and communities in England, Scotland and Wales.

Without Aldi's support we wouldn't be able to reach out to so many children, or do something on this huge scale, and we're working together to grow the partnership to be even better for nature in the future.

Our ambitions are big and we understand that we cannot reach every child in the UK on our own. Increasingly, we'll work with partners to scale up this work and increase the connection to nature that a whole generation of children can feel.



The RSPB's UK headquarters at The Lodge in Bedfordshire is now powered by a wind turbine located very close to it.

Turbine at The Lodge, Sandy (RSPB)



(RSPB)

**Melanie Coath**  
Senior Policy Officer



# Tackling climate change

The RSPB is stepping up to meet the challenges of a changing climate.

Climate change is one of the greatest long-term threats to nature. The RSPB's report, *The Nature of Climate Change*, published in 2015, makes sobering reading. It shows how Europe's wildlife is already being affected by climate change, and how its effects are likely to intensify. For example, the report shows that species are now becoming mismatched: in the Netherlands, between 1988 and 2005, oak leaves emerged 1.7 days earlier per decade, the abundance of caterpillars that feed on them peaked at 7.5 days earlier per decade, and chicks of great tits, who feed on the caterpillars, hatched around five days earlier. But sparrowhawk chicks, who feed on small birds, are not hatching earlier, creating a mismatch that would threaten their future. The report was taken by RSPB staff to the UN Climate Change conference in Paris, between 30 November and 13 December 2015.

The conference negotiated the Paris Agreement, a global agreement on the reduction of emissions leading to climate change, which will come into practice in 2020. The RSPB and BirdLife International were present at the conference, focusing on obtaining sound climate change mitigation measures on land use and forests, because so much wildlife is found there – 76% of the world's threatened birds are found in tropical forests. We're pleased that, after campaigning on the issues, the agreement contains a large section on the need for reducing emissions from deforestation and the role of conserving forests and other carbon-rich ecosystems in reducing climate change.

However, it is not clear if the overall ambition of the treaty is strong enough to ensure that the world really will stay below the temperature

targets the Paris Agreement sets. Neither is it clear that enough money will flow to help poorer nations reduce emissions and adapt to climate change; there is still work for us to do.

We take our commitment to tackling climate change very seriously, and in January 2016 we located a wind turbine in a field adjacent to the RSPB's UK headquarters in Bedfordshire. The installation of this turbine demonstrates our commitment to renewable energy: it produces the energy equivalent to 66% of the RSPB's electricity needs. The turbine also supplies power directly to our headquarters. Working in partnership with green energy company Ecotricity, assessments were conducted over three years on all aspects of the wind turbine proposal and how it could affect the surrounding area. These assessments analysed potential impacts, which included landscape, ecology, ornithology, hydrology, noise, and transport and access. We engaged with the local community, and the local council granted planning permission in April 2014.

Our campaigning continues, and in February 2016 we once again teamed up with the WWF, Oxfam, The National Trust, the WI and other partners from The Climate Coalition, to participate in the second year of the Show the Love campaign. A short film, *I Wish For You*, starring Maxine Peake and Jeremy Irons, was released in time for Valentine's Day, as part of the campaign. Created by Ridley Scott Associates and written by Michael Morpurgo, the film received more than four million views. Hundreds of thousands of people made, wore and shared green hearts around the UK, and inspired people to think about all the things they love most about the natural world and value in their own lives, and how these might be affected by climate change.

Orange tip butterfly by Niall Bervie (rspb-images.com)



## Spineless Simon steals Springwatch

In 2015, the long-running BBC wildlife show *Springwatch* was broadcast from Minsmere in Suffolk for the second time.

Chris Packham has described RSPB Minsmere as the “Disneyland of Wildlife”, but the unexpected star of the show was a 5 cm long stickleback known as Spineless Simon. He became the UK’s most famous fish, having two dorsal barbs instead of the usual three. Viewers watched the story unfold as an otter attempted to destroy his burrow, and then a hungry bittern appeared. Thankfully, after all the drama, Spineless Simon did eventually find a mate.

2.5 million people tuned into the 8 pm shows, and once again numbers to Minsmere soared due to the *Springwatch* effect. It is very encouraging to see how *Springwatch* is getting people interested in wildlife and visiting nature reserves; at Minsmere we’ve seen greater levels of visitor satisfaction, which is down to the dedicated work of Minsmere staff and volunteers.

*Springwatch* also returned to Minsmere in May–June 2016.



## Big Birdhouse tour takes flight

After 18 months, we have now come to the end of our flagship partnership with shopping centre owner intu: the Big Birdhouse Tour. Since hatching at intu Lakeside in July 2015, 15 giant birdhouses have flown around the country, roosting at 15 intu shopping centres across the UK, and finishing at intu Metro Centre on 16 October 2016.

The tour has enabled us to engage with hundreds of families and win support from more than 1,500 new members. intu colleagues from each centre also visited local primary schools, using RSPB resources, to encourage children to give nature a home and create bird-inspired artwork for display throughout the tour.

The 15 fabulous big birdhouses, designed by well-known personalities including Vic Reeves, George Clark, Jo Whiley, Will Greenwood and our president Miranda Krestovnikoff, will be auctioned in October and November 2016, raising further funds for the RSPB.

Big Schools Birdwatch by David McHugh (rspb-images.com)



Hurtigruten cruise ship (Alamy)



## 15 years of Big Schools' Birdwatch

90,000 pupils and teachers counted the birds in their school grounds during the first half of the 2016 Spring Term (4 January–12 February 2016), taking part in the Big Schools' Birdwatch.

The survey, now in its 15th year, is the biggest wildlife survey in schools. During this time it has helped to track numbers of birds in school grounds, providing an insight into how species are doing, and inspiring many children about nature.

Since its launch in 2002, the Big Schools' Birdwatch has provided a million opportunities for children and teachers to connect with nature in their school grounds.

More than 70 different species were recorded this year, ranging from starlings and house sparrows to red kites and green woodpeckers.

The survey revealed that the blackbird is still the most common school ground visitor. 87% of schools that took part reported seeing blackbirds, with an average of seven birds seen per school.

## New Hurtigruten partnership

We've joined forces with adventure travel company Hurtigruten in a three-year partnership. They are committed to raising £100,000 to fund vital marine and seabird conservation projects.

Hurtigruten's explorer cruise ships visit some of the most remote places in the world, including Antarctica, Greenland and Norway. The company is committed to preserving the destinations they visit for future generations.

Hurtigruten has had an informal relationship with the RSPB for many years, but this new three year partnership will generate significant funding for marine projects. The agreement also includes discounts for RSPB supporters.

The Norwegian coast, home to the majority of the Hurtigruten fleet, is also home to an impressive variety of species, and Hurtigruten passengers have the opportunity to visit one of the most accessible bird cliffs in Norway. Local residents include colourful Atlantic puffins and numerous other birds such as Arctic skuas, cormorants, kittiwakes, guillemots, razorbills, Brünnich's guillemots and northern fulmars.



We're satellite tagging hen harriers to find out their movements. Lush have supported this project through sales of their hen harrier bath bombs.

Steve Knell (rspp-images.com)

Lush hen harrier bath bomb (markavery.info)



President's award by Eleanor Bentall (rspb-images.com)



## Lush news for the RSPB

The fresh handmade cosmetics company Lush has raised over £100,000 for the RSPB, through sales of its hen harrier-shaped bath bombs.

Launched in August 2015, to help raise awareness of the persecution of one of Britain's rarest birds of prey, nearly 50,000 bath bombs have now been sold. The funds raised by Lush will help our EU LIFE+ Hen Harrier Life project, satellite tagging hen harriers to find out more about their movements.

Martin Harper, RSPB Conservation Director, said: "Satellite tagging is a hugely important tool in protecting hen harriers and aiding their conservation. The tags provide us with a wealth of information on the hen harriers' habits and movements, which ultimately helps us protect them from illegal persecution – the main reason they are absent from vast swathes of the UK uplands.

"Our Hen Harrier LIFE+ Project is a vital programme of work designed to help the species recover, so it's great that this fantastic support from Lush and its customers is helping to fund such important work."

## President's Award winners 2015

The President's Award celebrates the fantastic work of all of our volunteers. Here we celebrate the 2015 winners.

**John Oliver** has volunteered at Pulborough Brooks, West Sussex for 15 years, offering practical help whilst focusing on volunteer recruitment. There are now 223 volunteers.

**Brian Nobbs** has been volunteering for 37 years, latterly with the Sevenoaks local group. He has given more than 400 talks so far and raised over £10,000.

**Pip Goodwin** combines a passion for nature with knowledge of environmental law, leading important policy research on the Nature Directives.

**Brian Foster** is a key member of the Aylesbeare team in Kent where he runs the reserve's workshop.

**Allan Dawson** started volunteering at Bempton Cliffs 9 years ago to say thank you for years of enjoyment. He's now a vital team member.

**David Baynes** has volunteered at Loch Leven since February 2010, building new structures and making countless improvements.

Congratulations to our winners, and every one of our volunteers. Without their time and talents we couldn't achieve all we do for nature.



In an exciting new development, the RSPB will be managing the land at Sherwood Forest.

Major Oak, Sherwood Forest (iStock)



Andy Hay (fspb-images.com)

**Beth Thoren**  
Director of Fundraising and Communications

# How you're helping us do more for nature

Thanks to our members and supporters, we're able to do even more to help wildlife and the natural world.

The threats to nature are ever-increasing, and due to this, we need to keep stepping up our conservation ambitions. This means we have a need for an increase in all kinds of support for the RSPB, be it financial, volunteering, campaigning, leaving a legacy, or taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch.

In view of this, I'm proud to say that 2015–2016 was a great year for nature. Our membership numbers are now at an all-time high, with over 100,000 new members during that time. The number now stands at 1,187,839 members. It's wonderful that so many people want to do something for nature, and that they're choosing to do so through their RSPB membership. We're particularly proud of our increase in family memberships, because by inspiring children and families to care about nature, we're ensuring that the future of the natural world is in safe hands.

The past year was a time of income growth for sources such as trading income, and the same period was also a record-breaking year for legacy income. The RSPB received valuable legacies from 1,116 people this year, up from 1,105 in the 2014–2015 period. Legacy gifts can come in all sizes, and each one matters for wildlife.

Each gift means that we can do more great things for nature, and it's thanks to our members and supporters that we're able to do that. The pages of this annual review are great evidence of what we can achieve together. Whether we're restoring thousands of hectares of disused industrial land for the benefit of nature, or protecting and providing vital habitat for Red List species such as the puffin or turtle dove, or campaigning for action to defend the laws that protect nature in the UK, your support has made a big difference.

## Keeping our fundraising standards high

In recent years, charity fundraising practices have been under the spotlight, not always positively. Although this has presented a challenge across the charity sector as a whole, we've welcomed the opportunity to review our ways of working in this area. We've always worked hard to achieve the highest standards within our fundraising practices, as at the RSPB's core is the trust of our members, and this is something we value more highly than anything else.

Our members and supporters form the backbone of our organisation, without whom we couldn't do any of our great work to save nature. Thank you so much for supporting the RSPB.



Conservation doesn't stay the same on our reserves. Wardens and ecologists are always looking to find better ways to manage our sites.

Guy Rogers (rsph-images.com)



**Shaun Thomas**  
Director of Region and Country Operations

# England

It's been a successful year for wildlife on our restoration projects, and we've seen the benefits of partnership working.

The earth moved for Wallasea Island in the Thames estuary this year. Our coastal habitat creation has gone ahead on a massive scale, as three million tons of spoil were brought in from the tunnel being dug for London's Crossrail project. The material has helped create nearly 66% of the reserve, and we will be looking to complete this amazing new wetland over the coming years. Much of the groundwork is now complete on this – the biggest coastal habitat restoration project of its kind in Europe. The sea wall was breached in July 2015, and, by the end of the year, we had 168 hectares of new coastal habitat, ranging from lagoons to creeks. It was enough to draw in up to 10,000 birds in the first winter alone.

Smaller, but nevertheless important restoration projects elsewhere continue to progress. At Hesketh Out Marsh reserve in Lancashire, we landscaped lagoons and dug creeks, while the Environment Agency completed its sea wall, to manage the flow of seawater.

The developing reedbeds at Ouse Fen in Cambridgeshire gained a big endorsement from the bitterns we had hoped to attract there. Just five years ago, there were none at all. 2015 saw the number of booming males rise to 10.

In July, an unprecedented group of up to 150 sharks swarmed into the shallow intertidal waters at our Medmerry reserve in West Sussex. Measuring up to 1.5 metres in length, with the typical triangular shark fins sticking out of the water, these were smooth-hounds – usually found offshore.

Amazing footage of the event received international attention and goes to show the variety of wildlife that RSPB reserves attract. Medmerry is the largest open-coast managed realignment scheme ever in the UK – designed to protect over 350 homes in Selsey from coastal flooding. The Environment Agency, with RSPB support, has carried out a significant amount of work. Now we are really starting to see the benefits to wildlife, as well as the people living close by.

## Wildlife success stories

Breeding birds did exceptionally well at our Lakenheath Fen reserve in Suffolk this year. After two unsuccessful years, the cranes managed to fledge three chicks between two pairs – the most since they began breeding in 2007. Other rarities had a good season too; we had four successful bittern nests, and the first record of their diminutive cousin, the appropriately named little bittern, with a male calling during May and June. Only a generation ago, this incredibly productive reserve was farm fields.

It was a blooming good year for the extremely rare fen orchid at two of its only known sites in the UK. At Catfield Fen and Sutton Fen in Norfolk, the number of spikes more than doubled, from 3,600 to 7,700. We have to maintain a delicate balance to preserve this flower, keeping steady levels of acidity and the water level at or near the surface of our fens.

However, at Catfield Fen, where over 50% of the UK's fen orchid population is found, we think water abstraction is the key reason the site is becoming more acidic. Therefore,



along with Natural England, the RSPB will be supporting the Environment Agency at a public inquiry in April as they defend their decision to refuse to renew two water abstraction licences.

Breeding wading birds at Rainham have been doing well with lapwings and redshanks increasing every year since 2011 – lapwings from 13 pairs to 68 pairs in 2015, and redshanks from four pairs to 60 pairs in 2015. Careful management of the grazing, water levels, and an anti-predator fence, have clearly paid off.

The islands of Langstone Harbour on the Solent are home to one of the UK's most important colonies of little terns. The breeding population in Southeast England declined by 89% between 1986 and 2013, with Langstone Harbour's population crashing from 162 to 26 pairs. Our dedicated volunteers, the community and youth groups hand-painted over 100 model birds to act as decoys, drawing these threatened seabirds back to the site. Just before the birds arrived in April, we were busy putting out these model terns, as well as shelters to protect chicks from predators. We also played recordings of their calls to draw the real birds in.

A brightly-coloured spider caused a stir at our Radipole Lake reserve in Dorset. Spotted by

volunteers on a butterfly survey, *Hypsosinga heri* hadn't been seen in the UK since 1912. Small and reddish, it has a chequered pattern on its back. Not only did volunteers find two at the reserve, they also discovered a second group at nearby Lodmoor.

**In other news...**

Our blanket bog restoration at Dove Stone – in partnership with United Utilities and backed in 2015 by £228,000 of WREN funding – is storing water that would otherwise rush downhill, and potentially cause problems similar to those experienced in the terrible floods that engulfed parts of northern England in 2015. We've halted peat burning, helping to store carbon in the ground and improve water quality, and brought in Sphagnum moss to act as a green sponge. Breeding populations of birds such as golden plovers have rocketed.

Climbing boulders and cycling are not words you'd associate with RSPB reserves, but they feature in a two-year partnership launched with Sport England at Rainham Marshes in Greater London and Strumpshaw Fen in Norfolk. It's part of a £300,000 initiative to get more people outdoors and doing physical activity. London's Rainham Marshes has begun hiring out bikes to visitors for use on its trails, and has installed two climbing boulders. Strumpshaw Fen is encouraging runners and leading cycle rides. Many people will be getting fit and enjoying wildlife at the same time. We've been careful to ensure these activities cause no problems for wildlife or other visitors.

This year has marked the tenth anniversary of a project to bring peregrines closer to thousands of people in Manchester. The birds have been nesting right in the heart of the busy city centre, and we have been employing information assistants for the last decade to show the birds to the public. The birds have done well, and so too have the assistants – nearly all have progressed to other RSPB jobs.

At Lincolnshire's Frampton Marsh, seed company Limagrain have helped us with a "three scrape principle" in which we dry out our three lagoons (known as scrapes) on rotation. Each year, one scrape is sown with seed-rich crops, and then flooded. Last winter, they were brimming with ducks. Once the crops are cut, the decaying vegetation attracts invertebrates for wading birds. It's a rotation of habitats and birds.

**And finally...**

One of the RSPB's greatest stalwarts was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Cumbria for a "lifelong and outstanding contribution to nature conservation"; in recognition for his work at Leighton Moss. John Wilson became the reserve's first warden in 1964, and, in that year, there were just 365 visitors. Now, the reserve welcomes 110,000 visitors annually. John retired in 2001, but he's still ringing on the reserve, with bearded tits his speciality.



David Osborn (rspb-images.com)



Andy Hay (rsph-images.com)

At Ouse Fen reserve in Cambridgeshire, we're creating the largest reedbed in the UK, thanks to our partnership with construction materials company Hanson.

Through our nature reserves, such as Sumburgh Head, we're able to give more nature a home in Scotland.

Jack Perks (rspb-images.com)



Sumburgh Head is an  
RSPB Nature Reserve



giving  
nature  
a home





**Stuart Housden OBE**  
Director, RSPB Scotland

# Scotland

Being able to buy new nature reserves has allowed us to help more wonderful wildlife in Scotland. But the fight to protect and give nature a home goes on.

I will never forget the first time I saw a white-tailed eagle. The experience was so awe-inspiring it took my breath away. I can still see it now – that square-winged silhouette against the sky, the biggest bird I'd ever seen in the UK.

In 2015, 40 years after white-tailed eagles were reintroduced to Scotland, we celebrated a milestone: the 100th pair nesting in Scotland, which just happened to be at our nature reserve on Hoy, Orkney. It was the first time white-tailed eagles had nested in Orkney for 142 years and, even though the pair was not successful, it demonstrated the power of conservation when we get things right.

It's not just the RSPB's success. Bringing white-tailed eagles back to Scotland owes a great deal to the partners involved, as well as the support of Police Scotland, landowners, farmers, local community groups and organisations, and to Norway who gifted the young eagles that went on to be released.

It's fantastic to see how these magnificent birds have captured the public's imagination and that the sight of a white-tailed eagle soaring in the Scottish sky is no longer a thing of the past. Thanks to this conservation success, thousands of people each year are experiencing that "wow" moment, that sharp intake of breath; their first white-tailed eagle.

## Birds of prey still persecuted

Sadly, my love for white-tailed eagles and other birds of prey is not shared by everyone. In 2015, we published a 20-year review of the

illegal killing of birds of prey in Scotland. This confirmed that 779 protected raptors were illegally killed between 1994 and 2014, including 10 white-tailed eagles, 37 golden eagles and 104 red kites. These were just the bodies that were discovered and confirmed as involving criminal activity. No doubt there will have been many more.

There is now scientific evidence of the impact of illegal killing on Scotland's golden eagle, hen harrier, peregrine, and reintroduced red kite populations. The last national hen harrier survey, for example, showed the population had declined by 22% in Scotland between 2004 and 2010. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee Hen Harrier Framework 2011 concluded that illegal killing was having a significant impact on this species, particularly on land managed for driven grouse shooting in the southern uplands and eastern Highlands.

We welcome measures taken by the Scottish Government over the past 20 years to improve the laws protecting our birds of prey, and the recent improvements by Police Scotland and the Crown Office in tackling wildlife crime. However, our data shows that illegal killing of raptors continues to be a widespread problem in significant parts of upland Scotland. These crimes impact the natural wealth of Scotland and undermine our international reputation, wildlife tourism and diversified rural businesses.

## Hope at Abernethy Forest

While the challenges for birds of prey that we faced 20 years ago still remain, we are making



We hope that Manx shearwaters will soon be thriving on the Shiant, following a rat eradication attempt.

David Tipling (repp-images.com)



great progress in other areas of conservation in Scotland. Abernethy Forest in the Highlands, at over 13,000 ha, is one of our largest nature reserves and is spectacular: the smell of the Calendonian pine trees, the sound of crested tits trilling and the sight of red squirrels scampering away from you up a tree are all so thrilling.

Over centuries, Caldonian pine forests were felled or failed to regenerate, so in 2015, we launched our tree nursery to nurture new saplings to help restore it. Thanks to the financial support of the Scottish Power Foundation and Walkers Shortbread Ltd, trees such as alder, aspen, birch and willow are now being grown at the nursery from seeds from the forest. They will then be transferred into the reserve to help create a richer habitat for wildlife. Over the next ten years almost 100,000 trees will be planted amongst the already regenerating Scots pines with the help of local schoolchildren, volunteers and contractors. In 200 years' time we hope to have almost doubled the size of the forest. This is giving nature a home on a very grand scale.

### More land for nature

It's not just our Abernethy nature reserve that is giving even more nature a home. We bought our first nature reserve in Clackmannanshire in 2015. Black Devon Wetlands alongside the Forth was originally created when soil was excavated from the site to cap an adjacent area of landfill. It is already home to snipe, short-eared owls, teals and black-headed gulls and we're working to improve the habitats and the visitor facilities.

Thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have now purchased Dunnet Head, the most northerly point of the UK mainland. We have been leasing and managing the site since 2008. Go there in the spring and you'll be greeted by the cacophony of thousands of breeding seabirds, including puffins, guillemots, razorbills, fulmars and kittiwakes. The dramatic 300-foot high cliffs offer stunning views over to Orkney on a clear day. We're determined to ensure this headland remains a fantastic place for nature in the future.

### Shiant Isles now rat-free?

Scotland's seabirds have not fared well in recent years, one of the reasons why our Shiant Isles Recovery Project is so important. The Shiant Islands are a group of islands in the Outer Hebrides, owned by the Nicolson family. Non-native black rats are thought to have arrived there from an 18th century shipwreck and their presence has been detrimental to the nesting seabirds.

Despite this, the islands are still one of the most important breeding colonies for seabirds in Europe – around 10% of UK puffins and 7% of UK razorbills breed there each year. How much better could they be without rats?

Half of the money required to eradicate the rats came from the EU LIFE+ fund and Scottish

Natural Heritage. We then launched an appeal to raise the remainder. Thanks to many supporters, we were able to carry out the work last winter. The team worked relentlessly for many months in such a remote place – the islands are not inhabited. We put down over 1,000 baits, and needed to abseil off cliffs to get to the most remote spots. These baits were checked every three to four days – no mean feat when sometimes the team were facing Force 12 hurricane winds.

Gradually, the take-up of the bait reduced and just before Christmas 2015 we saw what we hope was the last rat. We will need to keep monitoring for another two to three years to be sure, but we are hopeful that the islands are now rat-free and the seabirds can thrive again.

### Decision on Forth and Tay legal challenge

It was disappointing for us when, in October 2014, Scottish Ministers granted consent for four offshore windfarms in the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Tay. Of course, renewables in the right place, including offshore wind, are critical to help combat climate change, but this area is truly vital for seabirds. It's where we've been running our popular boat trips and it's a fantastic place to see puffins, kittiwakes and razorbills.

We issued a challenge to the consent, as we were concerned about the impacts that a windfarm in that location would have, particularly on seabirds such as puffins and gannets. Happily for us, and for wildlife, the judge in the Court of Session ruled in our favour, after RSPB Scotland challenged the decisions by way of judicial review. The judge ruled that the Scottish Ministers had acted unlawfully as they had failed to consult on environmental information on the project. We are awaiting a decision from the Scottish Government on whether they will appeal.

We'll always take action against the most damaging developments, so we're really pleased about this result. It sends a strong message that we'll always speak up for wildlife, no matter how big the opposition.

### Nature of Scotland Awards

The Nature of Scotland Awards are designed to recognise and celebrate excellent innovation and outstanding achievement in Scottish nature conservation. I'm going to focus on the Lifetime Achievement Award winners, as I think they deserve a special mention. First up were Philip and Myrtle Ashmole, who are best known for being the leading lights behind the Carrifran Wildwood project of the Borders Forest Trust. This visionary ecological restoration initiative, eight miles northeast of Moffat, is transforming a heavily grazed upland glen into a carefully restored patchwork of wooded wild land. Myrtle and Philip have been supporters of the RSPB since the 1950s.

Great skua by Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)



Thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we've now purchased Dunnet Head, the most northerly point on the UK mainland.

Andy Hay (spb-images.com)



The other winners were Mike and Val Peacock, who between them have a lifetime of wardening, monitoring, habitat creation and management on the spectacular edges of the western seaboard of the UK under their belts. Mike's wetland creation at Loch Gruinart is now the largest roost site for Greenland white-fronted geese in the UK.

### Big Nature Festival

RSPB Scotland's Big Nature Festival returned in 2015 for a fourth successful year. Located at Levenhall Links, one of the best birding sites in Scotland, it was two days of festival activities for all, including more than 100 exhibitors. More than 6,000 visitors of all ages joined in an exciting celebration of Scotland's wonderful wildlife, and Bill Oddie gave talks.

### Dolphinwatch makes a splash

Record numbers of people visited Aberdeen's third annual RSPB Dolphinwatch in 2015, to witness the iconic spectacle of the bottlenose dolphin. Aberdeen is rapidly becoming famous as the best place to see dolphins in the UK, and it's fortunate that the dolphin watchpoint is so close to the city centre. The 2015 Dolphinwatch received 5,038 visits, up from 1,668 in 2014, including visitors from Germany, Spain, Sweden, Mexico, Canada and Malaysia, as well as all over the UK.

The Dolphinwatch team was on hand between April and August and also ran events, from guided walks and rockpool rambles, to beach cleans. Luckily, the dolphins did not disappoint. They were spotted on around 95% of the days when the team was working, and on some days, up to 20 dolphins were seen.

### 50 years at Balranald

2016 marks the 50th anniversary of our Balranald reserve, on North Uist. In 1966, RSPB Scotland, and local crofters and landowners, came together to create the reserve, now one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Western Isles.

The reserve was originally set up due to the presence of rare red-necked phalaropes, which bred sporadically at Balranald until 1984, and then disappeared. Imagine our excitement, then, when another pair returned there to breed in 2015. Corncrakes have more than doubled on the reserve in the past 50 years, but sadly corn buntings are only a quarter of what they were 50 years ago. However, new species have also come to breed, including swallows, sand martins and linnets. We're excited to see what the next 50 years of partnership hold for Balranald.

### Greening Glasgow

I'm really excited about a project that's underway to transform some areas of Glasgow to a resplendent shade of green. "Dear Green Future" is a partnership between RSPB Scotland and Glasgow University

Wildlife Garden Group. Led by the young people and students themselves, and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund Young Roots Programme, the project seeks to transform areas into green spaces that are perfect for wildlife, as well as run community events and a cultural research project. The events include workshops on subjects including foraging and wildlife identification. The project has been running since August 2015 and it's making great progress so far. The project will conclude with an exhibition at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, showcasing the discoveries and achievements of the young people involved.

### And finally...

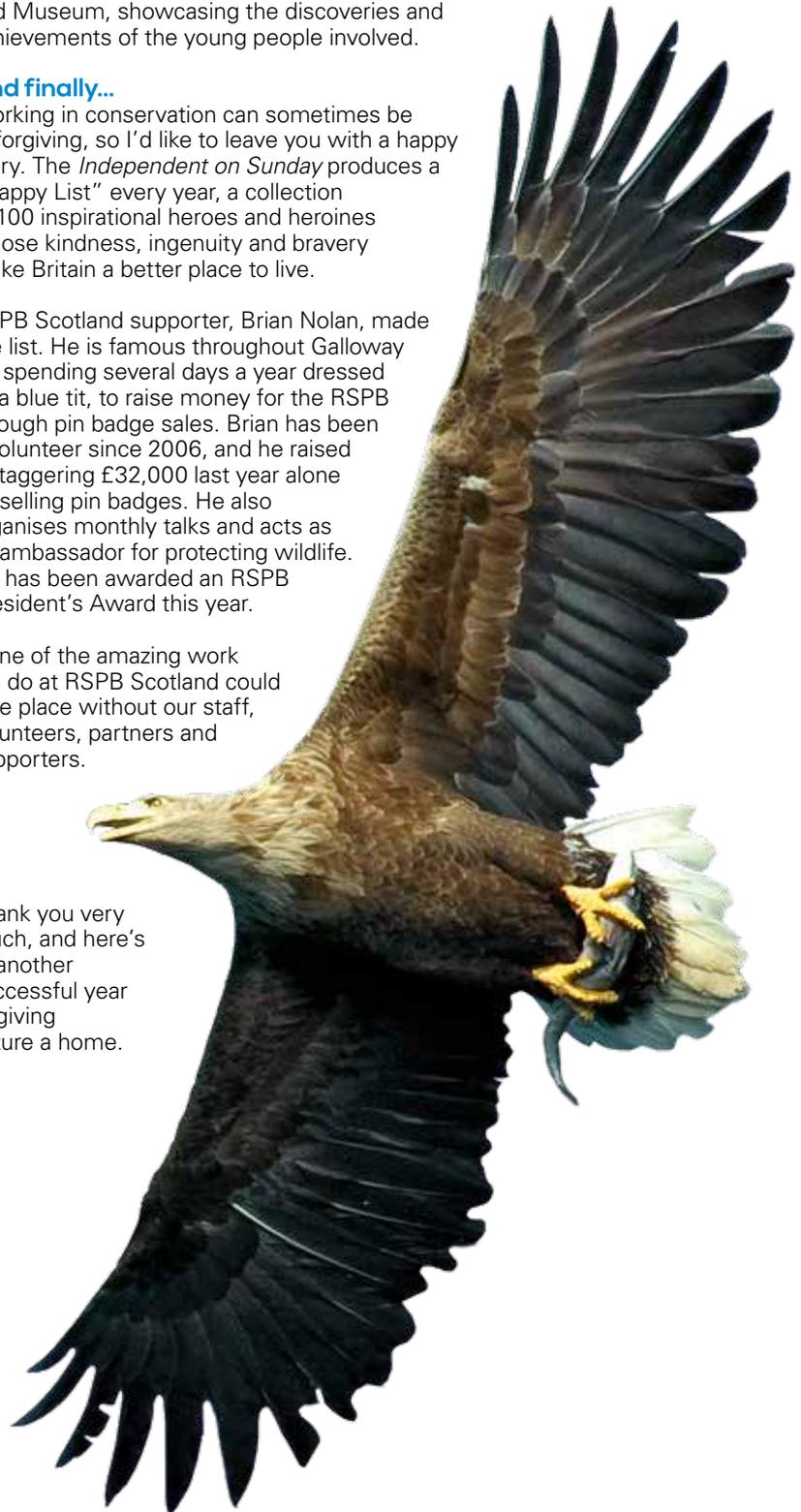
Working in conservation can sometimes be unforgiving, so I'd like to leave you with a happy story. The *Independent on Sunday* produces a "Happy List" every year, a collection of 100 inspirational heroes and heroines whose kindness, ingenuity and bravery make Britain a better place to live.

RSPB Scotland supporter, Brian Nolan, made the list. He is famous throughout Galloway for spending several days a year dressed as a blue tit, to raise money for the RSPB through pin badge sales. Brian has been a volunteer since 2006, and he raised a staggering £32,000 last year alone by selling pin badges. He also organises monthly talks and acts as an ambassador for protecting wildlife. He has been awarded an RSPB President's Award this year.

None of the amazing work we do at RSPB Scotland could take place without our staff, volunteers, partners and supporters.

Thank you very much, and here's to another successful year of giving nature a home.

White-tailed eagle by Chris Comersall





We're fighting for  
twites in Snowdonia,  
by working with  
farmers to increase  
their food sources.

Andy Hay (spb-images.com)

(RSPB)



**Katie-jo Luxton**  
Director, RSPB Cymru

# Wales

From landscape-scale conservation to targeted help to save threatened species, we've been making great strides in our efforts to save nature in Wales this year.

It's been a good year and I'm pleased to report on some of our notable successes and conservation projects. Looking back, I've been struck by the variety of our work, from large-scale conservation in the Gwent Levels to the very focused fight for twites in Snowdonia, as well as projects that consolidate our role in saving nature in Wales and those that engage future generations with our natural world.

## Safeguarding the future

Last year we announced a landmark agreement that secures the future of our tenancy at the Lake Vyrnwy estate farm in Powys. A year on and we're really feeling the benefits of a 30-year tenancy. The farm sits within a 10,000 hectare national nature reserve that welcomes over 200,000 visitors a year. It's also a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area, a Special Area of Conservation and the largest area of heather moorland in single ownership in Wales. The area includes blanket bog, moor and woodland and is home to hen harriers, merlins, red grouse, and very special plants and insects.

The tenancy provides us with long-term control over the habitat, key to the conservation of this very special environment. We've already started on a huge programme to repair many miles of fencing, and we're building a muck store. It doesn't sound pretty, but we need the manure to grow crops to feed the animals in the winter, and the store will enable us to make a highly nutrient-rich fertiliser in a more time-efficient and cost-effective way.

## Farming for wildlife

We've also been looking at our grazing techniques. As well as Welsh mountain sheep and Welsh mountain ponies, we have Welsh black cattle. Recently we've been grazing them on the mountains in summer. They graze differently to the sheep, creating a mosaic of different habitats. As a result, we've seen violets come up, which are popular with fritillary butterflies. There's also evidence that meadow pipits produce bigger eggs in areas where cattle have grazed moorland. The rich dung supports insects, which are eaten by meadow pipits, which in turn provide food for merlins.

It's a great demonstration of how we're running the farm both commercially and for nature. The farm has always been run to be economically viable and this is a way of managing the farm for wildlife, while also farming in the "real world".

## Protecting our natural heritage

I'm delighted to announce another large-scale project, albeit of a very different nature – the Gwent Living Levels Landscape Partnership. The Gwent Levels are a patchwork of diverse wildlife havens, sweeping the Severn Estuary coastline from Cardiff to the Severn Bridge and beyond. It's home to a wealth of charismatic and threatened species including lapwings, otters, water voles, the great silver water beetle and one of the UK's rarest bumblebees, the shrill carder bee. The area also hosts a number of specialist plants including frogbit, arrowhead and Wolffia – the smallest flowering plant in the world.



### Achieving more through partnerships

At the end of last year RSPB Cymru, in partnership with 11 other organisations and local authorities in Wales, was awarded £2.8 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore and protect the natural heritage of the Gwent Levels. This project will involve reconnecting the community to the landscape to create a sustainable future for this fascinating part of the country.

We're currently engaged in the development stage: together with our partners, we are working on a programme of activities which will be implemented from September 2017 to the end of 2020. Community engagement is at the heart of our work to ensure the views and wishes of local people shape the project. We are very proud of our involvement in this: by working with partners and the community on landscape scale projects like this, we can achieve and do more for nature.

### Creating new policy

RSPB Cymru's policy team worked hard with Assembly members and officials to inform new environmental legislation in Wales. I was especially pleased with our input into a new Environment (Wales) Act which received Royal Assent in March 2016. With the backing of our supporters and working with partners, we ensured that the new legislation included a commitment that Wales manages its natural resources in a more sustainable way. We're now helping to inform the development of the policies and reports which are being produced in compliance with the Act. We'll continue to advocate for sustainable policies which work for nature and people.

### Inspiring a love of nature

Our work to give nature a home in Cardiff took a dramatic twist last year when we worked in partnership with North Wales arts organisation Migrations and the City of Cardiff Council to produce *TAPE*, an art installation that caught the imagination of thousands of people from the city and beyond. Nestled in a tree in Cardiff's Bute Park, *TAPE* was a cocoon-like

structure of fantastical proportions big enough to fit a whole family. A key element of our Giving Nature a Home strategy is to engage children and their families with nature and this certainly delivered. Around 74,000 people came to see it in August: around 10,000 climbed inside *TAPE*, while others came to admire it, picnic by it, or just have a look.

Alongside this we ran more traditional nature-related activities for children – successfully engaging 1,000 children. A big thank you to our volunteers who gave 700 hours to help build *TAPE*, run events and engage with people.

We're really pleased with how it went and Migrations are too. In fact we're running another event together in July 2016 called *In the Eyes of the Animal*. More about that in the 2016–7 Annual Review. Collaborations like this are important. It's about pushing the boundaries, being innovative, taking risks and extending our reach to people that don't already engage with us. Nature and art go very well together and it puts us in a new light that gets people talking.

### The fight for twite

From the dramatic to the diminutive. Twites are a humble-looking brown finch that seriously need our help. Once relatively widespread in the uplands of North Wales, twites are now restricted to two areas of Snowdonia, with a 2008 survey estimating only 14–17 pairs. Twites only eat seeds and rear their young on seeds alone. This makes farmland vitally important for their survival, and we've been working with farmers for a number of years to underline this; some farmers already boost the birds' natural menu by feeding them nyjer seed. Last year we ramped up our efforts, and we now have four farms that take "grazing breaks" in which the animals are removed for 8 to 10 weeks to allow the grasses and flowers to go to seed and crucially provide food for twites. The fields are then grazed as normal.

The goal is to eventually remove the need to provide nyjer seed, and we're monitoring the grazing breaks to see how much the twites use them as a seed source. The British Trust for Ornithology is working closely with us on this project, carrying out ringing at the feeding stations and the birds' wintering grounds on the Dee Estuary. But it's the community of farmers within Snowdonia who are making a real difference to this delicate brown bird. By changing some of their farming practices, they're playing a vital role in securing a better future for twites.

### Saving nature together

There remain huge challenges for wildlife in Wales: habitat loss, species decline and climate change among others. However a look back over our achievements this year provides plenty of reason for optimism. Not least our efforts to work in partnership. By working together, I am hopeful we can save nature.

Shrill Carder-Bee by Will George (rspb-images.com)





TAPE (Omni Productions)

A family enjoying the  
*TAPE* exhibit.

Y llynedd, cyhoeddwyd  
cytundeb o bwys  
sy'n sicrhau dyfodol  
ein tenantiaeth ar fferm  
ystâd Llyn Efyrnwy  
ym Mhowys.

Eleanor Bentall (rspb-images.com)



(RSPB)



**Katie-jo Luxton**  
Cyfarwyddwr, RSPB Cymru

# Cymru

O gadwraeth ar raddfa'r tirwedd i gymorth wedi'i dargedu i helpu i achub rhywogaethau dan fygythiad, rydym wedi bod yn gwneud cynnydd da yn ein hymdrechion i achub natur yng Nghymru eleni.

Bu'n flwyddyn dda ac rwy'n falch o allu adrodd ar rai o'n llwyddiannau nodedig a'n projectau cadwraeth. Wrth edrych yn ôl rwyf wedi cael fy nharo gan amrywiaeth ein gwaith, o gadwraeth ar raddfa fawr ar Wastadeddau Gwent i'r frwydr hynod benodol dros linosod y mynydd yn Eryri, yn ogystal â phrojectau sy'n atgyfnerthu ein rôl o achub natur yng Nghymru a'r rhai sy'n ennyn diddordeb cenedlaethau'r dyfodol ym myd natur.

## Diogelu'r dyfodol

Y llynedd, cyhoeddwyd cytundeb o bwys sy'n sicrhau dyfodol ein tenantiaeth ar fferm ystâd Llyn Efyrynwy ym Mhowys. Blwyddyn yn ddiweddarach ac rydym yn gwirioneddol deimlo manteision tenantiaeth 30-mlynedd. Saif y fferm o fewn gwarchodfa natur genedlaethol 10,000 hectar o ran maint sy'n croesawu dros 200,000 o ymwelwyr bob blwyddyn. Mae hefyd yn Safle o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbennig, yn Ardal Gwarchodaeth Arbennig, yn Ardal Cadwraeth Arbennig a dyma'r arwynebedd mwyaf o rostir grug mewn perchnogaeth unigol yng Nghymru. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys gorgors, rhostir a choetir ac mae'n gartref i fodaod tinwyn, cudyllod bach, grugieir coch a phlanhigion a phryfed arbennig iawn.

Mae'r denantiaeth yn rhoi rheolaeth hirdymor i ni ar y cynefin, sy'n allweddol i gadwraeth yr amgylchedd arbennig iawn yma. Rydym eisoes wedi cychwyn ar raglen enfawr i atgyweirio milltiroedd o ffensys, ac rydym yn adeiladu cwt tail. Nid yw'n swnio'n rhyw hyfryd iawn, ond rydym angen y tail i dyfu cynydau i fwydo'r anifeiliaid yn y gaeaf, a bydd y cwt yn ein

galluogi i wneud gwrtaith llawn maethynnau mewn modd effeithiol ac effeithlon o ran amser.

## Ffermio ar gyfer bywyd gwyllt

Rydym hefyd wedi bod yn edrych ar ein dulliau pori. Yn ogystal â defaid mynydd Cymreig a merlod mynydd Cymreig, mae gennym hefyd wartheg duon Cymreig. Yn ddiweddar, buom yn eu rhoi i bori ar y mynyddoedd yn yr haf. Maent yn pori'n wahanol i ddefaid, gan greu brithwaith o wahanol gynfinoedd. Rydym wedi gweld fioledau yn tyfu, sy'n boblogaidd gyda gloynnod byw brith y gors. Mae tystiolaeth hefyd fod gorhedyddion y waun yn cynhyrchu wyau mwy o faint mewn ardaloedd lle y mae gwartheg wedi pori rhostir. Mae'r tail cyfoethog yn cynnal pryfed, sy'n cael eu bwytia gan orhedyddion y waun, sydd yn eu tro yn darparu bwyd i gudyllod bach.

Mae'n dangos yn glir fel yr ydym yn rhedeg y fferm yn fasnachol ac er budd byd natur. Mae'r fferm wedi ei rhedeg erioed i fod yn economaidd hyfyw ac mae hon yn ffordd o reoli'r fferm ar gyfer bywyd gwyllt, gan ffermio yn y "byd real" yr un ffordd.

## Amddiffyn ein treftadaeth naturiol

Mae'n bleser gen i gyhoeddi project arall ar raddfa fawr, ond un o natur wahanol iawn - Partneriaeth Tirwedd Gwastadeddau Byw Gwent. Mae Gwastadeddau Gwent yn glytwaith o hafanau bywyd gwyllt amrywiol, yn ymestyn hyd Aber Afon Hafren o Gaerdydd at Bont Hafren a thu hwnt. Maent yn gartref i gyfoeth o rywogaethau carismatig sydd dan



fygythiad gan gynnwys cornchwiglod, dyfrgwn, llygod dŵr, y chwilen ddŵr arian fawr ac un o gacynod prinnaf y DU sef y gardwenynen feinlais. Mae'r ardal hefyd yn cynnal nifer o blanhigion arbenigol gan gynnwys ffugalaw, saethlys a llinad di-wraidd – y planhigyn blodeuol lleiaf yn y byd.

Ddiwedd y llynedd, dyfarnwyd £2.8 miliwn gan Gronfa Treftadaeth y Loteri i RSPB Cymru mewn partneriaeth ag 11 o sefydliadau eraill ac awdurdodau lleol yng Nghymru i adfer a gwarchod treftadaeth naturiol Gwastadeddau Gwent. Bydd y project hwn yn cynnwys ail-gysylltu'r gymuned â'r tirlun i greu dyfodol cynaliadwy ar gyfer y rhan hynod hon o'r wlad.

### Cyflawni mwy drwy bartneriaethau

Ar hyn o bryd rydym yn y cam datblygu: ynghyd â'n partneriaid, rydym yn gweithio ar raglen o weithgareddau a fydd yn cael eu rhoi ar waith o fis Medi 2017 hyd ddiwedd 2020. Mae ymgysylltu â'r gymuned wrth galon ein gwaith i sicrhau fod barn a dymuniadau pobl leol yn rhoi ffurf ar y project hwn. Rydym yn hynod falch ein bod yn ymwneud â hyn: drwy weithio gyda phartneriaid a'r gymuned ar brosiectau ar raddfa'r tirwedd fel hyn, gallwn gyflawni a gwneud mwy dros natur.

### Creu polisi newydd

Bu tîm polisi RSPB Cymru yn gweithio'n galed gydag aelodau'r Cynulliad a swyddogion i gyflwyno gwybodaeth ar gyfer deddfwriaeth amgylcheddol newydd yng Nghymru. Roeddwn yn arbennig o falch o'n mewnbwn i Ddeddf Amgylchedd (Cymru) newydd a dderbyniodd Gydsyniad Brenhinol ym Mawrth 2016. Gyda chefnogaeth ein cefnogwyr, a chan weithio gyda phartneriaid, sicrhawyd bod y deddfwriaeth newydd yn cynnwys ymrwymiad y bydd Cymru yn rheoli ei hadnoddau naturiol mewn modd mwy cynaliadwy. Rydym yn awr yn cynorthwyo i oleuo datblygu polisiâu ac adroddiadau sy'n cael eu cynhyrchu mewn cydymffurfiaeth â'r Ddeddf. Byddwn yn parhau i gefnogi polisiâu cynaliadwy sy'n gweithio ar gyfer natur ac ar gyfer pobl.

### Ysbrydoli cariad at natur

Cafwyd tro dramatig i'n gwaith i roi cartref newydd i natur yng Nghaerdydd y llynedd pan fuom yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth â sefydliad celfyddydol o Ogledd Cymru "Migrations" a Chyngor Dinas Caerdydd i gynhyrchu TAPE, gosodiad celfyddydol a daniodd ddychymyg miloedd o bobl o'r ddinas a thu hwnt. Wedi'i osod mewn coeden ym Mharc Bute, roedd TAPE yn strwythur tebyg i gocŵn enfawr a oedd yn ddigon mawr i gynnwys teulu cyfan. Elfen hanfodol o'n strategaeth Rhoi Cartref i Fyd Natur yw ymgysylltu plant a'u teuluoedd â natur, a bu hyn yn fodd o gyflawni hynny yn sicr. Daeth oddeutu 74,000 o bobl i'w weld ym mis Awst: dringodd ddeutu 10,000 i mewn i TAPE, a bu eraill yn edrych yn edmygus arno, yn cael picnic gerllaw, neu ddim ond yn cael golwg.

Ochr yn ochr â hyn buom yn cynnal gweithgareddau mwy traddodiadol yn ymwneud â natur i blant – gan ymgysylltu 1,000 o blant yn llwyddiannus. Diolch yn fawr i chi ein gwirfoddolwyr a roddodd 700 o oriau i helpu i adeiladu TAPE, cynnal digwyddiadau ac ymgysylltu â phobl.

Rydym yn hynod falch o'r ffordd yr aeth pethau, ac mae Migrations yn hapus hefyd. Gymaint felly fel ein bod yn cynnal digwyddiad arall gyda'n gilydd ym mis Gorffennaf 2016 o'r enw 'Yn Llygaid yr Anifail'. Mwy am hynny yn adolygiad blynyddol 2016-7. Mae cydweithio fel hyn yn bwysig. Mae'n ymwneud â gwrthio'r ffiniau, bod yn arloesol, cymryd risgiau ac estyn allan at bobl nad ydynt eisoes yn ymgysylltu â ni. Mae natur a chelf yn mynd gyda'i gilydd yn dda iawn ac mae'n ein dangos mewn goleuni newydd sy'n gwneud i bobl siarad.

### Y frwydr dros llinos y mynydd

O'r dramatig i'r bychan iawn. Mae'r llinos yn aderyn bach brown di-nod yr olwg sydd wirioneddol angen cymorth gennym. Unwaith roedd yn eithaf cyffredin yn ucheldir Gogledd Cymru, ond mae bellach yn gyfyngedig i ddwy ardal yn Eryri, gydag arolwg yn 2008 yn amcangyfrif nad oedd ond 14-17 o barau ar ôl. Dim ond hadau fydd y llinos yn eu bwyta, gan fagu cywion ar hadau yn unig. Mae hyn yn golygu fod tir amaethyddol yn hollbwysig er mwyn iddynt oroesi ac rydym wedi bod yn gweithio gyda ffermwyr ers nifer o flynyddoedd i danlinellu hyn; mae rhai ffermwyr eisoes yn ychwanegu at fwydlen naturiol yr adar drwy fwydo hadau nyjer iddynt. Y llynedd, aethom ati i gynyddu ein hymdrechion ac erbyn hyn mae pedair fferm yn cymryd "seibiau oddi wrth bori" pryd y caiff yr anifeiliaid eu symud ymaith am 8-10 wythnos i ganiatáu i weiriau a blodau hadu a darparu bwyd ar gyfer llinosod. Yna caiff y caeau eu pori fel arfer.

Y nod yn y pen draw yw cael gwared â'r angen i ddarparu hadau nyjer, ac rydym yn monitro'r seibiau pori i weld faint o ddefnydd sy'n cael ei wneud ohonynt fel ffynhonnell hadau gan llinosod. Mae Ymddiriedolaeth Adareg Prydain yn cydweithio'n agos â ni ar y project hwn, gan fodrwyo yn y gorsafoedd bwydo ac yn yr ardaloedd lle bydd yr adar yn treulio'r gaeaf sef yn aber Afon Dyfrdwy. Ond y gymuned o ffermwyr yn Eryri sy'n gwneud gwahaniaeth gwirioneddol i'r aderyn brown bregus hwn. Drwy newid rhai o'u harferion ffermio, maent yn chwarae rôl hanfodol o ran sicrhau dyfodol gwell i'r llinos.

### Achub natur gyda'n gilydd

Erys heriau enfawr i fywyd gwyllt yng Nghymru: colli cynefin, dirywiad rhywogaethau a newid yn yr hinsawdd ysgyrra eraill. Fodd bynnag, wrth edrych yn ôl dros ein llwyddiannau eleni, mae digon o resymau dros fod yn obeithiol. Nid yn lleiaf ein hymdrechion i weithio mewn partneriaeth. Drwy weithio gyda'n gilydd, rwy'n obeithiol y gallwn achub natur.



Guy Rodgers (rspl-images.com)

Drwy weithio gyda'n  
gilydd, rwy'n obeithiol  
y gallwn achub natur.



Portmore Lough is a haven for rare breeding wading bird species.

David Wootton (iStock.com)



**Joanne Sherwood**  
Director, RSPB Northern Ireland

# Northern Ireland

As we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we look back on a very successful year at RSPB NI, where nature always comes first.

I'm writing this on the 50th anniversary of RSPB NI, and I can't believe how far we've come in that time. Frank Hamilton was our first regional officer, working from an office in Queen's University with just one member of staff. Now we have 50 members of staff, 280 volunteers and we own or manage thousands of hectares of land vital for wildlife across NI. We also offer better-than-ever visitor experiences at our reserves, including the revamped Window on Wildlife (WOW) in Belfast, and the Rathlin West Light Seabird Centre, which re-opened in March 2016.

Talking of the public, I'm proud to say we welcomed almost 2,000 new members in the 2015–16 period, and we now have around 14,000 members in NI. In addition, through education and outreach, we connect around 20,000 young people with nature every year. We're really proud of our hands-on events to connect people with nature, including the wildlife photography event at Portmore Lough, and the Big Wild Sleepout. The wildlife photography event takes place in an area of Portmore Lough not normally open to the public, in an area well-known for Irish hares. Our Big Wild Sleepout, nominated for Family Event of the Year, is the biggest UK Sleepout event – with a staggering 500 people taking part over three nights in 2015! We've also been very successful in connecting people to nature through Big Garden Birdwatch, increasing numbers of people taking part from 12,000 to 25,000 in two years.

I'm delighted to report that 2015–16 was a wonderful year for wildlife across our sites. For example on just one plot on Rathlin, the number of kittiwake pairs increased from 62

in 2014 to 165 in 2015. At Lough Beg near Toomebridge we recorded 121 'spikes' of the rare Irish Lady's Tresses orchid. In County Fermanagh, Sandwich terns returned to breed on Gravel Ridge Island in Lower Lough Erne from their wintering grounds in West Africa. This colony is unique as normally they only nest at the coast. Counts revealed 138 pairs, up from 124 the previous year, an impressive rate of breeding success.

This year, our reserves had their highest numbers of breeding wading birds ever, potentially holding up to 49% of the NI population of redshanks. There were also some rare sightings across the country, including pintail ducks at Portmore Lough and the discovery of the rare beetle *Carabus clathratus* in the Glenwherry area, previously thought to be extinct in County Antrim!

## Farming for wildlife

There's no doubt that agriculture shapes Northern Ireland's landscape. Close to three quarters of the land is dedicated to producing food, with the agri-food industry employing over 100,000 people and boasting an annual turnover of around £4 billion.

Technological improvements and a temperate climate mean that NI has developed a sophisticated and productive livestock farming system. However, wildlife, habitat, landscape character, water and soil quality have all suffered declines as an unintended consequence of agricultural modernisation. We've been working closely with farmers in key areas to plan how, together, we can attract more wildlife. Through this work, we've been able to improve



the fortunes of species such as curlew and yellowhammer, birds that have seen declines of up to 90% in some areas. We would not have been able to do this without the help and support of farmers, who are essentially saving species from extinction in the wider countryside.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded funding to preserve and enhance one of NI's greatest national treasures: Lough Erne in County Fermanagh. This money will go to the Lough Erne Landscape Partnership, of which we're a lead partner, for the stage one development phase. It will be used to conserve 'at risk' heritage buildings and to preserve and improve wildlife species and their habitats within the Fermanagh Lakelands, which are an important breeding ground for wading birds such as curlews, snipes and lapwings.

Our work does not solely take place in rural areas. We're continuing with the Belfast Swift City project, which raises awareness of the plight of swifts, monitors swift populations, and works in partnership with planners, developers, local authorities and businesses to protect and provide nest sites. We're continuing to promote the Swift Inventory, where the public can record their swift sightings online.

Over half of NI's wildlife is found at sea, so we must ensure marine wildlife has proper protection. Four new Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) have been proposed: Carlingford Lough, outer Belfast Lough, Waterfoot and Rathlin Island. These are home to a wealth of unique wildlife, including seagrass, black guillemots and the ocean quahog. RSPB NI was instrumental in campaigning for the successful implementation of these, and we're waiting for a final decision.

### Beyond reserves

To create a healthy, wildlife-rich environment based on sustainable land management, we must look beyond our reserves and work in partnership to help give nature a home. We've formed a partnership with Forest Service to provide advice and expertise on potential peatland restoration on their land and with

Northern Ireland Water to identify poor quality water catchment areas with the potential to become sustainable catchment areas. An INTERREG funding bid with RSPB Scotland, Birdwatch Ireland and other environmental organisations has been developed to restore wetland habitats, bog and wet grassland to benefit breeding wading birds and rare plants and insects.

### Adapting to changing conditions

There are always things we can't control. In winter 2015, we experienced the highest levels of flooding in 30 years, particularly affecting our Portmore Lough reserve. We've also been adjusting to major changes in government funding, changes to local government, and planning for post-election changes to the Northern Ireland Executive.

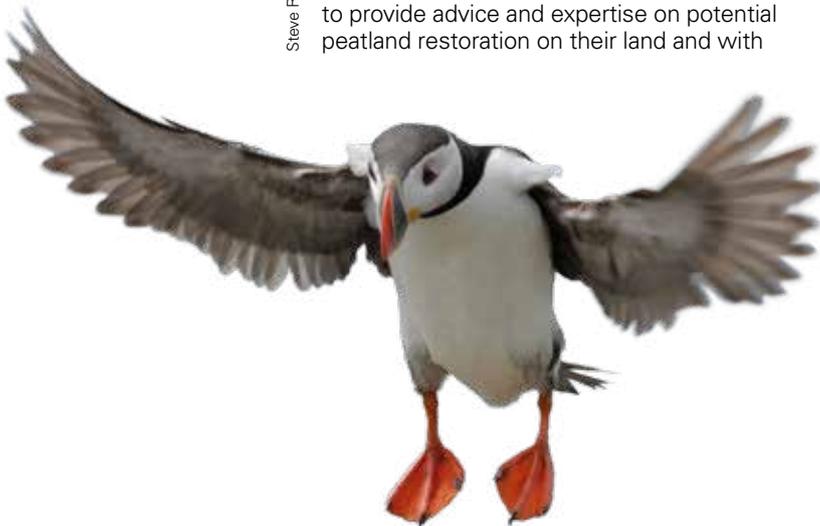
We started this financial year reeling from the severity of cuts to the Natural Heritage Grants Programme which affected environmental organisations working for nature in NI. We joined up with Northern Ireland Environment Link and other affected eNGOs to provide a sectoral response to this devastating news. In May, we were relieved that our voice had been heard and we were able to recoup a significant amount of our funding losses through the new Natural Environment Fund that raised revenue through the carrier bag levy. Whilst this fund was a welcome reprieve, it underlies the fragility of our environmental sector in NI, and the low levels of funding on which it relies.

On 1st April, 11 new 'super councils' took over from the previous 26 councils with new powers and responsibilities for planning functions. This shift to 11 councils working simultaneously on local and community plans will create a considerable and concentrated volume of work for our small planning team. We will continue to target our efforts in those areas where there are the greatest opportunities for, and threats to, our special places and species.

Finally, another fundamental change for us to plan for is the merger between the Department of Environment and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The new Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs effective from the May 2016 elections will also be responsible for Inland Fisheries and Sustainable Development, whilst the Rivers Agency, Inland Waterways and Strategic Planning moves to the new Department for Infrastructure.

As we look to the future, we're adapting to changing conditions, and you can rest assured that RSPB NI will always be a strong campaigning voice for nature.

Steve Round (rspb-images.com)





Nigel Blake (knp-images.com)

Rathlin Island boasts NI's largest seabird colony.



Your continuing support  
enables us to do more  
for nature, every day.

Ed Marechal (spb-images.com)



(RSPB)

**Graeme Wallace**  
Treasurer

## From the treasurer

Our commitment to continue to invest in important conservation work to save nature is central to our financial report for 2015–16. We increased our annual spend on our charitable objectives, ending the year with a surplus of £3.4 million, allowing us to maintain modest but sound financial reserves that give us capacity to deal with whatever challenges may lie ahead. This is thanks, in part, to prudent financial management, but mainly due to our dedicated team of staff and volunteers together with the generous support that you, our members, give. I'm pleased to report that expenditure on conservation has risen for the tenth year in succession.

Our overall expenditure on our charitable purposes was £97.3 million (£96.4 million 2014–15), which supported the essential research that underpins all our work, helped maintain the rich natural biodiversity found on our reserves, enabled us to purchase 1,042 hectares of nature reserves at a cost of £2.7 million and invest £4.2 million in improvements to our visitor facilities. Importantly, and with the generous support of Aldi, we significantly expanded our education work helping to connect more children with nature which is essential if conservation and nature is to continue to have the support it needs a generation from now.

We also increased investment communicating as widely as possible what we do and the impact that we have. This includes use of digital communications, as well as more traditional media such as TV advertising.

This expenditure was financed by growth in almost all of our income streams which, while very welcome financially, also demonstrates the faith that people have in the RSPB to save nature on their behalf. I as Treasurer, and the RSPB as a whole, never, ever, take that for granted.

Throughout the last year, public trust in charities was the subject of considerable negative media scrutiny. Our commitment to work to the highest standards in all that we do and recognition that our success is solely based on your continued trust and support has contributed to taking our membership to an all-time high of 1,187,839 members.

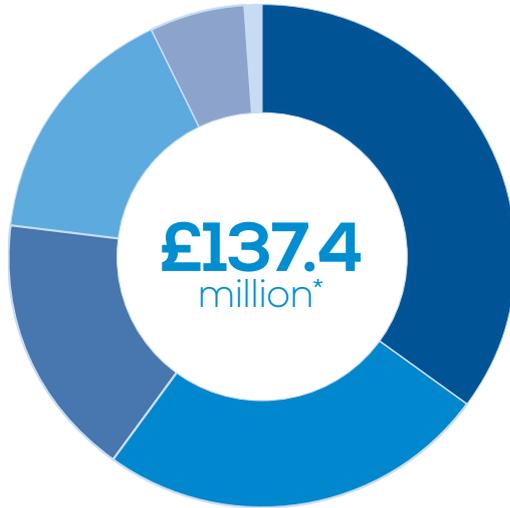
At year end, our free financial reserves were the equivalent of eight weeks' expenditure. This allows us to plan our work with confidence, and to react quickly to opportunities and risks, as appropriate.

Your continuing support is enabling us to do more for nature, grow our support and invest.

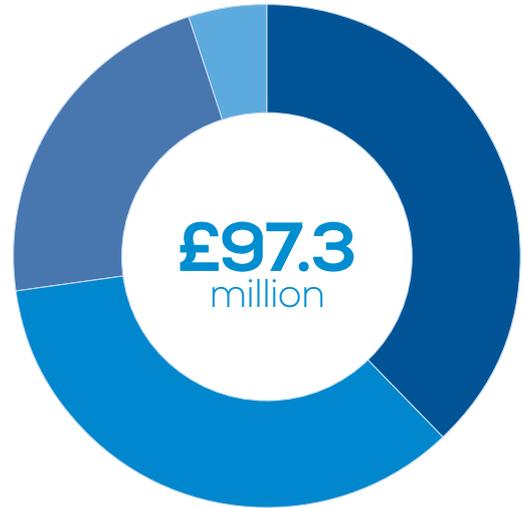
**Thank you.**

# Income and spend

## Total income



## Total spend



**\*Net income was £101 million. Cost of generating income was £37 million.**

- Membership, subscriptions and donations **35%**
- Legacies **25%**
- Grants, corporate and trusts **17%**
- Trading income **16%**
- Land income and fees for services **6%**
- Financial income and investment gains **1%**

- Research, policy and advisory **38%**
- Managing RSPB nature reserves **35%**
- Education and inspiring support **22%**
- Supporter care **5%**

We also spent a further £6.9 million on acquiring new nature reserves and investing in visitor facilities.

Harvest mice by Ray Kennedy (rspb-images.com)



## Summarised financial statements for 2015–16



Roger Tatham (rspb-images.com)

### Raising money for charitable purposes

	Income	Cost	2016 Available for charitable purposes	2015 Available for charitable purposes
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Trading income	22.5	(20.1)	2.4	2.9
Membership subscriptions & donations	47.7	(12.3)	35.4	34.2
Grants, corporate & trusts	23.8	(3.3)	20.5	23.7
Legacies	34.1	(0.9)	33.2	29.7
Land income and fees for services	7.6	(0.0)	7.6	7.2
Financial income and investment gains	1.7	(0.1)	1.6	3.1
<b>Total income</b>	<b>137.4</b>	<b>(36.7)</b>	<b>100.7</b>	<b>100.8</b>

£100.7 million available for charity purposes.

### Expenditure on charitable purposes

	2016 £m	2015 £m
Research, policy and advisory	37.4	38.1
Managing RSPB nature reserves	34.0	34.2
Education and inspiring support	21.5	19.6
Supporter care	4.4	4.5
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>97.3</b>	<b>96.4</b>
Surplus	3.4	4.4

In addition to the amounts spent in the year, shown above, we hold assets as shown below.

### Assets and liabilities

	2016 £m	2015 £m
Nature reserves	194.3	189.8
Equipment	4.3	4.1
<b>Total long-term assets</b>	<b>198.6</b>	<b>193.9</b>
Pension liability	59.0	86.5
Cash and investments	32.3	41.1
Stock, debtors and creditors	11.9	4.2
<b>Total representing available financial reserves</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>45.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>183.8</b>	<b>152.7</b>

Available financial reserves are held for the following purposes.

### Amount held for future purposes

	2016 £m	2015 £m
Available financial reserves	44.2	45.3
Held for specific purposes	(31.7)	(31.3)
<b>Free financial reserves</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>14.0</b>
Representing future expenditure cover of	<b>8 weeks</b>	9 weeks

### REPORT BY THE TRUSTEES ON THE SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

These summarised financial statements are extracted from the full statutory trustees' annual report and financial statements which were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf. The full financial statements, on which the auditors Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP gave an unqualified audit report in September 2016, are available on our website: [rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk)

The auditors have confirmed to the trustees that, in their opinion, the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016.

These summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to gain a complete understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. The full statutory trustees report, financial statements and auditors' report may be obtained from the Director of Finance, RSPB UK Headquarters, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL.

Signed on behalf of the trustees.

**Professor Steve Ormerod,**  
Chairman, RSPB Council

## Members and supporters

The support and loyalty of our members is critical to the success and achievements of the RSPB. Meeting the rigorous conservation targets that we set would not be possible without the enormous contributions that members make. Members help in many ways, all of them equally important, including: financially, through volunteering, by supporting RSPB campaigns through letter writing, and by helping to deliver RSPB projects on the ground through local groups. We would also like to thank all of the supporters who contribute generously through in memoriam, raffles, lotteries, payroll giving, regular gifts, appeals and other forms of support.

## Legacies

Legacy income makes a vital impact on our conservation work each year. Whilst it is impossible to thank every single one of our generous benefactors here, we would like to mention the following:

- Mrs Sylvia Ross Amner
- Mrs Hazel Carter
- Mrs Joyce Gillian Curzon
- Mrs Lois Dodwell
- Mr Robin Edwards
- Mrs Cynthia Daphne Figg
- Mrs Joan Elizabeth Franks
- Miss Elsie Rosevear Frost
- Mr Peter Frank Harvey
- Mrs Jean Howard
- Mr Derek Frank Kneller Howes
- Mrs Ruth Mary Hughes
- Mrs Gisela Jones
- Mr Brian William Kyle
- Mrs Brenda Frances Nesbitt
- Mr Peter Foulger Quick
- Mr Peter Robertson
- Mrs Irene Mary Townsend
- Mr Alfred Charles Vinall
- Mrs Margaret Walker
- Mrs Mary Edwina Anne Watkinson
- Mr Stanley Harry White
- Mr John Whittle
- Mrs Eileen Julia Wilks
- Miss Bertha Doreen Worswick

## Community groups

RSPB local groups, RSPB Wildlife Explorer groups and RSPB Phoenix groups worked unstintingly over the year. Our local groups provide a great focus for us in local communities, involve many people in our work, and raised over £350,000 for RSPB conservation projects.

## Volunteers

The RSPB enjoyed the support of 11,878 volunteers last year, giving the RSPB a gift of time of 936,219 hours. This is equivalent to an extra 547 full-time staff working for nature conservation.

These volunteers helped with virtually every aspect of the RSPB's work, and we cannot

thank them enough for their generous support. Additionally, 519,600 people gave an hour of their time to participate in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch.

## Heritage Lottery Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided essential support for RSPB projects to restore our natural heritage and bring nature into people's everyday lives. The RSPB is indebted to HLF for their continued support for our work.

## Charitable trusts, non-governmental organisations and individual donors

We are grateful for the support received and would particularly like to acknowledge the following:

- African Bird Club
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#### Business supporters

The RSPB enjoys successful partnerships with business supporters to our mutual benefit. We would particularly like to acknowledge the following:

- ALDI Stores Ltd
- Anesco Ltd
- Appleby (Cayman) Ltd
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# Looking forward

Our charitable mission is to create a world richer in nature so that our wildlife and natural places in the UK and beyond can thrive. We know that nature urgently needs our help, but in order to tackle the challenges it faces, we must continue to work together to halt the loss of species around the globe and see our wildlife and special places restored.

## State of Nature 2016

Three years on from the launch of the groundbreaking *State of Nature* report in 2013, the RSPB has joined forces with over 50 conservation and research organisations to produce *State of Nature 2016*. The report provides a comprehensive and cutting-edge assessment on how nature is faring across the UK, and now contains newly developed measures of change for more species than ever before.

Over the next year, we have exciting plans to encourage children to explore, learn about and take action to save nature, whenever and wherever they are. Our new scheme will

support our Giving Nature a Home campaign, and will help inspire children to develop a deeper relationship with the natural world.

The threats to the natural world are far too big for any one organisation. Whatever the outcome of the post-referendum negotiations, we know that partnerships like *State of Nature* give us a powerful and united voice to raise awareness and change the fortunes of wildlife across the UK and beyond.

The uncertainty that lies ahead means that our role in the BirdLife International Partnership is also now more important than ever.

The RSPB is seen as a leading charity on saving nature. With the continued support of individuals, communities, our members and supporters – in whichever form they take, it is you who ultimately give us the tremendous capability to achieve the winning outcomes that our wildlife so greatly needs. Together, we can succeed.

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[rspb.org.uk](http://rspb.org.uk)

The RSPB is a member of BirdLife International, a partnership of nature conservation organisations working to give nature a home around the world.

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