



**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust

Annual Report

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

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Ltd

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity No: 513615



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**Birmingham &
Black Country
Wildlife Trust**

Chair & CEO Report

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

2022-2023 in numbers

13

planning
application
responses



Volunteers donated

3,386 HOURS

to help our wild work!

4049

people attended
our events

100%

of our Natural
Prospects trainees
gained Level 2
qualifications

*Thank
You*

169

young people
attended training
courses

12,687

observations in
the City Nature
Challenge

50+

schools worked
with us to connect
children to nature

2021-2023 Successes & Highlights



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

confronting the climate and biodiversity crises.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Council has pleasure in presenting its report together with the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. Council has adopted the provisions of the Charities SORP (FRS102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Charities preparing their Accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (effective 1 January 2019) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

1.1. Structure, Governance and Management

Registered Company No: 01650938
(England and Wales)

Registered Charity No: 513615

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

Company Secretary: EF Mooney

Key Management Personnel

Chief Executive: Dr Delia Garratt

Head of Conservation: Simon Atkinson

Head of Education and Engagement:
Gareth Morgan

Head of Fundraising and Communication: Emma Thompson

Interim Head of Finance:
Ian Holmes

Trustees

P W Beardmore

A Bright

L C Pinney MBE

J D Larner

D H Mclellan

E F Mooney

A Wayro

D P Green

L Besenyei

J Daniel (appointed 15.10.22)

S P Khan (appointed 15.10.22)

J M Moran (appointed 15.10.22)

A L Nicholson-Evans (appointed 15.10.22)

M W Saleem (appointed 15.10.22)

Organisational structure

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

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

The Articles of Association give Council the powers to:

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

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

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

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

Governing document

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

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

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

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

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

Wider network and related parties

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

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

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

Induction and training of new Trustees

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

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

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

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

Key management remuneration

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

Risk management

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

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

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

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



Statement of Trustees’ responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charily SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

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

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



1.2 Objectives and Activities

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

Objectives

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

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

2. To advance the education of the public in:

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

Our Approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our vision is underpinned by three bold goals

Our Vision, Purpose and Approach

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

Our Vision

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

Our Purpose

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Public benefit

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

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

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

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

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

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



Achievements and Performance

1.3 Summary of the Year

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

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

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

Landscape-scale nature conservation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nature Reserves

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Volunteers

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

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

Education and Engagement

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Communications

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

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

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

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

Membership

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Trust was also invited by Birmingham City Council to provide

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

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

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



1.4 Looking ahead

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



the ongoing project with Birmingham Settlement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Financial Position

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

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

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

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

Reserves policy

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

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

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

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

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

Principal risks and uncertainties

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

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

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

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



Principal funding sources

Income

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

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

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

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

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

Expenditure

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

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

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

as well as production of membership magazines throughout the year.

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

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

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

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

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

J D Larner

J D Larner - Trustee

2. Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

Opinion

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees

determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We did not identify any additional fraud risks.

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

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

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mark Spafford FCCA ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor) for and on behalf of Luckmans Duckett Parker Limited Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors 1110 Elliott Court, Herald Avenue, Coventry Business Park, Coventry, West Midlands CV5 6UB

Date: 10/11/2023

3. Statement of Financial Activities

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

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

The notes form part of these financial statements

4. Balance Sheet 31 March 2023

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

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

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



J D Larner - Trustee

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

The notes form part of these financial statements

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

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

The notes form part of these financial statements

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

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

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

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

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

7. Notes to the Financial Statements

7.1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

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

Income

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

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

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

Expenditure

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

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

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

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

Tangible fixed assets

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

Short leasehold property – 4% on cost

Fixtures and fittings – 25% straight line

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

Heritage assets

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

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

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

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

Taxation

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

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

Fund accounting

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

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

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

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

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

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

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

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

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

Basic financial instruments

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

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

7.2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

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

7.3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

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

7.4 RAISING FUNDS

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

7.5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

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

7.6 SUPPORT COSTS

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

7.7 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

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

7.8 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

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

Trustees' expenses

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

7.9 STAFF COSTS

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

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

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

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

	2023	2022
£60,001 – £70,000	1	1

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

7.10 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

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

7.11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

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

7.12 HERITAGE ASSETS

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.13 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

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

7.14 CURRENT ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Listed investments	45,010	-

7.15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

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

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

7.16 LEASING AGREEMENTS

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

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

7.17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

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

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

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

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

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

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

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

7.18 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conservation

Various areas of funded work including:

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

Education and Engagement

Various areas of funded work including:

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

7.19 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

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

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





**Birmingham &
Black Country**
Wildlife Trust

Registered Charity No: 513615

Registered Company No: 01650938 (England and Wales)

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