



Lancashire,
Manchester &
N Merseyside

Annual Review 2020-21

www.lancswt.org.uk



THIS has been one of the most extraordinary years for the Lancashire Wildlife Trust. It started, in a public lockdown as COVID-19 swept the world. Twelve months later, it is still governing our ability to lead a normal life.

Many staff were furloughed and support from organisations, like the National Lottery, were essential to continue activities, while enabling us to maintain the capacity to protect nature.

We have seen organisations and local authorities declare a Climate Emergency and we recognise a global Ecological Emergency, as wildlife continues to decline and suffer damage. Campaigning continued, despite challenges. Action for Insects was launched across the country in April. We have support lobbying for a strong Environment Bill and for wildlife-friendly Agriculture and Fisheries bills. Our Peat-Free campaign focusses on eliminating peat from use in gardens.

Greater Manchester has been the focus of developments this year. In May there was a successful bid for £1.8m from the national Green Recovery Challenge Fund by Greater Manchester Environment Fund, with the Trust being key in the bid and the its establishment.

As part of the work towards the new approach to nature, GM was selected by Defra, as one of five national pilots for the Government Local Nature Recovery Strategy scheme. GM was announced as the location of a peri-urban pilot for the



Protecting nature in a pandemic

Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) to explore how the post-Brexit farming and land management could apply in a more urban environment. There was also our Carbon Farm at Winmarleigh Moss and preparation for the National Lottery Heritage Fund project at Lunt Meadows to begin.

Myplace won the HSJ 2020 Mental Health Innovation of the Year award. We were delighted for Myplace in the Morecambe Bay area, which we deliver in partnership with the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, to receive the Partnership in Innovation Award from the Innovation Agency. The Dame Mary Smieton Award is given annually by the Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts for the best Wildlife Trust research project. It was won by our project to re-introduce the large heath butterfly to mosslands of Greater Manchester.

In June we were involved in the first digital Manchester Festival of Nature. We have continued to meet through digital media,

which has been frustrating, but has identified our creative side.

Despite these challenges, we did manage to complete our first assessment of our organisational carbon footprint (based on our last 'active', non-lockdown year in 2019), which gives us baseline for developing an environment strategy we plan to include in reports.

RSWT's new CEO, Craig Bennett, came from Friends of the Earth and has embarked on a major resetting of the organisation nationally as well as its role in the federated structure of our movement.

Trustees were involved in the recruitment of a new CEO for our Trust. This was undertaken because Anne Selby, announced that she would retire. We were delighted to welcome Tom Burditt to the Trust in December and he has been working hard ever since, despite not being able to meet many of his team in person! We also

welcomed Jane Baker as our Director of Finance. Jane started in January.

This year we have lost another of our past Trustees. Roger Rees sadly died in January 2021. He will be fondly remembered. We saw one of our Trustees, Mustafa Desai retire from the Board and welcomed John Loder and Joan Hunter as Trustees. Iqbal Hasan has also been co-opted.

This will be my final statement as Chair as my term ends in October and I pass the baton to Julian Jackson. I have enjoyed it, I hope I have managed to play some part in our development and I will continue to support the Trust to the best of my abilities in the future. In my last report as Chair, I'd like to thank my fellow Trustees, staff, volunteers and members for their continuing support and commitment.

Thank you

Steve Garland

Protect, create and enhance land for wildlife and people



Alexander Mustard 2020/Vision

- A FIVE-year Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant for marine policy work, awareness raising and survey work was the highlight for our Living Seas team - Three full-time, dedicated staff now work on the marine project
- The Bay, a partnership project between Lancashire and Cumbria Wildlife Trusts, Eden Project North and the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, funded by players of the People's Postcode Lottery will use natural prescribing to deal with isolation and depression around Morecambe Bay.
- Little Woollen Moss saw habitat enhancement work and there was a reintroduction of the rare Large heath Butterfly onto Astley Moss after more than 150 year's absence.
- A reserve monitoring group was established and dealt with over 150 issues in the first lockdown period alone.
- Storm Christoph's considerable rainfall resulted in a collapse of the River Alt's embankment in January. The majority of our Lunt Meadows nature reserve was under several metres of water for most of February. This collapse saved over 400 houses in Maghull from imminent flooding.
- A five-year National Lottery Heritage Fund at Lunt Meadows, will include a new visitor centre, providing schools and community awareness raising programmes focusing on the reserves wildlife and the hunter-gatherer archaeological finds on the site.



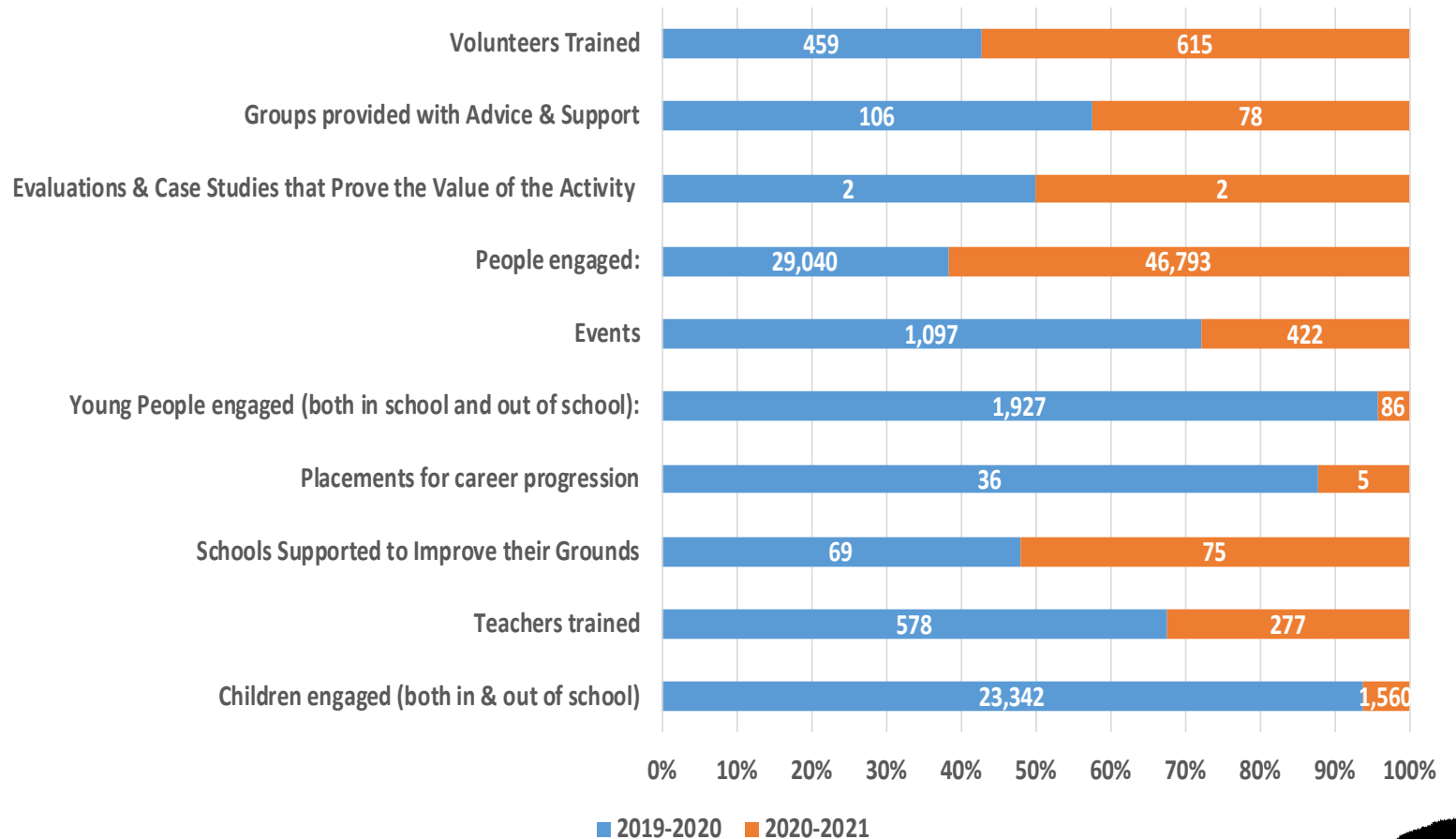
Standing up for wildlife

Peter Smith

- Wildlife advocacy work had a boost through the relaunch of Lancashire's Local Nature Partnership after seven years of no activity. The Trust is a prominent partner in the initiative and we hope it will give an environmental voice to the County.
- At the start of lockdown, we carried out a survey with over 2,000 responses, demonstrating the value people placed on their health through contact with nature. Led by our My Wild City project, we have sought innovative ways to keep inspiring people about nature during lockdown.
- Our work to encourage action for nature in gardens, expanded to all of Greater Manchester and we piloted our first My Wild Garden week of Facebook live videos. A bid to Cadent was successful for a My Wild Neighbourhoods project in North Manchester, and our work supporting Sites of Biological Interest in the city continued.
- MyPlace grown and expanded into new areas including Greater Manchester, with a new hub in Bury to add to activity in Bolton. Lancashire Wildlife Trust were actively involved in the bid development of one of the Green Social Prescribing pilots awarded to the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership.
- This year also saw a funding success with players of the People's Postcode Lottery Recovery Fund that will see MyPlace expand across Morecambe Bay into South Cumbria.
- The Carbon Landscape and Natural England also secured over £100k towards activity that will contribute towards an application for National Nature Reserve designation of the Wigan and Leigh Flashes, down to Pennington Flash. Despite lockdown we have engaged a wide range of people, attracting new volunteers, and a programme of activity targeted at young people, all online.



Inspiring people to engage with wildlife and to take action



Recognised and respected in our work



Malcolm Brown

- The profile for the environment has never been higher and now is the time for us to grasp this and continue to engage people with our work and our purpose.
- We saw an increase in engagement across all of our social media channels throughout 2020, and a real love for nature emerge, as the public turned to local greenspaces during the lockdowns.
- We drove our digital engagement, through a variety of online events and talks, live social media feeds and “how to” videos, all of which were well received.
- We continue to write regular features for key regional titles - the Manchester Evening News and Lancashire Life - and our local radio appearances are now occurring on at least a weekly basis.
- Our My Wild City Project and 30 Days Wild campaigns continue to see a growth in engagement levels, with this year seeing a successful My Wild Gardens campaign.
- We were also the leading organisation behind the Manchester Festival of Nature, which saw thousands of people engage digitally in nature activities and talks.
- Our species reintroduction project, bringing the Large heath butterfly (Manchester Argus) back to Manchester’s Peatlands generated a wide range of regional and national publicity, alongside a large level of online engagement.
- Our new customer relationship management system has now been implemented across membership and volunteering. Training is ongoing, and integration of our communications and donations processing is underway.

Moving towards a better place

As the financial year closed we are beginning to see Coronavirus restrictions lifting, our commercial outlets re-opening, with bookings being taken once more for events, conferences and weddings.

However, the arrival of another variant to core areas of our patch, such as Blackburn and Bolton, reminds us that the visitor-related aspects of our business remain uncertain and subject to change as a result of both the virus and government rules. Face-to-face fundraising, especially membership recruitment, was hard hit during the pandemic and is scaled back from pre-pandemic levels.

However, we have used lockdown to reassess the way in which we conduct areas of our business, and this makes us both more resilient, efficient, focussed and optimistic about the coming year than we were last year. On the commercial side this includes remodelling catering spaces at Mere Sands Wood and Brockholes to make them more flexible (with the ability to scale up and down more easily depending on visitor numbers). We have been focusing on the more profitable and Covid-secure takeaway aspects of our food and drink offer. A visitor facility at Lunt Meadows should be open soon.

We have also conducted successful digital/online trials for membership and fundraising, and are investing more on these areas during 2021/2. We have outsourced face-to-face membership recruitment which has helped to reduce our

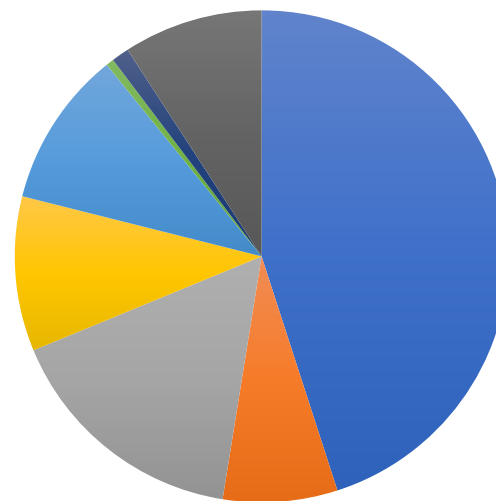
overheads. The socio-political context in which we operate also feels more positive than it did a year ago. The impacts of Brexit remain uncertain, but the Environment Bill (Act), peat and tree strategies all highlight the importance of our work on a bigger stage, and provide new sources of funding for our environmental work, which we feel well-placed to take advantage of, from new grants to Biodiversity Net Gain credits.

We continue to participate in the development of The Wildlife Trusts Wilder Carbon which may unlock more sustainable revenue streams for our peatland restoration programmes, as companies look to fund carbon sequestration initiatives. The value that people place on connection with the natural world has also increased in the last year. A survey we conducted in Manchester reported that 67 per cent more people had felt the benefits of green places to their lives during lockdown.

Following on from the 2030 strategic framework being agreed by the federation of all 46 Wildlife Trusts, we are embarking on our own Business Plan refresh. This will enable us to develop detailed plans for Nature Recovery, review our project pipeline and project planning process, and ensure that we are investing our financial and human resources more strategically to enable us to become a more financially resilient organisation, and one better placed to deliver our charitable objectives.

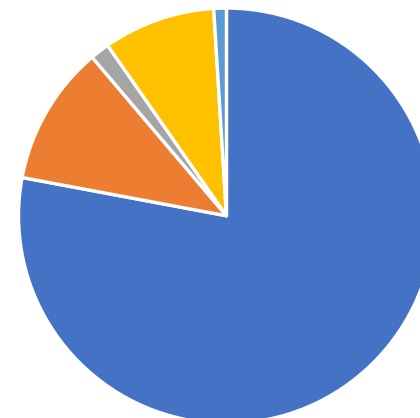
Jane Baker
Director of Finance

Revenue 2020-21



Grants	2,720,879
Donations	453,055
Membership	981,244
Contract	614,413
BELT	620,945
Legacies	30,933
Other Sales	69,271
Sponsorship	-
Other	551,989
TOTAL	£6,042,729

Expenditure 2020/21



Charitable Activities	4,237,411
BELT	590,911
Membership	81,137
Fund Raising	473,340
Governance	53,227
TOTAL	£5,436,027

Key Points to Note:

- Revenues at £6m only 4% lower than prior year despite the pandemic and lockdowns.
- Revenue has been supplemented by £528k from the Coronavirus job retention scheme which has allowed us to retain key skills
- Improvement in overall financial operations of Brockholes, despite a reduced turnover, delivering a profit of £33k for the Trust.
- For Every £1 raised in membership we raise £5 to match it.
- For Every £1 spent 70p
- directly contributes to our charitable activities of education, conservation and nature-based solutions in the county
- Overall net inflow - £612k
- Net Assets at the end of the year £12.8m, of which £10.5m is tied up in heritage and fixed assets

Recognised and respected



Peter Smith

Thank you to our corporate supporters

- Beachfields
- Eco Speed Couriers
- Mace
- Ocean Outdoor
- Blackburn Chemicals
- Volker Stevin
- Faith In Nature (Bury)
- MJ Wilkinson
- United Utilities
- Weinerberger
- Responsible Mailing
- Dugdale Nutrition
- Derek Fox Timber
- Eagle and Child Ramsbottom
- Holiday Cottages
- Valley Mist
- Standby Productions
- Su Melville Art
- Morecambe Bay Wills & Estates
- Worthington Sharpe
- Warton Parish Council
- Siemens
- Wildlife Travel
- Morgan Sindell
- Construction
- Eric Wright Constuction
- VercoGlobal
- Laing

- The pandemic had a significant impact on fundraising, with our in-person fundraising channels being on pause for the majority of the year.
- High levels of members remained with us throughout the pandemic. Their ongoing support has been critical when fundraising has been so limited.
- We focused on appeal fundraising and digital membership recruitment, which allowed us to fill some of the holes left by restrictions, but it is likely to take us several years to rebuild our income levels.
- Commercially, the majority of our income stopped abruptly due to restrictions, some remain in place around income generated by conferences and weddings. We have conducted a review to maximise income generation potential as restrictions begin to ease.
- Our catering offer is developing in line with our core values as a conservation organisation.
- A customer relationship management system was implemented across membership and volunteering.

In order to raise vital unrestricted funds to deliver our core charitable objectives, the trust undertook fundraising to the public this year in the following ways:

Delivered by carefully vetted fundraising professionals:

- Face-to-face membership recruitment.
- Door-to-door membership recruitment.
- Telephone fundraising.

Delivered by our skilled in-house fundraising team:

- Online membership recruitment .
- Fundraising Appeals.
- Legacy Fundraising .
- Face to face recruitment on reserves .
- In memory and in celebration donations.
- General donations.
- Individual fundraising (through JustGiving).

OUR VISION

A region rich in wildlife, valued and enjoyed by all.

OUR AIM

We aim to be recognised as the most active, inspirational, engaging, influential and authoritative local wildlife champion.

OUR OBJECTIVES

To protect, create and enhance wildlife in our region, creating Living Landscapes and Living Seas.

To stand up for wildlife and the environment.

To inspire people about the natural world and encourage everyone to take action for wildlife.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Trustees of the charity, who are also Members of the Board (“Council”), who have held office in the year and to the date of this report were: Mr SP Garland (Chair), Ms HA Ryan (Vice-Chair), Mr JB Jackson (Hon Treasurer), Mr ADJ Royce (Hon Sec), Mr S Niven, Mr R Wade, Mr JM Wells, Mr AJM Berry, His Honour Judge JR Duggan, Prof P James, Mr M Desai (resigned 24/9/20), Ms G Grady, Ms D Shackleton CBE, Mr S Sinha, Ms J Hunter (elected at AGM 3/10/20), Mr J Loder (elected 3/10/20), Mr I Hasan (co-Opted 20/1/21)

President - Mr C G Davies

Vice President - Mr E E Jackson MBE

Chief Executive - Dr Tom Burditt

The registered name of the Charity is The Lancashire Wildlife Trust Limited. It is registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales with the number 229325.

Registered office - The Barn, Berkeley Drive, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5 6BY

