



Lancashire,
Manchester &
N Merseyside



The Lancashire Wildlife Trust

— ANNUAL REVIEW —
2017

www.lancswt.org.uk



Chairman's Statement

This has been another memorable and action-packed year for the Trust. A new business plan was completed and a major review of the Brockholes Nature Reserve and Visitor Centre was completed. Both have had positive influences on the working of the Trust.

I have been thrilled to see our membership numbers grow so much, it's fantastic to see so many of you signing up to protect our local wildlife. The Trust has also received several legacies, which will make a huge difference to our work. Legacy gifts often help us fund our vital conservation projects where funding is difficult to secure, and give our organisation the ability to continue through difficult financial times. Thank you to all those who have supported us this year, we really couldn't do it without you.

Our nature reserves continue to improve as Brockholes matures and keeps turning up new birds and insects, Lunt Meadows is now becoming a major site for birds and the Greater Manchester peatlands now offer some of the most exciting new reserve prospects that we have had for some time. We have also opened a new classroom and centre at our Heysham Nature Reserve, with support from EDF Energy.

From a governance perspective, we have completed a Trustee Review and have reviewed our skills and our committee operations and structures. The outcomes should be more efficient working; fewer demands on precious staff time and an opportunity for Trustees to be involved in a more effective way.

A major review of Safety, Health and Environment policies and practices has also been undertaken by staff led by one of our trustees John Wells. This has been very positive and a number of improvements have been made to our already good position. Another trustee Hazel Ryan has led on an all-encompassing Risk Review of the Trust which is nearing completion.



We expect all of this work will greatly improve both our strength and our resilience in times of uncertainty. We benefit from working closely with other Trusts and RSWT's national resources and support is essential. Our local focus and national collaboration is what makes the Wildlife Trusts movement so strong.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their amazing support, hard work and enthusiasm over the year. The staff team is superb - attending a full staff meeting always fills me with a mixture of amazement and pride. The range of activities and projects across Lancashire is impressive. Our volunteers also make an essential contribution across most areas of the Trust's activities, I thank them for continuing to support us with enthusiasm.

Finally, I thank our members, both individuals and corporate members. Through your wonderful support we are able to represent wildlife with strength and confidence at a time when this may be more important than ever.



Steve Garland
Chairman



We are part of the Wildlife Trusts movement, the UK's leading conservation charity dedicated to all wildlife.

We are your local charity, working hard to improve your local area for wildlife and for you. Since 1912, The Wildlife Trusts have been speaking out for nature in the UK. Our organisation is unique - while most of our work for wildlife takes place at local grassroots level, we have a national voice.

OUR VISION

To create and protect a region rich in wildlife for everyone to enjoy.

OUR OBJECTIVES

These are the nationally agreed priorities with the Partnership of Wildlife Trusts.

- 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
- To foster sustainable One Planet Living, where the functioning of the natural environment is appreciated as essential for supporting life
- To ensure our work is based on knowledge and sound evidence
- To be recognised and respected for our work
- To grow our resources and increase support for our mission
- To ensure the organisation is effective and fit for purpose





The Lancashire Wildlife Trust is closing in on 30,000 members for the first time its history

A total of 1,242 volunteers completed 61,561 hours of working for wildlife this year



Red squirrels are now back to 80 per cent of the population before the pox, and numbers are still increasing



Brockholes will celebrate its one millionth visitor in August 2017



Our nature reserve portfolio has 38 sites covering over 1,300 hectares



Our Education Team is delivering environmental education to around 20,000 children per annum



The Trails and Explorer challenge throughout December saw more than 600 families taking part



Our Forest School programme, funded by player of People's Postcode Lottery, is expanding into Liverpool after its success in Manchester

The 30 Days Wild initiative saw 1,920 people register in the North West, the highest in all 47 Wildlife Trusts



Mere Sands Wood made it into the UK's Top 10 nature reserves in the Times

A Strategic — Influence for — Wildlife



As Chief Executive of the Trust, I am often asked about the most important issues we face. That's a difficult question to answer unless you can spare me several days of your time! I visited Summerseat Nature Reserve the other day to meet a local MP and I was reminded what a difference individuals can make to our environment, this fantastic reserve is managed by a dedicated group of volunteers. These individual acts of support for our environment are crucial as we face uncertain times.

Influencing at a strategic level is also a crucial part of the work we do. If we can talk to the key decision makers, and make sure that the environment is on strategic agendas at a local and national level.

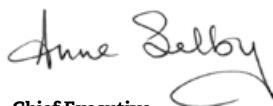
The Trust is leading the Greater Manchester Local Nature Partnership and new developments such as the Government Urban Pioneer project will place nature conservation and the environment at the centre of plans for the next 25 years.

Another really exciting new project is Myplace which is a Big Lottery-funded project where the Trust is working with the Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust to improve the health and wellbeing of young people with mental health issues. We hope this project will become a showcase for future eco therapy initiatives, just another example of the importance of our natural world.

Thanks to players of the People's Postcode Lottery our Forest Schools programme has continued to expand and we are delivering environmental education to around 20,000 children per annum. They have also supported us in our strategic work, to help ensure we are keeping the environment on the political agenda.

We have big challenges ahead. We do not yet know exactly what Brexit will mean and it may have impacts on funding, legislation, wildlife protection and activities that affect wildlife such as farming, building development and environmental laws and controls. We could potentially lose £300,000 in funds for land management. Change is inevitable, but we will be working with other Wildlife Trusts, RSWT and other organisations to try to get the best deal for wildlife. It won't be easy, but we are developing clear ideas and strategies to achieve our aims.

A huge thank you to all those who have supported us, I hope you will stand with us into the future.



Chief Executive



— Standing Up — for Wildlife





The Halcyon Bird at the Kingfisher Festival

We lobbied MP's...

In what threatens to become an annual fixture, we had to write bespoke, locally-evidenced letters to each of our 47 Members of Parliament to seek their support in asking HM Treasury to maintain current levels of Landfill Communities funding.

We continue to be the voice for wildlife...

The Wildlife Trusts at UK level concluded that departing the EU was, on balance, likely to increase rather than reduce the threats to our wildlife on land and at sea. We are working through our central office and with sister trusts to head off those challenges, both legal and financial.

We successfully campaigned for protection...

After decades of campaigning, by the Trust and many others, the West Pennine Moors was finally designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on 17th November 2016. This has been confirmed by Natural England in August 2017.

We continue to secure Living Seas...

The North West Wildlife Trust's Marine Project has continued to influence policy and practice through awareness campaigns, membership of key local committee such as the NW Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) and liaison with the Marine Maritime Organisation.



Looking for red squirrels in Formby

We monitored planning applications...

The Trust provided detailed responses to 17 local plan consultations during the year and has commented on several major development proposals.

We influenced at a strategic level...

The Trust's CEO, Anne Selby, is chair for the Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group, which is setting the strategic direction for environmental/low carbon policy. She has been leading the Urban Pioneer in Greater Manchester as part of the Defra 25-year Environmental Plan which aims to leave the environment in a better condition for the next generation.

Through this work, the Trust hosted a visit by Therese Coffey, Undersecretary of State for the Environment, to the Trust's Little Woolden Moss Nature Reserve to view restoration work of this degraded carbon store/wildlife habitat. The CEO also sits on the board for Nature Connected which is the Liverpool Local Nature Partnership.



— Our Wild Places —

Reserve Highlights

Our nature reserve portfolio has 38 sites covering over 1,300 hectares. The Trust also manages and advises on the wildlife management of a number of other sites in the sub-region – safeguarding, enhancing and influencing others to benefit wildlife.





Conservation grazing cattle help to provide perfect habitats for wading birds



Looking for mum at Seaforth



Swans in a hurry by Alan Wright

Cutacre

Fencing, hedge-laying, signage and water-control sluices have been installed. The increasing species richness of the grasslands is evident, with common knapweed, meadowseet and sneezewort becoming established, brought about by species introductions and the grazing regime with our longhorn cattle.

Mere Sands Wood

We have undertaken woodland management works by removal of rhododendron and replanting to restore a balanced structure and a boundary hedge. Stage one of the visitor centre is underway with planning consent gained to create a new education facility and refurbish the classroom into areas for volunteers and staff.

Warton Crag

New rides have been exposed by tree-cutting to keep open habitat corridors to benefit butterflies, particularly rare fritillaries. There is a plan for the fritillary's recovery following declines, thank you all who supported our appeal.

Lunt Meadows

The new fences and gates have enabled extensive grazing. Footpath building is controlling the increasing numbers of visitors to the site, and there are new interpretation boards and guided walks.

Freshfield Dune Heath

Our grazing capacity has been enhanced by the building of a new lambing facility (with electricity) along with the purchase of five goats to help combat rapid gorse scrub encroachment on the heathland.

Little Woollen Moss

A Willow Tit habitat has been created. Our work has also supported the establishment of bog plants on the bare peat.

Brockholes

A donation from a Trust member enabled two longhorn cows to be bought for grazing. We constructed a new all ability path and installed sculptures along the route for the "Wind in the Willows" trail.





Little Wooden Moss



Reed warbler by Peter Smith

Red Scar Woods, Longworth Clough and Summerseat

There has been a concerted effort to remove Himalayan balsam as it reduces native plant diversity. Funding was obtained to remove invasive plants from the River Yarrow Catchment.

Sefton Coast

We have worked to safeguard red squirrel populations in Merseyside's woodlands. There is another three years support from Lottery and LIFE funding. Populations have stabilised in many Sefton woods and they have recolonised new woodlands in West Lancashire.

Heysham Moss

Large heath butterflies have emerged again indicating a successful reintroduction so far. Further bred adults were released on site during June but a fire this year was a setback.

Seaforth Nature Reserve

Common tern bred on tern rafts: 172 nesting pairs producing 165 fledged young.

West Lancashire

The Plan Bee project has focussed habitat conservation efforts on grassland sites with habitat works to encourage pollinators on Beacon Country Park and Ashurst Beacon.

South Pennines Grassland Project

Over 4,000 metres of fencing have been erected to allow grazing of herb-rich grassland and plant plugs have been planted on eight sites. The project so far (since 2014) has worked on 126ha of farmland covering 43 sites and advised 30 different landowners.

Lancashire Dunes

The project has been awarded another five years funding from the Environment Agency to continue the restoration of the dunes. The Trust is working in partnership with Blackpool and Fylde borough councils to undertake works to rebuild the dunes seawards. Work is undertaken by local volunteers keen to see the dunes return to a robust state.





Work to ensure the Irish Sea is clean means children can safely search the beach for signs of wildlife



Grass snake by Peter Smith



Mud-dipping on the beach at St Annes

Heysham Nature Reserve

The worn out office was demolished with the new combined field centre and staff/volunteer accommodation building arriving on site after Christmas. The building is a boost to the Connecting to Nature Project with over 1,000 people participating in events in partnership with EDF Energy.

Mosslands

A total of £30,000 of capital restoration works has taken place on Winmarleigh Moss by the Trust Contracts team. £45,000 has been received from the Esmee Fairbairn foundation to pay for the ongoing community work in the Chat Moss area. This has allowed the project to run a wide variety of community events, and sessions with local schools.

We have also received £83,085 from WREN the majority of which (£58,000) has been spent on capital restoration works on Cadishead, Astley and Little Woolden Mosses. Finally, we have received £7,500 from the Tesco Bags of Help fund to help create an interactive walking trail on Little Woolden Moss.

Contracting

Work at Colliers Moss for the Mersey Forest and Bickershaw Allotments for Wigan Council, were completed. We also completed another year of maintenance at Alt Meadows for the Cass Foundation who have retained our services for 2017-18. We carried out a new phase of works at Cutacre including the installation of sluices, fencing and a bridge to allow cattle to cross the Brook. Throughout the year we have worked at several schools on grounds enhancements.

We carried out a project for Fylde Council which entailed reprofiling a sand dune to improve public safety and stabilising with biodegradable geotextile. The Contracting Manager was also engaged by Euxton Parish Council as project manager for a pond creation project.



— Our Wild Places —

As our People and Wildlife team continue to deliver major projects, we see some new landscape scale partnership projects begin.





Myplace and Myerscough students in Blackburn



Bee on yellow rattle

Carbon Landscape

Our major success for this year was a submission to Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Scheme which has awarded £1,997,700 to the Carbon Landscape programme. The Trust is the lead organisation, representing a range of partners who have an interest in part of our Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area, including our mosslands and Wigan Flashes. The programme has 22 projects including volunteering, building capacity of local groups to look after their landscape, as well as capital works across our nature reserves.

Myplace

In partnership with Lancashire Care Foundation Trust, we have spent the first year running taster sessions, developing activities and sites to become hubs. The project is gathering interest in how activity in nature can have an effect on mental wellbeing.

The Biodiverse Society

We have had a successful second year demonstrating huge interest in wildlife recording, and local naturalist groups and experts are recognising the value of this project activity. A bid to Lancashire County Council's Central Gateway Fund for £30,000 has enabled us to grow this work to other groups.

Men in Sheds

The Men In Sheds project at our Bolton ERC has had outstanding success, engaging a wide range of men all keen to put practical skills to use and make things for our centre and its grounds. They are now being commissioned for work in other green spaces.

Engaging Communities

Our two smaller Heritage Lottery Funded community engagement projects, Lunt Meadows and the Kingfisher Trail, have been achieving fantastic results proving our methods for engagement are effective at involving a wide audience and ensuring a lasting legacy is embedded into all activities.

Wild Families

For our work with children, young people and families we have engaged a significant number of people through Nature Tots, Wild Families and Wild Parties. Brockholes has seen record numbers of families and children at events.

Forest Schools training, activities and development of facilities, continues to grow as interest in the initiative gains momentum. We successfully secured continuation funding from Peoples Postcode Lottery. We are working with four new schools in Manchester which will develop capacity to run Forest School activity and our work has been so successful, PPL will also be supporting our future work in Liverpool too.

Volunteers

We continue to see high numbers of volunteers for the Trust, giving an incredible 60,000 hours of their time each year. From surveying to helping in our visitor centres, to leading guided walks and providing crucial admin and office support, each and every one of our volunteers is a hero.

Thank you to all those who give their time and skills to the Trust.



Lancashire Wildlife Trust finance 2016/17

The Trust continued to operate in a challenging economic environment as we see external funding, particularly in the public sector, continuing to face real cuts. Over the past few years the Trust has adapted and will continue to adapt to this environment.

The Trust's membership income rose by 6.2% to £852k during the year owing to the continued work by our dynamic development department. Grant income for the Trust also increased by a huge 27% as a result of a few large projects being given substantial funding. However, the operational financial performance of Brockholes remained similar to last year, mainly due to higher visitor numbers being offset by a lower spend per head and the use of agency staff to cover key staff changes (see graphs below for income and expenditure trends).

This year we have made progress in securing new sources of income and will continue to diversify our funding sources, whilst exploring new ways of generating sustainable sources of income. Our valued membership continues to grow alongside our legacy income. This type of unrestricted income allows us to invest our resources in areas where there is the greatest conservation need.

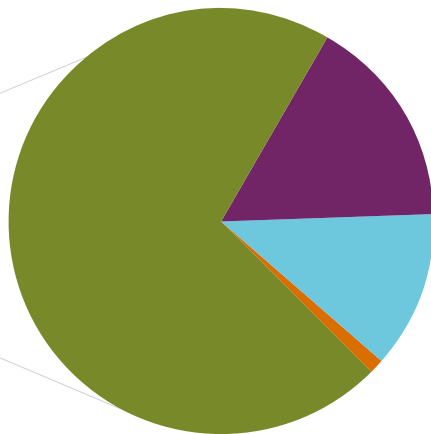
Every **£1** you give us turns into **£3.60**, which we spend on the following...



In order to manage our cash flow effectively, we continue to strengthen our internal controls and to operate tight budget setting. The subsequent management of these budgets is done monthly within the senior management and management action teams.

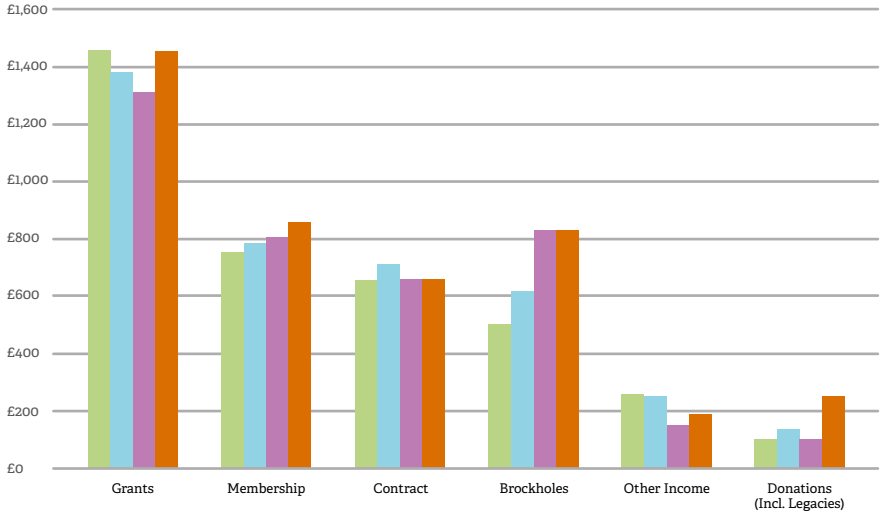
Principal themes from our consolidated statutory accounts are summarised here. These incorporate the results of the Trust and its subsidiary Brockholes Enterprises Limited ("Brockholes"). A full set of accounts is available on request or can be accessed through the Charity Commission web site or at www.lancswt.org.uk

- Spend on Charitable Purpose - Wildlife - 71%
- Membership Development & Fundraising - 16%
- Management & Strategy - 12%
- Governance - 1%



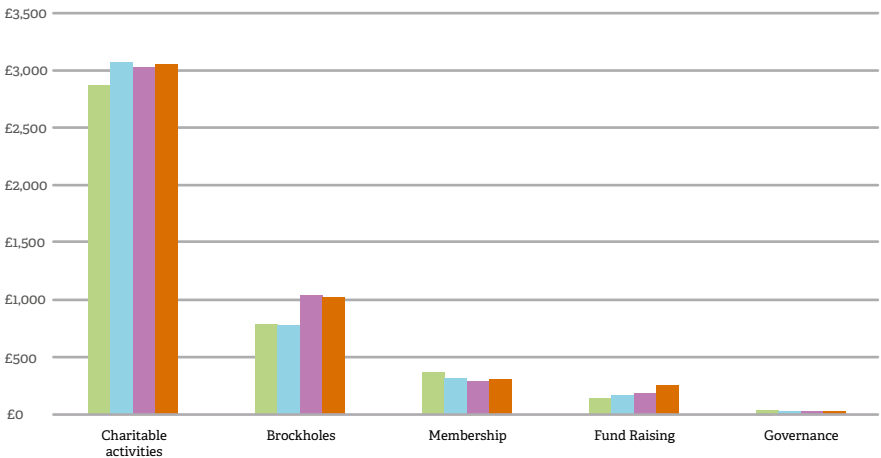
2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17

Annual Income Trends



2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17

Annual Expenditure Trends



— Looking to the Future —

The Trust has had a fantastic year with some really major projects getting off the ground. We have seen a growth in our membership to 30,000, it's truly wonderful to have so many of you standing up to help protect your local wildlife.





Wren in the rain by Alison Wellby

As with any organisation, we must also keep an eye on the future and prepare to face a series of challenges for our natural environment. Our influence as an organisation becomes increasingly crucial as we work to keep the environment on agendas, with these uncertain times we must make sure that key wildlife issues remain part of higher level decision making.

We will continue to work with MP's, other organisations and local authorities to secure a greener future for our region. Our work to engage businesses continues to grow, as we aim to ensure the environment has a place in their strategic thinking and to showcase the benefits of doing so.

We will work both locally and nationally to secure the best possible outcome for our wildlife as we see BREXIT unfold and continue to be a watchdog for key issues in our area. With our unrestricted income increasing this year thanks to the wonderful gifts individuals have left in their will and donations in memory of loved ones, we are able to invest in areas with the greatest conservation need.



Red admiral on bramble by Alan Wright

The coming year will also see the first phase of developments begin at our Mere Sands Wood nature reserve. So many of our members supported our appeal and we are thrilled that, after many funding challenges, this project will now begin with the installation of the new classroom in October this year.

This annual review showcases only the highlights of our impact over the past twelve months. We are proud of all we have achieved as an organisation but we are also extremely grateful to those who have made it all possible; our dedicated staff, army of volunteers, our funders and of course each and every one of our members – we just couldn't do it without you!

Thank you!



CORPORATE MEMBERS

GOLD

Booths
Qualitel
United Utilities
B and D Print

SILVER

Amey
Beaverbrooks
Fort Vale
Hanson
M J Wilkinson
RBS
SSCL
Tarmac

BRONZE

Aggregate Industries
Derek Fox & Sons
Dugdale Nutrition
Eagle & Child Ramsbottom
Eco-Speed
Hoghton Tower
Manchester Airport
Responsible Mailing

South Ribble Borough Council
Weinberger
ENI Liverpool
Neales Waste

Special thank you to organisations contributing in different ways to our work:

BEAR Nibbles, Lucozade Ribena Suntry, Brewin Dolphin, RBS Service Optimisation Team, Siemens, Costain, Price Waterhouse Cooper, Tetley (Tata Global Beverages), Eric Wright Construction, John Lewis, Leyland Trucks, Nurture Lakeland, Opticron, Ribby Hall Village, Team JMC, Vine House Farm.

Thank you to all our funders:

Awards For All, Arnside and Silverdale grants fund, BAE Systems, Baxenden Community Forum, Big Lottery Fund, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Blackpool Council, Bolton Council, Bolton, British Science Association, Burbo Bank Extension Community Fund (Grantscape), CVS, Chester Zoo, Chorley Borough Council, Cory Environmental Trust in Britain, DEFRA, Department of Health, EDF Energy, Environment Agency, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, EU LIFE, ESF, First Transpennine Express, Forestry Commission Green Grants, Fylde Borough Council, Green Vale Homes, Heritage Lottery Fund, HSBC, Hyndburn Borough Council, Irlam Rotary Club, Knowsley Borough Council, Lancashire County Council - Local Initiatives Fund, Lancashire County Council – Central Gateway Grants Scheme, Lancashire Environmental Fund, Natural England, Pendle Borough Council, People's Postcode Lottery, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Scout Moor Habitat Enhancement Fund, Sea-changers, St Helens Borough Council, Tesco small grants, United Utilities, Veolia Environmental Trust, Viridor Credits, West Lancashire Borough Council, White Moss Community Fund, Whitworth Town Council, Wigan Council, Windfall Fund, WREN.



Lancashire,
Manchester &
N Merseyside

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The Lancashire Wildlife Trust is a Registered Charity (No. 229325) and a Registered Company (No.731548) dedicated to the protection and promotion of wildlife in Lancashire, seven boroughs of Greater Manchester and four of Merseyside, all lying North of the River Mersey.

