



Lancashire,  
Manchester &  
N Merseyside

# Annual Review 2011

## A huge thank you

The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside would like to thank all those who have supported us as funders, members and companies. Without this valuable support, we would not be able to continue our work.

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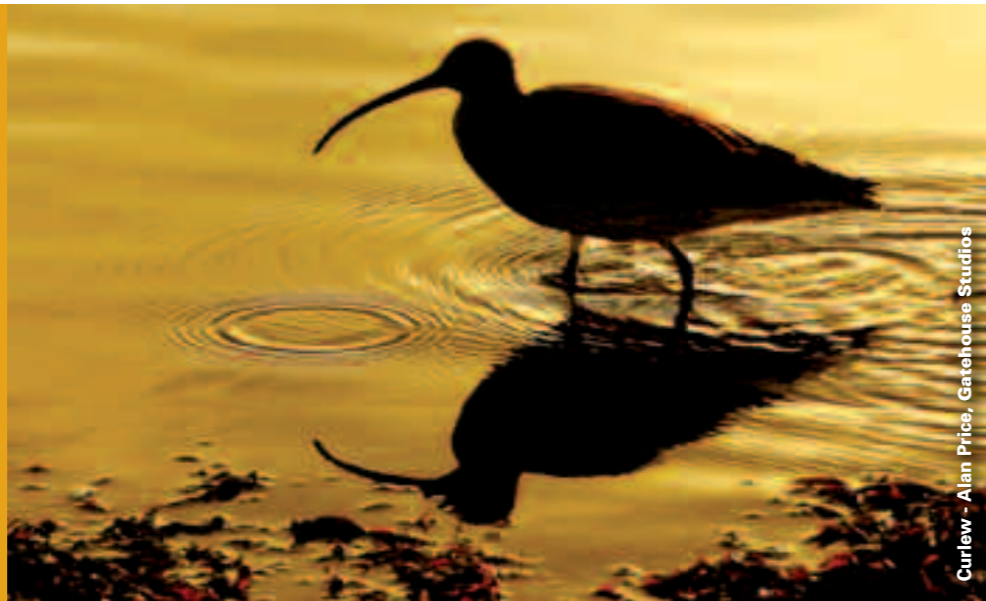
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Curlew - Alan Price, Gatehouse Studios

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### The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside

The Barn, Berkeley Drive, Bamber Bridge, Preston PR5 6BY t 01772 324129 f 01772 628849 [www.lancswt.org.uk](http://www.lancswt.org.uk)

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.

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Join us: [lancswt.org.uk](http://lancswt.org.uk)

Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future

# Reporting our success

Welcome to our Annual Review, which gives you some of our greatest highlights and achievements over the past 12 months. Our charity was founded in 1962 by local folk who were worried about the future of special places and creatures.

**We are independent of government and receive no direct state grant or subsidy for our work. We are therefore very dependent on our membership income and fundraising. The great news is that, despite the difficult economic climate, our membership continues to grow.**

Cutbacks in public spending have impacted on the availability of grants from local authorities and government agencies this year. Our VAT recovery rate also saw changes, putting us into reverse gear to the tune of £60,000. It is a tribute to staff that we have managed to pull the deficit back to £10,395 at year end. We believe we are in a better position than many charities, who are totally dependent on government funding.

Volunteering continues to go from strength to strength. A series of projects worth £500,000 in total, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund over the last five years, has moved volunteering on to a new level in the Trust by supporting new and existing volunteers and offering more structured training and recruitment.

Easter saw the launch of our flagship 'unreserved' nature reserve and Visitor Village at Brockholes. We also are delighted to have achieved BREEAM Outstanding status for the interim design stage of the buildings. This is the highest award for sustainable building in the country. Brockholes has been a very ambitious project and has tested us to the limit.

We aim to make this 160-hectare site self-sustaining, generating revenue to meet its management costs from cafe, shops and car parking. Despite the construction works we are already seeing evidence that the variety of wildlife at the reserve will exceed our expectations.

Campaigning work has been at an all-time high with the proposed Mersey Barrage giving cause for concern for the wildlife of the estuary. We have been working closely with our colleagues at the Cheshire Wildlife Trust and the RSPB to engage in the feasibility work. Commercial peat extraction in the North West defies common sense and everything we know about climate change. It also damages an important habitat.

We have been delighted by the hundreds of messages our supporters have written to the local authorities concerned regarding the Chat Moss application and in support of the Wildlife Trusts' national campaign on this issue.

We have produced a new Business Plan for the charity to guide us over the next four years and have been working throughout the Trust to begin to put this into action.

National Grid decided to close the Environment Education Centre at Penwortham this autumn after 12 years of partnership working. Thank you to the many people who have sent letters of appreciation for the work of the centre and those who have searched for new homes for the team. The creative energy will now move to Brockholes as we establish a new centre of excellence there.

We hope you enjoy the report and can see how your membership, your donations and your volunteering are making a real difference to the wildlife that is close to you.

**On behalf of the President, Sir Tim Kimber, the Chairman, Ted Jackson and CEO, Anne Selby.**

Sycamore seeds - Alan Price, Gatehouse Studios

## April 2010

The endangered Barred Tooth-striped moth was recorded at Warton Crag, the first record for the reserve.

## June

140 LWT staff and volunteers spend a day working on the dunes to celebrate National Volunteer Week

## August

The first ever Lancashire Bioblitz is launched to promote the Lancashire Environment Records Network (LERN). 890 species were recorded by families, experts and students from across Lancashire.

## October

Red Squirrel Week is celebrated at a time when sightings are on the up.

## December

£32,000 is raised in the Brockholes appeal – **Thank You!**

## February

News that Penwortham Environment Education Centre is to close, leaving the Trust's Education team looking for a new base.

## April

Brockholes opens its doors for the first time to 3,000 visitors on the first day!

## May

The Trust launches its campaign to save Chat Moss.

## July

Hollywood comes to Lancashire as LWT Trailblazers project host a film premiere to showcase environmental films made by their students.

## September

The Sand Lizard re-introduction programme begins at Freshfield.

## November

Two Trust Productive Landscapes in Preston projects are awarded by North West In Bloom.

## January 2011

Brockholes featured on BBC Countryfile.

## March

The Visitor Village at Brockholes floats for the first time, ahead of its big opening on Easter Sunday.

# Creating a Living Landscape

Our nature reserve portfolio contains 39 sites covering 970 hectares. A lot of our efforts go into keeping these sites in a good ecological condition, safe and offering many opportunities for people to get involved and understand more about the issues facing wildlife and its habitats.



## North Lancashire Grassland Project and Meadows Group

Funding from the Lancashire Environmental Fund enabled the purchase of additional equipment to carry out grassland management and restoration work on a number of our reserves as part of our North Lancashire Grassland Project.

The North Lancashire Meadows Group funded initially by the Arnside and Silverdale AONB Sustainable Development Fund aims to stimulate interest and knowledge of local grasslands, and provide assistance for maintaining and restoring them.

So far the two projects have drawn up restoration plans for 13 sites and surveyed 14 meadows in the area and Started practical management and restoration work on 11 target sites and undertaken seed harvesting at 4 donor sites.

## East Lancashire - Platts Lodge Project in Accrington

The Trust worked with pupils from Woodnook Primary School to design an on-site information board, a newt sculpture and an attractive leaflet for the site. Platts Lodge is scheduled to be designated as part of Woodnook Vale Local Nature Reserve, which will be the largest LNR in Lancashire!

## Merseyside - Sand Lizards are re-introduced on Freshfield Dune Heath

The Trust released 34 captive-bred young sand lizards at Freshfield Dune Heath in early September of 2010. The release was part of the Sefton Coast Landscape Partnership scheme - a package of projects for the coast, to celebrate natural and cultural heritage.

Latest surveys have discovered young lizards showing that the reintroduction has been a success and further releases are planned for 2011.

# 2010/11 Highlights

## Greater Manchester - Mosslands Project

A wide range of biological surveys have been carried out across the Trust's mossland reserves including surveys for sphagnum moss, invertebrates, birds, and site hydrology.

A new mosslands volunteer survey group has also been established. The Mosslands Project has continued to benefit from Natural England Wetland Vision funding. This has helped fund a substantial capital restoration works programme on the mossland sites across our area.

## West Lancashire - Forever Meadows Project

In 2010/11, the Forever Meadows Project surveyed 29 species rich grassland sites in Chorley, St Helens, Knowsley and West Lancashire. Farmers / landowners have been supplied with information on how to maintain the wildlife interest and in some cases given a helping hand.

For example, at Hic Bibi Local Nature Reserve in Chorley, Forever Meadows funded a fencing project designed to protect species-rich grassland (and Great Crested Newt habitat). This will allow livestock to graze freely, whilst diverting walkers away from sensitive grassland areas and newt ponds.

## Wigan - A Special Visit from China

Following our Wigan Projects Manager Mark Champion's visit to the Chinese city of Huaibei for the International Ecopolis Forum, we welcomed a group of delegates back to look at the similarities between the ex-coalfield landscapes around Wigan and those in Huaibei.

The delegation were taken on a tour of successful land reclamation sites around the Greenheart Regional Park and were very impressed with the success of our work.

## South Lancashire - Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve

Many birds suffered during the cold winter; our weather station recorded -16.2oC at 0600 on 19 December 2010. In contrast, the early spring warmth brought several moth and dragonfly species out much earlier than normal.

Volunteers remain integral to life of the reserve, with over 60 every week delivering a wide range of tasks. We welcomed over 85,000 visits during 2010 and launched 3 new audio trails, all of which can be borrowed at the reserve, or downloaded from [www.lancswt.org.uk](http://www.lancswt.org.uk).

# Inspiring people about the natural world

Bringing people and wildlife together is an increasingly important area of our work. If we can encourage current and future generations to live lightly on our planet and respect and enjoy the natural world, we can benefit both people and wildlife.



## Highlights 2010/11

### Working with young people

**This year has been the last year of funding from 'V' - the national youth volunteering service, for our Trailblazer and IMPACT projects.**

Both projects aimed to unleash the passion and enthusiasm of 16-25 year olds for conservation work; they have proved extremely successful and will continue albeit on a smaller scale.

Over the three years of funding, IMPACT has supported 20 full time placements, provided 321 young people with part time opportunities and 787 people have joined in with taster activities. Trailblazers has also had a fantastic last year, with a number of schools and colleges keen for continued support.

### Environmental Education

**It's been a difficult year for our education projects as National Grid has had to give notice due to the level of repairs needed to our Environment Education Centre at Penwortham, Preston. We now plan to relocate our education operations to Brockholes Nature Reserve.**

We are continuing to develop and market our income-earning services. Our Eco Factor outreach programme is growing in importance, with activities being delivered in schools and in partnership with local authorities.

Thanks to funding from the Big Lottery, the Bolton Environmental Action Team (BEAT) has had a successful year and is achieving excellent results, with 11-14 year olds at 12 schools enjoying a range of after-school activities.

### Wildlife Watch Turns 40!

**This year's Wildlife Watch children's conference had a party atmosphere as the groups got together to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Wildlife Watch, the UK's leading environmental action club for children.**

Over 80 members and leaders from groups based in Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside attended the event at the Environment Education Centre in Penwortham on May 7th.

The aim of the day was to bring Wildlife Watch group members together to have fun and take part in a variety of exciting and sometimes competitive environmental workshops.



IMPACT

### Food growing and health

**We have been successful with an application to the Department of Health's Volunteering Fund to run a pilot project called Mud To Muscle in Bolton that demonstrates the health benefits volunteering can have on people who are in danger of, or are suffering from, cardio-vascular diseases.**

We have had success through our Reaching Communities bid for the Activate Your Lives project which aims to increase community use of the Bolton Environment Resource Centre and encourage long-term community ownership.

The Growing Healthy Naturally project produced a wide variety of case studies and reports from across Lancashire, Sheffield, Yorkshire and Northumberland thanks to the contribution of all the Wildlife Trusts concerned working in partnership.

The promotion generated through the project has helped the Wildlife Trust demonstrate the value of our activities for the health of children, young people and families.



Mud To Muscle

# Standing up for wildlife & the environment

The Trust continues to work to stand up for wildlife through lobbying and commenting on national and regional policy documents, planning applications and through involvement with local development frameworks. This is a very time consuming area of our work, with much of it going on 'behind the scenes', but it is integral to what we do and to us protecting wildlife for the future.



Grey Seal - Martha Tressler

## Some of our most crucial fights...

### Securing Living Seas

**In the last Annual Review we reported that the Marine and Coastal Access Act had been passed in November 2009. Our work to secure Living Seas in the North West has progressed.**

The Marine Appeal raised £36,128. We are now working to ensure the network of ecologically coherent Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are established with wildlife needs at the forefront.

### Chat Moss

**The Trust has been actively campaigning to save Chat Moss peat extraction site and has provided detailed objections to both Salford and Wigan councils. The Chat Moss campaign received well over 500 objections in the initial stages.**

The application for the Irlam area of Chat Moss has been rejected and currently under appeal, and the Trust will continue to work on this in addition to raising the profile of the importance of mosslands and reducing our demands for peat. The Mosslands project has continued to benefit from Natural England Wetland Vision funding. This has helped fund a substantial capital restoration works programme on the mossland sites across our area.



### Natural Environment White Paper

**The Wildlife Trusts were a key voice in lobbying on the content of the Natural Environment White Paper – the first for twenty years.**

Launched in August 2011, The Trust applauded the recognition of the need for restoration and recovery of the natural environment at a landscape-scale and also welcomed the commitment to establish Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs).

There are concerns, however, that initiating just 12 across the whole of England could seriously limit the scale of nature restoration. There is a long road ahead and we are working with Local Authorities and MP's to put this into action on the ground.

#### Other key areas:

- Multiple windfarms applications
- Attended Manchester Biodiversity Strategy meetings to set out priorities for delivering the City's 'Wildabout Manchester' strategy.
- Other major planning applications have included Cottam Brickworks near Preston, Pontins redevelopment in St Annes, Queensway near St Annes and underground gas storage by Halite (Canatxx).
- The Trust undertook a detailed study into the use of volunteers in monitoring Wildlife Sites through grant aid from Natural England.

### The Mersey Barrage

**Working with Cheshire Wildlife Trust, we raised concerns over proposals for a tidal energy scheme in the Mersey Estuary due to the potential impact on thousands of birds and newly established populations of migratory fish.**

The Feasibility Study Report issued by Peel Energy Ltd found that the estimated £3.5bn initial construction costs were 'not competitive' in current markets.



# Brockholes

Brockholes opened on Easter Sunday 2011 and has welcomed over 37,000 visitors since then, which has been very heartening after a hectic previous 12 months of getting the Visitor Village and reserve ready for the big opening. Construction had begun in December 2009, and two harsh winters had caused some delays, but Reserve Manager Sophie Leadsom was still busy working with her team of volunteers to make sure all of the habitats around the site were in the best condition to attract wildlife.



Alan Wright

**We created 12 hectares of lowland wet grassland by moving 17,000 cubic metres of earth (25,500 tonnes) to create 2000 metres of water filled channels and 12 isolated pools, and also created three hectares of wader scrapes by moving 22,000 cubic metres of earth (33,000 tonnes) to create isolated pools, swampy areas and lots of feeding edge.**

We have also propagated a total of 84,000 reed seedlings in the past three years and planted 40,830 of these out.

In addition to the seedlings planted out we have also planted 4,990 reed stems to help to develop our target habitats of reedbeds and reed fringes for the benefit of reed warbler, sedge warbler, reed bunting and reedbed moths.



Jason Lock

So far the results have been very positive, with breeding numbers well up on those recorded in 2007 in the first breeding season after Brockholes was purchased by the Trust. The biggest increases have been in lapwing, little ringed plover, sedge warbler, reed warbler and reed bunting, showing that the new habitats created have been well received by these birds.

In addition to the above another one of the year's highlights so far is our sand martin wall. Not completed until late March 2011, when our established sand martins were already back and settling in to their traditional breeding area we thought we wouldn't see any real sand martin activity this year. In early June birds started prospecting and we confirmed approximately 20 pairs nesting.

The reserve is going from strength to strength as it develops more each year, and the target habitats are really starting to deliver and meet their objectives, so the future is looking very promising for wildlife at Brockholes and for all the visitors who are already coming to get closer to it.

# Volunteers - our driving force

Volunteers are the life blood of our organisation and without them we would not be able to achieve what we do. Our Volunteering project continues to go from strength to strength thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Lancashire Environmental Fund, the SITA Trust and various central government sources.

## Our key achievements

- A total of 1,032 new people registered to become volunteers, including an enormously encouraging 153 at the new Brockholes nature reserve.
- Just under 1,000 volunteers completed a total of over 35,000 hours in 2010/11, including nearly 10,000 hours at Mere Sands Wood nature reserve. The average volunteer took part for six days.
- Our volunteers come from all walks of life. Our most recent evaluation revealed that 24% of volunteers are aged 16-24, 13% of volunteers have a disability and the ethnicity of volunteers mirrors the wider population of Lancashire.
- Our annual Volunteer Conference in October attracted 180 people enjoying a day of talks and activities at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston.
- Sound of Sopranos volunteers positively identified seven bat species on 26 sites and delivered more than 2,000 volunteer work days to manage these sites for bats.

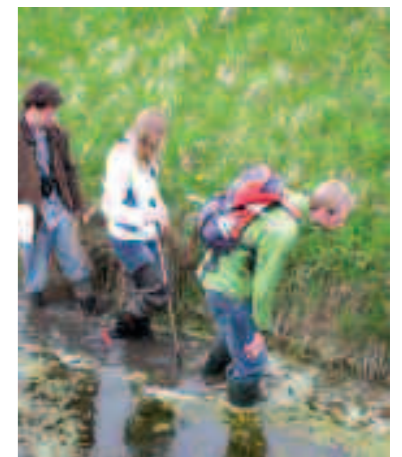


- Training in species identification saw 302 volunteers learning how to spot different types of beetles, bumblebees, wildflowers and mosses. This kind of information is crucial to building up an accurate picture of biodiversity in our region.
- Many volunteer groups are now FULL, demonstrating the high level of enthusiasm for volunteering with the Wildlife Trust and proof that our volunteer retention strategy is working.



Alan Wright

- Our 125 Water Vole Project volunteers completed a three-year survey of 315km of waterways. This comprehensive study revealed that water voles have clung on in strongholds in West Lancashire, and helped to secure new funding for surveys and habitat improvement work over the coming year.



# How we spent your money

## Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account) Year ending 31st March 2011

Every year we deliver hundreds of projects that benefit the people and wildlife of Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside. This year was no exception, but we also had the added challenge of opening Brockholes.



Brown Hare - Damian Waters

**The 'Brockholes Funding' chart shows the total funding for this major project, which has cost almost £11 million. There is still a shortfall of funding for this project of around £380,000, which we will need to find through fundraising and any profit on our operations.**

Now that Brockholes is open, we expect a very different picture for the accounts next year as the income and expenditure budgets will return to their normal levels of £3-4 million.

During 2010-11, Brockholes represented around 60% of our income and expenditure, which skews the organisation's accounts. To give a clearer picture, Brockholes is not included in the pie charts of income and expenditure for 2010-11.

Most of the projects we deliver must meet specific objectives as agreed with funders. Many of these projects support the core of our charity through management fees.

Others just cover their costs and contribute little to the running costs of the organisation itself. Some (e.g. nature reserve management) are subsidised by our charity from membership and donations for example.

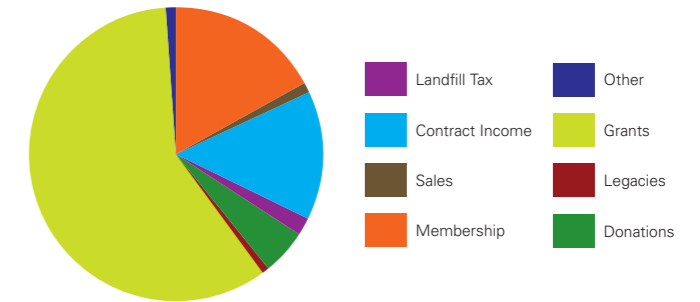
Every year we need to balance the income and expenditure whilst delivering the very best for wildlife and people, maintaining our nature reserves and fulfilling the criteria of funders. This year, the cuts resulted in a deficit of £10,395. Although this is a relatively small amount compared to the budget, clearly we cannot afford to spend more than we raise in future years.

This is why the income from membership and other 'unrestricted' sources (i.e. not for a specific project) are so valuable. This income allows us to keep the organisation going, helping us to develop amazing projects and to continue our vital work protecting wildlife for the future.

In addition, we match every pound we raise from membership by at least a further £5 raised from other sources.

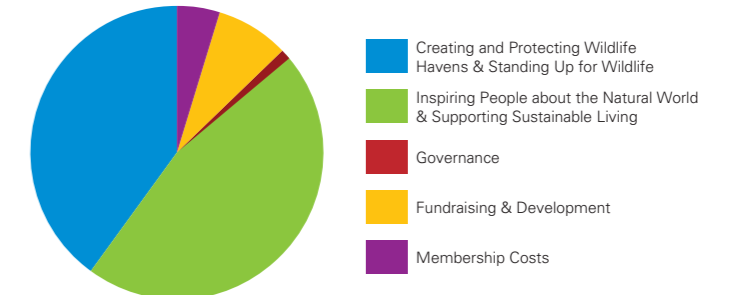
**Thank you for your support.**

## Total Income (excluding Brockholes) £3,790,116



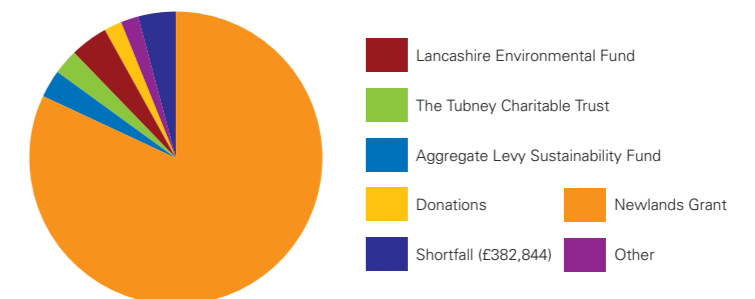
Legacies	£7,193	Sales	£52,126
Grants	£2,231,126	Contract Income	£546,506
Other	£49,692	Landfill Tax	£85,578
Membership	£629,651	Donations	£188,244
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,790,116</b>

## Total Expenditure (excluding Brockholes) £3,800,511



Membership Costs	£175,651	Inspiring People about the Natural World & Supporting Sustainable Living	£1,774,212
Governance	£18,008	Fundraising & Development	£294,915
Creating and Protecting Wildlife Havens & Standing Up for Wildlife	£1,537,725	<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,800,511</b>

## Brockholes Funding Total Cost £10,920,960



Newlands Grant	£9,091,664	Lancashire Environmental Fund	£416,750
Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund	£338,375	Donations	£177,042
The Tubney Charitable Trust	£350,000	Other	£164,285
		Shortfall (£382,844)	£382,844
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,920,960</b>

# Looking to the future

There are some challenging times ahead. We must remain true to our values while continuing to deliver an entrepreneurial approach to generate the funds needed to meet our core objectives.



**We are excited about Brockholes coming online and hope you are able to support us as we develop the site. We hope that Brockholes will continue to raise the profile of the Trust and become an important way for hundreds of thousands of people across the North West and beyond to connect with nature.**

Government cutbacks will continue to bite and, in addition to decreasing resources in government for nature conservation and cuts in local authority capacity, we are deeply concerned about proposals to dismantle the current planning system and replace it with a system that may not provide the same levels of protection for wildlife sites.

We could slip back 20 years in terms of the protection we have managed to gain for wildlife. We will be asking our campaigning members to engage with this once we know more.



In a rapidly changing world, it is very difficult to anticipate future opportunities and challenges, especially to try to look forward five years. However, we know from experience that our organisation is very good at adapting to new situations.

Our guiding concept is that we get fantastic people to work with and for us, we set ourselves ambitious goals to protect local wildlife and we share our deep passion for nature with local people so that we can achieve these goals together.

Protecting wildlife in the future  
**We all take such joy from the wildlife around us. The birds in our garden, a bee buzzing from flower to flower or a brown hare dashing across a field.**



The Lancashire Wildlife Trust takes a long term view on protecting wildlife and their habitats. Legacies, small and large, provide us with vital funds to continue this work into the future. Please consider leaving a gift to wildlife in your will.

To talk about leaving a legacy to Lancashire Wildlife Trust, you can call Clare Kenny on **01772 317234**. Thank you.

**With this in mind, we have produced a new Business Plan for the charity to guide us over the next five years.**

**Its core themes are:**

- Creating and protecting wildlife havens
- Standing up for wildlife
- Inspiring people about the natural world
- Supporting sustainable living

In recent times, the concepts of a Living Landscape and Living Seas have become central parts of all the Wildlife Trusts' thinking about the future. The idea of a Living Landscape is to provide a new way of thinking about, protecting and enhancing our natural world – by seeing it not as an optional extra, but holistically, as central to how we live, key to sustaining life on Earth. A Living Landscape approach seeks to make connections between people and wildlife, between nature, farming and business, in urban, rural and coastal areas, within and beyond land managed by the Trusts, right out to the seas that surround us.

Living Seas is The Wildlife Trusts' vision for the future of the UK's seas. Our ambition is to lead the way towards a healthy, productive and wildlife-rich future for our coasts and seas. Our seas and sea life have a remarkable capacity to recover but only if we give them the chance. A Living Landscape is a great undertaking that involves a total change in outlook. Delivering all of this is going to take good deal longer than five years, which is why we see this business plan as the first stage of a longer, 25-year plan. We continue to develop our products and services to ensure we maximize our potential to generate earned income. Our recent move to merge our education and community teams under 'People and Wildlife' will allow us to share expertise more effectively and increase the number of people we engage with the natural environment.

2012 also sees our 50th Anniversary and the Wildlife Trust Partnership's 100th Anniversary so we are planning special events and celebrations for the year. We are on course to hit our target of 20,000 members by 2012 - every one of whom is making a vital difference for wildlife in our region. We are also very grateful to all those who have left us a gift in their will. These legacies are increasingly crucial to the long-term future of the Trust and our ability to protect the wildlife of Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside for another 50 years.

**Thank you for your loyalty; it is what holds the charity together.**