



2024 - 2025

Annual report & accounts



**Northumberland
Wildlife Trust**



Grey seal pup © Tom Marshall



Wildlife spotting © Jon Hawkins – Surrey Hills Photography



Fly agaric © Guy Edwardes/2020VISION

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Birds survey at Whitelee Moor © Duncan Hoyle

A message from our Chair



It has been another extraordinary year for Northumberland Wildlife Trust (NWT), following a number of outstanding years of expansion and new initiatives. We have continued to grow our land holding, as well as extend our engagement with local communities.

There appears to be a new public interest in the environment and wildlife conservation and this has been noted in the numbers of people visiting our nature reserves, increased work with communities and in the availability of finance for new initiatives. It has also been reflected in the effectiveness of the resistance within the political environment to those elements of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill that threaten to diminish protections for nature in the face of housebuilding developments. The combined voices of the national team at The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) and other environmental partners, such as The National Trust and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, mean that nature and the importance of the environment have a stronger influence at a national level, as well as locally.

At a local level, NWT is engaged in one of the most significant initiatives in its history: the purchase of the Rothbury Estate. At around 10,000 acres, this is the largest single area of land that has come up for sale in England for the last 30 years. The £30m Estate is being bought by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (the

central body of the wildlife movement) in partnership with Northumberland Wildlife Trust under a two-stage agreement. We have been able complete on just over half the area of land making up the Estate and have until October 2026 to find the rest of the money. We are grateful for generous donors who have supported the purchase so far; but we urgently now need to raise the finance to finalise the deal. The prize offered by the successful purchase of the Estate is the chance to develop an international exemplar, demonstrating how supporting nature's recovery, world-class natural and cultural heritage, nature-friendly farming, and a thriving local community can go hand-in-hand: a genuinely unique opportunity for the wildlife movement to show what can be achieved for nature and people.

Aside from land purchase and nature recovery, NWT has been successful in acquiring funding to reconnect people with nature. This vital work in introducing local communities to the benefits of nature, along with supporting schools in giving children the chance to experience the natural environment, has been expanded and diversified to include under-resourced and under-represented communities. Engaging with local people also involves the successful use of social media and NWT has continued to extend its reach into communities of interest, complementing the very positive increase in media coverage and profile.

The future for nature's recovery looks bright despite an apparent lack of enthusiasm from the current government, and nothing demonstrates this better than the realistic concept of establishing a 40-mile corridor of land in recovery for nature, with the Rothbury Estate at its heart, stretching from the coast to Kielder, right across Northumberland.

A message from our Chief Executive



Mike Pratt, Chief Executive

Just when we think it is time to consolidate what we have achieved, irresistible new opportunities pop up, which take us a step further towards our mission! That was certainly the case for 2024/25 after an exciting previous year of delivery on all fronts.

New land at Whittle Dene was acquired, creating a continuous local wildlife corridor; we saw West Chevington rewilding site develop and all our Druridge Bay sites thrive in terms of nature recovery. We even entered the world of green finance, securing a habitat bank linking the Wilder Druridge landscape.

On the marine side, our partnership project with Durham Wildlife Trust, Stronger Shores, produced some pioneering work on marine conservation, involving oysters, seagrass and kelp, and helped raise public awareness and excitement which we can build on in future.

We also endeavoured to purchase the 3,800 hectare Rothbury Estate after the unsuccessful attempt in 2023. We succeeded in securing the first tranche and started a two-year bid to raise the funds to buy the rest. This will be the first national Wildlife Trust flagship for nature and nature-friendly farming in partnership with RSWT. The Rothbury purchase is part of a bigger vision of connectivity from the coast to Kielder and beyond, and an even wider one emerging between all northern Wildlife Trusts for a Wilder North.

It has not all been about land either. Our visitor centres at award-winning Northumberlandia and Hauxley grew in popularity and efficiency, offering the ideal combination

for people to enjoy wildlife whilst just relaxing and having a day out, exercising or attending events to involve themselves and their children in nature.

We also did a lot of work to find new and sustainable funding to expand our impact on nature in the city and edges of the urban areas. We have a highly active nature and communities team delivering a wide range of nature-connecting activities for everyone across a diverse range of communities. We have, as part of this work, started to develop partnerships and funding to provide therapeutic nature activities linked to improved health and wellbeing, which is something we have been aiming to do for some time. We even managed to spruce up our HQ at Gosforth to improve the working environment for those based in the offices.

We also did a lot of partnership work to develop species projects, such as a new National Heritage Lottery funded five-year red squirrel initiative, a Missing Lynx roadshow, and work on pine martens, orchids, water voles and more.

Change is our 'middle name' at NWT! We are constantly managing the dynamics of building a sustainable, resilient organisation, which has grown rapidly in the last few years, with the many opportunities that are out there and strategising over what we need to do next. We have big dreams and these are starting to be realised through land connectivity – that great nature corridor, with Rothbury at its heart, from coast to border, and coast to coast, along Hadrian's Wall. Now there's a thought – will this be a land where, one day, we might look up and see an English golden eagle soaring?

We need to dream big and bold here, in the only part of England we can lift nature back to where it needs to be. Our mission has never been more urgent or important, here in Northumberland, Newcastle and Tyneside. We really can bring nature back and back into people's lives.

The Wildlife Trusts' vision is a thriving natural world, with our wildlife and natural habitats playing a valued role in addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, and with everyone inspired to get involved in nature's recovery.



Short-eared owl © Luke Massey/2020VISION

Trustees' report

WHO WE ARE

The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement of people from all backgrounds who believe that we need nature and nature needs us. There are 46 individual Wildlife Trusts in the UK, each of which is a place-based, independent charity, as well as a central body, which co-ordinates collective action, campaigning, shared learning and projects. Northumberland Wildlife Trust represents Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland within this federation.

OUR PURPOSE

- Our purpose is to:-
- bring about nature's recovery,
 - manage large areas of land for the benefit of nature and climate,
 - empower people to take action for nature within their communities,
 - work with others to create a society where nature matters,
 - drive landscape-scale change for wildlife.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is a charity dedicated to saving wildlife and wild places and helping people to get closer to nature. We manage 69 nature reserves and help to create wildlife-rich landscapes and seas by working in partnership with other organisations, landowners and communities. The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit.'

The Trust's public benefit is enshrined in our charitable purpose as outlined above. Our activities and facilities are accessible to all. Our work to promote nature conservation and protect wildlife helps to maintain biodiversity and natural processes for the benefit of everyone and the climate. Our work to educate, engage and enthuse a wide range of people aims to improve understanding of, and engagement in, environmental issues.



Common frog © Mark Hamblin/2020VISION



Northumberlandia volunteers © Peter Ernst



Whooper swan © Danny Green/2020VISION

OUR STRATEGY AND BUSINESS PLAN

We launched our Wilder Northumberland strategy and business plan in May 2020 which set out our 2030 vision and five-year plan to deliver a wilder future for nature, places, people and the Trust. We are now at the mid-point and our operating environment has changed substantially. We intend to reframe the strategy and align it more with the national strategy as many other Wildlife Trusts have done. This will be completed by spring 2026.

Key additional areas of focus and emphasis include:

- Adopting a new larger scale vision of Wilder Northumberland incorporating wider corridors and bigger areas of activity
- Resourcing more activity to engage with farmers and landowners in active nature recovery

- How we maximise the nature value of existing sites we manage
- How we take forward key species projects
- How we further develop our business focus on BNG and green finance
- Extending the impact and longevity of our people engagement/community organising approach
- New and existing strategic partnerships
- Campaigning for nature - a sustained programme

The driver for all this remains the urgent need to intensify our impact on nature's recovery and engage more people with our mission. We plan to increase resources and capacity and to continue to innovate and trial new approaches in order to deliver the step change required by the business plan.

OUR VISION

“A wilder future for Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside”

This means:

- Everywhere and everything wilder, with landscapes richer in wildlife, bigger and better-connected land, wetlands and seas;
- Reaching more people, forming more partnerships and influencing decision-making about wilding and greening locally;
- Contributing locally, regionally and nationally to restoring nature and tackling climate breakdown.

Strategic objectives

We will deliver our vision through three strategic objectives:

- 1 Lead nature's recovery
- 2 Inspire people and organisations to care and mobilise them to act
- 3 Ensure an agile green culture and sustainable Trust

Underpinning all our work are our core principles and values - that we are passionate, visionary, inspiring, effective and acting with integrity.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Lead nature's recovery

By delivering projects aimed at restoring wildlife abundance and diversity, NWT ensures the preservation of local biodiversity. Healthy ecosystems provide essential services such as clean air, improved water quality, reducing flood risk and climate regulation through carbon sequestration, which are all crucial for community health and wellbeing.

PROGRESS THIS YEAR

INCREASED LAND PORTFOLIO

● Whittle Dene

The purchase of Whittle Dene Woods in the Tyne Valley, near Ovingham, was finally completed in April 2024. It added some fine ancient woodland and meadows to our portfolio and connects to our existing holding and to land owned by the Woodland Trust and Northumbrian Water. Taken together, we have nearly a whole tributary of the Tyne in management for nature. It is a small local example of the ecological connectivity we need to see at landscape scale across our area. We have been liaising with the local community at Whittle Dene over future management and with neighbours over a potential partnership project. Changes this year included fencing the perimeter, planting 200m of hedge, removing plantation conifers and replanting native trees with Newcastle's Nature Networks funding. We also upgraded the access track into the reserve to allow future restoration works, and set up species recording, including acoustic and camera trap monitoring which has resulted in great footage and records.

● Earsdon West Forest

The completed acquisition in April 2024 of Earsdon West Forest, close to West Chevington and the Druridge Bay reserves, marked our first habitat bank site. This 82-hectare site is a blank canvas of low quality grassland and woodland, stream edge and ponds that can be improved for biodiversity gain. It is another part of the wider jigsaw, our vision for a Wilder Druridge. Since purchase, we have completed the baseline habitat assessment, carried out a soil condition assessment and completed the initial Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, and associated Biodiversity Net Gain Metric. We await our first BNG unit sales.

● Securing the Rothbury Estate

The Wildlife Trusts, in partnership with NWT, purchased a large upland area of the Rothbury Estate around Simonside in October 2024. The charities agreed to buy the whole Estate through a two-phase purchase agreement and have until October 2026 to raise £30m for 3,800 ha of amazing countryside. It was the largest landholding to come up for sale in England in the last 30

years and is the most ambitious project we have ever undertaken. By conserving the Estate's rich natural and cultural heritage, supporting local farmers and improving public access, we will ensure a sustainable future for people and wildlife. We do not think people want the Estate to be broken up and exploited by investors or intensive agriculture. The Estate is at the heart of a 40-mile nature recovery corridor, from the Scottish border to the coast, and represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for nature connectivity on a vast scale.

This acquisition is proving a challenge, and not just for the fundraising. Liaising with the farming and local communities is so important to establish a way forward that works for everyone. It is a shared future and requires a shared vision.

NATURE RECOVERY ON OUR NATURE RESERVES AND WILDLING SITES

● Whitelee

Whitelee is the second largest nature reserve in England. The end of the tenancy agreement in December 2023 meant it returned to our direct management. Much has happened since then. The latest phase of peat restoration installed over 2,000 peat dams and baffles, 185 coir dams and over 15km of hag re-profiling. Volunteers like a wild challenge and helped install the coir dams and planted thousands of sphagnum clumps, a range of native trees and thousands of wildflower seeds in the enclosed fields. Further peat restoration and tree planting will take place over 2025 and link to the wider Kielder landscape. Working in partnership with Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency, our Northumberland Peat Partnership team has continued to analyse the impacts of the Whitelee peatland restoration works on water quality in the River Rede catchment.

● Druridge Bay

The 327 ha land at **West Chevington**, near Druridge Bay, was acquired in 2022-23, with help from the Reece Foundation, and provided an opportunity to explore rewilding techniques.

Arable fields are now out of production and several



Rothbury Estate © Duncan Hutt

fields sown with ryegrass. The ponds and wetland areas created with licensing for great crested newts have progressed. A massive number of tree guards have been removed and recycled from the plantation woodland.

The Wilder Druridge project, triggered by the acquisition of West Chevington, has engaged with 29 landowners and public organisations to co-create a landscape vision. We focused on key areas and developed fifteen work plans and five species action plans for beavers, harvest mice, water voles, swifts and red squirrels. Transformation continued, courtesy of the Biodiversity Boost project.

In March 2024, we were awarded £750,000 from Defra and the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Species Survival Fund for restoring 500 ha habitat, enhancing biodiversity and improving access at Druridge Bay. Our project, Biodiversity Boost, focused on **East Chevington, West Chevington** and **Hauxley** as well as partnering with Northumberland Zoo, Flexigraze and EcoNorth. Habitat creation and improvement work for 2025 involved the restructuring of plantation woodland, hedges, reed beds and waterways as well as the creation of species-rich

grassland, a wildflower meadow and wetland areas across a substantial area. We undertook mink monitoring with camera traps as it will not be possible to reintroduce with water voles if mink are present, and we used grey squirrel control to safeguard the small population of reds.

At West Chevington, we created five new ponds on the ex-arable land, rewiggled the watercourses and created natural mini-dams. These dams slow the flow of water, filter out sediment and divert the flow to create more natural meandering streams, which provide a greater variety of habitats. 5km of fencing has been removed on West Chevington to allow hedges to spread and wildlife to move more freely; we still use selective conservation grazing with No-Fence collars. We have reinstated and improved the public rights of way across West Chevington and installed some new permissive rights of way.

Reed cutting and reprofiling work at the East Chevington pond has been spectacular and we have seen bittern, not nesting, but there is hope for this in future years.

The project's aims are also to connect more people with

nature through volunteer task days and public events. Volunteers have been so helpful with surveys, removing tree guards and setting up marker posts to delineate new public rights of way at West Chevington. We have installed a new accessible wildlife-watching hide at Hauxley and wildlife cameras with live footage you can watch from the café with a cuppa. Our new drones also give us a birds-eye view of changes and are a big help on survey work. We have increased access to reserves through the creation of new footpaths and bridleways. The project employs two officers and provides entry-level conservation experience for two trainees.

In December 2024, we secured funding from the Rural Asset Multiplier Programme (RAMP) to enhance rural community facilities, health and wellbeing, volunteer opportunities and community resilience. Funding supported a communities officer to co-create and deliver 12 projects from Berwick to Amble and two 12-month trainee placements, aimed at encouraging people to work in the conservation sector. Much of the planned infrastructure work actually took place at Hauxley in 2025 including a new wildlife-watching hide, a new volunteer workshop and improvements to the building, café and paths.

● **Peatland**

Restoring degraded peatlands accelerates biodiversity, facilitates carbon storage, improves water quality and reduces flooding downstream. As the executive team of the **Northumberland Peat Partnership** (NPP), we worked on detailed surveys and plans for the restoration of 14 peatland sites across 5,000 ha. This was possible through the support of Natural England, the Ministry of Defence and the Environment Agency. These ranged from the uplands of the National Park to sites such as Prestwick Carr, on the edge of Newcastle, and included both blanket bogs and raised mires. Working with the landowner and specialist contractors, restoration work took place on 250 ha at The Wou and Moss Peteral Farm. Within months of completion, we could see sphagnum growing behind the hundreds of dams and used satellite imagery to show the impact of the works on the landscape. We now remotely gather water table data on 25 different peatland sites and are confident in the use of novel techniques and technologies.

● **Nature reserves**

We now manage 69 nature reserves including sites we manage for Northumbrian Water, The Land Trust and Forestry England, M.O.D. The area of this land is 6,193 ha, which represents 1.2% of the combined area of Northumberland, North Tyneside and Newcastle.

With **Annstead Dunes**, we are a partner in the EU-LIFE Wader project, which encompasses the North Northumberland Coast (north of Amble) and river Tweed catchment. Specifically our Annstead Dunes reserve is included in the Invasive Non-Native Species

element removing species such as Japanese rose and sycamore. Interpretation is also being upgraded.

Fencerhill Wood, St Nicholas Park and **Big Waters** reserves were part of Newcastle's Nature Networks, a two-year project to support pollinators across the city by improving habitats and removing invasive species. The main hide at Big Waters was repainted and renovated with a new floor. The feeding station was replaced (now squirrel proof), scrub controlled, and new bird boxes erected and monitored, thanks to the volunteer team. One of the more innovative features of the project was a trial using a biological control for Himalayan balsam at Fencerhill.

NWT volunteers help improve biodiversity and climate resilience. They contributed 14,449 hours of practical conservation on our own reserves and partner sites with **Northumbrian Water** and **The Land Trust**. Work on Northumbrian Water sites included pond clear outs, removal of invasives and scrub and woodland thinning. We were successful in retaining the long-term management contracts with The Land Trust for Northumberlandia and Weetslade. The Weetslade Practical Conservation team scooped the national Friends of/Community group Award from The Land Trust for their work restoring pathways and steps.

PARTNERSHIPS

If we want to change the outcomes for nature, we need people and organisations on board. It is our intention to work with other Wildlife Trusts, environmental organisations and networks as much as we can to maximise the impact for nature.

The northern group of **Local Enterprise Partnerships**, a 'Northern Place and Culture partnership' is working to drive forward a Place Strategy for the North. 90% of the north is covered by a devolution deal, so joined-up cross-sector working, where nature-based solutions link with health, net zero and jobs and investment is expected to happen. There is a lot more integration of these than ever before with increased resources allocated to them. Collaborative work is vital to expanding our efforts.

We are working with **Cumbria Wildlife Trust** to identify and develop opportunities for large-scale nature restoration, coast to coast, across the **Hadrian's Wall corridor**. This is currently being set up and will support rewilding projects, the reintroduction of keystone species and better protections for marine and coastal habitats.

An ambitious vision for **Wild Kielder** is gaining traction. Partners, including Forestry England and Northumberland National Park, are looking at an area of initially 6,000ha, which would link to Whitelee to create a vast cross-border nature recovery area with native planting and potential reintroduction of wildcats.



Reed cutting at East Chevington Nature Reserve © Helen Walsh

The **Wilder Northumberland Network** is an exciting network promoting closer collaboration with land managers committed to nature recovery action, including wilding, naturalised grazing systems and regenerative farming. Wilder Northumberland now covers 31,022 ha of land, with 27 members (either individual landowners such as Hepple. or organisational projects such as Wild Kielder). During the year, Wilder Northumberland has completed 35 advice visits to landowners and organisations. It has organised 12 events, from Great North Bog Day to a beaver film and talk, attracting over 400 attendees. Most popular actions from members are making space for water, making space for trees and scrub, encouraging native planting and reducing management generally.

The **Stronger Shores** project brings together leading academics, Wildlife Trusts and other nature conservation non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to improve understanding of the costs and benefits of kelp, seagrass and native oyster habitats with regard to coastal erosion, flood risk, climate change, biodiversity management and wider benefits. The Wildlife Trusts in the North East are leading seagrass re-introduction trials into the Aln and Don, with permission expected for the Wansbeck.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust managed the tree planting and community events for the **North East Community Forest**, a partnership begun in 2022, supporting delivery of their 30-year vision to increase tree coverage across the North East. This year, community and NWT volunteers planted 4,000 trees and carried out maintenance work on 22,000 trees.

The Trust is actively involved in developing the **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)** for the North of Tyne. We have been engaged in data gathering as part of the LNRS background understanding as well as being heavily involved in the habitat planning work and as a member of the overall steering group. Gathering, digitising and sharing data is one of our priorities to enable more informed decision-making and we have made good progress, for example, sharing over 20,000 sightings records with the Environmental Records Information Centre (ERIC).

Local Wildlife Sites are a comprehensive network of sites of nature conservation importance, designated as either Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) or Local Geological Sites (LGS). They provide refuges for wildlife and represent local character and distinctiveness, complementing other protective designations. We were successful in securing survey work from April 2024 for the next 12-18 months via Northumberland County Council.

EcoNorth, our subsidiary company, works in partnership with NWT as a combined habitat delivery body for Natural England, working toward the creation of pond mitigation habitats as part of the national great crested newt district level licensing scheme, one of Europe's largest habitat creation projects. The scheme has created or

restored over 70 ponds across Northumberland and North Tyneside since 2019. There is also a monitoring period each year, involving qualitative assessments and eDNA sampling for great crested newts. During the spring of 2025, more than 50 ponds were sampled and assessed.

EcoNorth conducted a harvest mouse feasibility study at Druridge Bay, involving habitat mapping and a suitability assessment, and habitat surveys and reporting together with a biodiversity net gain assessment at Earsdon West Forest.

Forestry England also appointed EcoNorth to complete UKHab and habitat condition assessments for the Wild Kielder project, which forms a significant part of Forestry England's national aspiration for rewilding areas of their estate. The fieldwork for this area of over 6,000 ha was an enormous undertaking.

We responded on 41 **planning applications**, including 2 large solar farms, the Cambois databanks, Northumberlandia high ropes and Newcastle Great Park's lit footpath through Havannah. We also considered 41 woodland grant applications.

SPECIES PROJECTS

As well as the fundamental habitat programmes, we have also supported individual species.

Red Squirrels Northern England (RSNE) is our red squirrels conservation partnership. The four red squirrel rangers have delivered an impressive 1,000 days of onsite effort conserving red squirrels, managing grey squirrels and protecting trees on 3,000 hectares of woodland. We continue to assist landowners, including NWT, with securing funding from the Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier scheme, which has recently been reviewed, and now offers £60 per hectare for grey squirrel control. Newcastle's Nature Networks funded training for 28 volunteers in squirrel monitoring, and a further 10 in grey squirrel control, which will benefit sites across the city and beyond.

Our spring survey remains vital for tracking changes in red and grey squirrel populations, informing conservation effort and measuring success. Between March and May 2024, we completed 246 surveys, thanks to the support of approximately 150 volunteers. Red numbers increased to 52% occupancy (up from 50% in 2023), but grey numbers also grew to 69% (up from 62% in 2023).

In March 2024, we received approval from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the **Red Squirrels Recovery Network** project. This ambitious five-year partnership project was awarded £4.86 million and will be delivered in collaboration with five partner organisations across the north of England and southern Scotland. The project aims to safeguard red squirrel survival through widespread community engagement, increased public awareness



and a significant expansion of the volunteer network. We will also be testing a delivery method for grey squirrel fertility control.

The Missing Lynx Project, a partnership between NWT, The Lifescape Project and RSWT, launched a touring exhibition on 23rd April 2024. It used impressive technology and imagery to inform about the lynx and its possible place in our ecosystems. The exhibition visited village halls and venues in locations in northern England and southern Scotland, in and around the predicted range of any theoretical potential lynx reintroduction to Kielder Forest. A team of staff, supported by volunteers, welcomed members of the public who were able to learn about lynx and the wider biodiversity crisis. Nearly 10,000 visitors were encouraged to ask questions and to fill in a questionnaire – we received 1,696. This work formed part

of the social feasibility study assessing the support of a future lynx reintroduction. Further engagement has been undertaken with a range of stakeholders who could be affected if lynx reintroduction takes place in the future. We held focus groups with people representing farming, forestry, business and the community.

All the work we have put into the Restoring Ratty and Naturally Native projects, bringing back **water voles** to Kielder and the Tyne catchment, was carefully monitored with 28 volunteer-led water vole/mink monitoring surveys.

A further 40 **harvest mice** were bred and released at East Chevington in Quarter 1 in partnership with Northumberland Zoo and have boosted the resilience of local populations.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Inspire people to care and act

People are key to nature's recovery. Despite all efforts, overall, the UK is still one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. If we are to change the outcome for nature and climate, we need people to care and act now. The problem is, although we need nature, we are increasingly disconnected from our natural environment. Many people feel unwelcome in green spaces, or are unable to access wild places close to where they live. Our aim is to reconnect people with nature, creating a 'ripple effect' of people and communities to achieve 1 in 4 people taking action for nature and climate.

PROGRESS THIS YEAR

OUR PEOPLE TEAM – WILD CITY

The Wild City team helps communities connect with and then take action for nature and climate, creating positive change. We amplify community voices, build agency and support people to act in ways that help both nature and communities thrive. Community organising is central to our approach. We believe lasting change is only possible through strong local partnerships and collaboration. Given the size of our region, we prioritise working with communities experiencing deprivation and underrepresented groups.

The team engaged 8,290 people and supported over 40 community and youth environmental social action projects.

● Education and young people

Our Education and Youth staff collaborated with 29 schools and 13 youth groups to embed nature in learning and develop young people's skills in environmental action. Following a successful outdoor learning pilot with Gosforth Junior High Academy, we supported staff to lead their own sessions with confidence. At Collingwood School and Media Arts College, we used hands-on experiences to spark curiosity and support pro-nature behaviours among Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) students.

Young people designed and led their own environmental projects, including:

- A 'Wild Ward Nature Trail' at Great North Children's Hospital
- A nature photography exhibition at Gosforth Central Middle School
- A courtyard-to-wildlife-haven transformation at George Stephenson Academy

● Young People's Forum

In its third year, NWT's Young People's Forum engages youth in organisational development. The Young People's Forum is made up of members from across Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland. The aim of the

group is to help the Trust work better for young people taking action for nature, whilst they gain skills, experience in the process. This year, they hosted another Eco Fashion Festival Event in Newcastle with 150 attendees and 400+ items of clothing swapped. They attended the Climate Action Newcastle rally, with one member delivering an amazing speech. They have created blog posts for the website, met staff and visited sites to learn about different roles, and attended a Wildlife Trust Careers webinar. NWT is keen to hear different perspectives and our plan is to develop and recruit two young people as Trustees to give a voice to the generation that will be most affected by climate change.

"The climate crisis is too big to tackle as individuals, but meeting everyone on the Forum has given me space to work as part of a group and find positive ways to make changes." – Lucy, Young People's Forum member.

● Community groups

Our Communities team collaborated with 33 groups, helping people build the skills and confidence to lead wildlife projects. Through our work with the North East Community Forest, we planted 4,780 trees and surveyed 22,000 more, achieving an 80% tree survival rate.

We worked with diverse partners, including Brightside Adult Services, Carers Northumberland, Tyne Housing, TopSoil queer gardening group, Skills for People, Hazelrigg Parish Council and many others.

Some projects just took off! Prompted by concerns from local residents, we helped launch a community-led initiative to support the return of swifts to Newcastle. Activities included public talks, swift survey training and nest box installations. Residents also formed local groups and social media pages to share sightings and co-ordinate action. Over 130 residents got involved and 84 swift boxes were installed, with 'Swift Streets' planned for next year.

This year also saw the launch of the Jean Cartman Wilder Communities Award, honouring a long-standing

We're new to the area.
Helping plant the orchard
helped us feel at home.



Tree planting © Richard Osbourne

NWT member and nature advocate. We received 60 applications, with Pottery Bank Community Centre winning and two runners-up receiving funding and support.

● Access and engagement for everyone

NWT staff teams, particularly the Wild City team, supported communities with barriers to accessing nature, or who are underrepresented, to connect with and act for nature. For example:

- Deafink – we worked with this charity that supports people who are deaf or hard of hearing over the course of the year, running nature connection sessions.
- Brightsides Adult Services – this group supports young adults with disabilities and we helped them to develop their outdoor space into a wildlife garden and food-growing zone.
- African Community Advice North East – we helped their youth group to set up a podcast called 'Ready Steady Grow' to encourage their peers to act for nature. The group also spoke at the North East Youth Symposium about litter and green space inequality in Byker, addressing influential figures such as councillors, the Police and Crime Commissioner and NHS leads.
- Great North Children's Hospital – we worked with a ward in this hospital over a few months as part of our Eco Influencers project.

"This project made her first year of treatment a positive one. We're so grateful." – Parent, Great North Children's Hospital.

- Hillcrest School (Special Educational Needs School) – we worked with a group of students with special educational needs to build green skills and connect with nature.

● Mental health

Evidence shows that a thriving, wildlife-rich environment benefits both physical and mental health. People with nature on their doorstep are more active, mentally resilient and have better all-round health. However, just 35% of households with annual incomes below £10,000 are within a 10-minute walk of a publicly accessible natural green space.

NWT is using innovative nature-based solutions to tackle health inequalities across Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. From social prescribing partnerships to co-designed peer-support models, we are at the forefront of integrating the natural environment into local health systems.

Our programmes combine conservation expertise with creative, community-led approaches that promote physical and mental health, reduce isolation and build

resilience. We believe access to nature is a right, and a powerful, underused tool for advancing health equity.

"A lovely way to improve wellbeing and mental health by noticing nature. Everyday."

This year, with a dedicated Nature and Wellbeing Officer, we set up 'Better with Nature', a six-month project funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund with the North East Combined Authority as the Lead Authority. They delivered taster sessions and two six-week courses in nature connection and skills programmes for people facing health and social inequalities, with poor physical or mental health, carers, service users and social prescribers. We engaged over 400 people across 19 local events and training. We connected 22 nature-based organisations. Outcomes were strong:

- 100% reported improved connection to nature
- 93% reported increased social connection and a sense of safety

"It's been so good for me – to be in nature, share experiences and feel supported." – Better with Nature participant.

The project outcomes were so successful that we have been funded by the NIECP Transitional Year Fund for more wellbeing work.

ACCESSIBILITY

Access to nature is not equal and we strive to reduce barriers and make improvements particularly to sites that can readily be reached by the majority of people in our region. We know that access to nature is important for health and wellbeing, relieving stress and for helping people stay active. We have improved access to nature at:

- Weetslade, 200m footpath resurfaced
- Northumberlandia, 400m of woodland paths resurfaced and a new 40m section of footpath added to link the Blagdon estate for a longer walk
- Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre, a new accessible hide, new brass rubbing disk trails, wildlife CCTV and a 3D interactive on-line reserve tour
- Holywell Pond, hide refurbished (new cladding, shutters) and viewing screen maintained

Our T-Level student also helped with an accessibility audit of the NWT website. We have made good enhancements already with ongoing improvements planned.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIVITIES

NWT actively engages its members, supporters, and the public by offering educationally entertaining programmes and general events. In 2024-25, we ran 418 events attracting over 23,811 participants. We focused on our visitor centres, St Nicholas Park, Tower Knowe for

Osprey Watch and various destinations for the Missing Lynx touring exhibition. We offered the usual holiday programme, monthly food and craft markets, guided walks, self-guided trails and more. We put on a wide range of activities to appeal to people from diverse backgrounds and age ranges. Notable activities included stargazing, a dawn chorus walk, mindfulness sessions, festive crafting, nature watercolours, theatre in the park with the Handlebards and a very special festive visitor at Northumberlandia. We attended 30+ fairs/shows/markets to spread awareness far and wide, with meaningful interactions with over 4,000 people. Our resilient Great North runners had a grand day out and raised £8,564.

30 Days Wild, the national campaign to encourage random acts of wildness throughout June, celebrated its 10th year and had 1,116 signups for information and inspiration. We promoted on social media and had various events lined up including the Big Wild Weekend, which included mindfulness and wellbeing sessions at Northumberlandia.

We have two authors to support us. Ian Jackson's Northumberland Rocks has sold over 5,000 copies since it was first published, donating profits to the Trust. And this year, longstanding volunteer, Mel Rockett, wrote and published the fascinating story of his involvement in the Restoring Ratty project, Ratty Restored – a vole, a mink and a man.

RSNE continued to be a leading source of advice and resources on red squirrel conservation. The website offers comprehensive information on the threats facing red squirrels and practical guidance on how individuals can contribute to their protection. It had over 50,000 website visitors and 8,000+ social media followers. RSNE also delivered six public activities, including talks to local community groups and colleges, as well as practical training in squirrel monitoring and humane trapping. 156 people of all ages participated and were better connected to nature.

The Northumberland Peat Partnership (NPP) directly engaged over 400 people on why Northumberland's peatlands are so special through attending events, presenting to local groups and providing opportunities for schools. We want to ensure that schools and colleges have access to high quality resources/opportunities to better understand peatlands.

● Visitor centres

NWT has two Visitor Centres in Northumberland, at Hauxley and Northumberlandia, which attract about 205,000 visitors per year and make a great introduction to wildlife. They offer accessible recreational opportunities and spaces for community events. These centres serve as hubs for environmental education and active participation, attracting schools, families, community groups and other charities.



The HandleBards at Northumberlandia © Liz Lovatt

At Hauxley, we run guided walks, rubbing trails, holiday activities and a monthly evening talk programme. It is our flagship reserve, with accessible paths and new/ refurbished hides, beautiful ponds, which attract a great number of migrating birds and a lively population of tree sparrows.

Northumberlandia hosts larger events such as theatre productions, fun runs and a monthly food and craft market, which can bring different audiences to engage with nature. It scooped two national awards from The Land Trust this year. Community Site of the year was awarded for its packed and varied programme of events. Connor Grundy named Volunteer of the Year for his work as reserve warden, making a difference to visitors' experiences and most importantly, helping the site's resident wildlife.

ADVOCACY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Acting as an advocate for wildlife, NWT influences local and national policies to protect natural habitats. We work closely with the collective Wildlife Trust movement to influence policy to ensure sustainable development and long-term environmental health, benefitting current and future generations. We have always been involved in the 30 by 30 initiative to restore 30% of land and sea to a good condition by 2030 but defending nature took on a force of its own in the run up to the General Election. We promoted the Great Big Nature Survey, which provided national evidence on the importance of the environment for voters. We participated in the Restore Nature Now protest on Saturday 22 June, joining more than 60,000 people and over 350 charities, businesses and action groups to march through central London to Parliament. We provided guidance on writing to MPs on the website, created materials for the public to use, and connected with Friends of the Earth in Alnwick to organise a hustings event.

Throughout the year, we campaigned on many specific key issues such as pesticides, peat bans, bottom trawling, water quality and nature-positive housing development.

AWARENESS AND INFORMATION SHARING

Creating awareness of the biodiversity crisis, the climate emergency or local wildlife stories is an important part of connecting with people and prompting that emotional reaction that triggers action. NWT news stories and social media are vital for creating awareness and our website and other communications tools give key messages and detailed information.

News coverage

In 2024/25, the Trust appeared in print 280 times and similarly the stories appeared 1,262 times online. We had good representation on radio with 48 interviews and news sound bites and the Trust appeared 57 times on television – local and national. Highlights put Rothbury

in top spot, with good coverage for lynx and the Restore Nature Now march. BBC Countryfile filmed at West and East Chevington featuring Sophie Webster and Lee Rankin talking about birds and re-wilding. We also had a number of requests for filming on our reserves including the very exciting Danny Boyle zombie epic, 28 Years Later, partly staged at our Briarwood Banks site!

Website and social media

The NWT website continues to be the main source of information for most people, with 439,127 users, similar to last year. We had 8,332 subscribers to our monthly newsletter, which gives supporters a neat regular update and ways to get involved; the average open rate is excellent at 49%.

We post on all the main social media platforms:

Facebook followers 11,692 +7% on last year

Instagram followers 4,137 +13%

X followers 6,318 -4%

Linked-in 2,639 followers

Bluesky, a new social platform, was also introduced

Print

We produced the member magazine Roebuck three times during the year, which keeps supporters up to date with key wildlife issues and NWT's activities. We also printed the What's On guide, which goes to members, visitor centres and tourist attractions throughout the region, promoting our events programme to involve as many people as possible with nature activities.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers provide an astounding extension to our work in repairing nature, engaging with people and helping us run the organisation. 454 volunteers contributed 31,014 hours in 2024/25, which equates to 20 FTE. Volunteering at NWT offers individuals from diverse backgrounds the chance to learn new skills and experience, improve their health and wellbeing and contribute positively to their community.

Practical conservation and wardening are always the most popular activities but many staff besides our estates team used volunteer support on their projects. Highlights included helping with Osprey Watch, where volunteers ran the popular viewpoint at Tower Knowe over summer; and supporting the Missing Lynx exhibition tour. Community engagement volunteers helped at fairs and shows and at the visitor centres/café's. And, we cannot forget the reception, finance, marketing and conservation office volunteers who kept on top of our admin.

The Red Squirrels Northern England (RSNE) spring survey tracks changes in red and grey squirrel populations, informing conservation effort and measuring success. 150 volunteers helped complete 246 surveys. Volunteer effort was directly recognised in the success of the Red Squirrel Recovery Network application with the National



It's been a pleasure becoming a regular volunteer alongside friends...I've learned invaluable lessons and formed meaningful connections.

Volunteer © Natasha Hemsley

Heritage Lottery, and there will be concerted efforts to recruit more red squirrel groups and a more diverse range of volunteers to help secure a future for red squirrels.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is not a transactional commitment like the National Trust – it is, in effect, a donation. Members provide an important source of unrestricted income that allows us to fund the Trust's most pressing needs. Members feel more strongly about nature and the TWT Great Big Nature Survey analysis concluded that they actually do more for nature too. We certainly know that members help with volunteering, campaigning, fundraising and writing to their MPs, as well as being nature advocates in their own communities – we salute them for their support.

Unfortunately, we are now starting to see the effects of the cost of living crisis, which has hit our region particularly hard. Memberships at 5,510 were down 1% versus last year; we recruited 3% fewer memberships but cancellations were 24% higher than the previous year. We did increase subscription prices for new members from January 2025 to contribute to cost increases. Recruitment remained mostly online (80%+) but recruiters still went to fairs and shows, as well as Northumberlandia and Hauxley as we think that this is an important part of awareness building and the 'commitment decision.' We did test different initiatives to recruit new members, including 'sales' which are still worth doing despite higher lapse rates. We also continued

lower cost, lower commitment options for those who wish to support us with our 'Adopt an animal' online scheme, which has been moderately successful. We are progressing a new member portal, which will allow members to update their own details, to help accuracy and efficiency. RSWT are also supporting us with developing data insights, reporting and benchmarking on Return on Investment (ROI).

APPEALS

- NWT ran four appeals in 2024-25, which members, donors and supporters kindly helped with:
- **Nextdoor Nature Appeal – Big Give Green Match Fund – £20,956**
This appeal was for our work in community, supporting and enabling local groups and residents to take action for nature.
 - **Pine Marten Survey Appeal – £5,798**
This appeal was for pine marten survey work to give us a better idea of the range and quantity of these animals in Northumberland.
 - **Securing Rothbury Estate – £72,809 (Northumberland/Tyne & Wear)**
This appeal was a bit of a surprise and went via RSWT to raise money to buy the Rothbury Estate; it was promoted by NWT (although is not included in our accounts) and people around the region were very generous.
 - **Whitelee Moor Appeal – The Big Give Christmas Challenge £20,505**
The Whitelee appeal ran as our Christmas Appeal to improve peatland, woodland and wildflower meadows.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Ensure a sustainable, agile and green culture

PROGRESS THIS YEAR

SUSTAINABLE FINANCES

Key to our long-term success is our financial sustainability. We operate a robust financial planning system, with rolling cash flow forecasts and working capital reviews. Quarterly management accounts operate with an open view to managing financial risks with a solid fundraising strategy, income pipeline and horizon scanning for new opportunities.

Financial reserves are the portion of our unrestricted funds that are freely available to spend on any of the Trust’s purposes in accordance with our charitable objectives. We review our reserves policy annually to monitor and maintain our financial resilience. Our key driver in setting the unrestricted funds target is maintaining sufficient cash flow to allow us to continue to operate in periods of uncertainty and to ensure that we can fund the large number of projects for which grant funding is received in arrears. We then aim to retain sufficient unrestricted cash reserves to cover non-project running costs for a specified number of months. The current target is to achieve and maintain a minimum of six months’ cover.

At the end of the year, we had liquid unrestricted funds of £1,018,873, an increase of £560,599 from last year. This increase derives mainly from a one-off donation towards the acquisition of Whittle Dene in the Tyne Valley, near Ovingham. This purchase added some fine ancient woodland and meadows to our portfolio and connects to our existing holding and to land owned by the Woodland Trust and Northumbrian Water.

£1,018,873 represents around 7 months’ worth of anticipated non-project related running costs. As the charity has grown in recent years, our budgeted expenditure is increasing, so the size of the fund needs to increase to cover both expected growth and continued uncertainty in income generation, and the impacts of the cost of living crisis and increase in NI contributions as introduced by the current government.

Total unrestricted funds at the end of the year were £8,055,925 of which £1,018,873 are realisable liquid funds, after excluding fixed assets and loans taken out to purchase fixed assets. We set £272,687 aside as designated funds for the maintenance and repair of our

current buildings, hides and walkways to ensure they are maintained for the next generation. The Trust aims to build up this fund with a specific repairs and maintenance plan for future years.

We are committed to putting our remaining income and financial reserves to work as soon as possible, to achieve our overall charitable objectives. Our restricted funds, provided by funders for very specific purposes, is £2,056,016 at year-end. Included in this balance is £1,900,000, a donation provided by the Reece Foundation for the acquisition of West Chevington rewilding nature reserve in 2021. Reece Foundation hold a legal charge over the Trust for the use of the nature reserve in line with our charitable purposes.

Diversifying into Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
We completed the purchase of Earsdon West Forest (82.56 ha) on 30 April 2024 through a philanthropic loan from We Have The Power. It is a sizeable, strategically important and well-placed site in the Druridge Bay landscape.

The main purpose behind this acquisition is to enrich the landscape and contribute to the recovery of nature. We are funding this by developing and implementing the Trust’s Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) business following a successful application to the Postcode Innovation Trust Social Investment Fund. BNG is a new approach to ensure future development contributes towards nature’s recovery. Developers must ensure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were pre-development, with either better quality or more habitats. Major and small developments must deliver a BNG of at least 10%, whilst rules for nationally significant infrastructure projects are expected from late 2025. Through BNG, the Trust is looking to improve financial sustainability by increasing the proportion of revenue derived from trading and reducing our dependency on grant funding. NWT is offering a habitat banking service to developers to provide off-site units where the 10% uplift cannot be achieved on-site.

Earsdon West Forest is the Trust’s first habitat bank. Since purchase, we have undertaken the baseline assessments and habitat management plans and welcomed potential future buyers from a wide range of industries to site, including house builders, utility companies, ecological

consultancies, government agencies and local authorities. We are ready to sell units but the government has caused a delay with a review of the legislation as part of the Planning & Infrastructure Bill. Market uncertainty and the emergence of competitor sites mean we have to be more realistic with timeframes for sales.

Progress has also been made in understanding the potential of green financing for peatland, through carbon credits, and plans for test sites are likely to demonstrate how this can contribute to financing its restoration.

Consolidating principal funding sources
During the year ended 31 March 2025, we generated income of £5,542,000, an increase of £1,334,000 compared to £4,208,000 presented in last year’s financial statement. The increase this year is predominately due to the deferred donation of £350k for Whittle Dene woods; although the donation was made in March 2024, the sale was not agreed before the end of the financial year and was therefore more accurately represented in the 2024-25 accounts.

Our income comes from a wide variety of sources, including membership subscriptions, voluntary donations and contracts for delivery of services. The principal funding sources during the year were:

| Income source | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Grants (conditional and unconditional) | 1,367,000 | 2,117,000 |
| Subsidiary trading income | 886,000 | 1,051,000 |
| Visitor trading and similar income | 390,000 | 486,000 |
| Sponsorships and membership subscriptions | 386,000 | 368,000 |
| Contract | 608,000 | 566,000 |
| Donations | 318,000 | 638,000 |
| Legacies | 209,000 | 257,000 |
| Education and training | 19,000 | 15,000 |
| Rental | 19,000 | 15,000 |
| Other income | 7,000 | 11,000 |
| Total income | 4,208,000 | 5,542,000 |

Countryside Stewardship continues to form the basis of Estates funding, bringing in over £274k annually. Agri-funding has become more of a challenge under the current government, however we are exploring options for including additional areas in schemes and renewal of existing schemes as they come to an end.

Subsidiary company Gift Aid contribution
The Trust has two wholly owned subsidiary companies, Northumberland Wildlife Enterprises Limited, which is currently dormant, and EcoNorth Limited, which provides a comprehensive ecological service for projects throughout the UK and Ireland.

The purpose of EcoNorth Limited is to raise funds for



NWT through its work as an environmental consultancy, providing commercial ecology surveys, assessments, licencing and mitigation, Clerk of Works and GIS mapping, advice and guidance. The profits of EcoNorth Limited are donated to the charity each year under the Gift Aid scheme. This year, EcoNorth exceeded a turnover of £1M for the first time ever, with a Gift Aid contribution to Northumberland Wildlife Trust of £100,000, which as an excellent boost to unrestricted funding.

Café and trading improvement
NWT runs two cafés at its visitor centres at Hauxley and Northumberlandia. Sales exceeded £421,000, 24% up on the previous year, with over 76,000 customers. Cost control has been vital during higher inflationary times but both cafés are now making a positive contribution to running the sites, helping wildlife and bringing people closer to nature.

We have made significant changes at Northumberlandia, improving the catering equipment and layout, adding a barista coffee machine, seasonal menus and more comfortable seating. Hauxley has added equipment and improved layout to improve flow and reduce waiting times. It frequently changes its menus, including more vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options as well as sandwiches as takeaways. Northumberlandia’s business is very seasonal and we adjust the winter opening hours, but Hauxley thrives year-round and is now a well-loved spot for its signature scones, capitalising on its fantastic views and seasonal wildlife gatherings.

We have 5-star hygiene ratings at both cafés. Wherever possible, we use local suppliers and sustainable products, and have increased our range of gift merchandise. The cafés are also touchpoints for visitor information, donations and event assistance.

● **Holiday let**

Our first holiday let at the Haining has proved a big hit with visitors. Tucked away in its own grounds, just over a mile from Elsdon Village, this lovely stone farmhouse offers the perfect setting for a peaceful getaway and a real countryside experience. The property was kindly gifted, alongside a beautiful piece of land, and provides additional income for the Trust. In its first year, sales were over £20,000, which contribute to improving habitat and other reserves close by, such as Benshaw Moor.

CARBON REDUCTION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

● **Progress to net zero**

After a reduction last year, organisational carbon emissions increased by 25% to 39.67 tCO₂e. This was due in part to an increase in staff numbers +11% in delivery teams, which involves more travel/commuting, and also in business travel, where we have attended more national/regional meetings with RSWT and other organisations about Rothbury and strategic partnerships. A large county such as Northumberland, with its far-

flung nature reserves, does present problems in reducing emissions on travel. We are gradually replacing the ageing vehicle fleet and taking on more electric vehicles, but the nature of our work with difficult terrain and heavy lifting equipment means expectations need to be modest.

● **Role of nature reserves as carbon stores**

Taking back control of Whitelee in December 2023 was important because major peatland restoration here will reduce our carbon emissions by 5% per year across five years. All our work on peatland, grassland, ponds and tree planting contributes to sequestering carbon.

● **Conservation grazing**

We use conservation grazing as part of grassland restoration and this year we have calculated Global Warming Potential (GWP) across 11 reserves, covering 1,587 ha with different animals/breeds. It is a measure of how much heat a greenhouse gas traps in the atmosphere over a specific time period, relative to carbon dioxide (CO₂). This gives us a calculation of the GWP grazing pressure per livestock unit, given a particular grazing regime. It may be difficult to reduce this much,

but we compensate with soil improvement and increased biodiversity.

● **Transport and energy services**

In September 2024, EcoNorth was awarded a large contract by Kier to deliver an extensive scope of ecological baseline surveys for sections of the A66 Improvements Scheme, between Greta Bridge and Bowes Village (Schemes 7 and 8). Fieldwork was successfully conducted during September and October. Since then, it has been commissioned for additional works on Schemes 7 and 8 in 2025, which will be primarily bat survey work and significant in scale.

TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

Over the last few years, we have upgraded our systems to improve efficiency, reporting and insights. We have tried to integrate systems with those used by The Wildlife Trusts so that we can easily share information and better evidence our overall performance. This strategy has affected our choices of software for accounting, CRM and communications (website, e-marketing). This year, we introduced new Heath and Safety software, Smartlog, which is designed to encourage compliance and workplace safety. It helps track incidents, manage risk assessments and conduct audits. By fostering a culture of safety, Smartlog helps us minimise accidents and any potential reputational damage, and improves employee well-being.

We also have software for HR and volunteering which facilitate analysis and reporting. We are working ever more closely with RSWT, which offers policy guidance, frameworks and problem-solving skills on cyber security, AI and GDPR. IT is an area where we hope to boost capacity to further transform our approaches and make the organisation more secure, effective and compliant for the future.

We have also increased the use of technology in estates teams. Survey and monitoring on reserves, including remote monitoring equipment, acoustic monitors/analysis software and camera traps give us new insights into the species using our reserves. We have also increased the use of drone footage to help us map and monitor the changes in habitats before and after management.

A BETTER APPROACH TO STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

NWT obtained the Bronze Better Health at Work Award in 2024 and started working towards the Silver Award. The Better Health at Work Award is an initiative across the North East that encourages workplaces to address health, safety and wellbeing issues. Workplace Health is an important and integral part of the regional public health strategy and is even more relevant in these challenging times, when companies need to use every tool available

to ensure their productivity and effectiveness. It is about sharing and signposting health related information to staff and volunteers so they will have a healthy, balanced home/work lifestyle. We ran several campaigns during 2024-25 on our journey towards the Silver Award:

- Physical fitness – 5k runs, NHS Workplace health checks, dog walks, yoga and nature walks
- Healthy eating – Hydration challenges, Fruity Fridays, allotment tours, healthy eating advice
- EDI – Neurodiverse lunch, Pride Picnic, setting up the voluntary staff EDI Team
- Sustainability – information on bikes and buses, energy efficient lunch, Livewell links

Staff had a lot of fun but the messaging was important that the Trust wants to be happy and healthy inside and outside work.

● **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)**

To achieve our aims for nature recovery and people it is essential that the environmental movement is welcoming and inclusive for employees, volunteers and communities, so that everyone feels like they can belong. In August, we launched a new voluntary staff EDI team to champion our collective commitment to action and meaningful change. Early achievements included:

- Free sanitary products across all office toilets.
- 9 EDI-related training sessions delivered, including on deaf awareness, British Sign Language and implicit bias.
- Mental health training – NWT now has 20 Mental Health First Aiders.
- Promoting six RSWT-run national support networks, for diverse groups.

As part of our general work, we have hosted 28 trainees and placements since 2021 to provide experience and opportunities for young people who might not have normally had access to a career in the environmental sector (for example, from an ethnic minority, who are disabled, or are from low-income homes). 2024-25 placements included:

- 3 roles via the Northern Directions scheme (for neurodiverse, ethnically diverse or rurally isolated youths aged 16-24).
- 1 T-Level student who completed an accessibility audit of NWT's website and implemented changes (for example alt text and screen-reader compatibility).
- 2 traineeships through the Hauxley Nextdoor Nature Project.

We have also made improvements on accessibility and infrastructure. An access audit was conducted by Disability North and implementation is underway, including accessible parking bays installed at Gosforth offices. We launched anonymised recruitment and a dedicated staff welfare email and reporting system. And Hauxley became our first digital reserve with the launch of an interactive virtual tour for people with access needs.



The Haining holiday let © Martin Pickup

Our year in numbers

Swift © Stefan Johansson; Survey © NECF; Bumblebee © Chris Gomersall/2020VISION; Community group © Katrina Martin/2020VISION; Osprey © Peter Cairns/2020Vision; Reedbed © Graham Holyoak; Countryfile © NWT; Young boy © Evie and Tom Photography; Sapling © David Tipling/2020VISION; Rothbury © Duncan Hutt; Event © NWT; Café © Debbie Lewney; Whitelee © Geoff Dobbins; Runner © Liz Lovatt; School pupils © NWT.



| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----|
| Charitable activities | £2,266,000 | 41% |
| Donations and legacies | £1,727,000 | 31% |
| Subsidiary trading | £1,051,000 | 19% |
| Visitor trading and similar | £486,000 | 9% |
| Other | £11,000 | <1% |



| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----|
| Charitable activities | £3,185,000 | 67% |
| Subsidiary trading | £948,000 | 20% |
| Cost of raising funds | £439,000 | 9% |
| Café and visitor centre trading | £159,000 | 4% |



84p in every **£1**
was spent on charitable activity
(excludes subsidiary company)



84
swift boxes
installed

130+
Newcastle residents
actively involved



106
surveys undertaken
by volunteers



454
volunteers helped
with nature recovery

31,014
volunteer hours, 20 FTE



8,759
members

£386,283
through membership income

Young People's
Forum's second event

150 people came

400
items of clothing swapped

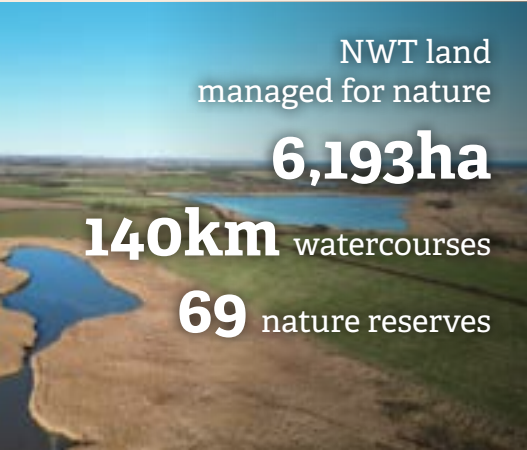


111
community groups
acted for nature



Osprey Watch
attracted

4,079
visitors to the cabin
at Tower Knowe, Kielder



NWT land
managed for nature

6,193ha

140km watercourses

69 nature reserves

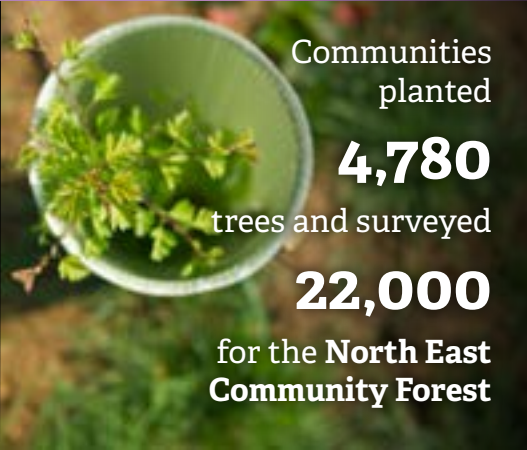


East and West Chevington
featured on **BBC Countryfile**



30 Days Wild
connecting with
nature campaign

1,116
individuals
signed up



Communities
planted

4,780
trees and surveyed

22,000
for the North East
Community Forest



Rothbury Estate appeal

Over **£8m** raised to date



NWT ran **418** events,
introducing people to nature,
with **23,311** attending



2 Visitor centres

205,000
Visitors introduced
to nature



**Wilder Northumberland
Network launch**

Nature recovery across

24,000ha

21 members



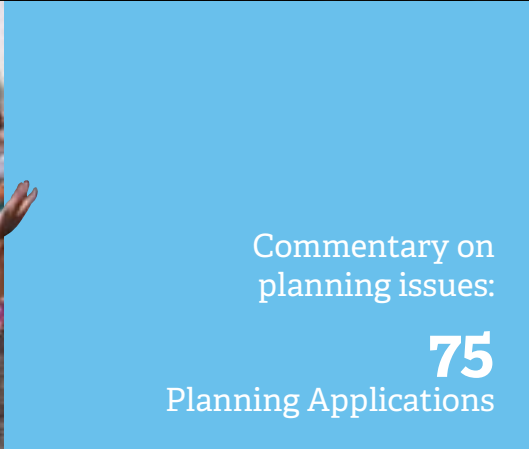
Supporters donated

£21,000
towards the **Whitelee** appeal



Great North
runners raised

£8,564



Commentary on
planning issues:

75
Planning Applications



Worked with

42 schools,
10 universities and
20 youth groups

Monthly highlights

APRIL

Biodiversity boost for Druridge Bay

The £750k award from the Species Survival Fund involved restoring 500 ha habitat, enhancing biodiversity and improving access across Druridge Bay. Plans included improving reed beds and restructuring woodland at East Chevington; creating species-rich grassland and realigning watercourses at West Chevington; and building a new hide at Hauxley. Footpaths and bridleways were set to be reopened and upgraded. The initiative retained two conservation posts and created opportunities for two new trainees, volunteers and partnering with Northumberland Zoo.

Reedbed at East Chevington © Graham Holyoak

JUNE

Campaigning for nature

The run-up to the general election prompted a flurry of activity to ensure the environment was included in party promises. We promoted the UK's largest ever public survey about people and wildlife, The Wildlife Trusts' Great Big Nature Survey, to learn about why nature matters. We provided information and resources for local people to campaign for nature, templates to write to MPs and encouraged people to submit questions for the June leaders' debate. We joined 60,000 people on the Restore Nature Now march in London and supported Friends of the Earth at a hustings event in Alnwick.

Restore Nature Now march © Eleanor Church

MAY

New network for nature recovery

We launched the Wilder Northumberland Network, which shares regenerative farming practices amongst landowners. Principles are to connect habitats, improve biodiversity and support resilience to climate change through management of river corridors and floodplains. Actions include reducing grazing and encouraging and planting native trees, scrub, hedgerows and verges. It currently has 27 members covering over 30,000 hectares across Northumberland.

Cow © Laura Hindle

JULY

NWT scoops trio of Land Trust awards

The Weetslade practical conservation team landed the *Friends of/Community group* Award for their work, including saltmarsh habitat restoration, the creation of four skylark breeding enclosures and the construction of access steps to the top of the site. Northumberlandia was named *Community Site of the Year* for its popular programme of activities, from downloadable trails, storytelling and mindfulness sessions to outdoor theatre. Lastly, Connor Grundy claimed *Volunteer of the Year* for his work as reserve warden.

Northumberlandia © The Land Trust

Monthly highlights

AUGUST

Turning the tide?

To mark the beginning of the Wildlife Trusts' Marine Week, we had a celebratory weekend of activities, inviting along organisations as part of the Stronger Shores project. Stronger Shores is funded by Defra as part of the £200 million Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes managed by the Environment Agency. Our project looks at the benefits of kelp, seagrass and oysters along the North East coastline, driving innovation in flood and coastal resilience and adaptation to a changing climate. The weekend culminated with members of the public manifesting the design, created by Claire Eason of Soul2Sand.



Beach mural © Northumberland Wildlife Trust

OCTOBER

Securing the Rothbury Estate

The Wildlife Trusts purchased part of the Rothbury Estate in partnership with NWT and launched a £30m appeal over two years to secure the entire 3,800 ha estate as a showcase for nature recovery on a vast scale. The current purchase includes the Simonside Hills and a mixture of lowland, woods, riverside and farmland. By acquiring the entire estate, we aim to enhance the rich, natural and cultural heritage for future generations, create a sustainable future for local farmers and avoid the land being broken up into multiple ownerships, which would make access for the public more difficult.



Rothbury Estate © Duncan Hutt

SEPTEMBER

Better health through nature

Better with Nature was our first pilot project to empower and connect people with poor health to nature. It aimed to support people's wellbeing through nature-based activities and green training, whilst gathering insights to increase future accessible green volunteering opportunities. We developed and delivered two six-week green skills and nature connection programmes for people with poor health or not in work, working with a network of partners and contacts to recruit participants. We also ran six green social prescribing and volunteer 'taster' events for the public, social prescribing link workers and related health professions.



Hand planting © Goran Horvat from Pixabay

NOVEMBER

A wilder Whitelee

Whitelee is the second biggest nature reserve in England and over half the site is blanket bog, a huge store of carbon and water, vital to mitigate future climate change and reduce potential flooding downstream. It takes a lot of looking after so we launched our Big Give Christmas appeal and raised nearly £21,000 to help us repair peatland, enhance meadows and plant more trees. We also started trialling the use of NoFence electric collars on its resident Flexigraze conservation grazing cattle.



Whitelee Moor © Geoff Dobbins

Monthly highlights

DECEMBER

Hauxley shares rural boost

We secured funding from the Rural Asset Multiplier Programme (RAMP) to enhance rural community facilities, health and wellbeing, volunteer opportunities and community resilience. Funding supported a communities officer to co-create and deliver 12 projects from Berwick to Amble and two 12-month trainee placements, aimed at encouraging people to work in the conservation sector. We were also able to construct a new wildlife-watching hide and a new volunteer workshop.

Skua hide at Hauxley Nature Reserve © Northumberland Wildlife Trust

FEBRUARY

Wilder communities, stronger communities

The Jean Cartman Wilder Communities Award was a new award to support local activities which benefit nature, wildlife and people. The winners were announced. First place went to Pottery Bank Community Allotment and Garden which provides regular activities, including mindful gardening, wood working, cooking and nature walks. These activities bring people together to enjoy nature and reduce social isolation. Second was the Garden Project which provides a nature-rich space for older, vulnerable and isolated residents in Walker. Third was Briardale Community Garden which provides accessible opportunities for a wide range of community groups in Blyth to experience nature.

Pottery Bank Community Allotment and Garden © Leo Hargreaves

JANUARY

Lynx exhibition rolls on

The popular touring exhibition called The Missing Lynx visited colleges and universities across northern England and the southern border of Scotland from January to March 2025. The lynx is a missing mammal that used to live in Britain until medieval times when its woodland habitat disappeared. The exhibition, which started travelling around the region in Spring 2024, was a chance to talk about how ecosystems work and provide information. During the year, nearly 10,000 people visited the stunning interactive show and over 1,700 people have filled in the questionnaire asking for views on bringing lynx back to the area.

Lynx © Berndt Fischer

MARCH

Green light for Red Squirrel Recovery Network

£4.86m was allocated by The National Lottery Heritage Fund for a new five-year partnership project to conserve populations of red squirrels, which are critically endangered, across the north of England and southern Scotland. With NWT as the lead, the plan includes working with landowners and expanding volunteer groups to safeguard and grow existing red populations, engaging new audiences about the plight of red squirrels and developing a methodology for grey squirrel fertility control.

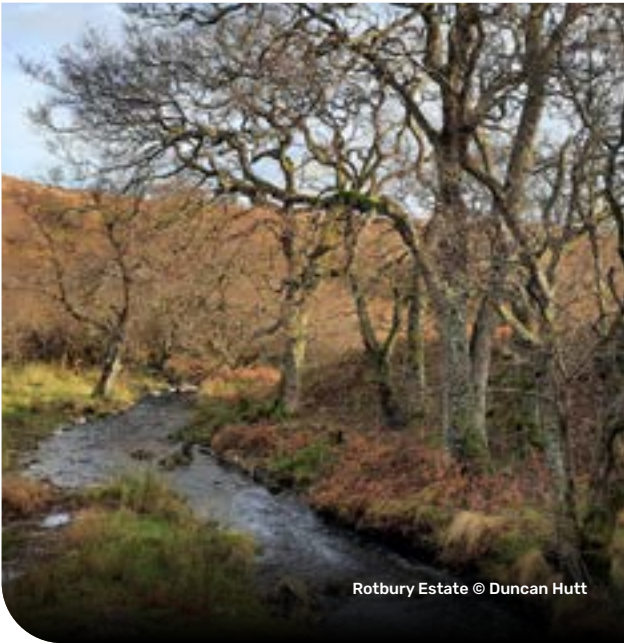
Red squirrel © Peter Cairns/2020VISION

Longer-term plans

NWT is learning to live with change as its default modus operandi. The more ambitious vision we now hold for a wilder north has so much potential. This includes our land and sea conservation, species work and connecting with people and communities, but it also includes more collaborative partnerships and campaigning for a world where nature plays the central role in our lives.

The Trust itself has grown rapidly over the last five years and has had to adjust its systems and support services. We have made good progress but we are conscious that this is an area that requires more attention to bring efficiencies and culture change, in line with the rest of the movement. We aim to express this step change in the last phase of our current Strategy and Business plan and will refresh and reframe this in 2025/26 to capture the new focus and demands of the times.

We will build on the important achievements of recent years. We have, with RSWT, managed to purchase the area around Simonside but we have to follow through with securing the entire Rothbury Estate – raising £30m by October 2026 is no small ask! We want to use this landscape to show how nature, community and the economy can work together, with people and nature thriving side by side. The opportunity for connectivity and nature recovery on a grand scale is awesome. We will pursue joined up approaches between the coast and Kielder and much in between. Hadrian’s Wall corridor, Wild Kielder and Wallington will be key partnerships. And of course, we now have a large portfolio of existing and newly acquired sites – West Chevington, Whittle Dene



Woods and Earsdon West Forest – as well as land brought back into management at Whitelee, which all require extensive planning, management and monitoring. We need to work closely with farmers and landowners as we seek to develop a wider network for nature recovery.

We will also continue our species led conservation. More work on water vole reintroductions is likely to feature in plans for 2026. Further down the line are possibilities of wildcat, beaver, lynx, eagle and other reintroductions and support for pine marten’s natural return.

People engagement and related community organising remains a key focus. Place-based initiatives are forming part of Local Authority strategies, which chimes neatly with our social action nature work particularly in urban and suburban areas.

One of the most challenging, but also potentially transformational, things going forward will be to harness green finance, in particular BNG. We have purchased the land at Earsdon West Forest as a habitat bank, creating an engine to fund and connect Wilder Druridge. We await the results of Government consultation on BNG and the new deadlines and scope for implementation.

Finally, with our stronger connections with the national team (RSWT) and The Wildlife Trust (TWT) movement in influencing, we will put effort into getting local politicians onside with our vision for change for nature north of the Tyne. We are going to produce a State of the Nature report. It will set out the current status and articulate the big things needed to return at least 30% of land and sea to good condition by the end of our next five-year plan.



In summary the main things we see happening in the next year include:

- Securing, with RSWT, the acquisition of the entire Rothbury Estate or to create a large scale wilding/ nature recovery corridor, connecting Border to coast
- Work on the new ‘coast to coast’ Hadrian’s Wall corridor nature recovery area with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and partners
- Progressing the restoration and connectivity of Duridge Bay sites, with more community participation
- Widening the Wilder Northumberland Network with nature friendly farmers
- Rewilding Whitelee and undertaking major new peatland restoration
- Starting to deliver the Red Squirrel Recovery Network across the North and into southern Scotland, to secure a positive future for red squirrels
- Reactivating and widening work on water vole reintroduction, working with Durham Wildlife Trust
- Developing other key species work on pine marten, eagle, beaver, for example
- Actualising green finance and systematic philanthropic investment
- Seeking longer term funding to extend our connecting people with nature programmes (1 in 4 people acting for nature) – we have new partners, the All England Lawn Tennis Club/Emirates, which wants us to develop a programme of urban nature outreach in underrepresented communities
- Campaigning for nature, working to embolden communities to take action collectively and independently, working with RSWT
- Increasing capacity and focus on digital enablement and transformation, including the development of a State of Nature data project
- Investing in internal systems and improving culture to support staff better and increase effectiveness
- Demonstrating our commitment to transitioning to a Net Zero Trust
- EcoNorth continuing to deliver wide-ranging, professional ecological services which support the Trust



Principal risks and uncertainties

The senior management team and the trustees review the risks the charity may face and, where appropriate, establish processes and procedures to mitigate those risks and agree action plans on a quarterly basis. This is done through our sub-committee structure. We also consider external factors such as new regulations, or the state of the economy. At each quarterly Council, a formal strategic risk management paper which highlights those risks that the sub-committees reviewed as ‘high’ after mitigation, is presented.

- We assess that the Trust’s principal risks and uncertainties include the following;
- Government structure and policy changes
 - Significant national events for example pandemic and avian flu
 - Economic uncertainty
 - Climate change and biodiversity loss impacts
 - Securing funding for charitable activities and good cost recovery to ensure sustainability
 - Insufficient cash to meet obligations
 - Insufficient evidence and data to make informed decisions

Governance and organisational information

● Governing document

The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

● Trading subsidiaries

The Trust has two subsidiary companies; EcoNorth Limited (ECN) and Northumberland Wildlife Enterprises Limited (NWE). NWE is currently dormant. ECN is governed by a Board of Directors on which at least one Trustee represents the Trust's interests. The Managing Director is line-managed by the Trust's Chief Executive. To find out more detailed information about either of the subsidiary companies, the individual company accounts are filed annually with Companies House.

In this report, the accounts include the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the charity and both subsidiaries whenever the statements are referred to as 'consolidated' or 'group.'

● Organisational structure and decision-making

The Trust is governed by the Board of Trustees (Council), who are also the directors of the company under company law. A list of trustees who have served during the financial year is shown on page 65. Delegation of authority is set out in the Trust's governance documentation. Council delegates all of its powers to the Chief Executive to enable them to manage the Trust's operations and to lead and direct its strategic development. However, the Chief Executive is obliged to consult with Trustees as appropriate and to report fully and appropriately on decisions taken and material developments. Specific issues which require reporting include:

- New strategic projects and partnerships
- Significant variations against budget or significant financial issues
- Issues affecting the Trust's reputation

Council meets four times a year, working to an annual forward agenda. A detailed agenda is agreed with the Chair well in advance of each meeting and staff provide written papers on all agenda items. Standard agenda items are strategic business issues, financial reports including the latest management accounts, policy changes and activity reports. A register of conflicts of interest is held and updated annually, and every Council agenda includes declaration of any potential conflicts which might arise at that meeting.

A sub-committee structure assists in the scrutiny of trustee responsibilities. The Finance and Risks Committee

(FRC), has delegated authority for ensuring that suitable financial systems and controls are in place and are working effectively, and that risks are properly identified, managed, mitigated and reported. The FRC meets quarterly and is chaired by the Treasurer.

The Nature Recovery Committee (NRC) has delegated authority for ensuring that the efforts and resources of the Trust are directed in the most effective and efficient way to secure nature's recovery within Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside.

The Governance and Compliance Committee (GCC) has delegated authority for ensuring that the Trust areas of governance, corporate responsibility and compliance are robust and maintained. The GCC oversees key policy areas such as equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), health and safety, employment, safeguarding, data protection, whistleblowing and complaints.

Informal groups also operate to provide a place for more detailed discussion that then inform formal committees and Council down the line. Examples of this include the EDI group and the trustee/staff BNG working group.

Working group sessions between trustees and staff will also be set up to discuss future priorities and emphases as we review the strategy.

● Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report including the strategic 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 the group and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their income and expenditure, for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the company's transactions and disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Group and the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

● Trustee appointments

Trustees may be elected by the membership at the AGM, or co-opted. The maximum tenure for elected trustees is nine years, with re-election required every three years. For co-opted trustees, the maximum service period is three years. All trustees have the same responsibilities, irrespective of tenure. There must be no less than eight elected trustees and no more than twelve. The maximum allowable number of co-opted trustees is four. Trustees may claim travel or other expenses but no trustees are remunerated for their services to the charity.

Recruitment and selection is led by the Trust's Governance Group, which reports directly to Council. All prospective trustees complete a skills analysis, which is compared with the Trust's agreed skills gaps; there is also an interview with the Chair and Chief Executive. The Trust advertises all trustee vacancies, seeking specific skills when required. It also takes the diversity of the Board into account when considering new appointments.

● Trustee induction and training

New trustees are provided with a range of documentation in advance of their first meeting, including the Trust's governing documents, the constitution, recent Council minutes and the latest annual report and accounts. They are invited to attend an induction session with the Chair and senior staff shortly after they start, and they are encouraged to meet informally with a more experienced trustee within their first three months. The Chair also has an informal discussion with each new trustee after their first six months.

Council have one 'away day' per year with senior staff. This is to facilitate both more in-depth discussion of specific issues than is often possible at Council meetings, and to provide an opportunity for trustees to visit sites or projects.

● Financial reserves policy

Our financial reserves policy is to maintain sufficient cash flow to allow us to continue to operate and ensure we can fund the large number of projects for which grant funding is received in arrears. The policy sets out the aim to retain sufficient unrestricted cash reserves to cover non-project unrestricted running costs of the charity for a minimum of six months.

● Information on fundraising practices

We are committed to dealing respectfully and ethically with our supporters. Without them, the charity would not be locally representative and not be able to champion wildlife and natural places, to inspire people and to promote sustainable living, according to our Mission and Strategy. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and have agreed to ensure our fundraising is legal, open, honest and respectful. The standards for fundraising are set out in the Code of Fundraising Practice. There have been no complaints from members of the public about our fundraising methods to date (but we do have a complaints procedure in place which is accessible) and the Trust takes a considerate and sensitive approach to asking for support.

The Trust employs face-to-face recruiters to attend our own reserves, fairs and shows but does not undertake street fundraising. It engages an agency to help with telemarketing (welcome and satisfaction calls) and requires them to adhere to the standards demanded by the Code. We comply with the Fundraising Regulator's guidance on treating donors fairly when we come into contact with people who may be in a vulnerable circumstance, or need additional support to make an informed decision. Periodic checks are carried out in person and by listening in on telephone calls to check that standards are being adhered to.

● Pay and remuneration

Pay for all staff, including the Chief Executive, is according to a job evaluation system, which places roles on one of seven pay scales. Staff are normally appointed at the bottom of a scale and move up the scale in four annual stages.

Trustees approve inflation awards annually, based on a benchmarking system. The total salary bill in the year for the senior management team was £236,178. One individual was paid over £60,000 and the highest salary in the Trust was 3.3 times larger than the lowest salary.

The Trust has no pension liabilities; it contributes to staff pensions but this is on a defined contribution basis only.

● Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

NWT is committed to providing access and equality in its activities, across its nature reserves, as well as supporting equitable treatment for staff, volunteers, members and supporters regardless of sex, gender, race, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership,

pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation or disability. In December 2020, the Charity Governance Code was updated with a focus on the principle of integrity and equality, diversion and inclusion. The Trustees reviewed the Trust's practice against these principles and has developed a working document to highlight areas for improvement in the coming years.

● **The Wildlife Trusts network**

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is part of the national federation of The Wildlife Trusts, represented nationally by The Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), which undertakes a central fundraising, influencing, coordinating and media role. All Trusts pay a levy (linked to their unrestricted performance over five years) towards the costs of running this central organisation, and there is a comprehensive regional and national governance mechanism to facilitate collective decision-making. Collectively RSWT and the 46 individual Wildlife Trust charities are known as The Wildlife Trusts (TWT). RSWT also adds value nationally by leveraging substantial additional funding to individual Trusts through a number of mechanisms, and provides critical support and advice, national leadership on strategy and leadership development, as necessary.

TWT formulates strategy and policy and has joint working arrangements to which all Wildlife Trusts are expected to adhere, though each Trust retains their individual autonomy as part of a federated structure.

In practice, TWT functions as a national network of similar bodies who share the same visions and mission. Data and systems are shared across the movement, to demonstrate joined-up activity, effectiveness and reach, and we act in unison in key policy areas and in national campaigns.

Overall TWT has over 944,000 members, manages 2,600 nature reserves and other sites covering over

98,500 hectares of land, manages 38,000 volunteers and engages with over 500,000 people through walks, talks and events. The Trust is an important contributor to this impact through its work in Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside but also in partnership throughout the North East and the North of England. The effect of our working within the TWT network is that we can make a difference to conservation at local, sub regional, regional and national scales.

The Trust also takes data protection very seriously and has taken external advice and reviewed its procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of GDPR.

● **Disclosure of information to auditors**

Each of the persons who are trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditor is unaware, and
- they have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees' report above, which incorporates the requirements of a directors' report and a strategic report under the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the trustees on 7 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Nigel Porter
Chair of Trustees



Derek Coates
Treasurer



Independent auditor’s report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northumberland Wildlife Trust Limited (the ‘parent charitable company’) and its subsidiaries (the ‘group’) for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated balance sheet, the company balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the related notes, 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, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 ‘The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland’ (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group’s and of the parent charitable company’s affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the group’s 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 group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council’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 group’s or the parent 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 other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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. 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 course of 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.

Opinion 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 Trustees’ report including the strategic report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees’ report and the strategic report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our 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 Trustees’ report including the strategic report.

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement, 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 group’s and the parent 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 group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor’s 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 an auditor’s report 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.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity’s operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

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/

auditors responsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

We obtain and update our understanding of the charitable company, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the charitable company is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

Based on our understanding of the charitable company, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to laws and regulations that directly affect the financial statements including financial reporting legislation (including related companies legislation), distributable profits legislation, pension legislation and UK tax legislation. In addition, the charitable company is subject to many other laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have a material effect on amounts or disclosures in the financial statements, for instance through the imposition of fines and litigation. We considered the extent to which noncompliance with laws and regulations might have a material effect on the financial statements and we have assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement items.

We also evaluated managements’ incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks related to posting inappropriate journal entries to manipulate financial results, management bias in accounting estimates, as well as improper revenue recognition which includes fraudulent posting of journal entries to revenue.

Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inquiry of management and those charged with governance regarding actual and potential litigation or claims as well as whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Reviewing meeting minutes to identify reported frauds and any potential non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Identifying journal entries based on risk criteria and testing the identified entries to supporting documentation, in particular journal entries with unusual account combinations; and

- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their significant accounting estimates and evaluating whether there was any evidence of bias by the directors that represented a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of any instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

● 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 auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Anne Hallowell

Anne Hallowell BSc FCA DChA
(Senior Statutory Auditor) for and
on behalf of UNW LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
Newcastle upon Tyne

7 October 2025



Early purple orchid © Guy Edwardes/2020VISION

Financial statements

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2025
(incorporating income and expenditure account)

| | Note | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
|--|------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Income from: | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 2 | 1,189,402 | 537,849 | 1,727,251 | 1,286,670 |
| Charitable activities | 3 | 39,605 | 2,226,641 | 2,266,246 | 1,638,353 |
| Other trading activities | 4 | 1,536,769 | 488 | 1,537,257 | 1,275,652 |
| Investments | | 3,552 | - | 3,552 | 4,643 |
| Other income | | 7,660 | - | 7,660 | 2,698 |
| Total income | | 2,776,988 | 2,764,978 | 5,541,966 | 4,208,016 |
| Expenditure on: | | | | | |
| Raising funds | 5, 6 | 1,545,201 | 1,522 | 1,546,723 | 1,416,103 |
| Charitable activities | 7 | 784,913 | 2,400,567 | 3,185,480 | 2,696,392 |
| Total expenditure | | 2,330,114 | 2,402,089 | 4,732,203 | 4,112,495 |
| Net income | | 446,874 | 362,889 | 809,763 | 95,521 |
| Transfers between funds | 20 | 322,582 | (322,582) | - | - |
| Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses) | | 769,456 | 40,307 | 809,763 | 95,521 |
| Other recognised gains/(losses): | | | | | |
| Gains on revaluation of investment property | 12 | 12,833 | - | 12,833 | - |
| Net movement in funds | | 782,289 | 40,307 | 822,596 | 95,521 |
| Reconciliation of funds: | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 7,273,636 | 2,015,709 | 9,289,345 | 9,193,824 |
| Net movement in funds | | 782,289 | 40,307 | 822,596 | 95,521 |
| Total funds carried forward | | 8,055,925 | 2,056,016 | 10,111,941 | 9,289,345 |

The consolidated statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 45 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Consolidated balance sheet at 31 March 2025

| | Note | | 2025 (£) | | 2024 (£) |
|---|------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Fixed assets | | | | | |
| Intangible assets | 10 | | - | | - |
| Tangible assets | 11 | | 10,288,555 | | 9,440,472 |
| Investment property | 12 | | 550,000 | | - |
| | | | 10,838,555 | | 9,440,472 |
| Current assets | | | | | |
| Stocks | 14 | 12,442 | | 5,106 | |
| Debtors | 15 | 830,432 | | 626,084 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 1,316,649 | | 1,436,724 | |
| | | | 2,159,523 | 2,067,914 | |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | 16 | (984,634) | | (1,236,072) | |
| Net current assets | | | 1,174,889 | 831,842 | |
| Total assets less current liabilities | | | 12,013,444 | 10,272,314 | |
| Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year | 17 | | (1,837,906) | | (935,883) |
| Provisions for liabilities | 18 | | (63,597) | | (47,086) |
| Total net assets | | | 10,111,941 | 9,289,345 | |
| Charity funds | | | | | |
| Restricted funds | 20 | | 2,056,016 | | 2,015,709 |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | | |
| Designated funds | 20 | 272,687 | | | |
| General funds | 20 | 4,951,796 | | 4,442,194 | |
| Revaluation reserve | 20 | 2,831,442 | | 2,831,442 | |
| Total unrestricted funds | 20 | | 8,055,925 | | 7,273,636 |
| Total funds | | | 10,111,941 | 9,289,345 | |

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 7 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Nigel Porter
Chair of Trustees



Derek Coates
Treasurer

The notes on pages 45 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

Company registered number: 00717813

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Balance sheet at 31 March 2025

| | Note | | 2025 (£) | | 2024 (£) |
|---|------|-----------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Fixed assets | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 11 | | 10,079,213 | | 9,238,672 |
| Investment property | 12 | | 550,000 | | - |
| Investments | 13 | | 5,002 | | 5,002 |
| | | | 10,634,215 | | 9,243,674 |
| Current assets | | | | | |
| Stocks | 14 | 12,442 | | 5,106 | |
| Debtors | 15 | 517,496 | | 425,094 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 996,807 | | 1,085,590 | |
| | | | 1,526,745 | 1,515,790 | |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | 16 | (798,772) | | (1,073,264) | |
| Net current assets | | | 727,973 | 442,526 | |
| Total assets less current liabilities | | | 11,362,188 | 9,686,200 | |
| Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year | 17 | | (1,837,906) | | (935,883) |
| Total net assets | | | 9,524,282 | 8,750,317 | |
| Charity funds | | | | | |
| Restricted funds | 20 | | 2,056,016 | | 2,015,709 |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | | |
| Designated funds | 20 | 272,687 | | | |
| General funds | | 5,423,450 | | 4,962,479 | |
| Revaluation reserve | | 1,772,129 | | 1,772,129 | |
| Total unrestricted funds | 20 | | 7,468,266 | | 6,734,608 |
| Total funds | | | 9,524,282 | 8,750,317 | |

The company’s net movement in funds for the year was £773,965 (2024: £54,856).

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 7 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Nigel Porter
Chair of Trustees



Derek Coates
Treasurer

The notes on pages 45 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

Company registered number: 00717813

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Consolidated statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2025

| | Note | 2025 (£) | 2024 (£) |
|---|------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cash flows from operating activities | | | |
| Net cash used in operating activities | 22 | 474,079 | 866,880 |
| Cash flows from investing activities | | | |
| Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets | | - | 4,000 |
| Purchase of tangible fixed assets | | (1,510,185) | (1,287,980) |
| Net cash used in investing activities | | (1,510,185) | (1,283,980) |
| Cash flows from financing activities | | | |
| New loans | | 1,172,100 | 925,000 |
| Repayments of borrowing | | (247,106) | - |
| Repayment of finance leases | | (8,963) | (12,507) |
| Net cash provided by financing activities | | 916,031 | 912,493 |
| Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year | | (120,075) | 495,393 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year | 23 | 1,436,724 | 941,331 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year | | 1,316,649 | 1,436,724 |

The notes on pages 45 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements

1 - ACCOUNTING POLICIES

● Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements 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), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The consolidated statement of financial activities (SOFA) and consolidated balance sheet consolidate the financial statements of the company and its subsidiary undertakings. The results of the subsidiaries are consolidated on a line by line basis.

● Company status

Northumberland Wildlife Trust Limited ('the company') is a charity dedicated to saving wildlife and wild places and helping people to get closer to nature.

The company is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom and domiciled in England. The address of the registered office is given in the reference and administrative details page of this annual report. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 65. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

● Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Northumberland Wildlife Trust Limited and its subsidiary undertakings.

The company has taken advantage of the exemption contained within section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 not to present its own income and expenditure account. The income and expenditure account for the year dealt with in the accounts of the company was £773,965 (2024: £54,856).

● Fund accounting

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

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

● Income

All income is recognised once the company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the company has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the company, can be reliably measured.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised; refer to the trustees' report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the company, which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

● **Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, 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 classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset’s use.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the group to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the group’s objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

● **Going concern**

In determining the appropriate basis of preparation of the financial statements, the trustees are required to consider whether the group can continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The group’s business activities, together with factors that are likely to affect its future development, financial performance and financial position are set out in the strategic report. In addition, the material financial and operational risks and uncertainties that impact the group’s performance are outlined in the strategic report.

The trustees have considered the position of the group at the year end, its recent financial performance and forecasts for a period of at least 12 months from the date of the signing these financial statements. As a result of this process, at the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees are of the opinion that it is appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of preparation of the financial statements.

● **Intangible assets and amortisation**

Intangible assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, intangible assets are measured at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Amortisation is provided on the following basis:

Website – 20 % straight line

Asset residual values and useful lives are reviewed at the end of each reporting period, and adjusted if appropriate. The effect of any change is accounted for prospectively.

● **Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost (or deemed cost for land and buildings held at valuation at the date of transition to FRS102), less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation is charged at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of fixed assets, less their estimated residual values, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Freehold land | - not depreciated |
| Freehold property | - 2%-25% straight line |
| Long-term leasehold property | - 2% straight line |
| Furniture, fittings and equipment | - 25% straight line |
| Motor vehicles | - 25% straight line |
| External fixtures and fittings | - 25% straight line |
| Computer equipment | - 50% straight line |

● **Investment property**

Investment properties are measured at fair value at each reporting date, with any changes in fair value recognised in the consolidated statement of financial activities. Investment properties are not depreciated.

● **Investments**

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

● **Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads. Cost is determined using the first-in first-out (FIFO) method.

● **Financial instruments**

The group only enters into basic financial instruments transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, and cash and bank balances.

Debt instruments due within one year are measured, initially and subsequently at the transaction price. Debt instruments due after one year are measured initially at the transaction price and subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

At the end of each reporting period debt financial assets are assessed for impairment, and their carrying value reduced if necessary. Any impairment charge is recognised in the consolidated statement of financial activities.

● **Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the group; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

● **Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand.

● **Finance leases and hire purchase**

Assets obtained under hire purchase contracts and finance leases are capitalised as tangible fixed assets. Assets acquired by finance lease are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives. Assets acquired by hire purchase are depreciated over their useful lives. Finance leases are those where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership are assumed by the group. Obligations under such agreements are included in creditors, net of the finance charge allocated to future periods. The finance element of the rental payment is charged to the consolidated statement of financial activities so as to produce a constant periodic rate of charge on the net obligation outstanding in each period.

● **Employee benefits**

Short-term benefits

Short-term benefits, including holiday pay and other similar non-monetary benefits are recognised as an expense in the period in which the employee’s entitlement to the benefit accrues.

Defined contribution pension plan

The company operates a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. Contributions are recognised as an expense when they fall due. Amounts due but not yet paid are included within creditors on the balance sheet.

The assets of the plan are held separately from the company in independently administered funds.

● **Taxation**

The taxation expense for the year comprises current and deferred tax and is recognised in the consolidated statement of financial activities except to the extent that it relates to items recognised in other comprehensive income, or directly in equity, in which case the tax

expense is also recognised in other comprehensive income or directly in equity.

Current tax is the amount of income tax payable in respect of the taxable profit for the current or past reporting periods. It is calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date.

Deferred tax represents the future tax consequences of transactions and events recognised in the financial statements of current and previous periods. It is recognised in respect of all timing differences, with certain exceptions. Timing differences arise from the inclusion of transactions and events in the financial statements in periods different from those in which they are assessed for tax

Unrelieved tax losses and other deferred tax assets are recognised only to the extent that it is probable that they will be recovered against the reversal of deferred tax liabilities or other future taxable profits.

Deferred tax is measured using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date that are expected to apply to the reversal of timing differences.

● **Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment**

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgments, assumptions and estimates that affect the application of accounting policies and amounts reported in the profit and loss account and balance sheet. Such decisions are made at the time the financial statements are prepared and adopted based on the best information available at the time. Actual outcomes may be different from initial estimates and are reflected in the financial statements as soon as they become apparent.

Significant judgments in applying accounting policies

In preparing these financial statements, no significant judgments were required in the process of applying the company’s accounting policies.

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

Estimates included within these financial statements include land at valuation, depreciation and asset impairments (for example provisions against debtors). None of the estimates made in the preparation of these financial statements are considered to carry significant estimation uncertainty, nor to bear significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

2 - INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Donations | 123,651 | 514,037 | 637,688 |
| Legacies | 256,883 | - | 256,883 |
| Grants | 446,397 | - | 446,397 |
| Sponsorship and membership subscriptions | 362,471 | 23,812 | 386,283 |
| Total 2025 | 1,189,402 | 537,849 | 1,727,251 |

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Restricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Donations | 144,761 | 173,367 | 318,128 |
| Legacies | 209,014 | - | 209,014 |
| Grants | 373,277 | - | 373,277 |
| Sponsorship and membership subscriptions | 362,377 | 23,874 | 386,251 |
| Total 2024 | 1,089,429 | 197,241 | 1,286,670 |

3 - INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Charitable activities | 39,605 | 2,226,641 | 2,266,246 |
| | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Restricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
| Charitable activities | 53,795 | 1,584,558 | 1,638,353 |

4 - INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

Income from non charitable trading activities

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Subsidiary trading income | 1,051,419 | - | 1,051,419 |
| Visitor trading and similar income | 485,350 | 488 | 485,838 |
| Total 2025 | 1,536,769 | 488 | 1,537,257 |

4 - INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Restricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Subsidiary trading income | 886,123 | - | 886,123 |
| Visitor trading and similar income | 388,489 | 1,040 | 389,529 |
| Total 2024 | 1,274,612 | 1,040 | 1,275,652 |

5 - EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS - SUMMARY

| | 2025 (£) | 2024 (£) |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Cost of raising funds (note 6a) | 439,106 | 428,660 |
| Fundraising trading expenses (note 6b) | 159,433 | 144,170 |
| Subsidiary trading costs (note 6c) | 948,184 | 843,273 |
| Total | 1,546,723 | 1,416,103 |

6 - EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS

a) Costs of raising funds

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Travel, training & recruitment | 11,458 | - | 11,458 |
| Leaflets and publishing | 25,754 | - | 25,754 |
| Legal and professional | 1,636 | - | 1,636 |
| Office & project costs | 75,547 | 216 | 75,763 |
| Wages and salaries | 324,495 | - | 324,495 |
| Total 2025 | 438,890 | 216 | 439,106 |
| | | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
| Travel, training & recruitment | | 1,600 | 1,600 |
| Leaflets and publishing | | 15,568 | 15,568 |
| Legal and professional | | 3,714 | 3,714 |
| Office & project costs | | 49,893 | 49,893 |
| Wages and salaries | | 357,885 | 357,885 |
| Total 2024 | | 428,660 | 428,660 |

6 - EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS (CONTINUED)

b) Fundraising trading expenses

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Visitor cost of sales and other fundraising costs | 144,497 | 1,306 | 145,803 |
| Support costs allocated to trading activities | 13,630 | - | 13,630 |
| Total 2025 | 158,127 | 1,306 | 159,433 |
| | | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
| Visitor cost of sales and other fundraising costs | | 116,348 | 116,348 |
| Support costs allocated to trading activities | | 27,822 | 27,822 |
| Total 2024 | | 144,170 | 144,170 |

c) Subsidiary trading costs

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Cost of sales | 160,035 | 160,035 |
| Administration expenses | 92,741 | 92,741 |
| Cost of sales staff costs | 328,684 | 328,684 |
| Administration staff costs | 341,950 | 341,950 |
| Administration depreciation | 24,774 | 24,774 |
| Total 2025 | 948,184 | 948,184 |
| | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
| Cost of sales | 229,286 | 229,286 |
| Administration expenses | 72,431 | 72,431 |
| Cost of sales staff costs | 233,023 | 233,023 |
| Administration staff costs | 289,583 | 289,583 |
| Administration depreciation | 18,950 | 18,950 |
| Total 2024 | 843,273 | 843,273 |

7 - ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

| | Activities undertaken directly 2025 (£) | Support costs 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Charitable activities | 2,354,074 | 831,406 | 3,185,480 |
| | Activities undertaken directly 2024 (£) | Support costs 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
| Charitable activities | 1,983,422 | 712,970 | 2,696,392 |

Analysis of direct costs

| | Total funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Staff costs | 1,413,490 | 1,229,021 |
| Depreciation | 88,270 | 93,565 |
| Direct project costs | 583,863 | 289,159 |
| Travel | 60,348 | 63,273 |
| Training & recruitment | 20,385 | 17,287 |
| Legal & professional | 46,170 | 202,079 |
| Overheads, publishing and office costs | 141,548 | 89,038 |
| Total | 2,354,074 | 1,983,422 |

Analysis of support costs

| | Total funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Staff costs | 537,885 | 406,278 |
| Travel | 3,344 | 1,395 |
| Training & recruitment | 7,727 | 2,080 |
| Legal & professional | 21,082 | 26,537 |
| Overheads, publishing and office costs | 168,248 | 171,138 |
| Premises and utilities | 55,354 | 72,361 |
| Governance costs | 37,766 | 33,181 |
| Total | 831,406 | 712,970 |

8 - AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION

The auditor's remuneration amounts to an audit fee of £17,200 (2024 - £16,000), and fees in respect of other services of £890 (2024 - £1,650). Fees payable to the group's auditor in respect of the auditing of accounts of subsidiaries of the group amount to £7,100 (2024 - £6,650).

9 - STAFF COSTS

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Wages and salaries | 2,463,392 | 2,109,648 | 1,907,881 | 1,682,244 |
| Social security costs | 224,710 | 191,398 | 157,339 | 135,016 |
| Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes | 258,402 | 214,744 | 210,650 | 175,924 |
| Total | 2,946,504 | 2,515,790 | 2,275,870 | 1,993,184 |

The average number of persons employed by the company during the year was as follows:

| | Group 2025 (No.) | Group 2024 (No.) | Company 2025 (No.) | Company 2024 (No.) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Business and management | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 |
| Charitable activities | 61 | 46 | 61 | 46 |
| Fundraising and publicity | 19 | 10 | 19 | 10 |
| Subsidiary | 16 | 13 | - | - |
| Total | 106 | 78 | 90 | 65 |

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

| | Group 2025 (No.) | Group 2024 (No.) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| In the band £60,001 – £70,000 | 1 | 1 |

Key management personnel have been determined to be the trustees and four members of the senior management team. Trustees received no remuneration or benefits. The total remuneration of the senior management team was £236,178 (2024: £228,012).

During the year, no trustees (2024: none) were reimbursed for expenses.

10 - INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Group

| | Website (£) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Cost | |
| At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 | 10,773 |
| Amortisation | |
| At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 | 10,773 |
| Net book value | |
| At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 | - |

No intangible assets are held by the company.

11 - TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group

| | Land and buildings (£) | External fixtures and fittings (£) | Furniture, fittings and equipment (£) | Motor vehicles (£) | Total (£) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Cost or valuation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 9,715,047 | 607,963 | 324,811 | 312,313 | 10,960,134 |
| Additions | 1,327,736 | 28,430 | 89,132 | 64,887 | 1,510,185 |
| Transfers between classes | 3,417 | - | - | (3,417) | - |
| Transfer to investment property | (550,000) | - | - | - | (550,000) |
| At 31 March 2025 | 10,496,200 | 636,393 | 413,943 | 373,783 | 11,920,319 |
| Depreciation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 417,079 | 602,821 | 255,910 | 243,852 | 1,519,662 |
| Charge for the year | 43,813 | 9,078 | 39,349 | 32,695 | 124,935 |
| Transfer to investment property | (12,833) | - | - | - | (12,833) |
| At 31 March 2025 | 448,059 | 611,899 | 295,259 | 276,547 | 1,631,764 |
| Net book value | | | | | |
| At 31 March 2025 | 10,048,141 | 24,494 | 118,684 | 97,236 | 10,288,555 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 9,297,968 | 5,142 | 68,901 | 68,461 | 9,440,472 |

Company

| | Land and buildings (£) | External fixtures and fittings (£) | Furniture, fittings and equipment (£) | Motor vehicles (£) | Total (£) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Cost or valuation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 9,553,567 | 607,415 | 217,892 | 297,332 | 10,676,206 |
| Additions | 1,327,736 | 28,430 | 56,816 | 64,887 | 1,477,869 |
| Transfers between classes | 3,417 | - | - | (3,417) | - |
| Transfer to investment property | (550,000) | - | - | - | (550,000) |
| At 31 March 2025 | 10,334,720 | 635,845 | 274,708 | 358,802 | 11,604,075 |
| Depreciation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 417,079 | 597,557 | 193,819 | 229,079 | 1,437,534 |
| Charge for the year | 43,813 | 9,078 | 14,575 | 32,695 | 100,161 |
| Transfer to investment property | (12,833) | - | - | - | (12,833) |
| At 31 March 2025 | 448,059 | 606,635 | 208,394 | 261,774 | 1,524,862 |
| Net book value | | | | | |
| At 31 March 2025 | 9,886,661 | 29,210 | 66,314 | 97,028 | 10,079,213 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 9,136,488 | 9,858 | 24,073 | 68,253 | 9,238,672 |

11 - TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS (CONTINUED)

The freehold land held by the group was last revalued internally on 1 April 2015.

The group has adopted a policy of revaluation for tangible fixed assets. Had these assets been measured at historic cost, the carrying values would have been as follows:

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Freehold land | 6,300,483 | 4,969,330 |
| Freehold property | 916,049 | 1,497,029 |
| Total | 7,216,532 | 6,466,359 |

Included in group land and buildings is freehold land at valuation of £9,133,092 (2024: £7,801,939) which is not depreciated. Land and buildings include leasehold land and buildings with a net book value of £12,327 (2024: £12,772).

The net book value of motor vehicles above includes an amount of £14,785 (2024: £30,748) in respect of assets held under hire purchase contracts.

12 - INVESTMENT PROPERTY

Group and company

| | Freehold investment property (£) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Valuation | |
| Transfer from tangible fixed assets | 537,167 |
| Surplus on revaluation | 12,833 |
| At 31 March 2025 | 550,000 |

Northumberland Wildlife Trust owns the freehold property situated at The Haining, Elsdon, Northumberland. The property is valued at open market value of £550,000 with a formal valuation performed in September 2023 by Richard Brown & Partners, external Chartered Surveyors.

13 - FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

Company

| | Investments in subsidiary companies (£) |
|--------------------------|---|
| Cost or valuation | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 5,002 |
| At 31 March 2025 | 5,002 |
| Net book value | |
| At 31 March 2025 | 5,002 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 5,002 |

14 - STOCKS

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Finished goods and goods for resale | 12,442 | 5,106 | 12,442 | 5,106 |

15 - DEBTORS

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Due within one year | | | | |
| Trade debtors | 651,749 | 413,619 | 397,408 | 266,740 |
| Amounts owed by group undertakings | - | - | - | 4,775 |
| Other debtors | 1,283 | 745 | 1,283 | 745 |
| Prepayments and accrued income | 177,400 | 209,234 | 118,805 | 152,834 |
| Tax recoverable | - | 2,486 | - | - |
| Total | 830,432 | 626,084 | 517,496 | 425,094 |

16 - CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Other loans | 17,421 | - | 17,421 | - |
| Trade creditors | 240,552 | 176,236 | 220,725 | 165,460 |
| Amounts owed to group undertakings | - | - | 68,617 | - |
| Corporation tax | 8,039 | - | - | - |
| Other taxation and social security | 178,533 | 146,858 | 96,399 | 109,485 |
| Obligations under finance lease and hire purchase contracts | 5,550 | 8,963 | 5,550 | 8,963 |
| Other creditors | 15,789 | 9,350 | 3,712 | 1,948 |
| Accruals and deferred income | 518,750 | 894,665 | 386,348 | 787,408 |
| Total | 984,634 | 1,236,072 | 798,772 | 1,073,264 |

Deferred income

| | 2025 (£) | 2024 (£) |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Group and company | | |
| Brought forward as at 1 April | 640,100 | 139,000 |
| Deferred in year | 319,064 | 640,100 |
| Released in year | (640,100) | (139,000) |
| Carried forward at 31 March | 319,064 | 640,100 |

17 - CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Loans | 1,832,573 | 925,000 | 1,832,573 | 925,000 |
| Net obligations under finance lease and hire purchase contracts | 5,333 | 10,883 | 5,333 | 10,883 |
| Total | 1,837,906 | 935,883 | 1,837,906 | 935,883 |

The loans of £1,833k relates to an amount received to aid with the purchase of Earsdon West Forest, Morpeth, Northumberland, to develop the biodiversity net gain service and in relation to the Whitelee Peatland Restoration grant.

18 - DEFERRED TAXATION

Group

| | 2025 (£) |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| At the beginning of the year | 47,086 |
| Charge for the year | 1,511 |
| Total | 48,597 |

The deferred tax liability is made up as follows:

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Land held at valuation | 48,597 | 47,086 |
| Total | 48,597 | 47,086 |

19 - PROVISIONS

Group

| | Other provisions (£) |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| Additions | 15,000 |
| Total | 15,000 |

The provision relates to obligations under an ongoing contract in the subsidiary EcoNorth Limited, where the performance obligations relating to the estimated liability will fall due over an extended period.

20 - STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

| | Balance at 1 April 2024 (£) | Income (£) | Expenditure (£) | Transfers in/out (£) | Gains/ (Losses) (£) | Balance at 31 March 2025 (£) |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Unrestricted funds | | | | | | |
| Designated funds | | | | | | |
| XLedger Development and Training | - | - | - | 5,000 | - | 5,000 |
| Briar Wood Bank Fencing | - | - | - | 20,000 | - | 20,000 |
| Cresswell Hide Ramp | - | - | - | 27,000 | - | 27,000 |
| Staff Wellbeing, Training and Development | - | - | - | 45,000 | - | 45,000 |
| Benshaw Moor Gateways | - | - | - | 5,000 | - | 5,000 |
| BNG Audit and Survey Fees | - | - | - | 55,687 | - | 55,687 |
| Gosforth Drainage and Car Park | - | - | - | 52,000 | - | 52,000 |
| Gosforth Bathrooms | - | - | - | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |
| HWDC External Courtyard Timber | - | - | - | 23,000 | - | 23,000 |
| Total | - | - | - | 272,687 | - | 272,687 |
| General funds | | | | | | |
| General funds | 3,194,511 | 1,722,017 | (1,365,082) | 187,916 | 12,833 | 3,752,195 |
| Hauxley Visitor Centre fixed asset reserve | 899,324 | - | (16,848) | (142,020) | - | 740,456 |
| Subsidiary trading funds | 348,359 | 1,054,971 | (948,184) | 3,999 | - | 459,145 |
| Revaluation reserve | 2,831,442 | - | - | - | - | 2,831,442 |
| Total | 7,273,636 | 2,776,988 | (2,330,114) | 49,895 | 12,833 | 7,783,238 |
| Total unrestricted funds | 7,273,636 | 2,776,988 | (2,330,114) | 322,582 | 12,833 | 8,055,925 |
| Restricted funds | | | | | | |
| General Estates | - | 389,802 | (256,650) | (110,758) | - | 22,394 |
| Fundraising and Development | 21,145 | 4,840 | (11,884) | (4,152) | - | 9,949 |
| Nature Recovery | - | 492,211 | (464,859) | (20,824) | - | 6,528 |
| Nature Reserves | 1,990,911 | 738,953 | (378,690) | (385,124) | - | 1,966,050 |
| Peat Partnership | - | 482,145 | (428,923) | (53,222) | - | - |
| Red Squirrel | - | 297,196 | (426,766) | 172,301 | - | 42,731 |
| Wild City | 3,653 | 306,497 | (380,983) | 79,197 | - | 8,364 |
| Biodiversity | - | 53,334 | (53,334) | - | - | - |
| Total | 2,015,709 | 2,764,978 | (2,402,089) | (322,582) | - | 2,056,016 |
| Total of funds | 9,289,345 | 5,541,966 | (4,732,203) | - | 12,833 | 10,111,941 |

Transfers into restricted funds from unrestricted funds have been made to meet shortfalls in restricted project funding.

Transfers out of restricted funds are in relation to capital spend.

20 - STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Details of the specific grants and donations making up the restricted funds are as follows:

General Estates

This covers general maintenance, land management, monitoring

Fundraising and Development

Giving tree funds at Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre.

Nature Recovery

Significant habitat and species projects that add, create and restore habitats and reverse the decline of species; projects that facilitate nature-friendly management of land with the aim of connecting nature at scale.

Nature Reserves

For specific reserves for monitoring, management of habitats/species; includes capital elements such as equipment, hides, buildings, access improvements; and raising public awareness/action.

Peat Partnership

Monitoring, management and restoration of peatland as well as public engagement.

Red Squirrel

Monitoring and protecting red squirrels in their natural habitats, raising awareness and providing guidance to increase red squirrel conservation.

Wild City

Contributes to our work reconnecting a wider range of people with nature so that they will act for nature and climate.

20 - STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Statement of funds - prior year

| | Balance at 1 April 2023 (£) | Income (£) | Expenditure (£) | Transfers in/out (£) | Balance at 31 March 2024 (£) |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Unrestricted funds | | | | | |
| General funds | 3,069,771 | 1,539,054 | (1,455,811) | 41,497 | 3,194,511 |
| Hauxley Visitor Centre fixed asset reserve | 899,324 | - | - | - | 899,324 |
| Subsidiary trading funds | 305,509 | 886,123 | (843,273) | - | 348,359 |
| Revaluation reserve | 2,831,442 | - | - | - | 2,831,442 |
| Total | 7,106,046 | 2,425,177 | (2,299,084) | 41,497 | 7,273,636 |
| Restricted funds | | | | | |
| General Estates | 14,898 | 20,000 | (34,472) | (426) | - |
| Fundraising and Development | 21,974 | 16,000 | (4,359) | (12,470) | 21,145 |
| Nature Recovery | 64,200 | 291,592 | (410,788) | 54,996 | - |
| Nature Reserves | 1,949,923 | 464,169 | (373,139) | (50,042) | 1,990,911 |
| Peat Partnership | 27,000 | 390,025 | (443,738) | 26,713 | - |
| Red Squirrel | - | 290,710 | (245,047) | (45,663) | - |
| Wild City | 9,783 | 310,343 | (301,868) | (14,605) | 3,653 |
| Total | 2,087,778 | 1,782,839 | (1,813,411) | (41,497) | 2,015,709 |
| Total of funds | 9,193,824 | 4,208,016 | (4,112,495) | - | 9,289,345 |

21 - ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) | Restricted funds 2025 (£) | Total funds 2025 (£) |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Tangible fixed assets | 8,388,555 | 1,900,000 | 10,288,555 |
| Investment property | 550,000 | - | 550,000 |
| Current assets | 1,684,443 | 475,080 | 2,159,523 |
| Creditors due within one year | (665,570) | (319,064) | (984,634) |
| Creditors due in more than one year | (1,837,906) | - | (1,837,906) |
| Provisions for liabilities and charges | (63,597) | - | (63,597) |
| Total 2025 | 8,055,925 | 2,056,016 | 10,111,941 |

21 - ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 (£) | Restricted funds 2024 (£) | Total funds 2024 (£) |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Tangible fixed assets | 7,540,472 | 1,900,000 | 9,440,472 |
| Current assets | 1,389,205 | 678,709 | 2,067,914 |
| Creditors due within one year | (673,072) | (563,000) | (1,236,072) |
| Creditors due in more than one year | (935,883) | - | (935,883) |
| Provisions for liabilities and charges | (47,086) | - | (47,086) |
| Total 2024 | 7,273,636 | 2,015,709 | 9,289,345 |

22 - RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENTS IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Net income for the period (as per Statement of Financial Activities) | 809,763 | 95,521 |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Depreciation charges | 124,935 | 109,908 |
| Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets | - | (2,500) |
| (Increase)/decrease in stocks | (7,336) | 7,765 |
| (Increase)/decrease in debtors | (204,348) | 15,854 |
| Increase/(decrease) in creditors | (265,446) | 634,290 |
| Deferred tax provision | 1,511 | 6,042 |
| Other provision | 15,000 | - |
| Net cash provided by operating activities | 474,079 | 866,880 |

23 - ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Cash in hand | 1,316,649 | 1,436,724 |

24 - ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

| | At 1 April 2024 (£) | Cash flows (£) | At 31 March 2025 (£) |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Cash at bank and in hand | 1,436,724 | (120,075) | 1,316,649 |
| Debt due within 1 year | - | (17,421) | (17,421) |
| Debt due after 1 year | (925,000) | (907,573) | (1,832,573) |
| Finance leases | (19,846) | 8,963 | (10,883) |
| Total | 491,878 | (1,036,106) | (544,228) |

25 - CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|--|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements | | | | |
| Acquisition of tangible fixed assets | - | 925,000 | - | 925,000 |

26 - PENSION COMMITMENTS

The group operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the group in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the group to the fund and amounted to £258,402 (2024: £214,744). Contributions totalling £23,244 (2024: £3,206) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

27 - OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2025 the group and company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|--|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Not later than 1 year | 10,923 | 20,122 | 665 | 7,473 |
| Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years | 3,427 | 20,388 | - | 332 |
| Total | 14,350 | 40,510 | 665 | 7,805 |

28 - FINANCE LEASE COMMITMENTS

Minimum lease payments under finance lease fall due as follows:

| | Group 2025 (£) | Group 2024 (£) | Company 2025 (£) | Company 2024 (£) |
|--|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Within one year | 6,435 | 10,169 | 6,435 | 10,169 |
| After one year and before five years | 6,314 | 12,749 | 6,314 | 12,749 |
| Less finance costs allocated to future periods | (1,866) | (3,072) | (1,866) | (3,072) |
| Total | 10,883 | 19,846 | 10,883 | 19,846 |

29 - RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Remuneration of key management personnel is disclosed in note 9.

During the year the charitable company purchased consultancy services of £69,911 (2024: £132,902) from EcoNorth Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary, and charged EcoNorth £28,087 (2024: £42,941) for services supplied. At the year end the charitable company owed £68,617 to EcoNorth Limited (2024: £4,775 from EcoNorth Limited).

During the year the charitable company supplied services totalling £14,363 (2024: £19,894) and purchased goods totalling £1,000 (2024: £1,025) from Urban Green Newcastle. At the year end, Urban Green Newcastle, of which a trustee of Northumberland Wildlife Trust is a director, owed the charitable company £nil (2024: £nil).

During the year the charitable company supplied services totalling £nil (2024: £nil) and purchased services totalling £1,000 (2024: £5,308) to/from Northumberland National Park Foundation, which is related by virtue of a common director. There were no balances outstanding at the year end.

30 - PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARIES

The following were subsidiary undertakings of the company:

| Names | Company number | Principal activity | Class of shares | Holding | Included in consolidation |
|---|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------------|
| EcoNorth Limited | 02274277 | Ecological consultancy | Ordinary | 100% | Yes |
| Northumberland Wildlife Enterprises Limited | 02044288 | Dormant | Ordinary | 100% | Yes |

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year were:

| | Income (£) | Expenditure (£) | Profit for the period (£) | Net assets (£) |
|---|------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| EcoNorth Limited | 1,124,882 | (976,251) | 148,631 | 594,944 |
| Northumberland Wildlife Trust Enterprises Limited | - | - | - | 2 |



Perch © Alexander Mustard/2020VISION

Acknowledgements of financial and other support for 2024-2025

We would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who made our work this year possible.

Charitable trusts, foundations and grant funders giving £1,000 or more:

- All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC)/Emirates
- Ashington Town Council
- Branch Out Fund
- BT
- Co-op Community Fund
- Community Foundation North East
- Cramlington Town Council
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- Newcastle's Nature Networks
- Newcastle Youth Fund - East & Inner West
- Northumberland Community Chest
- People's Postcode Lottery (PPL) - Planet Fund
- PPL - Social Investment Fund
- QBE Foundation
- Ray Wind Farm Fund
- Re-wilding Britain
- Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
- Sir James Knott
- The Big Give (The Reed Foundation)
- The Ernest Cook Trust
- The Hadrian Trust
- The Lifescape Project
- The National Citizen Service Trust
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- The Natural Lottery New to Nature Fund
- The Naturesave Trust
- The Newcastle Fund
- The Percy Hedley 1990 Charitable Trust
- The Reece Foundation
- The Swire Charitable Trust
- W A Handley

Organisations and companies contributing £5,000 or more towards our income and charitable objectives through donations and corporate partnership agreements:

- Defra/Environment Agency
- Forestry England
- The Land Trust
- Natural England
- Newcastle City Council
- North East Combined Authority
- North East Community Fund - Maintenance
- North Tyneside County Council
- Northumberland County Council
- Northumbrian Water Limited

Organisations and companies contributing £1,000 or more from company memberships:

- Aaron Optometrists
- Andrew Poplett
- Egger (UK) Ltd
- Ringtons
- Tarmac
- Thermofisher Scientific
- Thomsons of Prudhoe
- Vattenfall

Legacies and in memoriam donations contributing £1,000 or more:

- The estate of Peter John Lomax
- The estate of Mary Jeffrey Lillie
- The estate of James Murray
- The estate of Peter William Morton

Individual gifts of £5,000 or more (acknowledging that many donors prefer anonymity):

- Graham and Sara Alder
- Valerie Bess

Pro bono support:

We would like to thank the following supporters for their pro bono support during the last year:

- Barbour
- Newcastle Gateshead Initiative - Everybody Welcome

Reference and administrative details

Charity name

Northumberland
Wildlife Trust

Charity registration number

221819

Company registered number

00717813

Registered office

The Garden House
St Nicholas Park
Jubilee Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE3 3XT

Trustees

Trai Anfield
John Baker Cresswell,
Chair of Nature Recovery Committee
Eveline Brunton
Derek Coates, **Treasurer and Chair of Finance and Risk Committee**
Patricia Cresswell, **Chair of Governance and Compliance Committee**
Hugh Ferrand
Graham Gill, **Vice Chair and Chair of Nature Recovery Committee** *(stepped down October 2024)*
Ailsa Hobson, **Secretary**
Ian Jackson
Michael Jeffries
Suren Kanagasundaram
Nigel Porter, **Chair of Trustees**
Karen Statham, **Vice Chair**
Katie Stevens
Rosie Tapsfield
Chris Taylor

President

Conrad Dickinson

Vice Presidents

Ian Armstrong
Graham Gill
Angus Lunn *(deceased August 2025)*

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Chief Executive Officer

Mike Pratt

Director of Finance and Central Services

Dan Venner *(resigned January 2025)*

Head of Finance and Central Services

Blanche Phillips

Director of Conservation

Duncan Hutt

Director of Engagement and Fundraising

Sheila Sharp

Independent auditor

UNW LLP
Citygate St James'
Boulevard
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4JE

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland
31 Grey Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 6ES

Solicitors

Hay & Kilner
Merchant House
30 Cloth Market
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1EE

Glossary

AI - artificial intelligence

BNG - Biodiversity Net Gain

CRM system - Customer Relationship Management

CS - Countryside Stewardship, a government-funded scheme to incentivise improvements to the environment

DEFRA - Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

ECN - EcoNorth Limited

EDI - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Forest Schools - A scheme of outdoor-based learning in a woodland environment

FRC - NWT Trustee-led Finance and Risk Committee

FTE - Full time equivalent

GCC - NWT Trustee-led Governance and Compliance Committee

GDPR - General Data Protection Regulation

HWDC - Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre

Living Landscapes - The Wildlife Trusts' landscape-scale conservation approach

Living Seas - As above, but in the marine environment

MOD - Ministry of Defence

NRC - NWT Trustee-led Nature Recovery Committee

NWE - Northumberland Wildlife Enterprises Limited

NWT - Northumberland Wildlife Trust

PPL - People's Postcode Lottery

RSWT - Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts

SORP - Statement of Recommended Practice for Charity Accounts

TWT - The Wildlife Trusts



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-  [northumberlandwt](https://www.facebook.com/northumberlandwt)
-  [northwildlife](https://twitter.com/northwildlife)
-  [northwildlife](https://www.instagram.com/northwildlife)
-  [northumberland-wildlife-trust](https://www.linkedin.com/company/northumberland-wildlife-trust)

Registered Charity No. 221819
Registered Company No. 00717813



**Northumberland
Wildlife Trust**