

OUR WILD YEAR 2023/24

Impact report



Ymddiriedolaeth Natur
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Wildlife Trust



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Our year in numbers



9,977
members



Engagements with
55 youth groups,
560 young people,
121 schools,
3,041 pupils,
19 colleges/universities
and **238** students



50 full-time
equivalent employees



28,547
hours of
volunteer time



126 landowners
given advice
about their own
landholdings



286 local events,
walks and talks organised
by staff and volunteers,
reaching **3,665**
people



17,000
subscribers to
our e-newsletter



951 hectares of
land across **36**
sites owned and
managed for people
and wildlife

Welcome

By the time this report goes to print, the fourth World Biodiversity Summit will have taken place alongside the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where delegates will have considered topics such as 'Reparation for Climate Change Damage', 'Rebuilding Trust and Restoring Hope' and 'Food Systems and Chemicals'. All of these issues resonate at a local level, all have an impact on wildlife, and all relate to the work of North Wales Wildlife Trust through our strategy, *Bringing Nature Back*, which helps us to think globally and act locally.

Central to our work is revitalising the relationship people have with nature, because if nature matters to people it will be factored into individual and societal decision-making – whether that concerns how farmland is managed; choices we make over where we buy our food; how we travel; or simply how we choose to spend our precious time. We have reached a point where systemic change is required – new ways of working, forging new partnerships and working hard to support others to help restore nature.

People therefore remain at the heart of everything we do – and none more so than those who directly support us. Our membership numbers are healthy; we attract a high number of volunteers; we are supported by a wide range of funders and partners; and gifts in Wills represent a vital income stream that we turn into direct action for wildlife. Thank you for the trust you place in us.



Frances Cattanach
Chief Executive Officer



Howard Davies
Chair



Bringing Nature Back

Our **vision** is of a thriving natural world, with wildlife and natural habitats playing a valued role in addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, and people inspired and empowered to take action for nature.

Our **purpose** is to bring wildlife back, to empower people to take action for nature, and to create a society where nature matters.

Our **strategy** and its **three goals** set out what we believe needs to happen by 2030 in pursuit of our longer-term vision for nature's recovery.



GOAL 1

Nature in North Wales is in recovery, with abundant, diverse wildlife and natural processes creating wilder land and seascapes where people and nature thrive.



GOAL 2

People in North Wales are taking action for nature and the climate, resulting in better decision-making for the environment.



GOAL 3

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

GOAL 1

Nature in recovery

17% of species in Wales face extinction – and the future of once-common wildlife is uncertain.

It has become clear that protecting what we have left is no longer enough. We need to create new spaces for nature by connecting habitats, restoring landscapes and reintroducing 'keystone' species.

Our aim is for at least 30% of land in Wales to be protected, connected and positively managed for nature. Our aim for the recovery of our seas is to seek an ecosystem-based approach to build resilience against increased pressures. Only Marine Protected Areas that are recovering will form part of the 30% target.

NATURE IN NUMBERS

150 swift boxes
were installed in towns
and villages across
north-west Wales

25,000 trees
were looked after at our
Aberduna tree nursery

A record **50 pairs of
pied flycatcher**
bred successfully at
Coed Crafnant Nature
Reserve

**115km of
riverbank**
were managed to control
and eradicate Himalayan
balsam and Japanese
knotweed

BRYN IFAN © DILYS THOMPSON



BEAVER © NICK UPTON





Scaling up to '30 by 30'

We began work on scaling up our efforts to support nature recovery and help meet the Global Biodiversity Framework target of having 30% of land effectively managed for nature's recovery by 2030. Recognising that we need to work more closely with other environmental bodies, we initiated an effort to improve coordination, and a group of public- and third-sector organisations are building a joint picture of our current contributions to nature recovery in North Wales.

In the meantime, we continued to dedicate resource to our own Living Landscape areas. Highlights included:

- Planting hedgerows and clearing rhododendron alongside Action Asylum in our Alun and Chwiler Living Landscape
- Managing parts of HMP Berwyn's land on the Wrexham Industrial Estate to benefit grizzled skipper butterflies and other species, in partnership with ARC and Butterfly Conservation Wales
- Supporting the creation of a community-powered vision for the Conwy river catchment, seeking to put people at the centre of more inclusive decision-making about their freshwater
- Securing funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to begin what could become a hugely ambitious 7-year project to protect and enhance the Anglesey Fens

FRED FLYCATCHER © RICHARD STEEL / 2020VISION



Bryn Ifan

Through the acquisition of Bryn Ifan (thanks in no small part to wonderfully generous individual donors), we took our first steps as a partner in the Atlantic Rainforest Restoration Programme: a long-term commitment to nature-based solutions by Aviva. The wider site is home to marsh fritillary butterflies, lesser horseshoe bats and other scarce species, and also enables us to work with local people to consider its farming future in the face of changing agricultural policy.

Action for our seas and coast

We continued to work alongside developers to influence large-scale tidal energy schemes and offshore wind projects, whilst a team of volunteers helped monitor our shores using The Wildlife Trusts' 'Shoresearch' methodology. Seagrass, sharks, skates and rays became key focus species for supporting young people and communities to engage with their local marine environment, with 'Project SIARC' (in which we are a key delivery partner) being awarded Wales Project of the Year in the National Lottery awards following a public vote.

Nature reserves

Our own nature reserves remain some of the most important sites for wildlife in North Wales. Particular highlights included:

- Marford Quarry cementing its importance for invertebrates, with surveys revealing two new species never previously recorded in Wales
- A record 9,546 greater butterfly orchids being recorded at Caeau Tan-y-bwlch during the annual survey
- Starting a 20-year coppicing cycle at Coed y Felin and seeing an (unrelated) ten-fold improvement in the numbers of the site's special Deptford pinks since 2022
- Eight new ephemeral scrapes being created and looming Leylandii replaced with new native hedgerow planting at Minera Quarry
- Spotting 2 black grouse males displaying and 4 females in flight at Gors Maen Llwyd
- A memorial to Gwaith Powdwr's past as Cooke's Explosives Works being unveiled by artist Howard Bowcott and MS Mabon ap Gwynfor, with the reserve also featuring in two BBC *Springwatch* broadcasts





DEPTFORD PINK © VAUGHN MATTHEWS



TOMPOT BLENNY © PAUL NAYLOR



BLACK GROUSE © MARK HAMBLEN 2020VISION

GOAL 2

Meaningful action

Without people power, the fight to protect nature and tackle the climate crisis seems an insurmountable task.

North Wales Wildlife Trust have a clear remit to engage and empower people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to grow the ranks of those willing to take action and stand up for nature, or simply re-engage with and understand wild places and green spaces.

By increasing the number of people who can speak up and take action for wildlife, and diversifying the mix of individuals who step into our sector as staff, members or activists, our voice will be louder and reach further than ever before.

NATURE IN NUMBERS



2,224 people
in North Wales signed
up to 30 Days Wild, The
Wildlife Trusts' biggest
national engagement
campaign



Our posts reached over
3 million social
media accounts



28,546 hours
of time was given by
our amazing volunteers
– a 19% increase on last
year's figures!



We engaged with
55 youth groups
and **121 schools**

COMMUNITY GARDEN © NWWT





Supporting communities

Our 'Nextdoor Nature' project continued to prove that long-term presence in small communities is key to fostering a sense of local ownership and laying the foundations for community organising – learning that we're now embedding right across our work and hopefully inspiring a greater number of long-term actions for wildlife. Meanwhile, we embarked on a new partnership with Canolfan Addysg y Bont, a special needs school in Llangefni, where we'll be spending the next two years improving their grounds for nature and outdoor learning whilst also carrying out accessibility improvements at Cors Goch – their nearest nature reserve.

Inspiring the next generation

Through our 'Stand for Nature Wales' programme, we hosted young people from across the country for a series of events and helped them to speak directly to political figures and decision-makers regarding their 'asks' for nature and future generations – as per their youth manifesto, launched at COP15. We also marked the second year of 'Ocean Rescue Champions' and its particular focus on young marine conservationists, with previous participants acting as mentors to support new recruits. Together, they spent the year monitoring and planting seagrass sites around the Llŷn Peninsula and delivering public events to share and promote their activities.

Volunteering

The volunteering element of our work continued to thrive throughout 2023 -24. Almost 800 people freely contributed an invaluable 28,546 hours of their time – whether you were balsam-bashing, fixing fences, searching the shores, or helping out in our offices and shops, we really can't thank you enough!

Spreading the word

Our communications and marketing team continued to produce regular high-quality and engaging content to support the delivery of our strategic goals, including leading a noticeable improvement in print and broadcast media coverage. Digital channels also continued to play an important role in reaching and engaging with our audiences: subscribers to our weekly e-newsletters, *Wild Weekly* and *Wythnos Wyllt* increased to 17,000, whilst our social media channels are followed by around 36,000 people (up 7% year-on-year) and over 500,000 unique individuals visited our website.



GOAL 3

Nature-based solutions

The loss of nature in North Wales is having a clear and measurable impact on both wildlife and people.

Threatened species are suffering from habitat loss; mental and physical wellbeing is declining with fewer high-quality greenspaces for people to explore and enjoy; soil erosion is increasing and soil fertility decreasing; and we're seeing ever-more frequent extreme weather events.

Thankfully, the natural world can provide its own solutions to combat and reverse these dangers. North Wales Wildlife Trust use our influence to encourage and guide society and decision-makers to look towards nature-based solutions to address the nature and climate crises.

NATURE IN NUMBERS

**785.61 tCO₂e
emitted**

by North Wales Wildlife Trust across Scope 1-3 – a figure we're actively working to reduce

150,000 people*

visited one of our nature reserves – wild places benefitting wildlife and human health and wellbeing alike

*In 2022-23 – most recent figure available

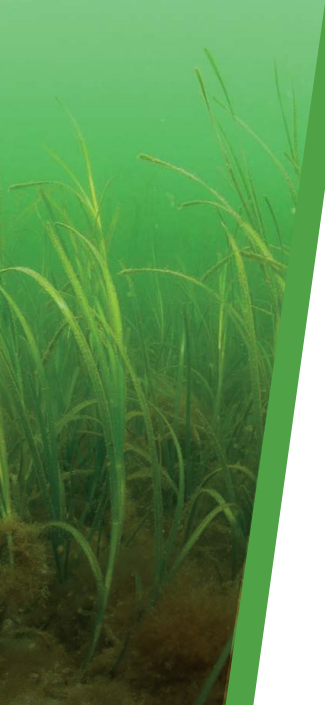


Seagrass restoration on the Llyn Peninsula

SEAGRASS © PAUL NAYLOR

**1.5 million
seagrass seeds**
were collected to be planted in 2025

58.18 tCO₂e
is being taken out of the atmosphere by our Cors y Sarnau Nature Reserve



Restoration to sequestration

All our work to improve and expand wildlife habitats on land and at sea is helping to restore ecosystems, so that natural habitats can sequester carbon, help prevent flooding, reduce soil erosion, improve soil fertility, stabilise global temperatures, provide pollination services and improve human health and well-being. Wildlife restoration projects which are also especially valuable in sequestering carbon include peatland restoration at Cors y Sarnau Nature Reserve, seagrass habitat expansion through our Living Seas work, and woodland restoration, most notably at Bryn Ifan.

Getting our own house in order

Our recorded carbon emissions increased significantly between 2021-22 and 2022-23 (the last dates for which data is currently available), particularly within Scope 3, which includes most indirect sources of greenhouse gases from our operations. However, this is because we are collecting data on more elements than we have in previous years, with the major increase being due to us now counting emissions as a result of purchased goods and services. We continue to do what we can to reduce our carbon footprint, including having purchased one electric vehicle in the year.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Our new strategy puts diversity of people central to our mission, and staff and volunteers understand and appreciate the inherent value of involving a wider cross-section of society in our work. Society's problems require innovative thinking, and this will only come from bringing people together with different backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, ideas, and outlooks.

To this end, building on The Wildlife Trusts' *Wild About Inclusion* framework, we developed a short-term action plan to help us ensure that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is a way of being. This includes developing and refining our new EDI policy, and establishing an EDI Development Group of staff and Trustees to drive this area of our work forward. We have also continued our partnerships with Asylum Link Merseyside and Disability Wales (with whom we are hoping to improve accessibility to our reserves and offices for people with disabilities) and, through working with the North Wales Africa Society, our youth forum 'Môn Gwyrdd' welcomed its first Black members.



Financial review

North Wales Wildlife Trust had another successful financial year, whilst expanding our operations to meet new demand for our services.

Despite the cost-of-living crisis, our membership showed continued growth to 9,977 at the end of the year, up 6.4% from prior year: a net increase of over 600 which maintains our position as one of the best performing Wildlife Trusts in the UK. The income and support received provide a considerable contribution towards our success, and we continue to be grateful to our members for their generosity.

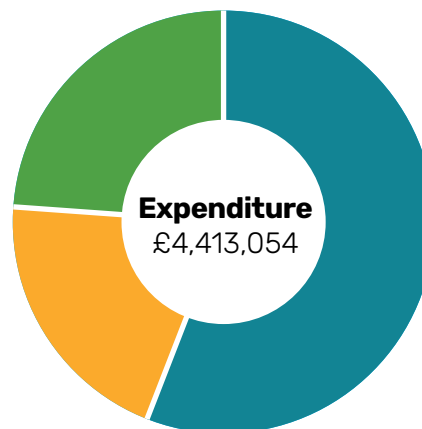
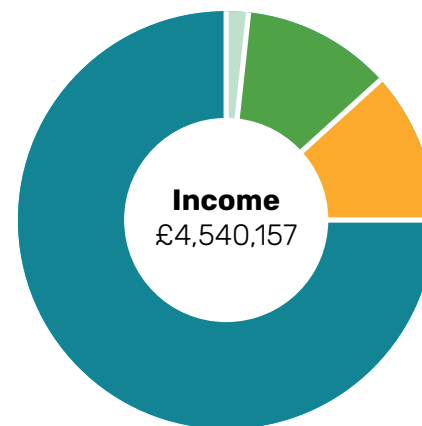
Turnover for the year reached £4.5 million, an increase of £800,000 compared with two years ago. Although down £1.5 million from prior year, this is explained by 2022-23 including a significant contribution from Aviva which went towards the purchase and renewal of Bryn Ifan, which completed at the beginning of 2023-24.

NWWT Trading benefited from a longer opening season for its shops and overcame the challenges of previous years to turn last year's small loss into a £15,000 profit. Enfys Ecology had a more challenging year, generating turnover of £490,000 and a small loss for the year, compared with a £45,000 prior year profit. A turnaround plan has been put in place and the Trustees remain committed to regularly reviewing performance and future forecast trading against the plan.

Overall, a busy year – for which the staff, volunteers and all North Wales Wildlife Trust supporters deserve congratulations and thanks for all that has been achieved!



Alex Lord
Treasurer



Looking ahead: 2024-25



The three interlinked goals of our Strategy 2030, *Bringing Nature Back*, guide us in taking our crucial local role in tackling the climate and nature crises. We're putting nature into recovery by helping people take meaningful action to support it, including by adopting nature-based solutions to society's challenges.

GOAL 1

In 2024-25, our work to put nature in recovery will include:

- Agreeing a strategy and business plan for a new land management advisory service for farmers and other landowners
- Continuing efforts to halt swift decline, including seeking legislation to ensure swift bricks are installed in all new buildings
- Defining priority geographical areas and habitats to underpin our multi-partner '30 by 30' ambitions, both on the land and at sea
- Developing a new, fourth Living Landscape project in the Conwy Valley



GOAL 2

In 2024-25, our efforts to help people in North Wales take meaningful action for nature will include:

- Finalising and rolling out an exemplar model for community organising, reaching beyond existing focus areas in Corwen and Gronant
- Embedding our new EDI policy into both our marketing strategy and project delivery
- Developing the next generation of environmental leaders by supporting our 'Môn Gwrydd' youth forum and, where feasible, establishing others



GOAL 3

In 2024-25, our work to embed nature-based solutions into society's problem-solving will include:

- Agreeing our own organisational carbon reduction strategy, focussing on office management and transport
- Using UK-wide blue carbon mapping work to identify local priorities and appropriate interventions
- Forecasting the ecological impacts of climate change across our nature reserves, Living Landscape areas and priority terrestrial and marine habitats



MORLO LLWYD © THINESH THIRUGANASAMPANTHAR

Our Natural Partners

We're proud to work for wildlife with businesses throughout North Wales.

Our Natural Partners help us work for a wilder North Wales – whether through sponsoring our projects; creating valuable wildlife habitats on their own land; or sharing their subject-specific expertise. Together, we're demonstrating that biodiversity can mean business!



Remember us in your Will

Help protect local wildlife and wild places for future generations by leaving a gift in your Will.

Once you have provided for your loved ones, remembering North Wales Wildlife Trust in your Will helps keep your memories of our wildlife alive for future generations.

22% of our voluntary income comes from gifts in Wills, which enables us to continue to protect the wildlife and wild places of North Wales.

Every gift in every Will, however large or small, makes a difference.

Would you like a free Will? We have entered into a number of partnerships that enable our supporters to write their Wills for free – without any obligations whatsoever. Please visit northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk/legacy or contact us for more information.



PHOTO BY OPPOFINDXSPRO ON UNSETLASH





Thank you to our supporters

We are incredibly grateful to our members, staff, volunteers, donors, legacy-leavers, partners, funders and investors for their commitment to supporting nature's recovery. Your continued generosity, support and dedication is crucial in helping to create a wilder North Wales for the benefit of people and wildlife alike.

Thank you!



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