

Our Year for Nature and People

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Impact Report 2022



Nature's recovery. Sounds good, sounds easy, certainly it's never been more necessary in the face of a climate and ecological emergency becoming more serious with each passing year. In response your Wildlife Trust has bold goals

and ambitions to bring wildlife back and mobilise communities across Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull to take meaningful action for wildlife where you live, work or play.

Together with a record number of members, volunteers, and supporters of all types we are energised and determined in our progress towards a wilder future and to grow the ranks of people standing by our side demanding better for the natural world.

This report takes you through what we have done in 2022. Of course, redefining our relationship with nature is not going to be easy. It will be achieved in steps, whether that's through growing our own estate of nature reserves so there are more recovery hubs for wildlife and special places for people to appreciate biodiversity on their doorstep, or through partnerships with others across much larger areas, influencing land use at scale. Or perhaps by asking communities what is important to them and exploring ways in which we can help more people take more action for wildlife. Or by being a voice through which the opinion of those on nature's side can be heard more clearly.

And of course, we'll need help. Helping hands and minds. Help with campaigning, fundraising, surveying, and volunteering. This report gives a brief overview of the help from thousands of supporters and says a massive thank you to everyone who in 2022 took us closer to a wilder Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull.

Ed Green, Chief Executive



Find out more about our 2030 strategy here!
warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/Strategy

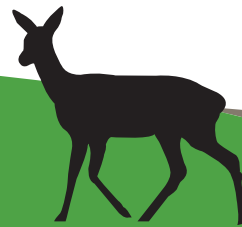
Our Strategic Goals

Goal 1

More space for nature – we will work for 30% of land in recovery, protected and connected for nature by 2030.

Goal 2

More people on nature's side – we will help 1 in 4 people in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull take action for wildlife.



Our Strategic Transformations

1

Aligning our charitable and commercial interests

2

Working effectively as a part of the distributed TWT network

3

Inspiring community and mobilising organisations

4

Undergoing a thorough digital transformation

5

Delivering a step-change in the scale and diversity of funding



Our Enabling Priorities

1

Getting our own house in order

2

Communicating so that people hear and change their behaviour

3

Developing clear and consistent evidence-based policies

4

Investing in high-skilled staff and volunteers

5

Speaking with a bold and confident voice



Goal 1

More space for nature



Success will be when nature is in recovery with abundant, diverse wildlife and natural processes creating wilder landscapes where people and wildlife thrive.

Restoring the abundance of nature in our woodlands

24 ha of our 450-ha woodland portfolio was in active management through thinning and coppicing, helping regenerate woodland and create a diverse structure and age range, opening the canopy and allowing light to reach the woodland floor. We also created a web hub that explains our woodland management work, showcasing case studies, blogs and vlogs.

Our visitor centres are supporting nature's recovery

We ran a range of engagement events from mindfulness and wellbeing to flora and fauna identification, all inspiring people to appreciate and care for the natural world. These included events run with the RSPB, and a collaboration event with local environmental groups aimed at helping the public document nature sightings.

Reducing our carbon footprint We installed eight electric vehicle (EV) chargers across Brandon Marsh and Hams Hall as part of the Carbon Reduction Action Plan and 8% of Trust

staff have now accessed EVs through a new salary sacrifice scheme. Carbon emissions for the group (i.e., Charity, Middlemarch and Wildlife Fundraising Central Ltd) have reduced by 21% from our 2019 baseline, as a result of investing in and delivering on our carbon reduction plan.

Buying the right land in the right places

We investigated opportunities to acquire more than 1,122 ha of land across ten sites with offers for three sites submitted: Fir Tree Farm, Warmington, Sheep Field, Brandon Lane and Bascote Road, Bishops Itchington. These totalled 127 ha and had a cumulative bid value of £3.8 million. Two were unsuccessful, negotiations with Tarmac on the extension of Brandon Marsh continue.

Guiding landowners in acting for wildlife

We appointed our first Agricultural Land Adviser to provide advice to farmers, such as helping them to apply for countryside stewardship schemes that support them making more space for nature on their farms. Our Warwickshire farm



cluster groups now have 97 members across the Leam and Upper Avon Sustainable Farming Group, the South Warwickshire Sustainable Farming Group, and the Arden Wildlife Farm Wildlife Network.

Delivering programmes of work that will support nature's recovery

Our application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was successful for the 'Sherbourne Valley Project', enabling us to start a multi-million pound project that will connect local people in Coventry with the Sherbourne, inspiring them to care for the river and improve its surrounding area for wildlife - the largest single project in the Trust's history.

Helping wildlife by influencing policy at all levels

We joined the national multi-organisation response to proposals by the government to expand fracking, create new investment zones free from all environmental regulations and introduce the Retained EU Law Bill, threatening thousands of laws which protect wildlife. The campaign mobilised widespread support across the country. More fracking was abandoned in 2022 and investment zones (including those proposed for Wellesbourne, south Coventry and Arden) were dropped later.



Goal 2

More people on nature's side



A growing movement of individuals standing up for nature are changing the mindsets and behaviours of the majority. That is what success will look like.

Embedding 'Five Ways to Natural Wellbeing' in our work The National Lottery Community Fund and Warwickshire County Council's Covid Resilience Fund helped us deliver bushcraft courses, outdoor yoga, wellbeing walks, social birding and allotment gardening in partnership with Coventry and Warwickshire Mind, supporting more than 600 people to improve their mental and physical wellbeing through nature.

Inspiring a lifelong love of nature through learning Children in Need funded weekly sessions at Yorkswood Primary to help facilitate learning in the outdoors. After several years the school's staff are now ready to go outdoors without us so their children can continue to reap the benefits of outdoor learning. We also created a nature webinar hub, showcasing over 30 hours of educational recordings and videos on our website.

Making nature accessible for everyone With funding from Warwickshire County Council's Reducing the Impact of Covid-19 fund, we delivered a programme of wild wellbeing taster sessions in partnership with EQUiP (the Equality and Inclusion Partnership) to find out more about barriers that minority ethnic communities in Warwickshire face to accessing green space.

Diversifying our volunteer opportunities 2022 saw an incredible 628 registered volunteers supporting the Trust, with volunteering on our reserves returned to pre-pandemic levels. Over the course of 2022 we registered 187 new volunteers. We are reviewing opportunities for young people, public transport users and



people living within an urban area, who highlighted barriers to volunteering.

Identifying barriers stopping people acting for nature Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Nextdoor Nature project is working with the Attleborough community in Nuneaton, understanding what matters to them in their area, so we can better understand how to support people taking meaningful action for nature.

Facilitating action for wildlife on other people's land Our #TeamWilder grants scheme, funded through City of Culture, supported grassroots organisations to make space for nature in their area of the city, enabling the development of pollinator friendly nature areas with bug hotels, bird feeders at Wild Earth's nature zone and the renovation of a forest school area at Bishops Ullathorne school.

Giving people the skills required to act for wildlife Six trainees all successfully completed their City and

Guilts Level 2 qualifications in Work-Based Environmental Conservation and were awarded their diplomas as part of the Love Your River Cole project.

Empowering people to influence their own networks and communities The Trust's new youth committee set out their vision to 'inspire and empower young adults to take action for nature and amplify their voices on the environmental issues that matter to them' and successfully organised their first public engagement event.

Working in partnership with others to achieve shared goals We delivered projects through the Coventry City of Culture Programme, ranging from the Coventry Creature Count, a citizen science programme encouraging people to record species on their doorstep, through to 'Our Wilder Family' drone show, which was viewed by 27,000 people in War Memorial Park and thousands more online.

Supporting the strategy – transformations and priorities

Transformations

Working effectively as a part of the Wildlife Trust movement We worked collaboratively with Wildlife Trusts across the River Severn Basin to share best practice and exchange knowledge on river related delivery. We're continuing to engage organisations like Severn Trent, the Environment Agency, and Water Resources West at a strategic level to try and foster cross-county project delivery.

Inspiring community and mobilising organisations We created a new #TeamWildier website hub to inspire and support people to act for nature. The hub includes a range of resources, tips and information for individuals, community groups, schools, and businesses to support nature's recovery.

Undergoing a thorough digital transformation We appointed to a newly created role of Data & GIS Officer in 2022, to ensure that all our decision making is based on strong data. This allowed us to start developing mapping and reporting that measures the impact of the Trust supporting community action in green spaces.



Delivering a step-change in the scale and diversity of funding Membership at the Trust grew to 26,500 members (compared to 25,400 members at the end of 2021) and individual giving to the Nature Recovery Fund appeal reached £120,000. Thank you to all our members, and those who have supported the appeal, which is our springboard for being able to react quickly to opportunities to purchase land.

Enabling Priorities

Get our own house in order We adopted the refreshed and updated Wildlife Trust logo and branding. A successful digital roll out was completed in May 2022, with planning taking place for a phased roll out across physical assets by 2025.

Communicate so that people hear and change their behaviour We helped our supporters living in South Warwickshire comment on the Local Plan consultation, leading to a greater level of personalised response from local people giving a voice to nature.

Invest in our staff and volunteers Volunteer 'Share and Explore' events invited feedback on how the Trust is doing and encouraged people to share their ideas about volunteering at the Trust. We also carried out our annual volunteer survey online for the first time, making it easier for people to complete.

Speak with a bold confident voice We stood up to the Government's deregulation agenda, calling on members to lobby their MPs and attend local climate change rallies in Stratford and Leamington. The Trust had a platform at both rallies,

Middlemarch Environmental

With a growing team and record-breaking sales exceeding 2021, the Trust's natural environment consultancy, Middlemarch, delivered yet another impressive year in 2022.

A key highlight is the Stratford Riverside Scheme, a transformative initiative that will achieve remarkable success in creating a sustainable habitat along the riverfront. Through prioritising habitat creation and wildlife conservation, the project is revitalising the area, enhancing biodiversity, and fostering sustainable ecosystems. It will serve as a model for future environmental initiatives while showcasing the benefits of sustainable growth.

Driven by its passion to protect the natural environment and reverse the UK's decline in biodiversity, Middlemarch will continue to develop and deliver innovative solutions to support the target of protecting at least 30% of our lands, rivers, lakes, and wetlands by 2030. Visit: www.middlemarch.eco.



encouraging the public to stand up and #DefendNature. We also supported two of our Young Adult Ambassadors, who delivered a 60,000-strong petition to Downing Street calling for more ambitious nature targets.

Funders and finances

Thank you to our funders

We know how vitally important nature is and how motivated people feel to defend it, protect it and to support its recovery. That motivation has driven an incredible number of funders to support our work in 2022 and we thank them all for being on nature's side.

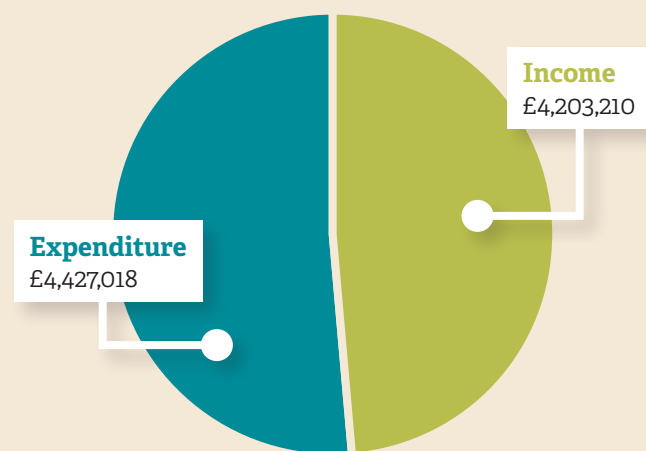
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Brandon's Natural Way
- Children in Need
- People's Postcode Lottery
- European Social Fund
- Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation
- Mayor of Leamington Spa
- National Trust
- Severn Trent Water
- Siemens
- Solihull District Soroptimists
- Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
- The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust
- Margaret and Idris Charitable Trust
- Rural Payments Agency
- The family of Clem Hindmarch
- Citizen Housing
- Environment Agency
- European Social Fund
- Highways England
- Orbit Housing
- Severn Trent
- Coventry City Council
- Leamington Spa Town Council
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Rugby Borough Council
- Stratford District Council
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Warwick District Council

Legacies

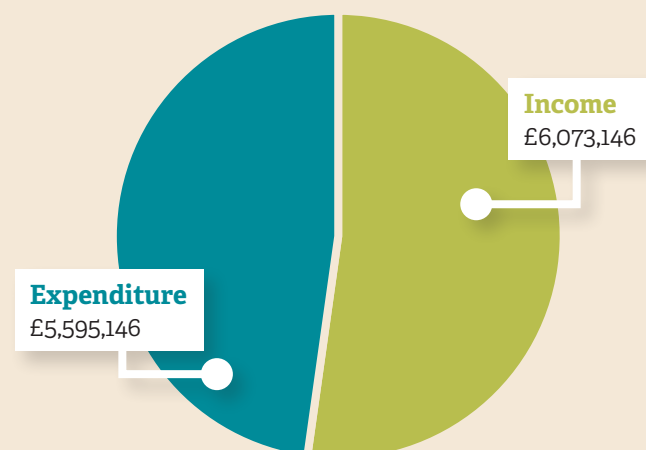
The Trust was notified of a total of £229,000 in legacy income in 2022. We are extremely grateful to the following people who left a gift to help ensure that nature is put into recovery:

- Peter William Holmes
- Anne & Bill Adams
- Lorna Alice Watson
- Miss Betty Browning
- Michael John Welch
- Pauline Marianne Whitehead
- Stella Jarman
- Maurice Arthur Arnold

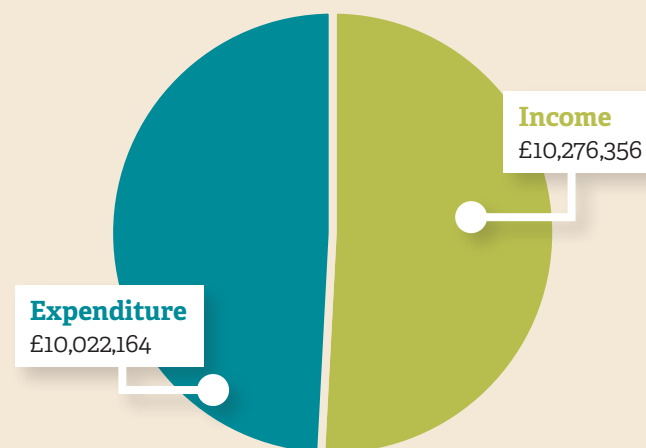
Charitable



Trading (Middlemarch Environmental)



Total



Our collective finances

Our full annual accounts can be viewed at www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/reports.