



Ymddiriedolaeth  
Natur  
**Gwent**  
Wildlife Trust



## **Annual Review 2022/23**

Notice of AGM

Year in Pictures

Finances at a Glance



# Gwent Wildlife Trust's 60th Annual General Meeting

## Wednesday 27th September 2023



Starts 7pm with presentations from staff  
At The Glen-yr-Afon House Hotel, A472, Usk, NP15 1SY

**7pm** Presentations from staff and guest speakers on Nature's Recovery in Gwent

**8pm** Official AGM agenda

1. Minutes of the 2022 AGM and matters arising.
2. To receive the Annual Report of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2023.
3. To receive the Annual Accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2023.
4. To appoint Auditors of the charity to hold office until the conclusion

of the next General Meeting at which the accounts are laid before the charity.

5. To re-elect Trustees for 2023/24
6. To introduce the elected officers of the Board of trustees for 2023/2024.

By order of the Board, July 2023,  
Sue Finn, Hon Secretary.

**For AGM papers & to book your place**

Online: [www.gwentwildlife.org/AGM](http://www.gwentwildlife.org/AGM)  
By calling 01600 740600  
Or emailing [info@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:info@gwentwildlife.org).

## Everyone welcome

PHOTO CREDITS: 2020 DIVISION



### Welcome to our Annual Review.

Over the last year thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers, and the support of funders, our nature reserves have undergone one of the largest investments in their history, including the purchase and management of additional livestock, coppicing and thinning of woodlands to maintain diverse habitats, the removal of non-native species, and the creation of new habitats including ponds, woodland blocks and newly seeded meadows. Alongside record investments in our current sites we are in the final stages of acquiring several new nature reserves which will double the area of land Gwent Wildlife Trust own, so we can provide more space for wildlife and restore essential ecosystem functions like water purification, flood and drought prevention and carbon sequestration.

We have continued our extensive program of monitoring to ensure we understand how our work is impacting the species and habitats we manage for, and this has helped us to constantly tweak our management to get the best results. We continue to work with Local Wildlife Site owners and other landowners to monitor and manage their land as key stepping stones for wildlife, and as part of this we are also targeting our work to significantly reduce the vulnerability of 10 threatened species in Gwent by 2030. These iconic species represent many of Gwent's most special habitats and are: Dipper, Pine Marten, Shriill Carder Bee, Water Vole, Adder, Nightjar, Grayling, Pink Ballerina Waxcap, Hedgehog, and Barn Owl.

We have worked across Gwent to engage and inspire people to act for wildlife, with our Wild Health work which delivers health and wellbeing benefits to a range of audiences having doubled in scale and gained additional interest from the Aneurin Bevan Health Board, National Nature Service, and other Health and Wellbeing providers across the UK.

And finally, we have been reaching beyond our traditional audiences by listening to people in Pillgwenlly, responding to their needs and ideas to take local action for nature. Meeting people where they are is taking us one step further towards the tipping point of 1 in 4 people acting for wildlife by 2030.

We are so grateful for your support to ensure that Gwent is a wild place which inspires all who live here or visit. In particular, we would like to pay tribute to three individuals who through gifts in their wills have made a significant amount of additional work and impact possible, so thank you to Pat Gorvin, Lorna Riley and Dr Martin Anthony, along with their families and friends for their huge generosity.

This is just a snapshot of the fantastic work that our staff, volunteers and supporters are delivering, but as you can tell we are going from strength to strength and the year ahead is already more exciting than the last so I look forward to sharing that journey with you. Thank you again for all of your support.

**Adam Taylor**  
Chief Executive.



“We have worked across Gwent to engage and inspire people to act for wildlife”

**Gwent Wildlife Trust People.**  
(As at 31st March 2023)

**Patron** Iolo Williams

**President** Chris Hatch

**President Emeritus** Roger James

**Vice-Presidents** Julia James, Stephanie Tyler, Richard Waller

**Board of Trustees**

Marc Leppard (Chair)  
Rob Waller (Vice Chair)  
Sue Finn (Secretary)  
John Newton (Treasurer)  
Jonathan Stephens  
Tom Clancy  
Dai Rees  
Rebecca Spooner  
Lucy Holland  
Kate Coleman  
Richard Howell

**With special thanks to:**

Local Group volunteers in Chepstow, Usk and Monmouth, The Gwent Levellers, Eastern Valleys volunteers, Pentwyn and Wyeswood shepherds and the many other passionate, committed individuals who give their time and expertise to support our work.



# Strategic objective 1: Nature is in Recovery



Nature's recovery is a slow process, requiring lots of patience. Sometimes habitats can appear to be on their way to restoration and the process artificially sped-up, but the key building blocks, the return of the keystone species and the availability of multiple niches are what helps to create a fully functioning ecosystem, and this takes time.

Working at Gwent Wildlife Trust for such a long time as I have, has its benefits at times! I have been able to be involved with, and latterly lead on, some of our largest land acquisitions and restoration projects and see the impact 10, 15 even 20 years later.

One of my favorite reserves in Gwent is Pentwyn Farm where the ancient SSSI meadows butt up against our exciting restoration project at Wyewood Common. A moment standing in the first top field of Wyewood and no matter how hopeless I might be feeling about nature's slow recovery I am instantly filled with optimism and admiration for our work.

Being able to buy Wyewood Common, originally Glyn Farm, in such a short space of time back in 2008 with the generous donations of our supporters was humbling. It was such a huge opportunity for nature's recovery across a large area. And our hard work over the last 15 years has not disappointed. I helped to carry out our initial baseline monitoring using 50

random 1m quadrat surveys in each field. Years of use as a dairy farm with slurry application and reseeded had resulted in a monoculture across the site and I was sadly excited when I spotted a rare dandelion in any quadrat. Hedgerows were tightly flailed, and the grassland boasted a lushness of thick green grass, a misnomer of health, with the soil below damaged from repeated ploughing and artificially high fertility.

Our vision for Wyewood Common requires a 50-year restoration project. It initially may have looked like we were doing very little, because we had to start by reducing the soil fertility and all that required was several years of cutting the fields for silage, repeatedly through the year. When the contractor announced that the fields were no longer suitable to take silage, we were happy that our first milestone had been reached. Other milestones have since come and gone, with a bit of trial and error along the way. (No one restoration project is the same, what might work at one site may not work at others, with wildlife unfortunately not reading our Ecological Restoration handbooks!)

Wyewood Common now boasts a huge abundance of wildlife compared with 15 years ago. Pentwyn Farm's flower-rich fields lying adjacent have acted as a great source for this wildlife, especially as a botanical resource through both seed application and our stock eating the hay.

Many of the fields are now full of common spotted orchids and buzzing with life, the hedgerows are left unflailed to enhance connectivity and maximize autumn food provision. Our tree planting has developed into a young woodland, buffering the ancient woodland patches that border the site at the lower end, which are great for dormice. Our conservation grazing is now well-established using Organic Longhorn and Hereford cows, Exmoor ponies and Hebridean and Hill Radnor sheep. Having our own stock allows us to move the animals when and where we want them, and with careful welfare considerations, avoid wormers and flea treatments to reduce insecticide usage and help encourage dung beetles back.

There is still a long way to go. Our recent eDNA work on grassland fungi showed how mycelial networks key to a functioning healthy ecosystem can take decades to be restored after soil disturbance like ploughing. And healthy soil is the basis for any long-term ecological restoration.

Standing in Wyewood Common I can, however, celebrate for a moment and recognize how far we have come, because I remember. The shifting baseline phenomenon, where people accept the new norm of nature constantly disappearing, must be challenged so the urgency of nature recovery can be recognized before it's too late. During this year, Gwent

Wildlife Trust continued to restore nature with the help of hugely committed staff, trustees, volunteers and our members, without which Wyewood Common would have remained an aspiration for wildlife far out of our reach. So here, we report on this year's outputs and achievements, whilst acknowledging that impacts on nature's recovery can take generations:

1 Our volunteers put in over 2,550 volunteering hours' work on our nature reserves across 72 work party sessions, with many hundreds of hours of individual monitoring and wardening works in excess of this!

2 We undertook surveys of 4 sites for Woodland Creation and surveyed and reported on 52ha of Restored Ancient Woodland in the Wye Valley on behalf of The Woodland Trust.

3 We surveyed 5 more "urban" woodlands in Torfaen and produced management recommendations for Torfaen County Borough Council.

4 We surveyed and wrote Management Plans for the 8 Local Nature Reserves in Torfaen, and carried out surveys and wrote a Grassland Management Plan for Cadw/Twmbarlwm Society on Twmbarlwm.

5 18 New Local Wildlife Sites were identified in Monmouthshire in 2022, covering 54ha.

6 We engaged with around 50 attendees at our LWS Landowner's Day held, with our landowner advice newsletter reaching around 400 Landowners.

7 We surveyed 26km out of the 49km of the River Usk, from the tidal limit at Newbridge-on-Usk to Glan Usk, mapping Water Crowfoot, but also recording adjacent habitats, Sand Martin Colonies, pollution and Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS).

8 We undertook eDNA surveys for aquatic invertebrates on 10 Reens within the Gwent Levels SSSI network, this revealed new records for Wales and the UK!

By Gemma Bodé, Head of Nature's Recovery



A huge amount of work has been completed at our Bridewell Common reserve ahead of the planned opening to the public in 2023. Orchard trees have been successfully transplanted from the Derek Upton Centre car park area, infrastructure for footpaths has been put in place including a large new reed culvert, large poplar trees have been pollarded, gates and fences have been replaced.

We have made significant progress with our digital transformation this year, working with other Wildlife Trusts to develop apps for field recording of e.g. reserve infrastructure. Working with Data Cube group hosted by Monmouthshire County Council we

have also been developing our use of remote sensing evidence gathering technology.

Five Nature Recovery trainees worked across Gwent from March to September, gaining varied practical experience and qualifications to set them up in the nature conservation careers.

We progressed the project to re-introduce White-tailed Eagles in Wales, in partnership with The Durrell Trust.

Shrill Carder and Brown Banded Carder Bee were recorded in huge numbers on Great Traston Meadows reserve during a visit with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

PHOTO CREDITS: HEPBURN PHOTOGRAPHY, JOE RYDER

PHOTO CREDITS: GEMMA BODÉ, HAMISH BLAIR, BEN BOYLETT, ANDREW ASTBURY



# 2030 Aim: Ten vulnerable species recover in Gwent



Shrill Carder Bee habitat - Great Traston Meadows

In developing our 2030 strategy last year, we took the decision to focus our conservation efforts on a range of specific vulnerable species. A biodiverse, healthy, functioning ecosystem depends on a vast variety of species of course, but by spotlighting a small number, we are far better able to measure impact and engage others in targeted action. Each of our selected species occur in Gwent, are threatened and feature in the Greater Gwent State of Nature Report (2021.) It was also important in our selection criteria, that targeted work for chosen species would benefit countless other species in varied habitats across Gwent.

1. Grayling butterfly (*Hipparchia semele*)
2. Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)
3. Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*)
4. Pine Marten (*Martes martes*)
5. Pink Waxcap (*Porpolomopsis calyptriformis*)
6. Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)
7. Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)
8. Adder (*Vipera berus*)
9. Shrill Carder Bee (*Bombus sylvarum*)
10. Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)

We have written Action Plans for all species, that can be found at [gwentwildlife.org/ten-vulnerable-species-recovery](http://gwentwildlife.org/ten-vulnerable-species-recovery) within which we have further elaborated on the threats, our objectives for recovery, what

main actions need to be taken and key partners for collaboration.

We're providing a spotlight on two species in each edition of our Wild About Gwent magazine. Here, I write about Grayling and Shrill Carder Bee, two species that should be on the wing as this reaches members' doorsteps and inboxes.

### The Grayling

This is the butterfly, not to be confused with the fish of the same name!

The Grayling is closely related to a number of our commoner and more familiar "brown" butterfly species such as the



Meadow Brown, Ringlet and Gatekeeper. They have fussier habitat requirements however and are therefore less well distributed and consequently a much scarcer species. They are found in open habitats with bare ground, such as coastal areas, lowland heath and brownfield sites such as quarries. In Gwent, they particularly favour old colliery and quarry sites as these contain a mix of bare ground (for basking), flowers (for nectaring), and fine grasses the caterpillars feed on, all of which are needed for them to be successful. Revegetating colliery spoil can provide these conditions in abundance. This makes them a great flagship species for this valuable but threatened habitat, that supports so many other species, from common to threatened.

Even in the correct habitat, they can be tricky to spot, because they are highly cryptic (well camouflaged), keeping their wings closed when landed. However, in flight they are less discreet, due to their medium-large size and looping-gliding flight habit.

They are a species in trouble, as in the UK, they have declined in distribution by 62% since the 1970s. This has led to them being listed on the following:

- ◆ Species of Principal Importance - Section 7 - Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- ◆ Endangered – Red List of British Butterflies
- ◆ Priority Species - UK Biodiversity Action Plan (2007)

The reasons for these declines are not fully understood, but the loss of vital bare



ground to habitats scrubbing over is a considerable concern for Grayling and many other species here in Gwent. The following are the main threats that have been identified:

- ◆ Habitat mis-management or under-management, resulting in natural succession, shading and loss of bare ground
- ◆ Habitat loss - post-industrial sites often seen as development opportunities
- ◆ Climate change

### Shrill Carder Bee

There are over 270 species of bee in the UK, of which 24 are Bumblebees and the Shrill Carder Bee is one of the rarest and most threatened of these.

It gets its name from its shrill "buzz" and its habit of combing material to form a cover for its nest, similar to a process used in the textile industry called "carding".

It is a late-emerging (May) and long-tongued bee, which favours foraging plants of the pea, mint, broomrape and daisy families. It is associated with open, often tall grassland sites with a varied sward

structure and a high density of diverse forage sources. This makes them a great flagship species for flowery, species-rich grasslands that support so much more wonderful wildlife. Little is known about the Shrill Carder Bee's nesting and hibernation sites, but ensuring these are provided in close proximity to abundant forage is thought to be key.

They have undergone a major decline in the second half of the 20th Century and are now found in only five isolated population areas, with our Gwent Levels being a stronghold. This has led to them being listed on the following:

- ◆ Species of Principal Importance - Section 7 - Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- ◆ Priority Species - UK Biodiversity Action Plan (2007)
- ◆ Nationally Notable B

The reasons for these declines are likely multiple. The following are the main threats that have been identified:

- ◆ Loss and fragmentation of flower-rich mosaic habitats - drivers: inappropriate or lack of management; development pressures

- ◆ Inbreeding and loss of genetic diversity, leading to increased risk of local extinction
- ◆ Climate change and extreme weather events such as flooding and drought
- ◆ Other interrelated threats may include: an inability for bees to disperse and track with climatic shifts; phenological shifts caused by climate change impacting foraging; pesticides; pathogens; and possible competition and disease risk from commercial bee populations.

### Engaging community action

Your help is of integral importance to reversing the fortunes of these wonderful creatures. We're collaborating and calling for citizen scientists on a local level, to establish where Grayling and Shrill Carder Bee are currently present, where they used to be, and also importantly, where they could be: the location of any suitable areas where they are not currently present.

Visit our website to find out how you can help: [gwentwildlife.org/ten-vulnerable-species-recovery](http://gwentwildlife.org/ten-vulnerable-species-recovery)

**By Andy Karran, Evidence Manager.**

PHOTO CREDITS: LOWRI WATKINS, ANDY KARRAN, GABI HORUP

PHOTO CREDITS: SAM ASHMAN



# Strategic objective 2: People are working with nature



The air we breathe, water we drink and food we eat all rely on biodiversity - the variety of life on Earth. We need nature and it needs us. Far more people must connect with and take action for wildlife, if it is to recover. We believe that if 1 in 4 people convert their enthusiasm for wildlife into action to protect it, we will reach a tipping point and real change will happen.

One in four people is an incredibly big goal, but momentum has been gathering apace over the last year. All over Gwent, people from diverse communities have been taking action for nature – from small actions in their gardens to whole community scale action. Some of this has been through our projects, such as S4NW and Wild Health, whilst other communities have been organising themselves.

There's great strength in the committed support of this growing network of hundreds of organisations and groups and thousands of individuals in diverse communities working for nature's recovery. Our approach is to focus our efforts on supporting and empowering communities and individuals to undertake actions for nature in their local area. We're reaching far beyond our traditional audiences, including working with younger people (through the Stand for Nature Wales project), urban communities (such as through Nextdoor Nature) and people who are newer to nature. We call this Team Wilder!

### Young people leading change:

1 We worked with more than 500 young people this year, with 20 young people now regular attendees at our weekly sessions

2 Our Nature Nurturers group in the Eastern Valleys have together, attended 580 hours of activities

3 Stand for Nature Wales groups contributed to the pan-Wales youth manifesto for Cop15

4 The groups have planted pollinator borders, made rain gardens, bog gardens, beetle banks, hibernaculum, and built hedgehog, bee and nest boxes

### Good for wildlife, good for people:

1 20 partner organisations and 200 individuals engaged with our wild health initiative this year

2 Volunteers from diverse community groups have undertaken 2,700 hours of recreational activities...

3 ...given 340 hours of work on our nature reserves and similar amount to other sites in Gwent

4 The groups have cleared litter, built hibernaculum and bug hotels, restored ponds and planted and coppiced trees.

By Natalie Waller, Head of Nature Based Solutions

### Greening Maindee

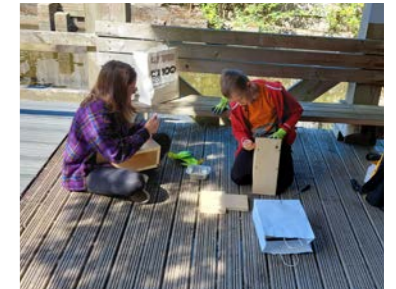
The Wildlife Warriors and Nature Nurturer groups we're working with in the Stand for Nature Wales project have been helping communities across the Maindee area of Newport with trialling and championing small-scale solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss, which put nature at their heart. The groups first visited in 2021 and have returned several times since, getting to know and work with local community action group Maindee Unlimited. They've brought commitment, effort and openness to trial and learn across a range of specific projects: getting hands-on with digging, planting, drilling, barrowing and more. So over the past year, all across Maindee, small-scale nature-based solutions projects have been springing up: rain gardens, ponds, beetle banks, hibernacula, all of which are helping the communities' adaptation to our changing climate. And all of which are contributing to a greener and wilder Maindee!

### Blue tits rescued from peril

The staff at Screwfix in Ebbw Vale got in touch with us last Spring, to explain that blue tits had started nesting in the metal cigarette bin just outside their site. The bin was attached to a south facing wall, which could cause the nest to overheat. Two of the young people who joined our Nature Nurturers group through the Stand for Nature Wales project, Molly and Chloé came with our Youth Engagement Officer Rob to investigate. They discovered that most of the young blue tits had fledged, but unfortunately two had perished. Molly and Chloé decided to cover the cigarette bin holes with mesh to stop birds from making the same mistake. They then made an alternative home that they located out of the sun, facing north east.



PHOTO CREDITS: ROBERT MAGEE



*"Being part of the wild health project has been a pleasure for myself as therapy worker, and also for the clients I support.... I have documented an increased motivation for nature walks and activities with many of our clients and a stronger respect for their environment, as shown in their mindfulness of littering and knowledge retained in outdoor skills such as compass and map reading, identifying local plant life and lighting and maintaining campfires safely outdoors."*



PHOTO CREDITS: ROBERT MAGEE, PETRA MITCHARD, IAN THOMAS





## Strategic objective 3: Welsh policy works for wildlife



To have a lasting impact on our natural world, we need Welsh Policy to work for wildlife, so that the laws we have in place to protect our environment and its sustainability for future generations do just that. Our policy agenda aims to ensure that sites designated for wildlife across Gwent are properly monitored, managed and protected. Planning policy must deliver net benefits for wildlife and ecosystem services. Mega solar developments on the Gwent Levels present a vital and urgent threat facing our biodiversity here in Gwent and we are focusing our policy and campaigning work here, having called on Welsh Government for a moratorium. As well as planning, farming policy must be developed to benefit people and wildlife. And in support of the new curriculum for Wales, we want to help ensure every primary school child learns in, about and for the natural environment every week.

A lot of the policy advocacy that we do isn't publicly visible. We stand up for wildlife by influencing policy through many collaborative networks, including through the 5 organisations which make up Wildlife Trust Wales. A lot of effort goes into ensuring that our policy positions and advocacy are evidence-led: underpinned by high quality data, local expertise, and technical analysis.

Against our key policy aims, achievements this year include:

### Sites designated as ecologically important are monitored, managed and protected:

Planning policy has been a major focus on the Gwent Levels where we have been involved in developing Welsh Government's pilot for the National Natural Resource Management Areas (NNRMAs), alongside which we have been challenging damaging developments and where possible suggesting more suitable locations for sustainable development.

We have continued surveying, designation, advice and management of Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), completing monitoring of our designated nature reserves, and through education, training and supporting citizen scientists to gather, analyse and share data which serves this cause.

### Every child under 11 learns about nature in school:

we have continued to work with schools, youth groups, community groups, children and their guardians to encourage early connection to wildlife and demonstrate the multiple benefits that outdoor education provides. We delivered training in learning in the natural environment to 8 teachers.

### Protecting the Gwent Levels SSSI

In winter 2022, Gwent Wildlife Trust joined with Friends of the Gwent Levels, The Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Marshfield Community Council to call upon the Welsh Government to declare a moratorium on major developments on the Gwent Levels. The Gwent Levels, declared "an ancient landscape with a special cultural significance" which is "important for biodiversity, recreation, flood alleviation, carbon storage and food production" by the Welsh Government, has been under sustained pressure from developers in recent years. As part of this coalition, we have called upon the Welsh Government to take a clear stand and place a temporary moratorium on major developments in the area while a special planning policy is developed.



### 'Red Route' road scheme scrapped

In February, 2023 the Welsh Government responded to the Roads Review set up in June 2021 by the Deputy Minister for Climate Change. Of the 55 road schemes that were assessed, a large number have now been scrapped including the 'Red Route' in Flintshire which would have destroyed an ancient woodland. Gwent Wildlife Trust stood alongside other Wildlife Trusts in Wales in calling for this decision.

"It is clear that the Welsh Government has recognised that business as usual is not an option when it comes to road building across Wales – the climate and nature emergencies must be urgently addressed." Tim Birch, Senior Policy and Advocacy Manager at Wildlife Trusts Wales.

PHOTO CREDITS: NEIL ALDRIDGE, 2020VISION

## Strategic objective 4: Connect people to inspire action



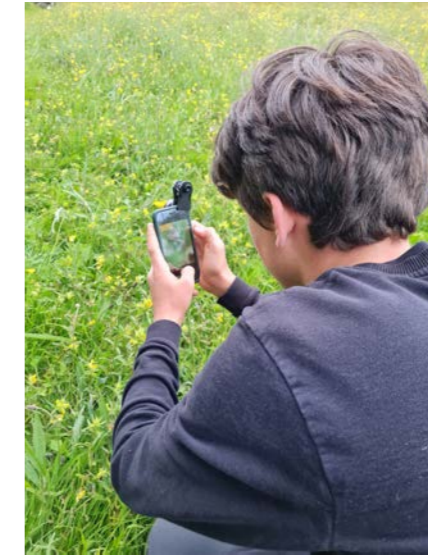
We're reaching far beyond our traditional networks to connect with people to inspire action for wildlife. Over 200 volunteers directly supported our conservation efforts with many thousands more people taking action in their own communities. We ended the year with over 8,000 members, 601 people booked on talks, workshops, training or events, and our social media following grew to 18,000 people!

### A Wildlife Warrior's Story

One of the Wildlife Warriors, who was 11 when he joined was, like many of the others, anxious about the future because of climate change. He already had an interest in wildlife, particularly birds but this interest has broadened and the knowledge he has gained is enviable. He is always thirsty to learn more and now helps us with our bird song identification. The student is becoming the teacher!

He attends almost every meeting, even choosing to come camping with us on his 13th birthday! He has helped dig a rain garden at Eveswell Community Centre, created a green roof structure, put nest and bat boxes up in his garden and participated in citizen science surveys, such as the RSPBs Big Garden Birdwatch .

PHOTO CREDITS: PETRA MITCHARD, LIZ WINSTANLEY



I introduced him to Dr Steph Tyler who is a county recorder for Dipper, and she has taken him under her wing and provided some amazing bird ringing experiences. He is thoroughly enjoying his time with her and because of this experience his interest has now turned into a true passion

Several of our young people have an interest in photography and this has encouraged others to take more than a passing interest. Their photography skills are constantly improving and they enjoy sharing them on the group padlet for us all to see.

"The whole warriors experience has been amazing for him. He said afterwards that no one at his school has the same interest as him and that on warriors it's so good to be around people who share the same interest; it's been great for his confidence, his independence and his whole love of nature and birds and learning so many things about ecosystems and how they work and the human impact. It's great that the warriors program is such a positive response to the overwhelming issue of climate change and bio-diversity loss; to have such a great group of young people all gaining such intimate knowledge of the landscape and its creatures is a real inspiration. (Parents of Wildlife Warrior participant who was happy to tell his story but preferred to be anonymous.)

By Petra Mitchard

"I'm challenging myself...I'm getting my confidence up" Nathan, Aderyn



### Connor's Story

Connor was referred to our Wild Health project by his GP. He told us about how he quickly felt empowered and developed a curiosity in nature and wildlife. He has since shadowed delivery staff, co-delivered sessions, delivered sessions and most recently achieved Volunteer Warden status at our Silent Valley Nature Reserve near Ebbw Vale. Acting as a visible presence on site, dealing with queries from members of the public, undertaking surveys and site security checks, his achievements have been nothing short of remarkable. He has taken up training in animal husbandry, strimmer and brushcutter, ATV sit astride and outdoor first aid. Ardderchog Connor!

By Ian Thomas

"I can't believe I've lived here this long without getting to know the park" Gareth, Integrated Autism Service



# Strategic objective 5: Our finances continually improve

**1** We welcomed 1,231 new members who joined during the year

**2** 430 members responded to our membership preferences survey and 93% were satisfied or highly satisfied with Wild About Gwent magazine

**3** We raised £16,966.25 online in 2022 through match-funded Big Give appeals – thank you to everyone who supported these! Funds helped us to continue monitoring Water Voles on the Gwent Levels and to monitor wildlife across our nature reserves to inform their management.



**4** Our Nature Reserves had a huge boost of investment as we secured over half a million pounds to improve access and ecological management of nature reserves

in Gwent, thanks to the Welsh Government's Nature Networks Fund administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

**5** We are so grateful for your support to ensure that Gwent is a wild place which inspires all who live here or visit. In particular, we would like to pay tribute to three individuals who through gifts in their wills have made a significant amount of additional work and impact possible, so thank you to Pat Gorvin, Lorna Riley and Dr Martin Anthoney, along with their families and friends for their huge generosity.

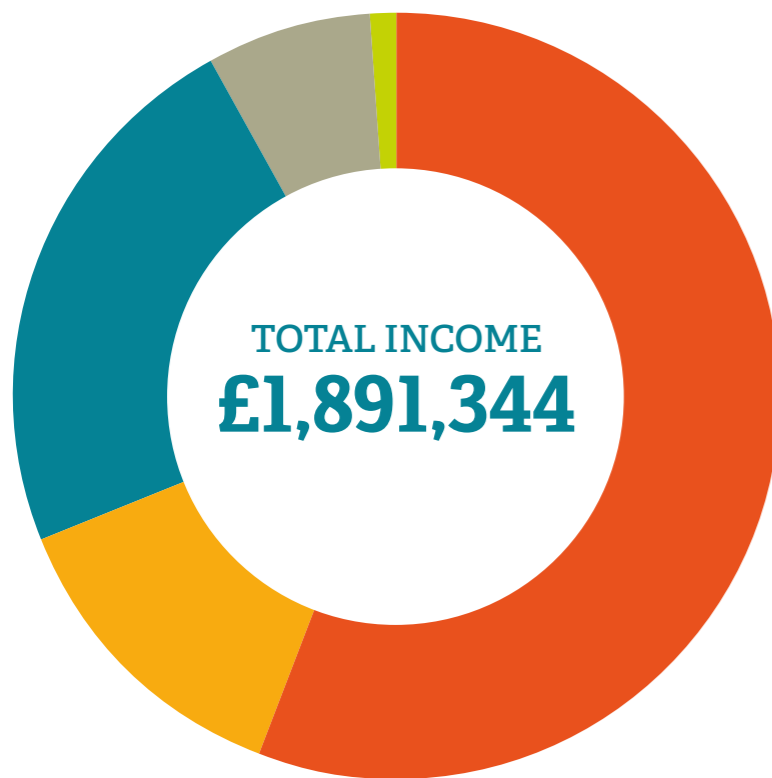
**Gwent Wildlife Trust would like to thank:** Volunteers, Members, Wildlife Guardians, Local Wildlife Site owners, Ancre Hill Vineyard, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, The Big Give Foundation, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Frank Sutton Ltd, Heron House Financial Management, Hopkins Machinery, Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme, The Makin Family, Mandarin Stone, Marshalls Plc, Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust, Monmouthshire County Council, National Lottery Community Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Natural Resources Wales, Players of the People's Postcode Lottery, The Reed Foundation, RSPB Wales, Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, Swire Charitable Trust, Travel Chapter, Tri-Wall Europe, Vine House Farm, Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Welsh Government, Wye Valley AONB

PHOTO CREDITS: ANDY KARRAN



## Our Finances for the year ended 31st March 2023

### Income



- 56% GRANTS AND TRUSTS
- 13% MEMBERSHIP
- 23% DONATIONS AND LEGACIES
- 7% EARNED INCOME
- 1% OTHER FUNDRAISING
- 0% OTHER

**Grants and Trusts - £1,055,526** Grants from statutory bodies, (e.g. Welsh Government), charitable trusts and foundations

**Membership - £243,048** Regular contributions from members (people and businesses)

**Donations and Legacies - £427,561** Donations, gifts in wills and in memoriam and business support

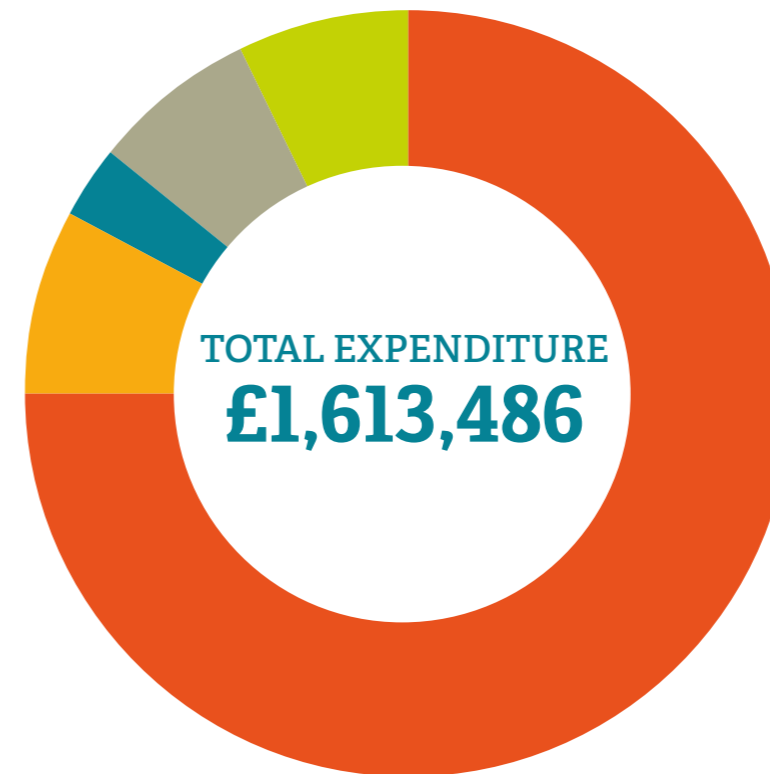
**Earned Income - £130,538** Sales of services, trading, rent, event and course income

**Other fundraising - £26,497** Includes annual raffle and community fundraising activities

**Other - £8,174** Investments

See full audited accounts for details and comparison with previous year.

### Expenditure



- 75% PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND ENGAGING PEOPLE
- 8% OPERATIONAL SUPPORT
- 3% GENERATING FUNDS
- 7% MEMBERSHIP
- 7% GOVERNANCE

**Protecting wildlife and engaging people - £1,199,875** Delivery and associated direct costs of our conservation, education, policy, public engagement and campaigning work

**Operational Support - £120,501** Compliance and support functions including Finance, Health and Safety, I.T, Human Resources.

**Generating funds - £52,259** Staff and office costs related to generating funds for our work

**Membership - £110,494** Membership recruitment, communications and financial and administration costs of processing regular donations

**Governance - £117,640** Annual audit, consultancy and legal fees and governing board meeting costs

Full audited accounts will be available on our website by 1st September, 2023 at [gwentwildlife.org/our-funding](http://gwentwildlife.org/our-funding)



# Snapshots of our Year // Cïpolwg ar y Flwyddyn mewn Luniau

## SPRING

1. Young people from the Stand for Nature Wales project created a raingarden, planted an orchard, five metres of hedge and collected more than 74kg of rubbish.
2. In partnership with Torfaen Council we began overseeing community engagement work at the post industrial site turned wildlife haven - The British in Pontpool.
3. NNF2 grants funded reserves work such as monitoring at Bridewell, planting an orchard at Tŷ Mawr and equipment including a quad bike.
4. Findings from our invertebrate study on the Gwent Levels showed new records of species including six, not previously recorded in Wales.



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PHOTOS: SARAH HARRIS, PAUL WHITEHEAD, ROB MAGEE

## GWANWYN

1. Creodd pobl ifanc prosiect Sefyll Dros Natur Cymru ardd law, a phiannu perllan, pum metr o wrych a chasglu mwy na 74 kg o sbwriel.
2. Mewn partneriaeth â Chyngor Torfaen fe ddechreuon ni oruchwylio gwaith ymgysylltu â'r gymuned ar y safle ôl-ddiwydiannol sydd wedi'i droi'n hafan bywyd gwyllt - y British ym Mhont-y-pŵl.
3. Ariannodd y grantiau NNF waith yn y gwarchodfeydd, fel monitro yn Bridewell a phiannu perllan yn Nhŷ Mawr ac offer gan gymwys beic cwad.
4. Roedd canfyddiadau ein hastudieth intertebrata ar Wastadeddau Gwent yn dangos cofnodion newydd o rywogaethau, gan gynnwys chwech heb eu cofnodi yng Nghymru o'r blaen.

## SUMMER

5. Four Long Horn Cattle - 20 month old heifers, joined our Conservation Grazing 'family' courtesy of the Nature Networks Fund.
6. A 300-year-old Small Leafed Lime Tree at Prisk Wood Nature Reserve was recognised in the late Queen's Green Canopy Jubilee celebrations.
7. The Gwent Levellers helped Nature Recovery Officer Ben replace more than 200m of rotten boardwalk at Magor Marsh.
8. To help wildflower meadow restoration on the Gwent Levels we harvested seeds from Great Traston Meadows and spread it on our newest reserve Bridewell Common.
9. Weatherman Walking star Derek Brockway, filmed his TV show at Kitty's Orchard and interviewed our Senior Youth Engagement Officer/ orchard expert Beccy Williams.



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PHOTOS: JOE RYDER, MARK ZYTYSKI, BEN BOYLETT, CARYS SOLMAN

## HAF

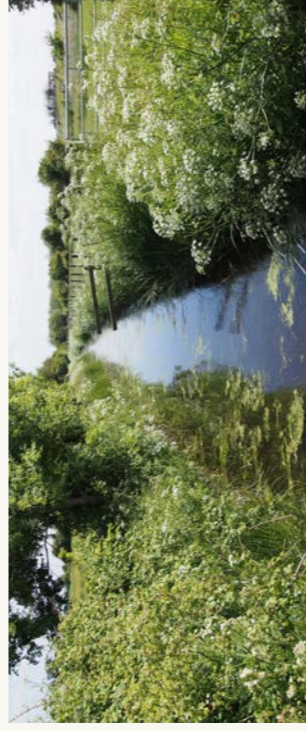
5. Ymunodd Pedwar Gwarthegyn Corn Hir - heffrod 20 mis oed, â'n 'teulu' Port Cadwraeth drwy garedigrwydd prosiect y Gronfa Rhywydeithiau Natur.
6. Cydnabuwyd coeden Pisgwydden Dall Bach 300 oed yng Ngwarchodfa Natur Prisk Wood yn nathladau Jiwili Canopi Gwyrdd y ddiweddar Frenhines.
7. Cafodd mwy na 200m o lwybr pren wedi pydru ei newid gan y Gwent Levellers a Swyddog Adfer Natur Gwent, Ben, yng Cors Magwyr.
8. Er mwyn helpu i adfer dolydd blodau gwyllt ar Wastadeddau Gwent, buom yn cynaeafu hadau o Ddolydd Great Traston a'u gwasgaru yn ein gwarchodfa fwyaf newydd ar Gomin Bridewell.
9. Ffilmiodd seren Weatherman Walking, Derek Brockway, ei raglen deledu yn Kitty's Orchard a chyflwedd ein Huwch Swyddog Ymgysylltu ag Ieuenctid / arbengwyr perllanau, Beccy Williams.

## AUTUMN

10. We launched our Nextdoor Nature project to empower people to take community action for nature in Pllgwennyli.
11. We publically launched our campaign to protect the Gwent Levels SSSIs from major solar developments following plans for damaging solar power stations at Wentbooge, Rush Wall and Magor.
12. Our Stand for Nature Wales young people attended a three-day Youth Climate Summit with youngsters from Trusts around Wales.
13. Carrying out eDNA surveys of invertebrates in the reens on the Gwent Levels and Grassland Fungi at 30 sites across Gwent: we found fly species new to Wales and many fantastically rich fungi sites. These findings are helping to inform their future management.



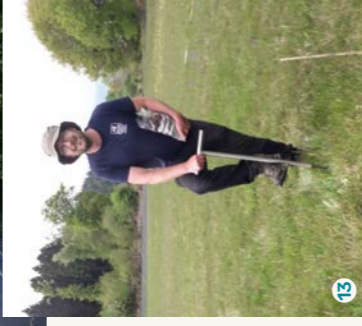
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PHOTOS: JULIAN HOFFMAN, BECCY WILLIAMS, BECCY WILLIAMS, PETER HUNT, CHARLOTTE SPRING

## WINTER

14. We launched our 2023 Nature Recovery Appeal to raise £100k to increase our landholdings and manage and restore more land for nature in Gwent.
15. Our conservation grazing herd grew further when two Exmoor Ponies - Jacinth and Jemima - joined us courtesy of Monmouthshire Meadows group.
16. Working jointly with Newport County Council rights of way team, we replaced all the bridges on Great Traston Nature Reserve with a longer lasting metal girder base. Bridges open public to walk the Wales coastal path route that runs through the site as well as a secondary circular walk through the hay meadows.
17. We launched our initiative to focus on 10 threatened and key species in Gwent. By protecting these species, countless others and varied habitats across the region will also benefit.



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## GAEAF

14. Lanswydd ein Hapêl Adfer Natur 2023 i godi £100k i gynyddu ein daliadau tir a rheoli ac adfer mwy o dir ar gyfer byd natur yng Ngwent.
15. Tyfodd ein casgliad o anifeiliaid pori cadwraeth ymhellach pan ymunodd dwy Ferlen Exmoor - Jacinth a Jemima - â ni drwy garedigrwydd grŵp Dolydd Sir Fynwy.
16. Gan weithio ar y cyd â thim hwliau tramwy Cyngor Sir Casnewydd, rydym wedi llwyddo i ailosod pob pont yng Ngwarchodfa Natur Great Traston gyda sylfaen trawst metel sy'n parhau hirach. Mae pontydd yn galluogi cyhoeddi i gerdded llwybr arfordir Cymru sy'n rhedeg drwy'r safle, yn ogystal â thath gyfchol eiliaidd drwy'r dolydd gwair.
17. Lanswydd ein menter i ganolbwyntio ar 10 rhywogaeth dan fygythiad ac allweddol yng Ngwent. Drwy warchod y rhywogaethau hyn, bydd rhywogaethai eraill di-ni a chymefinodded amrywiol ar draws y rhanbarth yn elwa hefyd.