



**Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
& Oxfordshire**
Wildlife Trust

Our Impact Report

2021-22



More nature everywhere

Working together for a **wilder future**

Welcome to our impact report for 2021-22, showcasing some of the highlights that your support has helped us to achieve over the past year.

Our new five-year Strategic Plan, “Wilder”, which launched during the year, sets one simple overarching aim: to create more nature everywhere. To do this, we need to inspire people to take action for nature while doing all we can to restore wilder landscapes.

Through your generous support we have made a positive start by increasing our landholding, reaching new audiences and supporting more people to put nature at the heart of their decisions. By sharing our vision for a wilder future in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, you enable us to work towards nature’s recovery and our aim of 30% of the land across our three counties to be well managed for nature by 2030.

Over the year, we’ve seen more reports showing the perilous state of today’s natural world and the urgency of tackling the climate crisis. By working together, we can create bigger, wilder, more connected landscapes across our three counties, so nature and people can thrive and our climate has a chance for recovery.

Thank you for sharing our commitment to nature’s recovery.
With our best wishes,



George Levvy

George Levvy Chair



Estelle Bailey

Estelle Bailey Chief Executive

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust September 2022

Our work protects and restores the natural world, and connects people with wildlife

Our vision

More nature everywhere, for everyone

Our mission

To bring about nature’s recovery through local action

To achieve our Wilder vision, we have three main goals:

- 1 Put nature into recovery
- 2 Empower people to act for nature
- 3 Secure our future



Our Impact in numbers

Your support helped us achieve all this and more in 2021-22



2,700ha land managed by Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust



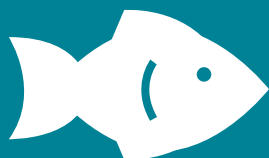
Working in **2** additional urban areas, Aylesbury & Bicester



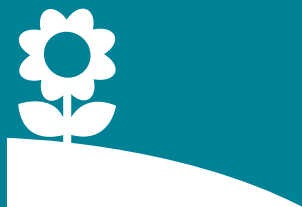
Delivered conservation projects across a total area of **77,111ha**



31ha added to Upper Ray Meadows nature reserve



30km of the River Thames now accessible to migratory fish



170km road verges surveyed in West Berkshire for the 'Wild Verges' project



32% increase in local and national media coverage



6 Living Landscapes



85% of the planning applications responded to by Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust have been withdrawn, refused or amended with improved considerations for wildlife




43.6k social media followers



28,539 memberships (55,000+ members)



538 Wildlife Ambassadors writing to MPs and decision makers

35%  increase in income



Working with partners - RSPB, Finance Earth, Woodland Trust, local councils & landowners.

Read more about what we've achieved during 2021/22 thanks to your support in our full Annual Report and Accounts at bbowt.org.uk/publications

Putting nature into **recovery**

Our 86 nature reserves are at the heart of our plans for Nature Recovery Networks that join up landscapes so wildlife can thrive.

We have already made progress towards our goal of increasing our landholding by 200ha during the next five years. This past year, we bought Ludgershall Meadows which extends our Upper Ray Meadows reserve and Nature Recovery Network in Buckinghamshire. The landholding at Upper Ray Meadows now comprises over 200ha and is our third largest reserve.

Beyond our reserves, we're working with more partners and landowners in our Living Landscape areas to restore nature along our Nature Recovery Networks. This includes urban areas through our 'Wild' projects such as Wild Banbury. Our ecological consultancy Future Nature and Land Advice Service allow us to expand this key area of our work.

Since September 2021, we have been developing The Wildlife Trusts Habitat Banking Financial Model, in partnership with Cheshire, Warwickshire and Surrey Wildlife Trusts, and Finance Earth. This should enable us to acquire and manage more nature reserves which can also help deliver Biodiversity Net Gain.

We have also contributed to Local Planning Authorities' work on the roll out of Biodiversity Net Gain across our area and have been testing this on potential habitat banking sites.

In this era of climate and nature crisis, our nature reserves continue to provide a haven for wildlife, from the rare and beautiful military orchid (over 800 flowers were counted last year) to more abundant species such as gatekeeper butterflies and blue tits. On reserves and beyond we've continued our water vole project, surveying 344 sites for water vole activity, and our badger vaccination project, vaccinating 42 badgers against bovine TB.



344 sites surveyed for water voles



56 planning applications responded to where development threatened nature



Oxfordshire Wildlife Sites Project management advice was provided to **27 Local Wildlife Sites**



Spotlight on restoring nature

Wetland restoration at Chimney Meadows

During the year, we completed the £2m Water Environment Grant Wetland Restoration and Fish Pass Channel project at Chimney Meadows working with JCTR Ltd, Five Rivers and Atkins. We developed ways to keep water on the floodplain at Duxford Old River in spring and summer for longer. This will create valuable wetland habitats, which help wildlife such as curlew, as well as providing natural flood storage. We have also provided new ways for fish to move up and down the River Thames through our reserve, making things easier for them during dry summer periods, when in-river barriers impeded their movement most. We have opened access to approximately 30km of river habitat just by addressing fish passage for species such as barbel, chub and dace on our reserve. This includes a major new 450m bypass channel around Shifford Weir.

We planted 1,000 trees, which are all native, wet woodland species, to replace an old, over-mature plantation of hybrid poplar trees. The project also included tackling non-native invasive species, such as Himalayan balsam, and replacing old riverside fencing to keep livestock out of the watercourse. Visitors to the site can learn about the project and importance of the nature reserve through new interpretation boards.

We have undertaken a baseline assessment of the carbon storage across our landholding and in floodplain meadows and we are carrying out detailed research into just how effective this habitat can be at locking up carbon deep in the soil. We hope this will become a showcase for how our work is vital to tackle the nature and climate crises together.

Read more about this landmark project at
bbowt.org.uk/chimney-meadows-wetland-restoration-and-fish-passage-project



450m

bypass channel for fish



1,000

trees planted, all native,
wet woodland species



9 interpretation
boards installed

“It was a privilege for JCTR Ltd to project manage the planning and delivery of the Chimney Meadows Wetland Restoration vision and an honour to be part of the dedicated and skilled team of BBOWT staff, project partners and advisors.”

Rebecca Chiazzese

MSc, MCIWEM, C.WEM, CEnv, PIEMA, DIC

Founder and Director, JCTR Ltd

Empowering people to **act for nature**

By reaching new audiences and giving people the tools they need to restore nature in their own neighbourhoods we will achieve our vision of more nature everywhere.

This past year saw the community team focused on enabling community groups to act for nature through #teamWILDER. This included staff helping groups 'wild' their local patch, for example adding wildlife-friendly features to community gardens and a churchyard in the Chilterns. We also delivered webinars and online events on wildlife gardening and nature connectedness to help inspire and equip people to act for nature independently.

The Engaging with Nature project in West Berkshire has enabled us to work with new audiences to promote the benefits of access to nature on wellbeing, for example with the housing and mental wellbeing charity Response, at Carramar House in Thatcham, Berkshire.

Our education centres operated throughout the year, delivering in a Covid secure way. This saw 5,073 schoolchildren take part in sessions led by our team of professional outdoor educators. We restarted our nature clubs for tots, rangers and teens and reimagined family events to enable more self-led provision on our reserves.

We significantly increased our number of campaigning Wildlife Ambassadors by more than 200 to 538 people, who give wildlife a voice by writing to and meeting with their local councillors and MPs. We have also campaigned on shortcomings of the Environment Act by meeting our local MPs and inspiring members of the public to join the campaign.

Finally, a new Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) was launched in November 2021, following Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust's involvement in a key working group to establish it. This is a critical step taken in Oxfordshire in preparation for the development of a forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy.



5,073 schoolchildren took part in environmental education sessions



48 primary school classes participated in our education sessions thanks to our bursary programme



5,000 people in our three counties signed up to be part of the 30 Days Wild challenge



Spotlight on local action for nature

Enabling everyone to play their part

Helping nature is a joint effort. If just one in four people helps, we can tip the scales back in nature's favour. To reach this target, we launched #teamWILDER which gives people the resources and skills they need to take action for local wildlife.

Our community wildlife team led training sessions and created resources for individuals and groups to use. These are available on our website to make action for nature accessible for more people. The website also enables people to showcase their action through an interactive jigsaw map and share their story to inspire others to do the same, whether as individuals, community groups, schools or businesses. Already we've seen a young girl who attended Nature Tots as a pre-schooler become a junior fundraiser for BBOWT, a care home in Bicester add wildlife-friendly features to their grounds, neighbouring villages coming together to plant trees and install owl nest boxes, and individuals creating wildlife-friendly gardens.

Over the coming year we will add to the resources available by creating a network for community groups to share their knowledge and skills. As more people take action for nature we hope to see a ripple effect through communities creating more nature everywhere. If you're taking action for nature too, no matter how small the act is, you're already a part of #teamWILDER.

Find out more about #teamWILDER and add your puzzle piece to the map at bbowt.org.uk/team-wilder

We really appreciate the advice from BBOWT that helped us to get started and create the Shabbington Nature Network.

Shabbington Nature Network founders



12 #teamWILDER blogs published to showcase local stories and inspire others



7 #teamWILDER webinars delivered



3 'Wild' urban projects in Banbury, Bicester and Aylesbury

Securing our **future**

Growing and diversifying our network of supporters will enable us to expand our work across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire

If Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust is to deliver its ambitions for wildlife across the coming years it is critical that our finances, people and infrastructure are resilient to the challenges we face within our operating environment. We must prepare ourselves for unforeseen circumstances and ensure that we respond flexibly to a dynamic world.

This past year, our membership reached its highest ever level of over 28,500 memberships – an inspiring sign that more people than ever are joining us to help nature. We are encouraged by and incredibly grateful to all our donors and supporters. Our commitment is to maximise the resources that we have to ensure they deliver the greatest possible impact for nature.

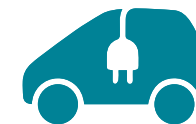
We launched our mission-lead ecological consultancy 'Future Nature'. This is operating currently as a brand from within BBOWT and is designed to drive future income to the Trust but also to achieve impact for nature across our three counties.

We have continued to adapt our working practices around the unfolding situation with Covid-19, ensuring that our employees and volunteers stay safe at work and can deliver for nature. We have successfully maintained our financial security through uncertain times, with careful financial management.

We are taking steps to minimise our own environmental impact. We have purchased a third electric vehicle for our fleet and removed three diesel driven vehicles to reduce our emissions. Four of our offices now have LED lighting and we have six electric vehicle charging points to allow rapid charging of the trust's fleet of electric vehicles.



28,500+ memberships



3 electric vehicles and **6** electric vehicle charging points



Future Nature
ecology consultancy
launched



Spotlight on leaving a gift for nature

Helping wildlife for generations to come

We benefited in particular this past year from unprecedented levels of gifts in wills. These legacies form an important part of our income and can help us do more than originally planned. They allow us to seize opportunities to acquire new reserves, often providing the crucial cash deposit needed to secure a piece of land to protect or restore as a haven for wildlife. Your gifts in Wills can also help BBOWT take on exciting new projects – projects that might never happen without this form of support. Conservation work involves planning for the long term, and gifts in Wills enable us to look ahead with confidence.

Recent legacies helped us to buy land at Duxford Old River and extend Chimney Meadows nature reserve to both sides of the river. This land has now been improved for nature as part of our wetland restoration project (see page 5 for more). Your past legacies have also allowed us to double the size of Finemere Wood nature reserve in Buckinghamshire, continue our careful management of Warburg Nature Reserve in Oxfordshire, and restore a wet meadow on the Upper River Ray to help protect threatened wading birds like redshank, snipe and curlew. Redshank bred successfully for the first time at our Upper Ray Meadows site, an example of how our supporters' generosity and our expertise come together for wildlife.

Find out more about leaving a gift in your Will at bbowt.org.uk/support-us/leave-legacy



86 new people
pledging to leave a gift
to BBOWT in their Will



Over £1.5m
legacy income received
in 2021-22, our highest
ever legacy total



256 unique views of
our legacy webpage

“Your Will is there to protect those you
love for the future - and for me that
means remembering wildlife too.”

Val S, BBOWT volunteer and legacy pledger

Our finances

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust continues to maintain a healthy financial position.

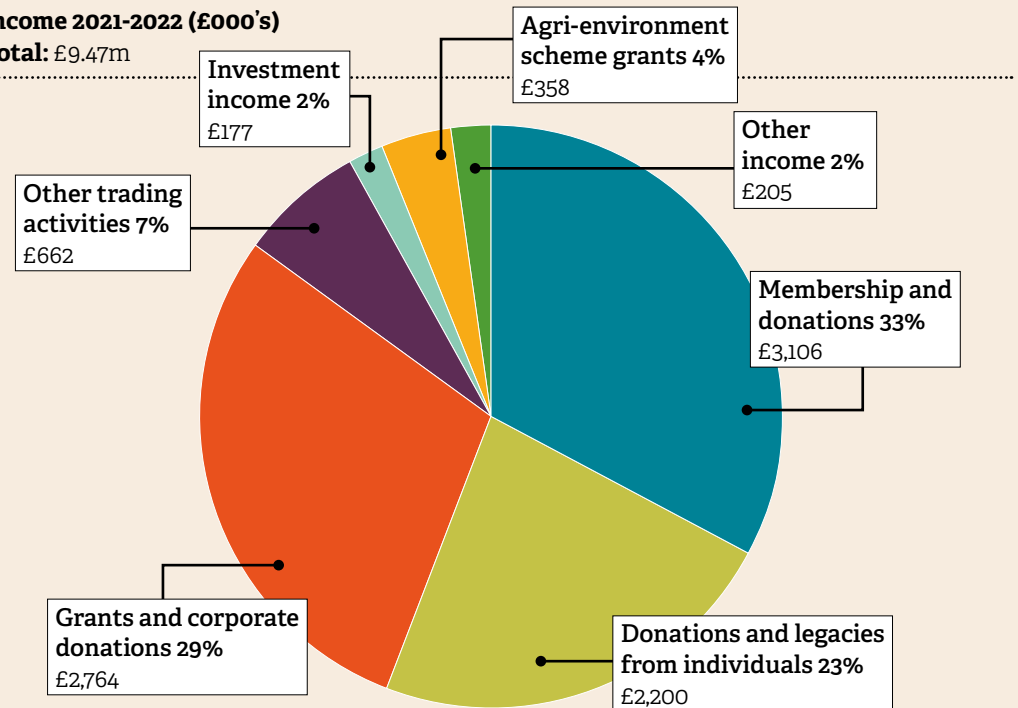
Income from membership and membership donations, donations and legacies from individuals, grants and corporate donations, and other trading activities all increased, resulting in a 35% increase in income on the previous year. This was boosted by exceptional levels of income from legacies for which we are very grateful.

73p
from every £ is
spent on our
conservation
and **education**
work



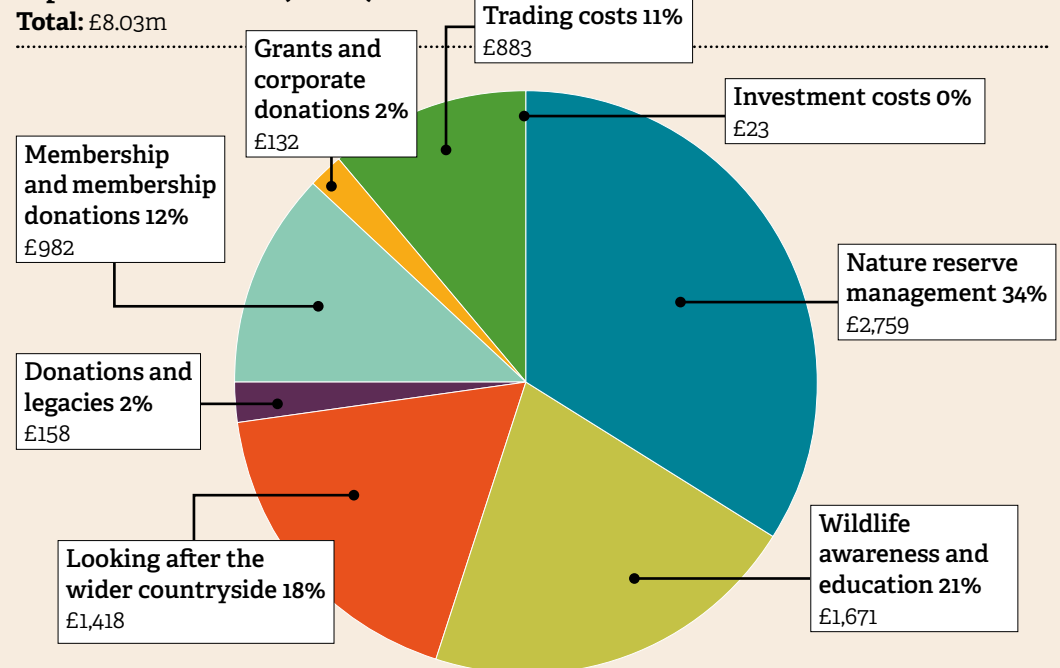
Income 2021-2022 (£000's)

Total: £9.47m



Expenditure 2021-2022 (£000's)

Total: £8.03m



Our members

Fundraising promise...

The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) is committed to fundraising and communicating in an honest and transparent way.

We aim to ensure that everyone who chooses to support us, whether by joining as a member, making a donation, giving their time to volunteer with us or attending events, has a positive and rewarding experience and understands that their support is truly valued.

As part of this we will be honest and transparent, protect your data, be respectful of your wishes, and accountable. Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust Trustees regularly review all fundraising activity for both its cost effectiveness and compliance. Furthermore, Trustees review all complaints received and any fundraising ones are reported to the Fundraising Regulator.



“We really appreciate the work you do, thank you for helping to provide nature with support.”

Family member, annual survey 2021



More than
55,000
members



3,801 new
memberships
during the year



£3.1m
income received
from memberships



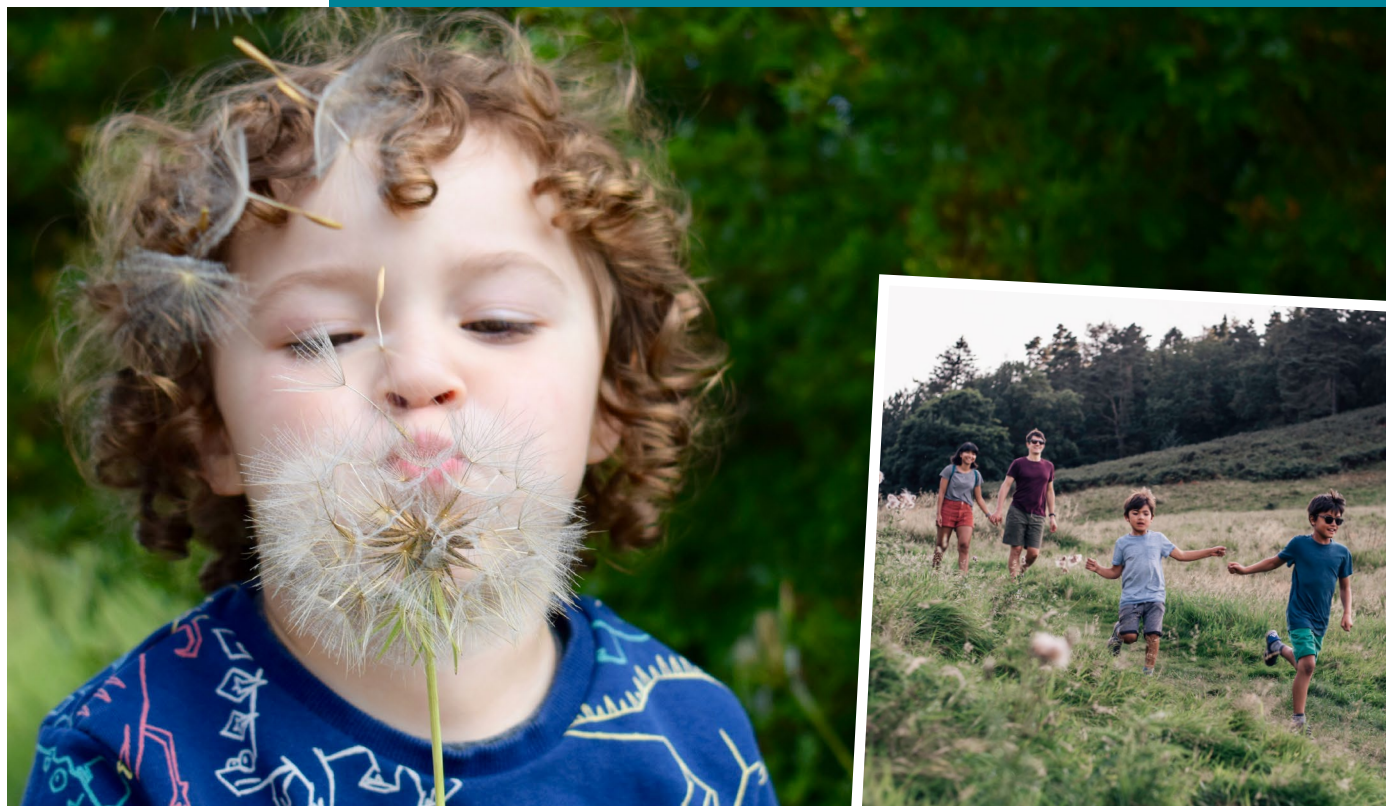
23% of our income
is from donations
and legacies from
individuals, many of
whom are members



10,118 Wildlife
Watch Club members



33% of our income
is from membership
and donations



LEVE AND TOM PHOTOGRAPHY

Thank you to **our Supporters**

The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust relies on the generosity of its members and other supporters. Without this support we would not be able to achieve our aim of more nature everywhere in our three counties.

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals who have generously supported Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust during the 2021-22 financial year. We would like to particularly acknowledge the support from individuals and organisations that enabled us to continue to face the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

President

Steve Backshall

Honorary Vice-Presidents

Dr Pam Berry
Dr Robin Buxton MBE DL CEnv FCIEEM
Professor Sir Dieter Helm CBE
Martin Spray CBE
Audrey, Lady Wood

Board of Trustees

George Levvy (Chair) – appointed 28 July 2021
Graeme Thompson (Honorary Treasurer)
Ian Davidson (Honorary Secretary)
Frances Brindle (Deputy Chair)
Jane Cotton
Natalie Ganpatsingh
Joanna Davidson – resigned 9 October 2021
Chris Mees
Mike Pollard
Gregory Webster
Drew Bennelick – appointed 28 July 2021
Miles Evans – appointed 28 July 2021

Charitable Trusts (£2,000+)

The Swire Charitable Trust
The Rothschild Foundation
The Syder Foundation
E B M Charitable Trust
The Sir Ralph Verney Memorial Trust
Richard Radcliffe Charitable Trust
Cecil Pilkington Charitable Trust
Mr & Mrs J A Pye's Charitable Settlement

Grant-making and Statutory Bodies

The Chilterns Conservation Board
National Lottery Community Fund
RSWT
Canal and River Trust
The Curry Fund (The Geologist Association)
Quaternary Research Association (QRA)
DEFRA
Environment Agency
Natural England
Landfill Communities Fund
Biffa Award
Grundon Waste Management Ltd
The Veolia Environmental Fund

“As a long-time supporter of BBOWT, Grundon are thrilled to support the lakeside improvements project at the Nature Discovery Centre in Thatcham, which help to bring visitors to the NDC closer to nature”
Anthony Foxlee-Brown, Grundon's Head of Marketing & Communications

Local Authorities

Bracknell Forest Council
Buckinghamshire Council
Cherwell District Council
Oxfordshire County Council
South Oxfordshire District Council
Vale of White Horse District Council
West Berkshire Council
West Oxfordshire District Council

Corporate Partners

Ascot Lloyd
Alnylam Pharmaceuticals Ltd
Berkshire Botanical
Blenheim Palace
Catesby Estates
Chroma
Eleos Compliance Ltd
English Provender Company Ltd
Freeths LLP
Ipsen Biopharm Ltd
Johnson Matthey plc
Jordans Farms
NatureBureau
Novuna
QuickMoveNow
RWE
Sophos
Ssassy Property
Taylor and Francis Group Ltd
Thames Water Utilities Ltd
Vale Brewery
Vine House Farm

Major Donors

Dr & Mrs Peter Asquith
Mr & Mrs Roger Aylward
Clive & Margaret Booth
Rose Dale
John and Hilary Everett
Dr Tony and Mrs Marion Gillie
Professor & Mrs Helm
Jean & Roger Jefcoate CBE DL
Mrs McGough
Margaret R. T. Wigan

Legators

We are extremely grateful to the following people who left a bequest to Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust in their Will:

Ivy Brickstock
Simon Haviland
Anne Joyce
Michael Charles Doyle Malone
Jane Matheson
Geoffrey Penny
Anthony Purkins
Mary Elizabeth Rees
David Seligman
Shelia May Vernonia Thompson
Richard Webb
Angela Yaffey

We also thank those individuals and families who have chosen to donate anonymously.

Looking forward to 2022-23, our plans for the next year and beyond

As the response to the nature and climate crisis becomes ever more urgent, we will continue our work for nature's recovery apace.

Put Nature into Recovery

We will continue to ensure our existing reserves are rich in wildlife and secure funding for the delivery of work to protect and restore nature from government grant schemes. We will also proactively investigate opportunities to expand our reserve landholding. We will explore where a more hands-off approach to management may be possible on both our own reserves, and across the wider landscape, allowing nature to take the lead.

Beyond our reserves we will develop and fundraise for new landscape scale conservation projects in the wider countryside, particularly in the Bernwood, Otmoor and Ray region, and support the development of the new statutory Local Nature Recovery Strategies in each county. We will also work towards implementing Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust's Biodiversity Net Gain offering through one demonstration site.

Empower People to Act for Nature

We will continue our #teamWILDER work, building on the achievements so far through a community group network, more volunteering opportunities and expanding into two new urban areas – Reading and Slough in Berkshire.

As the pressure on wildlife continues, we will support members of the public to respond to planning applications in a way that supports and defends wildlife. We will actively work with local environmental stakeholders to influence how biodiversity offsets are delivered locally to ensure we see true gains in biodiversity in the future.

We will deliver the second phase of our project at Windsor Great Park Environmental Centre in partnership with the Crown Estate, and create new activities at all our education centres to enable more people to connect to nature.

Secure our Future

Over the next year we plan to review and refresh our corporate membership and partnership programme, and launch the Meles Circle (for major donors) and our Legacy Society. In order to reach and work with more diverse audiences we will embed our equality, equity, diversity and inclusion strategy across the organisation. We will also review our volunteer plan to establish the focus and capacity needs for our expanding team of volunteers to ensure all needs are met.

Read more about plans for more nature everywhere and how you can get involved in Wilder, available at bbowt.org.uk/publications

Be part of nature's recovery

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust brings people and nature together to create more nature everywhere.

Thanks to the generosity of individuals, charitable trusts, grant-giving bodies and businesses we are able to achieve our goals. Through their support, our experts work with more than 1,700 volunteers to look after 86 nature reserves, four education centres and two visitor centres. To find out more or to support our work visit bbowt.org.uk

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust is one of 46 Wildlife Trusts across the UK. Together, The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement of people from a wide range of backgrounds and all walks of life, who believe that we need nature and nature needs us.



**Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
& Oxfordshire
Wildlife Trust**

Contact us

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Grants, trusts, individuals & major gifts

fundraising@bbowt.org.uk

Company support

partnerships@bbowt.org.uk

Legacies

legacies@bbowt.org.uk

Volunteering

volunteering@bbowt.org.uk

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Registered charity number: 204330 Company registered number: 00680007

