

A year at

Shropshire Wildlife Trust



**Shropshire
Wildlife Trust**

2018-19

Love **wildlife**, love Shropshire

Our **vision**
is for **Shropshire**
to be **alive** with **wildlife**,
loved by people
and its **wild places**
cherished.

Cover image: Ragged robin
by Ben Hall / 2020VISION



Linda Pitkin / 2020VISION

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

- Cares for over 40 nature reserves, including woods, meadows and wetland bird havens
- Welcomes people on to its nature reserves
- Campaigns for positive development that respects our natural environment
- Encourages people to enjoy wild places through events in town and country
- Involves volunteers in all aspects of its work

We are part of a nationwide network of 46 local Wildlife Trusts working in partnership to protect wild places and wildlife.



The year in numbers

11,428 lovely people supported the Trust as members

4 more pine martens discovered in south Shropshire

350 landowners along **54** miles of rivers and streams engaged with us to reduce pollution

600 excellent volunteers gave us **33,000 hours** of their skills and time

6,000 **young people** enjoyed wild play and outdoor fun

18 schools and colleges joined us for dynamic environmental activities

720,000 people followed and engaged through lively social media

1 filthy scrapyard cleared

145 hectares of lowland bog restored to spongy wetness

91 local businesses supported the Trust



Expanding activity

The Trust has seen significant growth over the last 12 months. Activity has increased around river catchments and in the north Shropshire mosses at Fenns, Whixall & Bettisfield National Nature Reserve. The Trust's work with young people through the Big Lottery supported Growing Confidence initiative continues to engage and inspire the next generation.

The Marches Mosses BogLIFE project, operating in partnership with Natural England and Natural Resources Wales, has been instrumental in restoring 145 hectares of damaged peatland and enabled us to acquire around 100 hectares of land, which will be managed for its biodiversity. The reclamation of one of the most polluted sites in Shropshire at the former Furber's scrapyards is underway. Much work remains to be implemented in the next two or three years but a significant start has been made in securing the future of one of England and Wales' largest lowland mosses.



Rivers & streams

Equally significant is the work currently underway with the agricultural community. Working with the support of Severn Trent Water, the Environment Agency and others, contact has been made with around 350 farmers and landowners to secure a better water environment in Shropshire. Targeting locations most threatened by water quality issues, water courses have been improved and wildlife habitat increased. One of the most encouraging factors is that in many cases it has been the farmer who has come up with practical solutions and the Trust, its partners and funders have been able to adopt a more customised approach.

Concerns around climate change and increasingly erratic flood events have focused attention on river catchments. The Trust's Slow the Flow programme continues to help reduce flood risk within Corvedale in South Shropshire through natural management techniques. More than 100 woody dams have been constructed, largely on private land, aimed at reducing downstream flooding. Careful monitoring and

research by the Trust team will support the continued development and adoption of natural flood management measures into integrated flood schemes at a national level. Evidence is being collected to demonstrate the effectiveness of these measures.



Dipper

Tom Marshall

Tackling airborne ammonia

Local Wildlife Site surveys continue, including an environment network survey in the Clun Forest and a further 25 sites across the county, adding to the 400 advisory visits over the past four years.

Survey work by several specialist groups has highlighted the risk posed by increasing levels of airborne nitrogen. Attention was drawn to this in the *Flora and Vegetation of Shropshire* by Alex Lockton and Sarah Whild, which analysed and mapped plant distribution between 1985 and 2015. Nutrient enrichment is causing a decrease in plant diversity. It is estimated by Government sources that the nitrogen loading in the air in Shropshire is four times over the critical threshold. Specific studies undertaken through the BogLiFE project by Manchester Metropolitan University support this. To this end the Trust has worked to bring together the regulators, academic partners including the University of Chester and the farming industry to try and seek local solutions. Around 90% of ammonia emissions are generated by the agriculture sector.



Round-leaved sundew

The Trust has also been instrumental in drafting an Environmental Strategy for The Marches with the Marches Nature Partnership and Local Enterprise Partnership which highlights the strategic threats and opportunities for the economy, including the big challenges around water management and air quality.

Business partnerships

Working with business continues to be an important priority. The Marches Blue Business Awards, recognising the tremendous efforts of the private sector, were again run by the Trust with this year's winners being Wye Valley Brewery and Roy Marsh of Crosemere Farm, Cockshutt. More than 100 local businesses support or work with the Trust either as corporate supporters or as members of the Meres and Mosses Business Network. Live Well Work Well, an initiative to improve the health and wellbeing of employees in the work place, has entered its second year supported by Telford & Wrekin Council and many local companies in Telford including Capgemini.



Blue Business Award winner Roy Marsh with SWT's Pete Lambert

Nature in our towns

The level of building development within Shropshire remains a concern. While it is accepted that new housing and related infrastructure is essential, the smart approach as to how it might be done remains open to question. Hence the Trust was particularly active within the development of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan and was delighted to see that nurturing nature was recognised as a priority strand. What this means in reality has begun to be reflected in the Trust's work with developers, which in the past year culminated in the taking on of green space in a small housing development in Monkmoor from Shropshire Homes. The intention over the coming years is to build an exemplary approach as to how new developments might be managed for the benefit of people and wildlife alike.

In Telford steps forward have been made with the designation of two further Local Nature Reserves within the town, both easily accessible to their respective local communities. Owned by the local authority, the Trust played an active role in pushing for their designation.



Wild species

While wildlife continues to be put under increasing pressure it is encouraging to note some successes. The Trust has led a research project to establish the range of the recently discovered pine martens in south Shropshire. Local landowners and people around the world have shown great interest in the project. Meanwhile, the Trust's efforts to protect the threatened curlew population have continued, both in supporting the work of the Curlew Country project and through surveys, nest monitoring and protection in partnership with community groups and the Shropshire Ornithological Society.



Curlew

Involving people

As ever it is people that make the Trust tick. The value of our volunteers cannot be under-estimated. This year 600 individuals regularly gave their time and expertise with practical work on nature reserves, wildlife monitoring, administration tasks in the office; by running the Trust's ten branches, looking after the Trust's garden in Shrewsbury; running wild play sessions for children; supporting environmental curriculum work in schools and delivering and supporting us at hundreds of events. Without their efforts the organisation could not flourish.

The interest and co-operation of landowners and local communities is vital. Around 6,000 young people have engaged in Trust activity via schools, youth groups, and holiday events, helping to inspire the next generation with a love of nature.

Children need to engage with the natural world as young as possible. Wildlings, a programme of activities for under-5s, was launched in 2018/19 with support from The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust.

Awareness of the Trust is rising, with strong social media engagement. More than 720,000 individuals engage with the Trust via Instagram, Facebook and Twitter and an additional 15,000 through the website.





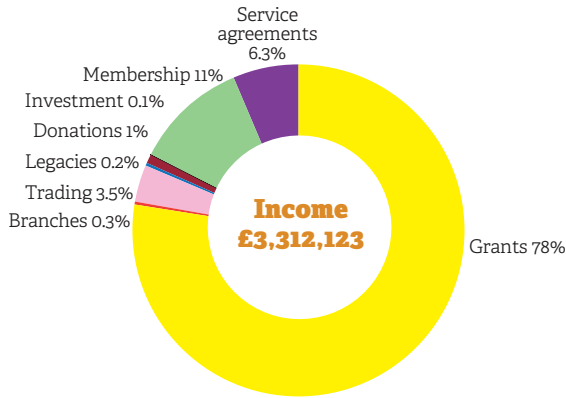
Terry Whittaker / 2020VISION

Hazel dormouse

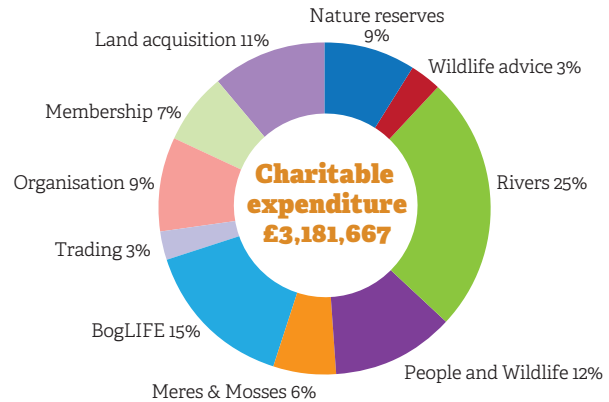
For every **£1** we receive in membership we raise almost **£9** to match it, your membership money is unrestricted income and supports all our charitable objectives.

Membership remains steady and crucial to supporting our work.

Income 2018/19



Expenditure 2018/19



Unrestricted income 55%

This type of income can be used wherever the need is greatest to protect local Wildlife.

Sources of unrestricted income include:

- Membership subscriptions
- Donations
- Legacies
- Service agreements

Restricted income 45%

Sources of restricted income include grants from funders, public bodies and partner organisations and fundraising for specific projects.

Revenue expenditure £3,181,667

Land acquisition £409,125

Acknowledgements

Grants and donations

Beaumont Financial Planning, Bournville Village Trust, Daniell Charitable Trust, DEFRA, D'Oyley Carte Charitable Trust, Environment Agency, European Regional Development Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Grieve Charitable Trust, Jean Jackson Charitable Trust, Lightmoor New Community Ltd, Liverpool JMU, Millichope Foundation, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, The National Lottery Community Fund, Natural England, The Rivers Trust, Severn Trent Water, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust, Telford and Wrekin Council, Tesco Bags of Help, The 10:10 Foundation, The Woodland Trust, Tudor Griffiths Environmental Fund, Upper Onny Wildlife Group, Veolia Environmental Trust, Whitley Animal Protection Trust, Wildflower Society and WREN.

We would also like to acknowledge financial assistance from all our Business and MMBEN Members as well as Accenture, Agilent, Black Birches, Bruton Knowles, Cap Gemini, Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club, CJ Wild Bird Foods, Country Gardens, Crest, Darwin Shopping Centre, Friends of

Pontesford Hill, Friends of Whitcliffe Common, Hafren Water, Highways Agency, Kew Accountants, Lyreco, McKenzie Law, McPhillips, Muller, Sabrina, Sciquip, Scottish Power, Shropshire Festivals, SP Energy Networks, Vine House Farm, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Wildlife Travel.

The following assisted with donations of time and help in kind:

ESI Consulting, Hafren Water, Leo Smith, Mervyn Evans, Tudor Griffiths Group, Upper Onny Community Wildlife Group. Additional support was given by the MMBEN (Meres & Mosses Business Environment Network).

Legacies and gifts in memoriam

In memoriam bequests and funeral donations were received from the friends and families of Katherine Brook, Dawn Edgington, Ann Galloway, Marie Jeanne Jones, Jean Noble, Thomas Alan Rogers, George Shaw, Eirlys Thomas.

Legacies were received from John Simpson and Andrew Tullo.

2018-2019



Garden volunteers



Planting trees in Bwlytal Wood

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Guided walk around Melverley Meadows