

# Annual Review 2024/2025

We start with a huge THANK YOU to all of our staff, volunteers, members, and supporters who collectively have contributed to nature's recovery. From species recovery projects, restored and newly created habitats and work with local communities, we've made significant progress in creating spaces where nature can flourish, both on our reserves and across the wider landscape.

Taking a leading role in the production of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been a major focus this year. The strategy, due for launch in autumn 2025, will set out priorities for action across the county for many years to come.

Here is a selection of some of the highlights in the 2024/2025 financial year.



Supported by over  
23,500 members



Assisted by  
653 active volunteers



Volunteers collectively gave  
2,430 days of their time



More than 2700 people took  
part in over 100 Trust events

## More Space for Nature

- Thanks to funding from Highways England, the Environment Agency, and Defra's Species Survival Fund we undertook significant restoration works to the River Lea and its associated wetland habitats at Lemsford Springs and Stanborough Reedmarsh Nature Reserves.
- At Wilstone Reservoir, part of Tring Reservoirs Nature Reserve, specialist equipment helped create habitat for Bitterns, while Water Buffalo at Thorley Wash Nature Reserve shaped wetlands through their natural wallowing.
- We began a three-year project, funded by the Environment Agency, to help landowners improve chalk stream habitats in the River Mimram catchment, working closely with the local farm cluster.

## Fabulous flora

- The critically endangered Scarce Tufted-sedge has been introduced to four sites to boost resilience of this nationally rare plant. It was previously only found on one site in Hertfordshire in the whole of the UK.
- Over 1900 Helleborines were found at Fox Covert Nature Reserve.
- The near threatened Thatch-moss was rediscovered at Fir and Pond Woods Nature Reserve.



## Intriguing invertebrates

- The Pin-stripe Wolf Spider *Pardosa monticola* was found at Aldbury Nowers Nature Reserve, only the second record in the county.
- At Archers Green Nature Reserve, the Small Semaphor Fly was recorded, a new species for the Herts Environmental Records Centre database, along with the Eyed Rush Moth, a new site for this Herts Species of Conservation Concern.
- At Whitwell on the River Mimram, the first Beautiful Demoiselle damselfly was found, exciting news as this is one of our indicators of a healthy chalk stream.



## Magnificent mammals

- Nationally rare Barbastelle bats were found at Astonbury Wood Nature Reserve.
- Since their reintroduction to key sites across our area in recent years, Water Voles have been thriving—spreading along the River Beane, with new sightings upstream to Watton-at-Stone and downstream to Hertford, and on the River Ver, they have reached Redbourn upstream and Sopwell downstream.
- Water Voles have also been recorded at Lemsford Springs Nature Reserve for the first time in 17 years.

## Data and evidence

- Herts Environmental Records Centre, which is hosted by the Trust, reached the milestone of 3.5 million records of species observations on the database.
- In the Beane Valley, we continued to support and develop citizen scientists to collect environmental data to inform conservation and enhancement of the river.
- Evidence gathering for thousands of new sites for the Herts Ancient Woodland Inventory is now complete, helping secure recognition and stronger safeguards for these irreplaceable habitats.

## Wilder Communities

We all have a part to play in building a wilder Hertfordshire and Middlesex – here's how people-power helped nature's recovery over the past year.

## Engaging and inspiring

- Volunteers delivered 22 talks to local community organisations and visited 21 schools to give advice on making more space for nature in their grounds.
- Thanks to funding from the Government's Species Survival Fund a three-year project started in Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, Hertford, and Ware to support communities to make more space for nature, with a particular focus on rivers and wetland habitats.
- Work in Watford continued with a new three-year programme getting underway to enable urban communities to take local action for nature, thanks to funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and Swire Charitable Trust.



## Standing up for nature

- Securing a thriving, sustainable future for wildlife relies on making nature's recovery central to local decision-making.
- Through the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership, we're helping shape the county's Local Nature Recovery Strategy—advising on priorities, supporting mapping, and engaging key stakeholders.
  - We are leading the Trust's highest-profile campaign to date to protect Broadwater Lake SSSI from a harmful development proposal by Hillingdon Council—an ongoing effort to safeguard this vital wildlife site and prevent a dangerous national precedent.
  - We continue to actively engage with local and national politicians to shape policies and decisions that deliver the best possible outcomes for wildlife.

## Financial summary

Our Strategy sets out the need to create more space for nature and to inspire more people to take action for habitat and species recovery. This action is urgently needed. We secured around £2.1m unrestricted income in the last year, thanks in most part to our members, and ended with a surplus. However, as the scale of the nature crisis continues to grow, so do our costs for delivery. Throughout the 2025/2026 financial year, we will continue to ask our supporters to help us raise vital funds to support our local wildlife and wild spaces.

## The Year In Numbers



**Income:**  
TOTAL £3,840k

**£1,310k**  
Membership  
**£1,568k**  
Donations, gifts  
and grants

**£13k**  
Fundraising  
**£452k**  
Fees and  
contracts

**£404k**  
Legacies  
**£93k**  
Investment  
and other  
income



**Expenditure:**  
TOTAL £3,444k

**79%**  
Conservation

**20%**  
Raising funds

**1%**  
Governance

We are very grateful to all our members, donors, grant funders and other supporters over the year.

The financial information above has been taken from the draft accounts for the year. Full details of the Trust's finances can be found at [bit.ly/43JWrTt](https://bit.ly/43JWrTt)

