



Avon
Wildlife Trust

Impact Report 2016-17



Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future



Our Vision:

Nature restored on a grand scale
across the West of England.



Avon

Wildlife Trust

We protect wildlife in the West of England and ensure everyone can enjoy wildlife-rich lives.

Wildlife-Rich Places

Wildlife-Rich Lives



How we Work:

People are at the heart of everything we do.

We work with people to deepen connections with nature, build skills and confidence, and take action for wildlife.

We work with communities to create places that work for people and wildlife.

We work in partnership to protect and restore wildlife at the landscape scale.

We make the case for wildlife conservation by using robust evidence and showing what can be done.

What We Do:

Create, connect and care for places rich in wildlife.

Champion the value of nature.

Inspire people & communities to care for nature.

We do this with support from over 18,000 members, 800 volunteers, 40 staff and 12 Trustees.



Review of the year

The Year in Numbers

2016 – 17 saw us complete the second year of our Vision 2020 strategy. We developed more work at a landscape scale to connect habitats and protect wildlife. We welcomed thousands more people to connect to everyday nature. And we gave nature a louder voice to champion its value for our region.

£1 million
awarded

from Our Bright Future to engage 11 – 24 years olds with the value of nature and develop skills for employment over the next five years.

£500,000
awarded

from Big Lottery Fund for our four year, Wellbeing through Nature project.



46,000
volunteer hours

helped with conservation tasks, at events and in the office.

3,800
metres

of ditches restored on North Somerset Levels & Moors.



6,400
people

enjoyed an abundance of urban nature at our Feed Bristol project.





65
hectares

of chalk and limestone
grassland restored to
provide vital habitat
for pollinators.



3
pairs

of breeding lapwing
protected.



2,090
new members

joined our community.



23
species

of bee recorded at our
Burlidge Hill Nature
Reserve.

11
Dormice

recorded in our
region's woodlands
as part of a national
monitoring scheme.



1,474
toddler
engagements

at outdoor, urban
Wild Play sessions.

92
features

in local and regional
press, online, radio and
TV to champion the
value of nature.

14
maps

created to show key
locations for ecosystem
services and ecological
networks across
the Avon Region.

12
urban wildlife

demonstration
projects created.





160
species
of native wildflowers
were grown from seed.

Create, connect and care for places rich in wildlife

Pressure on the natural world from growing populations and associated development is increasing, and as a result landscapes have become more fragmented. Without healthy, connected landscapes wildlife cannot survive.

We care for 30 nature reserves across Avon, from ancient woodland to rare wildflower meadows, and wetlands to moorland. These wild places provide shelter for the wildlife that makes its home in our corner of the country.

Successes

- At **Blake's Pools** breeding Cetti's Warblers were recorded as well as water rail, shelduck, avocet, lapwing, green sandpiper, peregrine and breeding barn owls.
- At **Folly Farm in the Chew Valley** we recorded 22 Ancient Woodland Indicator species during woodland monitoring in Spring 2016.
- At **Burledge Hill** we recorded 22 species of bee and 27 species of hoverfly over the summer.
- 5 Osprey Nesting platforms were erected in the **Chew Valley** to welcome nesting pairs.
- French Oat Grass was recorded at **Walborough** for the first time since 2006.
- We recorded Violet Oil Beetles at **Tickenham Hill**.

- 3,800 metres of ditches and 15 acres of wet grassland restored on the **North Somerset Levels & Moors** to provide healthy habitat for waders and wetland mammals including otters.

Increasing the abundance of wildlife on our nature reserves also relies on us connecting up the spaces in between, and we do this in partnership with landowners and farmers.

We provide advice and practical support to encourage and enable these custodians of our local landscape to manage their land in ways that support wildlife to thrive.

- Our conservation team has contacted 240 farmers across the region this year.
- A total of 20 farmers have received direct support to help with land management and we have supported a further eight farmers to access Countryside Stewardship grants.



“AWT’s work is helping more people to recognise the role that nature can have on how we feel and what we can achieve.”

Rob Dixon, Occupational Therapist in Mental Health

Inspire people and communities to care for nature

This year we reached over 25,000 people from toddlers to teenagers, people living with mental ill-health and the effects of long term unemployment, naturalists and novices, corporate teams and community groups.

We support people from all walks of life to develop the skills and confidence to take action and care for nature right where they live.

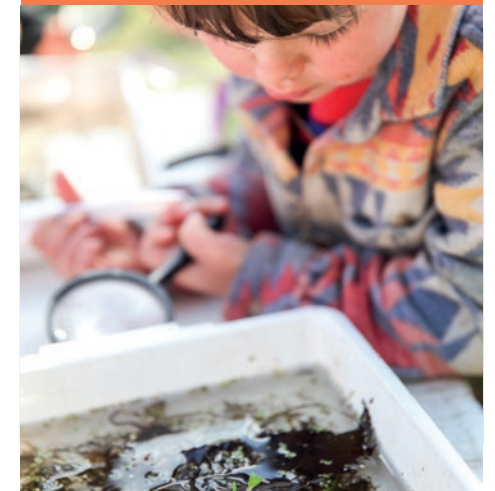
Successes

- Our Learning programme engaged almost 7,000 children from inner city and rural primary schools.
- Weekly, outdoor ‘Wild Play’ session across Bristol supported 1,424 toddler engagements.
- 2,917 school children got up close to nature at our Folly Farm education centre in the Chew Valley.
- 12 Urban wildlife havens created across Bristol including at the BRI and a Bedminster Primary School.
- 160 species of native wildflowers were grown from seed as part of our therapeutic horticulture offer at our Feed Bristol site.
- £1m awarded by Our Bright Future to inspire young people aged 11 – 24 with the value of nature and develop skills for employment, with 1,250 young people engaged this year.

Case Study:

Eel Education

Our **Spawn to be Wild Eel Education** project is funded by **Bristol Water** and supported by partners from **Bridgwater College Fisheries Team, Sustainable Eel Group, Charles Berkeley from Berkeley Castle & Berkeley Estate Fishing Syndicate**. This project highlights the serious plight of European eels, which are critically endangered. Four primary schools took responsibility for tanks of elvers; and we helped the children to learn about eels and raise them until they were mature enough to be released into the wild. In total 1,290 pupils took part in workshops, fieldtrips and assemblies to gain an understanding and experience of eel conservation in practice.





Champion the Value of Nature

Nature's voice has never needed to be louder. The 2016 State of Nature Report described how our natural world is in crisis: 56% of our species are in decline and 12% of UK species threatened with extinction from our shores.

In total, this year we had 92 pieces of coverage from local press, radio and TV and we focussed our regular column in the Bristol Post to make a stronger case for nature in the city.

- £500,000 awarded by Big Lottery for our Wellbeing through Nature programme, working with Public Health to demonstrate the value of nature for social prescribing.
- 500 people attended our Nature Day at Bennett's Patch and White's Paddock to connect families with local wildlife and hear from TV presenter Nick Baker about the importance of outdoor learning and play.

Case Study:

Mapping the Region's Ecosystem Services



In 2015, in partnership with the West of England Nature Partnership, Avon Wildlife Trust created the West of England Ecosystem Service Maps. The maps highlight key areas in our region for people and wildlife, with a focus on water quality and quantity plus ecological networks created by woodland, wetland and grassland.

The maps provide free information for environmental decision making to help protect our essential ecosystems. This year our maps were presented to the 2016 European Ecosystem Services conference at the University of Antwerp in Belgium in September. The conference was attended by academics and practitioners from across Europe who are all developing work around ecosystem services. The maps also framed our response to the Joint Spatial Plan for the Avon region.

Our Director of Delivery Programmes, Dr Lucy Rogers, was awarded the prestigious Dame Mary Smieton Award in acknowledgement of this pioneering mapping work.

We are working hard to make nature's voice heard by the decision makers and influencers in our region. To this end we worked in partnership with a wide range of organisations this year including:



Rolls-Royce



Thank You

We would like to say a big thank you to all of our generous funders, members, partners and supporters, volunteers, farmers, graziers, wardens, and local groups.

Your generous support has enabled us to care for over 1000 hectares of local nature reserves, to reach over 25,000 people and inspire them with the wonder of nature and help them take care of it, and given nature a

louder voice here in our region. Together we are ensuring a healthy future for our natural world so our unique local wildlife and our children can rely on it. **We couldn't do this without you all.**



In particular we would like to thank

AWT Local Groups (various)
Amdocs
The Alan Evans Memorial Trust
The Banister Charitable Trust
Basil Brown Charitable Trust
Biffa Award
Big Lottery Fund
Bristol City Council
Bristol Naturalists Society
Bristol Ornithologists
Bristol Water plc
Business Initiative
Buglife

Burges Salmon
The Cobalt Trust
Cory Environmental Trust
DEFRA
Ecosurety
Ecotricity
Katharine & Mark Finn
The Hammamelis Trust
IOP Publishing
Hab Housing
Kew Gardens
Natural England
Nature Picture Library
The Pauline Meredith Charitable Trust
Players of People's Postcode Lottery
Quartet Community Foundation

Malcolm Ravenscroft
Rolls-Royce plc
RSWT SDRC
Sobell Trust
Triodos Bank
Verdon Smith Family Charitable Settlement
Vine House Farm
Viridor Credits Environmental Company
Wessex Water
Dr. B Watts
Western Power Distribution
Peter White
Woodland Trust
Giles Woodward

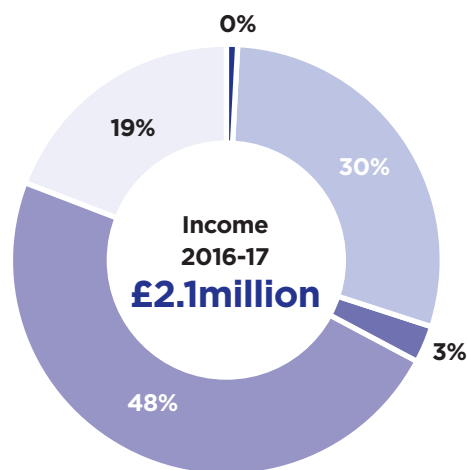
“AWT consistently deliver high quality advice and support. Our wildflower meadows and our hedges are thriving as a result.”

Rosie Notage,
St. Catherine's Valley,
Bath

Financials

Where did the money come from?

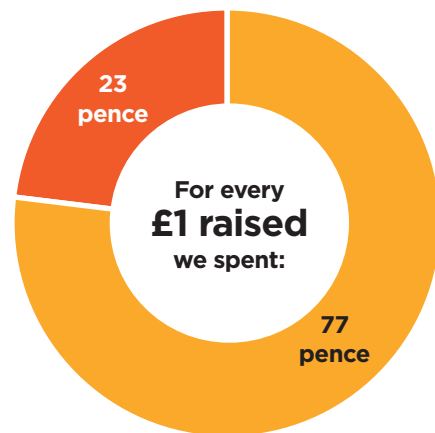
AWT's income for the year was £2.1million, down slightly on last year as we received fewer legacies.



- 30% ● Membership & donations
- 3% ● Legacies
- 48% ● Grants, corporate and trusts
- 19% ● Trading income
- 0% ● Other income

How was the money spent?

We spent £1.8million on our work to protect wildlife across Avon, connect people to the value of nature, and give nature a voice in our region.



- 77p ● on protecting the future for nature
- 23p ● on raising the next £1



Volunteers

This year our amazing volunteers gave 46,000 hours of their time to help us on our nature reserves, in our cities, at events and in the office. This is equivalent to c. £300,000 of salary costs. Our volunteers are absolutely vital to our success and we would like to thank each and every one of you for your significant contribution to protecting our local wildlife.

For more detailed financial information please see the full Annual Report and Financial Statements available at www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/publications

“Our teams enjoy getting hands on with AWT and getting educated about nature at the same time.”

Kate Newman,
Amdocs

Looking to the future

This year, you helped us to protect wildlife and ensure more people can enjoy wildlife-rich lives. We moved closer to our aim to restore nature on a grand scale for our region.

Over the next 3 years we will

- increase focus on the Avon coastline where the network of rhines, wetlands and high tide roosts for wading birds is a vital part of the internationally important Severn Estuary ecosystem.
- work with WENP to achieve the aims of the Severnside Wetlands Nature Improvement Area, focussing our work on our priority areas: the North Somerset Levels and Moors and the Gordano Valley.
- continue to focus on farmland from Chew Valley to Bath, where we are working with landowners to restore and connect habitats for the benefits of pollinators and other wildlife.
- maintain focus on working in partnership to restore ecological networks at the West of England level, protect Local Wildlife Sites and influence development to take more account of the benefits of nature.
- continue to step up our work in urban areas.
- work with diverse communities in Bristol and Bath to improve spaces for wildlife and engage people with wildlife and the benefits of access to nature where they are.





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Please support Avon Wildlife Trust
by fundraising or joining as a
member today.

Find out more on 0117 917 7270
or hello@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk
or at www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk

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