

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust



Annual Review 2012 – 2013



Lincolnshire

Our vision

Lincolnshire and the neighbouring sea and estuaries to be rich in wildlife for the benefit of everyone



Banded demoiselle
Dean Eades

Although it is an honour to be elected as acting chairman of the Trust it is tinged with sadness due to the fact that Sir John Mason had to step down due to ill health, we have been friends for many years, and he was an excellent chairman.

Although membership went down during the year it is pleasing to report that, with a new partnership of Wildlife Trusts involved in recruiting members, membership has increased by almost five hundred since April and now stands at approximately 25,500. In the present economic climate this is good news but we must do all we can to continue to increase membership and raise the profile of the Trust.

Our members are, along with staff, our main strength and their efforts in volunteering on reserves, serving on various teams, in sales outlets and running Area Groups are vital to the Trust. One way in which the Trust

benefits from volunteers is in the delivery of the Lapwings magazine, the vast majority being delivered by hand saving the Trust £30,000 a year. It is not just time that members give up but they are also very generous in other ways and this was the case when a member gave the Trust £2,000 to pay for an extension to Rush Furlong in the north of the county.

It is essential that we maintain links with other organisations so that the wildlife diversity and wild places in the county can be enhanced for future generations. It is the support we get from landowners, businesses, councils and others that help us in our vision.

We are grateful to all our supporters and thank you all for your continued commitment to the work of the Trust.

Geoff Trinder
Chairman

Our Mission

Safeguard wildlife in Lincolnshire and in the neighbouring sea and estuaries by:

- protecting existing wild places as reservoirs of biodiversity and by restoring and creating wildlife habitats to contribute to healthy functioning ecosystems and an environment more resilient to climate change and other challenges;
- sharing this vision with others, particularly relevant decision makers;
- encouraging more people to enjoy Lincolnshire's natural environment and to understand the need to conserve it; and by
- encouraging research projects which lead to a better understanding of the complexities of the natural world

Cover image: Six-spot burnet moth at Red Hill nature reserve
Rachel Scopes

In 2012 The Wildlife Trusts (originally the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves now Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts) celebrated its centenary.

To mark the occasion, and in recognition of "his unique contribution to the first 100 years of nature conservation", Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's founder and President, Ted Smith, was presented with the Society's Centenary Award (the only one of its kind) by Sir David Attenborough at a ceremony in Woodhall Spa.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust presented the first President's Awards at events across the county to recognise the outstanding contribution of volunteers. The award, a silver lapwing pin, will continue to be awarded and further nominations are sought.



Tom Marshall



Bug hunting at Whisby Nature Park
Adrian Royston

Nature reserves, events and education programmes are providing wide-ranging opportunities for people to experience wildlife and the natural landscape

Maintaining a strong formal environmental education capacity

The principal sites of Gibraltar Point, Whisby Nature Park and Far Ings were the focus of formal education activities with 9,000 students participating in formal education visits. Over half of these were primary students with a quarter being secondary, and others being higher education and adult.

New educational programmes were developed including, for five and six year olds, investigating seed dispersal using fake fur mittens much to the delight of the pupils and teachers involved.

Over 60 schools were visited for outreach work, engaging a further 5,500 students.

Delivering high quality events

Staff, volunteers and Area Groups organised nearly 300 events with over 10,000 participants. The wide ranging events included guided walks, reserve open days and children's activities.

The Trust attended over 30 external events including the Lincolnshire Show and Birdfair, both of which took place despite the dreadful weather which saw the cancellation of many events.

The Big Free Pond Dip at Whisby Nature Park attracted over 140 people for a morning of free pond dipping and bug hunting for all the family, despite the weather the families attended were very enthusiastic and amazed at what they found.

Launching new Wildlife Watch groups

Wildlife Watch groups are predominantly run by dedicated volunteers and have been shown to be nurturing the conservationists of the future.

Following the establishment of new groups at Spalding and Grimsby, two further groups were launched at Far Ings and Gibraltar Point.

Interpreting the wildlife of nature reserves

Panels on nature reserves and inside hides help visitors learn more about the wildlife they see. Interpretation at the new Willow Tree Fen Nature Reserve was completed. Interpretation for the Lincolnshire Coastal Country Park, incorporating a number of existing Trust reserves, is now in place with further plans proposed.

New interpretation has been installed at Snipe Dales and Epworth Turbary. A full review of signage has been undertaken at Gibraltar Point NNR along with interpretation to the newly opened up woodland area, providing wheelchair access to viewing screens, bird feeding areas and ponds.

New visitor facilities at Donna Nook enabled improved interpretation for the seal season.

A new bird hide with wheelchair access at Far Ings (overlooking the recently enhanced wetland scrapes area) was installed.

25,010 people supported the Trust through membership providing valuable funds to protect the wildlife and habitats of Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North-East Lincolnshire.

9,000 students from 188 schools, colleges and universities participated in formal education visits at Gibraltar Point, Far Ings and Whisby Nature Park.



Mary Porter

Three dormice were found, measured and weighed by the Limewoods Wildlife Watch Group when they carried out 'box checks' at Chambers Farm Wood.

3,700 people received a monthly newsletter via email.

Seven families took up the challenge of spending 24 hours in a woodland nature reserve and learning bushcraft skills. Eight year old Conner Marshall described it as "a totally awesome experience".

Creating a living landscape

15,000 starlings were seen above the Ness Pit reedbed at dusk on Christmas Day at Far Ings in what turned out to be a special winter for the starling murmurations with reports of spectacular scenes from Deeping Lakes and Whisby Nature Park (above).

3,855 green-winged orchids were counted in Rush Furlong nature reserve and showing they are spreading across the reserve (below)



1,600 brent geese wintered at Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve.

48 reserves were grazed and the hay cut and we are very grateful to the many farmers who have assisted us in this work. It was a very good year for hay following the wet conditions with record breaking yields.

1.4 hectares of wet reedbed were created at Far Ings National Nature Reserve.

Our nature reserves are vital in securing the long-term future of Lincolnshire's wildlife in their own right and at the heart of Living Landscape schemes

Managing nature reserves for wildlife and people.

Work on the Trust's ninety-eight nature reserves continued apace and included grass cutting and raking, weed control, scrub bashing, ditch clearing and the multitude of other unglamorous tasks carried out by field staff and an army of dedicated volunteers.

The year also saw major projects including:

- Willow Tree Fen: completion of paths, hides and information centre, and the creation of a fish refuge on the River Glen.
- Crowle Moor: new large grazing enclosure completed in the north reserve, with birch thinning for improved nightjar habitat. The re-wetting programme was aided by record spring rainfall.
- Legbourne Wood: coppice regime was reinstated after 50 years with no coppicing.
- Kirkby Moor and Moor Farm: water level management structures to maintain conditions for wet heath.
- Snipe Dales: stream enhancements to allow better fish migration and re-fencing in the nature reserve. Commencement of the woodland flora re-introduction programme in the Country Park.
- Saltfleetby – Great Eau floodbank realignment and washland creation.
- Far Ings – fen scrapes rewetting, reedbed creation and island creation.

Establishing new nature reserves within Living Landscapes

The only acquisition in the year was the freehold purchase of 120 hectares at Woodhall Spa Airfield. Sixty-three hectares was already in conservation management by the Trust (since 2004) and subject to an Environmental Stewardship Scheme. Part of the site is still subject to a farming tenancy and therefore yet to come under direct management by the Trust.

This adds considerably to the 'Kirkby Living Landscape' aspiration, with the extension making a contiguous block of 255 hectares, with only the minor road of Kirkby Lane forming a break in the continuous land holding. At the longest axis the site now runs for 2.5 miles north to south and 1.75 mile east to west, making it the Trust's largest inland nature reserve and the biggest freehold nature reserve.

Fundraising has begun to enable the Trust to buy the remainder of the site when CEMEX's operational activities are complete. This offers the prospect of further connectivity with other wildlife sites and improved visitor access.

Due to on-going aggregate extraction and agricultural tenancy agreements there is currently no access provision. The site can be viewed from the south-west corner of Kirkby Moor nature reserve and more extensively from the southern boundary of Forestry Commission's Ostler's Plantation.



Family of tufted ducks at Far Ings
Mandy West

Through Living Landscape schemes we are thinking bigger and more joined-up to restore the natural environment across the wider countryside

Working strategically with partners to develop Living Landscape schemes

During the year the Trust has strengthened partnerships and plans across the county.

The delivery phases of the Heritage Lottery Funded Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes project and the Humberhead Levels Nature Improvement Area project are now underway.

In November, Willow Tree Fen was the venue for the launch of a new Strategic Plan for Fenland. Produced by the Fens of the Future Partnership, the plan identifies top priorities for action alongside the projects, funding and partnership working that can deliver them.

In south-west Lincolnshire action has focussed on the continuation of the Life on the Verge project. Over four years, 170 volunteers have helped survey 1,433km of road verge. Key discoveries have been the High Dike Waddington to Colsterworth and Limestone Heath, east of Grantham, and connecting stretches between Roadside Nature Reserves near the Rutland border. Life on the Verge in the Lincolnshire Wolds completed a second year of surveys. Eighty volunteers have surveyed 727 km of verge with Hemingby/Fulletby area highlighted as having stretches with high restoration potential.

Standing up for wildlife at a regional and county level

Approximately 8,200 planning applications were reviewed and responses made to 276. As a result of a significant increase in requests from some local authorities for advice a strategic approach was adopted from July 2012 to direct resources more effectively.

The Trust has continued to work closely with all the county's local planning authorities and contributed to many development documents and strategies. The Trust also plays an active role in national issues through The Wildlife Trusts, contributing local case studies and examples of best practice to the development of national policies

Playing an active role in the Biodiversity (now Nature) Partnership

The Trust has made a significant contribution to one of the first and probably the strongest Local Nature Partnerships through hosting and engagement with its steering group. Launched in November 2012 the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) represents almost 40 organisations working together to achieve more for nature. It replaces the successful Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership.

The Trust is also playing an active role in the establishment of the Humber Nature Partnership which would be well placed to tackle the complex issues around the estuary.

64 Roadside Nature Reserves were managed by the Trust on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council.

2,000 people attended Marshes Month in July; a month of events focusing on the Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes and co-ordinated by the Project Team that are hosted by East Lindsey District Council.

12 black oil beetles were spotted on a road verge near Grantham; the first time this threatened species of beetle had been seen in the county in 28 years.

Two large mosaics illustrating the wildlife of Willow Tree Fen were created by members of the public. They are displayed in the interpretive centre.



150 employees from Cargill of Witham St Hughes near Lincoln provided a total of 500 hours of volunteering at Tunman Wood nature reserve.

Restoring living seas



Queen scallop swimming
Paul Naylor

14,000 Petition Fish signatures gathered in Lincolnshire, along with 250,000 from across England were presented to MPs in January. Chief Executive Paul Learoyd and North Sea Living Seas Manager Kirsten Smith presented a Petition Fish to Austin Mitchell MP for Great Grimsby.



Unfortunately no Lincolnshire sites were proposed in the first tranche of Marine Conservation Zone designations.

Nine harbour porpoises were seen off the Lincolnshire coast during the Whale & Dolphin watching weekend. Seawatching events and working with MARINELife and Sea Watch Foundation has resulted in a significant increase in harbour porpoise sightings along the coast.

30 Trust staff, volunteers and vets attended a British Divers Marine Life Rescue course held at Gibraltar Point and learnt how to rescue stranded whales, dolphins and seals.

For too long we've taken too much with too little care of our seas. We are working to restore our seas so wildlife can thrive from the depths of the ocean to the coastal shallows

Increasing awareness of marine wildlife

Over 5,000 people visiting the Lincolnshire coastal resorts including Cleethorpes and Skegness participated in Living Seas roadshows to raise awareness of marine species and habitats and their conservation. Holiday makers discovered more about the starfish, shells and mermaid's purses found on the beaches, created giant animal sculptures from found items and saw live crabs, shrimps and fish caught in the shallows.

The Trust's website and Facebook sites included regular stories and images to promote the often overlooked North Sea wildlife.

A highlight was the success in Lincolnshire of the national Whale and Dolphin Watch in July with good sightings of harbour porpoises generating local and national interest.

Helping to conserve the wildlife habitats of our seas

Specialist staff working jointly with other Wildlife Trusts have been instrumental in the Trust's work to identify and safeguard marine protected areas.

Further work has focussed on the significant wind farms proposed across the North Sea including Dogger Bank and the new spatial planning pilot.

Furthering our knowledge and understanding of the marine environment

A second Seasearch dive off the Lincolnshire coast, this time in the proposed Marine Conservation Zone offshore from Donna Nook, produced exciting results. A full programme of Shoresearch (beach surveys) along the Lincolnshire coast has started to establish some good data, notably after the large wrecks of shell fish along with other animal groups in the spring of 2013.

In partnership with the charity MARINELife staff and volunteers undertook training in the identification of cetaceans and participated in survey trips from Hull to various European destinations across the North Sea. This work will complement the Seawatch work already underway.



Edible crab and common sunstar
photographed offshore from Donna Nook
University of Hull, CEMS

Financial overview

2012 - 2013



Chaffinch
Amy Lewis

During the financial year, the Trust completed the acquisition of 120 hectares of land in the Kirkby Moor Living Landscape area at a cost of £903k. This represents a significant addition to our land holdings in this important area and leaves the Trust well placed in negotiations with CEMEX for the remainder of the site. How to finance this at a time when grants are in short supply is currently exercising the minds of the Finance Team and encouraged the Trust to launch an Appeal to members – its first appeal for many years.

In the past, legacies have played a key role in facilitating the purchase of sites of conservation interest and the Trust is most grateful to those members who recognise the importance of protecting the Lincolnshire countryside by leaving a bequest in their wills.

Membership and Investment income also play a major role in boosting the “unrestricted income” of the Trust and allow us to support projects and acquisitions that would otherwise be difficult to finance. Whilst membership numbers did reduce at the year-end, it is good to see that focused recruitment is having a beneficial impact. A newly formed Marketing Team will be looking at further ways to improve this income line in the future.

During the course of the year, the Trust has undertaken a review of its Investment Policy and details of the new policy are set out in the Audited Accounts. The purpose of this review was to maintain the level of income generated by the portfolio, whilst delivering a better spread of investments to provide greater diversity and reduce risk.

The difficulties within the subsidiary company, referred to in the last accounts, have been addressed and there is now an expectation that our retail and café business will be able to make a positive contribution to the Trust, going forward.

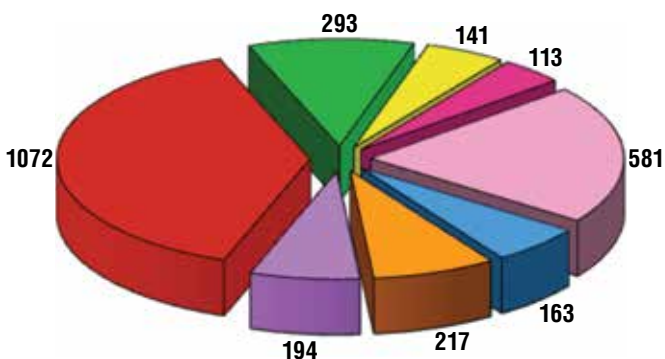
In summary, the Trust has enjoyed another successful year with a modest surplus of £73k in the year, augmented by gains on the value of our investments and property sales of £405k. This leaves the Trust with a strong Balance Sheet but a need for increased funding if the full potential of Woodhall Spa Airfield as part of the Kirkby Living Landscape is to be realised in due course.

David Cohen
Honorary Treasurer

Copies of the full annual report and financial statements may be obtained from the Trust's Headquarters.

Income

Total £2,774K

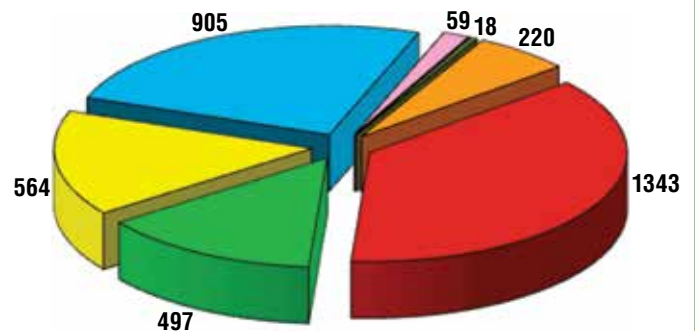


- Subscriptions, donations and gift aid
- Legacies
- Merchandising and consultancy income
- Investment income
- Nature reserve income
- Wider countryside conservation income
- Inspiring people income
- Other income

Expenditure

Total £2,701K

In addition £905K nature reserve acquisition



- Nature reserve management
- Wider countryside conservation
- Inspiring people
- Nature reserve acquisitions
- Costs of generating voluntary income
- Governance costs
- Merchandising and consultancy costs

Thank you to everyone who has supported us this year

Future Plans

- Deliver Kirkby Moor extension (airfield acquisition phase II) – fundraising requirements and opportunity for increasing profile arising from the project and anniversaries.
- Continue delivery of Living Landscape projects on which we lead or are a partner: significant input on Life on the Verge 2 (the Wolds), South Lincolnshire Fens, Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes and Coastal Country Park, Witham Valley Country Park and Humberhead Levels. A particular focus on securing continuity funding for key project posts and new officer for the Fens.
- Deliver marine planning and Marine Conservation Zone advocacy and data collection.
- Input to the critical South Humber Bank mitigation strategy.
- Maximise opportunities arising from the establishment of two Nature Partnerships in Lincolnshire.
- Actions to achieve membership growth.
- Enhance web and social media presence.
- Commence strategic planning for next five year period (2015-20).

Acknowledgements

The Trust is a voluntary, charitable organisation whose work is dependent on the goodwill, financial support and voluntary input of individuals, businesses, local authorities and voluntary bodies. We acknowledge with thanks the help of all our supporters. We are grateful to the following for substantial financial support in 2012/2013 through donations, grants and the sponsorship of projects:

Anglian Water	Forestry Commission	North Lincolnshire County Council
Anglia Regional Co-op	Heritage Lottery Fund	RSPB
Biffaward	HSBC Bank Plc	RSWT
Cargill PLC	Lincolnshire County Council	South Holland District Council
Centrica	Lynn Wind Farm Limited	Vine House Farm
DEFRA	Ministry of Defence	Wash Fens Rural Development Programme
East Lindsey District Council	Natural England	Waste Recycling Environmental (WREN)
Environment Agency	North East Lindsey Drainage Board	Wolds AONB
The European Union	North Kesteven District Council	

Legacies

Receipts from legacies form a substantial part of our unrestricted income, allowing us to find match funding for a variety of projects and to maintain our Conservation and Development Funds. During 2012/2013 the Trust has been notified of bequests from the Wills of the following:

Pauline Sandra Hopkins	John Monks	James Gordon Wallace
Iris Mary Bauckham	Joan Rosaline Thomas	William Arthur Markham
Frank Wilson	Charles Ian Lee	Neil Anthony Taylor
Mary Holt	Judith Ann Bartlett	Alexander George Parker

Corporate Members

Corporate Membership of the Trust is designed to provide an effective means for companies to demonstrate care for the local environment. The following were Corporate Members during the reporting period:

Aggregate Industries	Cupit Print, Horncastle	Mortons of Horncastle Limited
Alfred Enderby Limited	Exeter Street Veterinary Centre	Natureland Seal Sanctuary
Andrew & Co LLP	Fenland Laundries Limited	North East Lindsey Drainage Board
Anglian Water Services	Gardman Limited	Novartis Grimsby
ARH Tucker & Sons	Growing Wild Limited	Omex Agriculture Limited
Associated British Ports	Hornsby Travel Services Limited	Page Paper Limited
B A Bush & Son Limited	Humber Bridge Board	Riva Construction
Badley Ashton & Associates Limited	J E Piccaver & Co	Rowhire Limited
Cargill PLC	J W Ruddock & Sons Limited	S Betteridge Paving Contractor
Chapel Garden Centre	John E Haith Limited	SCS Technology Solutions Limited
Cleethorpes Builders Merchants	John Kinch Group	Sibelco UK
Clugston Group Limited	Jolly Common Caravan Park	Singleton Birch Limited
Conoco Philips (UK) Limited	Kes Building Maintenance	Tata Steel UK Limited
Cray Valley Products Limited	Lincolnshire Co-operative Society Limited	TCS UK Spraying
Creative Nature	Lindsey Oil Refinery Limited	Truelove Property & Construction
Crowder & Sons Ltd	Lowfields Leisure Limited	Yara (UK) Limited

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Website: www.lincstrust.org.uk

Snipe Dales Nature Reserve and Country Park

Lusby, Spilsby PE23 4JB
Tel: 01507 588401

Whisby Nature Park

Tel: 01522 500676
Education Centre
Tel: 01522 696926
Thorpe-on-the-Hill, Lincoln LN6 9BW

Far Ings National Nature Reserve and Visitor Centre

Barton-on-Humber DN18 5RG
Tel: 01652 637055

Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve and Wash Study Centre

Skegness PE24 4SU
Tel: 01754 898057

Senior Staff

P Learoyd **Chief Executive**
D Bromwich **Head of Reserves**
C Steel **Head of Conservation**
Head of Finance
P Thorpe (*Retired 31 December 2012*)
S J Smith (*Appointed 21 January 2013*)

Board of Directors and Trustees

Dr A E Smith CBE MA
Mr D F Wright MSc MSB
Mr B Tear BSc
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Vice President (*Resigned 1 May 2013*)
Vice President (*Resigned 1 May 2013*)
Vice President (*Re-appointed 1 November 2013*)
Chairman (*Resigned 24 April 2013*)
Chairman (*Appointed 25 June 2013*)
Deputy Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Honorary Treasurer

(Appointed 1 May 2013)
(Appointed 1 May 2013)
(Appointed 1 May 2013)
Patron
Patron