



**Lincolnshire**

Wildlife Trust

# Annual Review

2015 - 2016





## From the Chairman

Ted Smith, President of Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust died in September 2015. In the 1940s Ted Smith recognised the urgent need to save Lincolnshire's most special places for nature. In 1948 he was the founding Honorary Secretary of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and went on to be Chairman and then President. He fought to save our unspoiled coast, ancient meadows and heaths and to halt the destruction of native woodland. Ted campaigned on almost every front from saving roadside flowers from being sprayed with chemicals to pressing for legislation to protect otters.

His influence extended far beyond Lincolnshire. He travelled the length and breadth of Britain, lecturing on his vision for nature and for local Wildlife Trusts to champion it. Most importantly, he saw the need for local nature organisations which could own land and for them to derive support from a wide section of the community. In 2012 he was presented with The Wildlife Trusts' Centenary Award by Sir David Attenborough. Talking about Ted Smith's dedication and presenting the award, Sir David Attenborough commented on the

profound impact that Ted had on the first 100 years of nature conservation:

*"This countryside of Britain may not be as rich as Ted knew it as a child in the 1920s and 30s but it is immeasurably better than it would otherwise have been without him and The Wildlife Trusts. Generations to come are going to benefit more than they will know."*

In 2010, Gibraltar Point was dedicated to Ted in celebration of his lifetime commitment to the reserve. Established in 1949, Gibraltar Point was the first Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve. It was a new kind of nature reserve that promoted nature conservation, survey and research, as well as public enjoyment and access. Sadly Ted did not get to see the recovery of the nature reserve after the 2013 floods and the completion of the new visitor centre which replaced the one damaged during that event which opened in May 2016.

**Geoff Trinder, Chairman**

### Our vision:

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





Woodhall Spa Airfield

ROBERT ENDERBY

## Creating a Living Landscape

Major works were completed to create the nature reserve at the former **Woodhall Spa Airfield** including large scale spoil movement, wetland creation and new access. Development of a full restoration plan for the site and adjacent nature reserves (Moor Farm, Kirkby Moor and Kirkby Low Wood) were developed with a view to possible external funders.

**Whisby Nature Park's** 25th anniversary was capped with the opening of the new rail crossing at the centre of the nature reserve. This was the result of partnership work with Network Rail and Lincolnshire County Council and provides excellent access for visitors and the potential in time for good nightingale habitat.

On Trust nature reserves otter have been regularly recorded at **Deeping Lakes** nature reserve following the installation of holts in previous years; works were undertaken to landscape a series of islands to

enhance for wildlife. Otter have also been recorded at **Willow Tree Fen** nature reserve for the first time and introduction of greater water parsnip to the site has been highly successful.

Large scale woodland management was undertaken at **Tunman Wood** nature reserve and **Bloxholm Wood** nature reserve with woodland plans prepared for a number of other sites. The woodland flora project at **Snipe Dales** is delivering results for people and wildlife with royal fern now being introduced after careful propagation.

The Trust continues to support the MoD at the former **Wainfleet Range** and Natural England at **Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes** National Nature Reserve through direct management of the sites. The longer term arrangements for the sites remain under discussion. Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR is included amongst a small number of other NNRs across England to consider approaches to partnership working. On site there has been considerable frustration with anti-social behaviour and, while not unique to the site, its proximity to holiday resorts and numerous access points make this a particularly difficult site to manage. Regular sightings reports to the Lincolnshire Naturalists Union have helped demonstrate the site's wildlife interest to a wider audience.



DEAN EADES

Otters have been seen on a number of Trust wetland nature reserves including, for the first time, at Willow Tree Fen in south Lincolnshire





MANDY WEST

Yellow wagtail amongst grazing cattle



SUSIE CROWE

Youngsters from the Alford Wildlife Watch group planted 1,000 marram grass plugs at Sandilands to help create new sand dunes. Alford Wildlife Watch Club were awarded second place in the Watch Group of the Year competition

Plans to take forward **'Wild Coast and Marshes Living Landscape Area'** from the Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes and Coastal Country Park projects as potential Nature Improvement Areas made limited progress. Lincolnshire County Council, on behalf of the Trust and other partners, commissioned work to consider options. Early discussions were undertaken to consider possible routes for the Coastal Access Path, this work is led by Natural England.

The **Meadows Project** (successor to the Life on the Verge Projects) hosted the national Caring for God's Acre conference in the county, working closely with a number of community groups to establish new areas of flower rich grassland including the University of Lincoln's Joseph Banks Laboratory grounds.

The Trust hosts the **South Lincolnshire Fenlands Partnership Project** Officer. Along with the Regional Fens Project Officer good progress is being made to improve the area for wildlife in this intensively farmed

area. A South Lincolnshire Fenlands Farmers' bid to the Facilitation Fund (agri-environment fund for groups of landowners) was successful. Three farmers entered Mid-Tier agreements with potentially some Higher-Tier applications. Greatest benefit to date is in developing relationships with farmers.

## Restoring Living Seas

Lincolnshire's marine life was brought to international attention with the stranding of **four sperm whales** on the county's beaches with over thirty stranded along the coastline of the southern North Sea. While the Trust was not directly involved, one animal was closely monitored on the former Wainfleet Range and some media work carried out. The Lincolnshire coast and particularly Trust sites featured on BBC Radio 4's Open Country programme in December 2015.

Two iconic species on the Lincolnshire coast, grey seal and little tern, experienced good breeding seasons at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point respectively through good site management.

Government proposals for a **Greater Wash Special Protection Area** (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation in the North Sea for harbour porpoise are welcomed. This complements the existing network of Marine Protected Areas. The Trust continues to lobby for improved protection for wildlife in these areas.

Volunteers were rallied for beach cleans at Gibraltar Point, Anderby Creek and Crook Bank (Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes).



## Inspiring people

April 2015 saw the demolition of the damaged visitor centre and education buildings at **Gibraltar Point** commence. By the end of the period the new elevated visitor centre, as well as the refurbishment of the 19th century coastguard house (to be used for events and meetings), was well underway, ultimately opening in May 2016. This offers an exciting new beginning for the visitor facilities at the site. Funding was secured for its construction from the Coastal Community Fund and European Regional Development Fund by Lincolnshire County Council along with a contribution from the Trust.

Delivery of education and events at Gibraltar Point NNR remained affected by the flood damage in December 2013. Alternative arrangements were made including tipis at Gibraltar Point, reminiscent of the earliest education visits to the nature reserve in the 1950s and 60s along with increased use of Snipe Dales and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe.

Over 4,000 students from over 220 **schools, colleges and universities** participated in formal education visits at those sites and Whisby Nature Park, Far Ings and Donna Nook. A similar number were visited in school.

Throughout the year staff, volunteers, Watch Groups and Area Groups organised over 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 (with an award winning stand) and the Birdfair.

**The new visitor centre at Gibraltar Point has been designed to provide views across the nature reserve and is raised on stilts to protect it from future flooding**

The Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust **website** continued to be a very important resource and was visited by 230,670 people, who viewed a total of 885,160 pages. This represents a 13% growth in website usage over the last two years. Website content was refreshed with news, events and general updates, whilst mini-websites that sit within the main Trust website were developed for the Meadow Network Project and the Lincolnshire Environmental Awards. The website and social media were also used to raise funds through a Seal Appeal for Donna Nook and a Nationwide Building Society donation after a public vote.

**Social media** continued to be a huge growth area for Trust communications with a consistent increase in followers, which was further enhanced with new Facebook pages launched for Gibraltar Point, Far Ings and Whisby Nature Park. All Trust Facebook pages







Another record breaking year at Donna Nook with 1,895 grey seal pups being born. Volunteer seal wardens amassed an impressive 2,096 hours helping visitors and ensuring the safety of the seals

managed by staff were branded with the Trust logo and a page-specific colour to ensure that they are identifiable as official Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust pages.

## A voice for wildlife

The Trust remains actively involved in forward planning to try to ensure appropriate policies are included in local and national plans and strategies to protect nature conservation sites from inappropriate development and other activity, and achieve more resilience to climate change and other pressures.

This year a significant focus has been on local interpretation of the new Common Agriculture Policy, particularly influencing targeting of the new Countryside Stewardship scheme. During the year the Trust worked closely with all the county's local planning authorities and contributed to a number of development documents.

The Trust reviewed 9,899 planning applications and responded to 166 which involved developments that could adversely impact on sites of nature conservation importance and/or offered significant opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

The Trust plays an active role in the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP), which it hosts. The Partnership compliments the Trust's advocacy work. The Partnership focussed on collecting evidence on the value of nature tourism; this was presented at a very successful conference in November 2015 and the publication of a report. The financial value of nature tourism to the Greater Lincolnshire economy is over £50million. The Partnership has made good progress across a range of themes, more details of the activity and achievements are available in its Annual Review 2015-16.

Membership of the Trust is open to all, and the total number of subscribing members at 1 April 2016 increased to 27,014, up from 26,128 in 2015.



A Level Biology Students from William Farr Comprehensive School surveying the land from the waters edge to the woodland at Whisby Nature Park. They collected data on how the flora changes moving away from water

# Financial overview 2015 - 2016

It is pleasing to report that membership numbers have risen to 27,014 at the year end. Whilst there has been much comment during the year in the press and in Parliament on the fundraising activities of the charitable sector, it is pleasing to report such a significant increase in membership. The Board takes a keen interest in membership recruitment and retention and ensures that the Trust meets its obligations under the relevant legislation and is always mindful of the reputational risk involved in inappropriate contact with its members.

The Trust has again benefitted from a healthy number of legacies and is indebted to everyone who has appreciated the importance of this income stream to the Trust's work. Over the years, this source of income has enabled the Trust to acquire new reserves, manage them better and improve visitor facilities, whilst building up financial reserves to support the ongoing work of the Trust. In the current year, the Trust is particularly grateful to the late John Allen for a legacy in excess of £300k.

The settlement of the outstanding insurance claim at a figure of £149k and the opening of the new visitor centre at Gibraltar Point just after the year-end will enable the Trust to recapitalise its subsidiary company in the near future. Operating out of a Portacabin and a mobile catering vehicle has been expensive from a financial perspective and difficult from a staffing perspective, so staff can look forward with confidence to a more satisfying way of working in the future. Early

indications are that the new visitor centre is popular with visitors and is generating a healthy level of interest. Negotiations for a renewed lease with Lincolnshire County Council are progressing well and the Trust has agreed to contribute £200k towards the cost of the new visitor centre, once the lease is completed.

Changes to the Common Agricultural Policy schemes to promote good environmental practice have caused significant additional work for the Nature Reserves Department, and the Trust's income from this source is likely to decline in the short and medium term as the new system unfolds. Whilst there is a degree of certainty in contracted payments under the Entry Level Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship schemes until 2017, thereafter income is predicted to fall away over the next four years. There is now a greater degree of uncertainty while Brexit negotiations are underway. The Trustees have been keeping a close "watching brief" on developments and the Board is starting to plan for life under the new arrangements.

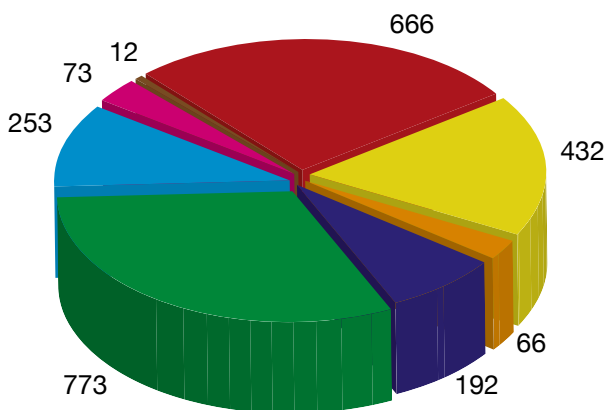
On balance, the Trust can be proud of what has been achieved during the course of the current year and whilst there are issues to address over the next few years, the Trust is well capitalised and has the financial strength to resolve them.

**David Cohen, Honorary Treasurer**

## Thank you to everyone who has supported us this year.

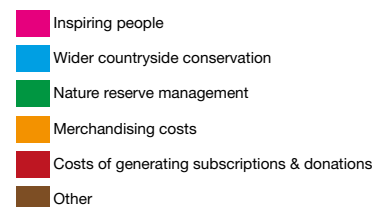
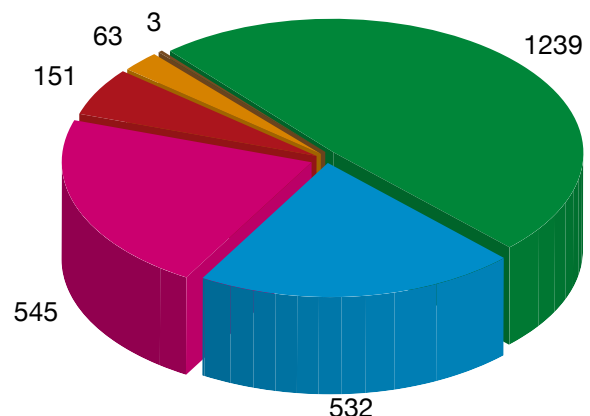
### Income

Total £2,467K



### Expenditure

Total £2,533K





## Future Plans

During the year ahead effort will focus on delivery of the new five year Strategic Plan which commenced April 2015. Particular activities in the year and indicative measures of success are:

- Gibraltar Point Visitor Centre – opened and inspiring people on a sustainable operational footing.
- ‘Wild Coast’ – take forward the coastal strategy.
- Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR – have agreed medium term operational arrangements.
- Fens – maintain South Lincolnshire Fen as a key element of a regional strategy.
- Humber – working with key partners on critical strategies and their implementation.
- Woodhall Spa Airfield Nature Reserve – open to the public.
- Health and Wellbeing – through Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership identify opportunities around this agenda.
- Communications and marketing focussed on legacy promotion – increased gifts in wills.

## 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 2015/16 through donations, grants and the sponsorship of projects:

Anglian Water Services	Heritage Lottery Fund	North Kesteven District Council
Cargill PLC	Lincolnshire County Council	RSPB
Centrica	Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service	RSWT
Defra	Ministry of Defence	Vine House Farm
East Lindsey District Council	Nationwide Building Society	Waste Recycling Environmental (WREN)
Environment Agency	Natural England	
Esmée Fairburn Foundation	North East Lindsey Drainage Board	
The European Union		
Forestry Commission		

## 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 2015/16 the Trust has been notified of bequests from the Wills of the following:

Patricia Diana Collins	Patricia Elizabeth Wells	Josephine Edith Sharpe
Peter Jansen Birkett	Florence Vera King	Stephen Perkins
Elsie May Tippler	John Allen	Andrew Sang
Joseph Roe	Sheila Diana Jackson Hannam	Denis Peter Cawdron
Anthea Dee	Fay Gibson	Barbara Mary Odling

## 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	Crowder & Sons Ltd	Natureland Seal Sanctuary
Alfred Enderby Limited	F W Cupit (Printers) Limited	North East Lindsey Drainage Board
Andrew & Co LLP	Fenland Laundries Limited	Novartis Grimsby
Anglian Water Services	Growing Wild Limited	Page Paper Limited
ARH Tucker & Sons	Hornsby Travel Services Limited	Riva Construction
Associated British Ports	Humber Bridge Board	Rowhire Limited
B A Bush & Son Limited	J E Piccaver & Co	SCS Technology Solutions Limited
Badley Ashton & Associates Limited	J W Ruddock & Sons Limited	Sibelco UK
Cargill PLC	John E Haith Limited	Singleton Birch Limited
Chapel Garden Centre	John Kinch Group	TCS UK Spraying
Cleethorpes Builders Merchants	Jolly Common Caravan Park	The Jungle Zoo
Clugston Group Limited	Lafarge Aggregates Ltd	Truelove Property & Construction
ConocoPhillips (UK) Limited	Lincolnshire Co-operative Society Limited	Yara (UK) Limited
Cray Valley Products Limited	Lindsey Oil Refinery Limited	
Creative Nature	Mortons of Horncastle Limited	

### Headquarters/Registered Office

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Email: [info@lincstrust.co.uk](mailto:info@lincstrust.co.uk)  
Website: [www.lincstrust.org.uk](http://www.lincstrust.org.uk)

### Far Ings National Nature Reserve and Visitor Centre

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

### Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve

Skegness PE24 4SU  
Tel: 01754 898057

### 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

### Senior Staff

*Chief Executive:* P Learoyd  
*Head of Reserves:* D Bromwich  
*Head of Conservation:* C Steel  
*Head of Finance:* S J Smith

### Patrons

The Earl of Yarborough  
Baroness Willoughby de Eresby

### Presidents:

Dr A E Smith CBE MA  
Mr D N Robinson OBE MSc  
Mr D F Wright MSc MSB  
Mr B Tear BSc

President and Trustee (Deceased 13.09.15)  
Vice President and Trustee  
Vice President (Deceased 05.05.16)  
Vice President

### Trustees/Directors:

Mr G L Trinder ARPS  
Mrs J Mellor MSc  
Mr T S Sands  
Dr D A Sheppard BSc PhD  
Mr D A Cohen  
Mrs C E Harrison BSc  
Mr C Morrison CSci  
Mr J Purvis BSc FCA  
Mrs A Quigley BA  
Ms T Smalley MSc  
Mr P Stapleton FCA  
Mr E J Redshaw  
Mrs B Tyrrel

Chairman  
Deputy Chairman  
Deputy Chairman  
Deputy Chairman  
Honorary Treasurer

Appointed 05.11.15