

Charity Registration No. 214927
Company Registration No. 738693 (England & Wales)

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATION

Trustees	M Argo (appointed 28/11/24) R Collins J Dennington (appointed 28/11/24) S Javid (appointed 28/11/24) S Judd (retired 28/11/24) C Neame J Richards J Roscoe S Sanderson (appointed 28/11/24) B Stothart (Chair) C Swarbrick S Williams
Secretary	Charlotte Harris
Chief Executive	Charlotte Harris
Registered office	Bickley Hall Farm Bickley Malpas Cheshire SY14 8EF
Charity number	214927
Company number	738693
Auditors	Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditor 3 rd Floor 44 Peter Street Manchester M2 5GP
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ
Solicitors	Excello Law One City Place Queens Road Chester CH1 3BQ

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

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CHAIR'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2024/25 has been another good year for Cheshire Wildlife Trust. CWT continues to work for people, wildlife and nature in Cheshire, Wirral, Stockport, Trafford, Tameside, Warrington and Halton. There are many examples in this report which show the impact of that work; making more space for nature and wildlife, and engaging and energising more people to act for its recovery. Notably, the Trust managed and influenced over 3,000 hectares of land and reached almost 250,000 people. During the year we also reviewed our strategy (to be published in due course), ensuring that we remain focused on the actions that deliver the greatest impact and continue to be a resilient organisation.

CWT is in good financial health, showing a surplus for the ninth successive year. Cash now stands at just over £2m, of which 45% is restricted or designated for specific purposes, and we have unrestricted financial reserves equivalent to 6 months' essential operating expenditure.

The Trust received a legacy of £600k during 2024/25 from David Aldred for land acquisition. CWT is very grateful for all legacies and donations received which support our work. Accounting rules determine that such receipts are accounted for in the period they are received, which somewhat inflates our income for this year. Much of the legacy from David Aldred has been used to support the purchase of land, completed after 1st April 2025, at Picton near Chester and at Erwin's Lane near Macclesfield, and some remains to support future purchases. The land at Erwin's Lane has been renamed Aldred's Lea in memory of David.

This will be my final report as Chair, having served the maximum period of nine years as a Trustee, of which the last seven were as Chair. I would like to thank the Trust's staff, volunteers, all supporters and my fellow Trustees for their contributions and commitment both this year and throughout my time as Chair.

We need more space for wildlife, and more people on nature's side



Bill Stothart

Chair

Date: 29 September 2025

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TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Charities SORP (FRS 102) Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Overview

Cheshire Wildlife Trust is the only charity dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and wild places in the Cheshire region.

Formed in 1962 by volunteers, Cheshire Wildlife Trust is one of 46 independent charities, which together form the UK-wide Wildlife Trust movement. The Trust benefits from the support of 17,500 members and over 700 volunteers, is governed by a ten-strong Board of Trustees and currently employs 60 dedicated staff. We are passionate about securing a future for local wildlife on land and at sea and work as part of the Wildlife Trust movement to influence decision making for nature at the highest level nationally.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited is required by charity and company law to act within the objects of its Memorandum of Association, which are as follows:

1. To promote and deliver the conservation, protection, improvement and expansion of the physical and natural environment, for the benefit of wildlife and the public of the United Kingdom; particularly in the Vice County 58 (the traditional County Palatine of Chester) and adjacent areas.
2. To advance the education and engagement of the public in the principles and practice of:
 - a. Biodiversity conservation and enhancement;
 - b. Sustainable living and development;
 - c. Nature-based health and wellbeing initiatives; and
 - d. Natural capital, and its protection, restoration and value to society.
3. To promote research in all branches of relevant scientific study and to publish the useful results thereof.

Our 2030 Strategy: Wilder Cheshire is available on our website:

https://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/2030strategy_with_a_summary

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duties in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'. The Trust's public benefit is enshrined in its charitable objects.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Our vision is for a Wilder Cheshire

Our mission is to bring wildlife back – for everyone, everywhere.

Our strategy tackles three crises:

1. Wildlife crisis – Let's fight for wildlife's recovery.

Nature today is not normal. Since the 1930s, species-rich wildflower meadows have become virtually extinct; since the 1950s, we have lost over half the abundance of all species across the UK; since the 1970s, there's been a 60% fall in vertebrates globally. Elsewhere, recent reports tell us that insect populations have collapsed by 75% between 1990 and 2014. In the UK, we have lost half of our farmland birds in one generation. Cheshire is not immune to these trends and less than 10% of our region is protected for wildlife.

Outcome: At least 30% of the land and sea in Cheshire needs to be managed for nature so that missing wildlife will return. We want to see more and better connected wild spaces and the pressures on the environment reduced.

2. Climate crisis – Let's make nature part of the solution.

We are facing a climate crisis and nature is a big part of the solution. Healthy ecosystems and restored habitats will help us play our part in delivering the UN's Paris Agreement to tackle the climate emergency. Our peatlands, woodland and wetlands, if restored, can protect us. These habitats store carbon, cool our towns and help control flooding as well as supporting our economy and wellbeing. Our utility bills are higher because we need to clean our water. Our food bills are rising because farming is not sustainable. The costs of flood damage are devastating where nature's defences fail.

Outcome: Resilient nature will help combat climate change. We need more carbon to be locked up in our plants and soils and to restore broken ecosystems.

3. Nature connection deficit – Let's have more people on nature's side.

Our disconnect with nature is snowballing with each passing generation. New generations grow up ever more distant from the natural world. They do not miss it when it disappears, and so it continues to slip away unnoticed. When we lose our connection with nature, mental health problems, obesity and isolation rise. We need at least 1 in 4 people to be taking visible and meaningful action for nature in order to achieve a social tipping point. We need caring for and protecting nature to be a normal part of everyday life and the decisions we take. Only then will we start to see nature recover.

Outcome: Our wellbeing and economy rely on a healthy, natural environment. We need everyone to be passionate about wildlife and at least 1 in 4 people to be taking action for nature's recovery.

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Strategic report

The information below, including the review of achievements and performance, financial review, risk management statement and summary of future plans, forms the Strategic Report for the purpose of the Companies Act 2006.

Achievements and performance

Our charitable objects are the drivers behind our 2030 strategic framework. Our achievements and performance are reported against each of the three strategic outcomes and we also report on a fourth underpinning objective to ensure that Cheshire Wildlife Trust is effective and resilient.

Wildlife and climate are in crisis

In the year ended 31 March 2025, Cheshire Wildlife Trust transformed 140 spaces for nature across a total of a 3,032 hectares.

Outcome: 30% of land in Cheshire is good for nature

We completed the Severn Trent Water funded Environmental Measures on the Aldford Brook (EMAB) project, creating and restoring a range of wetland habitats including ponds, scrapes, ditches and riparian corridors across 15ha of the Barnston Estate and Green Farm.

Forty-two hectares is our lucky number for woodland creation; for a second year running we have created another 42ha of new woodland with Defra Trees for Climate funding. New woodland sites included a second agroforestry scheme covering 10.5ha, sites where natural regeneration was prioritised and others where the diversity of species planted was chosen to give maximum benefit for wildlife.

We created and restored 35 more ponds for great crested newts, mitigating for losses due to development, bringing the total from the District Level Licensing Scheme to date to 355.

Sixty-five hectares of wildflower meadow were created and restored to provide a welcome boost for pollinators. This is the most we've created in one year since we launched our Pollinating Cheshire project, with the increase thanks to grant funding. The project was supported by additional grant funding from National Highways' Networks for Nature fund and planning compensation funds distributed by the Local Authorities.

During the year we increased capacity within our plant nursery at Bickley Hall Farm, which now supplies plug plants and trees, grown from Cheshire seed, to our habitat creation projects.

We delivered land management advice to a variety of private, corporate and agricultural land managers and owners to boost the biodiversity value of approximately 840ha of land. This included a contract to monitor the condition of protected sites on behalf of Natural England, creation of a Nature

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Recovery Plan for the Daresbury Laboratory Science Park, as well as advice to farmers, landowning estates and smallholders.

We completed our Dee Treelines project, which saw the creation and improvement of 40km of hedgerow for wildlife.

We secured funding from the Environment Agency for a natural flood management project at Newhall Farm in the Wirral in partnership with Wirral Council.

Nature reserves were managed in line with our plans to restore and maintain priority habitats. During the year we carried out baseline surveys and created a restoration plan for our new site, Greenbooth Nature Reserve, which was purchased using donations from our 60th anniversary appeal. At our largest reserve, Gowy Meadows, a Species Recovery grant enabled 3km of habitat improvement for water voles and 2.5km of habitat creation to support wading birds. We further improved access at Hatchmere Nature Reserve and held regular work parties across our sites to manage scrub encroachment and to control invasive species. We agreed a management contract with Royal Liverpool Golf Club to secure the future of Red Rocks Marsh and continued the restoration of Saltersford Farm using Biodiversity Net Gain contributions.

Outcome: Declining species are recovering

The completion of the RiverThrive project has seen the creation and restoration of approximately 121ha of wetland habitat along the River Gowy to benefit water voles and European eels, including the creation of 40 ponds, eight scrapes, 2ha of reedbed, 5.3km of new buffer strips and 3.5km of new ditches.

Through the Southwest Peak Curlew Recovery Partnership we continue to engage citizen scientists to monitor wader nests across the Peak District and create farm wader plans with landowners. New scrapes have been created and are already attracting breeding waders, which helps support the long-term recovery of this threatened species.

A reptile recovery strategy has been created across the Sandstone Ridge and Delamere Living Landscape, which will inform future species recovery programmes across the landscape.

Research is underway to understand coastal change in the Dee Estuary and model future habitat change, which potentially impacts on the natterjack toad population.

Our beavers at the Hatchmere enclosure continued to attract interest across Cheshire, with over 500 people attending guided visits.

Outcome: 30% of land is protected for nature

During the year a process arising from the Environment Act 2021 to produce Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) was the focus of our work towards this outcome. In collaboration with RECORD, the local biological records centre for the Cheshire region, we successfully tendered for and then led the creation of a new landcover map for Cheshire and Warrington. This included modelling habitat

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connectivity and identifying potential areas for restoration and creation so that future action by a wide range of stakeholders can focus their efforts to achieve the greatest impact for nature.

The project involved digital mapping of habitat data from 15 years of Local Wildlife Site surveys, gathering data from a wide range of sources and extensive consultations with stakeholders on the methodologies to map the priority measures. This project also enabled a review of the state of nature in Cheshire and the creation of an up-to-date description of the region's wildlife and how and why it has changed over the last 80 years. We also fed into the Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester LNRs. These strategies will be published in 2025.

We made it easier for the public to respond to planning applications affecting nature by reviewing and updating the resources on our website. We supported communities in protecting habitats by producing environmental reports or maps for Weston, Basford and Crewe Green and Churton Neighbourhood Plans in alignment with new planning policies. We co-led 6 training courses through Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) for Local Authority decision makers, ecologists and practitioners and gave talks to parish councils and community groups on planning related matters.

Over the year we provided management advice for 16 Local Wildlife Sites, ranging from tree planting queries and reviewing management plans to full survey/advice visits. We also carried out data audits to ensure that accurate information relating to Local Wildlife Sites was available to local partnerships.

We influenced 14 major planning proposals (covering 96ha of land), including large infrastructure projects such as HyNet, to ensure nature doesn't lose out. We convened a group of eNGOs to align our advocacy and formal responses to the Mersey Barrage proposals and raise awareness of potential risks to wildlife posed by the proposals.

We participated in the planning inquiry for Longridge Local Wildlife Site (an appeal by a developer to build 225 houses on protected habitat). This involved giving evidence over a five-day period and being cross-examined by a King's Counsel barrister.

We continued to work with RSWT and Countryside Link, and met with Defra to highlight our concerns about the new BNG metric, and we fed into the consultation response for the new National Planning Policy Framework.

Our plans for April 2025–March 2026:

- Transform 140 spaces for wildlife.
- Directly improve the management of a further 1,000ha for wildlife.
- Influence the management of 2,000ha through advice, support and other enabling activities.
- Ensure our nature reserves remain well managed and provide refuge to declining species.
- Increase the area of land under our direct control.
- Develop a species recovery plan for the water vole to prevent local extinction.
- Influence local plans and policies to ensure they deliver the best outcomes for nature.
- Take forward landscape-scale restoration projects in the Gowy catchment, Sandstone Ridge and Cheshire Peak District areas.

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We are in crisis

In the year ended 31 March 2025, our communications and engagement programmes reached 248,024 people and inspired 22,598 actions for nature.

Outcome: People in Cheshire are more connected to nature

We engaged nearly 2,000 school children through learning sessions on nature reserves and other sites. We delivered 15 teacher training sessions to develop the skills of more than 50 teachers. Topics included confidence in teaching outdoors, adapting your curriculum for the outdoors and leading beach learning confidently.

Through the Our Dee Estuary project, we delivered 81 events which engaged 1,593 new people. These included geology walks and wildlife talks, coastal wellbeing sessions and National Marine Week celebration events.

Our teacher training events and outreach to schools saw the membership of the Wilder Education Network grow to 131 teachers.

A Young Rangers Day was delivered in collaboration with the Rangers at Wirral Country Park. Students from four schools and colleges were given an insight into green skills and green careers. The day involved practical surveying techniques in water quality sampling, shore searches and moth trapping. In partnership with Scottish Power, we worked with Chester University to support the installation of three Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) Pods on campuses. We delivered an interactive workshop with 25 geography students on the value of SUDS in tackling the sewage crisis.

Outcome: More people are aware of the nature and climate crisis and what they can do to help

Our social media followers grew to over 39,316, and 205,000 people visited our website. Our social media content engaged people well, with high levels of sharing and commenting. Our Facebook and Instagram engagement rates were consistently well above the average for the charity sector.

Our weekly Wild Cheshire e-newsletter was opened and read by an average of 9,000 people every Wednesday.

We engaged more than 5,000 people at events which included Operation Summer in Crewe, RHS Flower Show Tatton Park and Chester Zoo's Wildlife Connections Festival. We also welcomed people to a wide range of our own events and activities, including Nature Break sessions for businesses, shore searches for families and Our Dee Estuary clean water information stands and dog pit stops.

Outcome: Everyone has access to urban wild space

Our Green Shoots project, in its final year of delivery, continued to advance the community organising approach to increasing access to nature in Crewe and surrounding areas, including Nantwich, Shavington and Haslington. In total, 383 volunteers have been involved, and at least 3,473 people have benefited from the project in the surrounding geographic areas; 11,000m² of new green spaces across 13 different areas were created, and 33 spaces improved. These included a mix of meadow

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creations, orchard planting, hedgerow planting, pond creation and wildflower patches. Three local schools also benefited through creation of new wildlife habitats within their school grounds. The National Education Nature Park project delivered school grounds improvement works at a further three schools.

We worked with community and volunteer groups including Wilmslow Allotments, Jodrell Bank and Knutsford Heath to manage meadows, create ponds and help maintain local wildlife areas.

Outcome: A network of champions & warriors are empowered to take action for nature

A total of 17,619 people acted for nature through their continued membership of Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

The number of active members of our Wild Network (a support group for those taking action for nature) grew to 545. To help develop the capacity of groups and individuals to take action, we ran a series of training and networking events including winter webinars, networking meetings focused on swifts and orchards, and an Action for Nature event at Birkenhead Park. We inspired more action for nature by publishing stories from the Wild Network on our website, through the Facebook group and in our quarterly Wild Network e-newsletter.

We hosted two site visits for members of the Cheshire East Economy and Growth Committee. The first was to Danes Moss and was attended by the Deputy Leader of Cheshire East Council as well as four other committee members. The visit was to encourage the councillors voting on the continuation of the Danes Moss North development to recognise the value of the site. We also ran an additional visit for the Leader of the Opposition and a second councillor to see the work we were doing in Crewe.

We piloted our Campaigner Academy training designed to empower individuals to run their own campaigns. Ten people attended six sessions on the skills needed to plan, run and promote a campaign and reported increased confidence levels at the end of the course. We shared our resources and findings with other Wildlife Trusts so that the approach can be rolled out nationally.

We campaigned to highlight the nature crisis in the run up to the General Election, albeit cut short by the snap timing. We had 320 people engage with us directly through action such as lobbying parliamentary candidates and we supported several nature-focused candidate hustings including a Wirral Wildlife and Wirral Environment Network husting and a nature-themed question time at Chester Zoo. Sixty supporters from Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Lancashire Wildlife Trust took part in the London Restore Nature Now march prior to the General Election. We marched alongside 60,000 people and many fellow NGOs to demand that the next Government prioritise nature restoration.

We met with four standing MPs and a parliamentary candidate (who was narrowly defeated) who expressed a keen interest in supporting our mission, with MPs submitting questions to Defra relating to beaver licensing and to the Department of Local Government and Housing in relation to the campaign against development of and greater protection for Local Wildlife Sites such as the one at Longridge.

We launched Phase 1 of our campaign against a Mersey tidal barrage, in which over 900 people signed up to send letters of concern to their local councillor. The purpose of the action was to raise awareness

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amongst the public and local politicians of the importance of the estuary for wildlife and the potential impact of the proposal.

Our plans for April 2025–March 2026:

- Reach at least 250,000 people through our communications, events and outreach visits.
- Mobilise and support at least 23,000 people to take action for nature.
- Develop trusted relationships with MPs and other decision makers.
- Continue to input into the Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Further grow and support our Wild Network to inspire more actions for nature.
- Grow our network of educators and schools to increase nature in the curriculum.
- Campaign against development and policies that harm nature in Cheshire.

We are effective and resilient

Below is a summary of our programme to ensure that CWT has the financial resources it needs, is well run and has a high-performing and valued staff and volunteer team.

Outcome: CWT is financially sustainable

Our total income increased by 22% from £3.5m in FY24 to £4.3m in FY25 and we returned an overall surplus of £636,919. The large surplus is attributable to a generous legacy received of £599,970 from David Aldred. This gift is restricted for the purchase of land and will be used in FY26 for this purpose. Our underlying surplus for CWT's regular operations was £36,949 and therefore this is the ninth successive year in which the Trust has managed its expenditure within budgetary limits.

Earned income remained similar to the previous year at £1.2m. During the year we continued to secure new contracts for habitat creation, species reintroduction and land management advice.

Income from grants grew by 12% from £1.6m to £1.8m, secured from a range of sources including Defra (e.g. Trees for Climate), Natural England (e.g. Species Recovery Programme), Environment Agency (Natural Flood Management Programme), National Lottery Heritage Fund and several charitable trusts. Grant funding enabled the continuation of existing engagement activities together with the completion of our RiverThrive project.

Income from subscriptions, legacies and appeals stood at £1.3m (2024: £715k), an increase from the previous year due to the legacy mentioned above. Our supporters gave £50k in donations to our meadows appeal and other ongoing appeals. The total number of members saw a small increase, which, given cost of living pressures, indicated a continued commitment to nature's recovery.

The Trust's cash increased from £1.6m to £2.1m, of which nearly half is designated or restricted for specific purposes. The Trust has increased its unrestricted financial reserves and therefore its overall financial resilience has improved. Cash held for future use is invested in fixed term deposit accounts to maximise risk-free investment potential. These investments generated £46k in interest which was used to support charitable activities.

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Outcome: CWT is well governed and an effective member of the Wildlife Trust federation

A successful round of Trustee recruitment saw four new Trustees co-opted and then elected at the AGM.

We continued to improve benefits for staff including externally benchmarking salaries and aligning staff benefits with those across the Wildlife Trust federation.

Policies and procedures relating to health & safety and safeguarding were kept up to date.

A mid-term review of our 2030 strategy was completed in November 2024 which was used to inform a reorganisation of our team structure in early 2025. The strategy, for which a public facing version will be released in due course, reflects on the current state of nature in Cheshire and identifies the most impactful actions that CWT can focus on over the next five years, recognising that difficult choices need to be made to align with available resources.

CWT continued to play its full part in the federation. The CEO and Chair took part in national conferences and working groups on a range of strategic topics.

CWT continued to work closely with North Wales Wildlife Trust to deliver the final year of the Our Dee Estuary project and with Cumbria and Lancashire Wildlife Trusts to campaign for better protection of the Irish Sea.

We provided training and advice to other Wildlife Trusts on biodiversity net gain. We continued to work closely with Lancashire Wildlife Trust to align input into the Liverpool and Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategies and major infrastructure campaigns.

We supported the RSWT campaign against neonics for the fifth year running. After a change of Government, we finally got the long-needed ban on the emergency authorisation that had become routine under previous administrations.

Our plans for April 2025–March 2026:

- Further grow our resources and ensure that we remain financially sustainable.
- Update our public facing strategy document.
- Create a five-year work plan to scale up our impact and ensure that our team are motivated by and focused on clear goals.
- Focus on maintaining employee engagement, wellbeing and development.
- Aim to further diversify our Board of Trustees by recruiting at least two more Trustees.
- Continue to contribute to the progression of the Wildlife Trust federation through working groups and partnerships.
- Further strengthen the Trust's balance sheet through prudent investment in land.
- Ensure that our governance remains effective and fit for purpose.

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Financial review

Review of the year

Cheshire Wildlife Trust's overall financial position improved. The proportion of income from grants and restricted gifts increased relative to voluntary income with unrestricted income for the year of £1.9m (FY24: £2.4m) and restricted income £2.4m (FY24: £1.2m).

Expenditure for the year totalled £3.7m (FY24: £3.4m).

Principal funding sources

Almost half of our income in the year came from grants. The largest source of unrestricted income remains contracts and earned income, although membership subscriptions continue to provide a major part of the Trust's ongoing unrestricted funding. The main sources of funding for the charity were:

Grants	41.7%
Contracts and earned income	26.9%
Donations and legacies	15.9%
Membership subscriptions (including gift aid)	12.6%
Appeals and sponsorships	1.1%
Other income	1.1%
Fundraising	0.6%

Generating funds

Approximately 30% of our financial support came from individuals, with trust membership being crucial as the foundation for other fundraising. As of March 31, we had 17,619 members, who provide essential funding and a collective voice for wildlife advocacy. Legacy income increased significantly to 15.9% (2.5% in FY24) due to a large, restricted gift. We also seek lasting support from institutional bodies, corporate members, grant funders and charitable trusts. Significant income is generated through land management, ecological advice and education services. Volunteers, integral since our founding in 1962, are central to our operations, contributing to conservation, field surveys, and office and education support, making our work possible.

Financial reserves

Total funds	£2,092,646
Less restricted	£831,972
Less designated	£288,418
Unrestricted funds	<u>£972,256</u>
Unrestricted cash and investments	<u>£1,335,423</u>

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The Council has examined the Trust's requirements for financial reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation to:

- provide sufficient cash liquidity for operational effectiveness of the Trust, and
- protect the continuity of the work undertaken by the Trust.

The Trust has targeted a level of unrestricted cash and investments of four months' expenditure by the Trust (excluding that on grant-funded projects). At March 2025 the Trust had cash reserves (excluding cash earmarked for land purchase) which are sufficient to cover six months' unrestricted expenditure. The Trust is looking to increase this cover to safeguard both the operational and financial sustainability of the Trust as the organisation grows.

Investment policy

Any surplus cash, over and above the amount required to support one month's working capital requirement, is held in fixed term deposit accounts at competitive rates.

Risk management

The Chief Executive maintains a strategic risk register which is regularly reviewed by Council. The Trustees and Senior Leadership Team, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, work to both minimise and mitigate strategic risks.

The top three strategic risks in the year ending 31 March 2025 were:

- The effect of wage inflation and taxation on the Trust's finances.
- Continued decline of the UK's natural environment combined with insufficient societal and political support for our cause.
- The impact of changes to policies, regulations and funding for protecting and restoring the natural environment proposed by the current government.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited (CWT) is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such has no share capital. It was incorporated on 24 October 1962 and registered as a charity on 20 February 1963. The company is governed by its charitable objects and articles of associations (reviewed 2020).

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The Trustees, elected by members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), are known as Council Members and registered as Directors with Companies House and charity trustees with the Charity Commission.

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They serve three-year terms, renewable up to three consecutive terms. Co-opted Council Members must retire at the next AGM but may stand for re-election.

The Council aims for a diverse skill set from various sectors, including public, private and voluntary, with expertise in policy, strategy, finance and legal matters.

Council Members are unpaid, except for travel and incidental expenses, which were not claimed during the period. No financial transactions occurred with Trustees or connected persons during the period.

Council Members induction and training

All Council Members are inducted so they become familiar with the Trust's governance arrangements, sites, projects and staff.

Council Members are signposted to relevant reference material, including the Trust's Articles of Association, the Charity Commission booklet CC3 'The Essential Trustee', the Companies House 'Incorporation and Names' booklet (GP1), the Companies House 'Hallmarks of an Effective Charity' booklet (CC10) and the Health and Safety Executive booklet 'Leading Health & Safety at Work', and 'Good Governance: a practical guide for trustees, chairs and CEOs' by Dorothy Dalton.

Organisational structure

The Council sets the strategic direction and policy of the charity and appoints the Chief Executive, who attends but does not vote in Council meetings.

The Council meets six times a year and uses committees and working groups for detailed scrutiny and support. Key committees include Finance, Audit, Risk & Resources, Governance & Nominations, and Health & Safety. Each group is chaired by a Council Member and includes up to five Trustees and senior staff.

The Council agrees on strategy, work plans and budget, delegating daily operations to the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team.

Remuneration decisions involve the Chair and Trustees, informed by benchmarking data.

Relationship with the charity and related parties including its subsidiary

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited is the sole shareholder in a dormant (since April 2021) company, Cheshire Ecological Services Limited (CES) (Company No: 2623356).

As part of the Wildlife Trusts federation (Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, registered charity number 207238), CWT benefits from centrally led advocacy, campaigning, shared services and fundraising. Members use the Wildlife Trusts logo and benefit from the resources, best practice and specialist experience of other member Trusts. Membership gives the charity a national voice and profile, as well as respectability by association for those unfamiliar with its particular work. However, each member of the federation remains entirely independent in terms of governance.

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Statement of the Board's responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

Each Director has confirmed that they have taken all reasonable steps to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to the auditor. The members of the Board who were in office on the date of approval of these financial statements have confirmed, as far as they are aware, that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

Auditors

In accordance with the Trust's policy on auditor rotation, a resolution to appoint Saffery LLP as auditor for the year ended 31 March 2026 will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective 1 January 2019).

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Report of the Members of the Board, which includes the Strategic Report on pages 7–13, was approved by the Board on 29 September and signed on their behalf:



Bill Stothart
Chair of Council

29 September 2025

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members and Trustees of The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flow, and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2022.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members and Trustees of The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of Cheshire Wildlife Trust and its subsidiary, and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and sufficient accounting records have not been kept by the company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members and Trustees of The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees (who are also the Directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the sector, control environment and Trust performance;
- the Trust's own assessment of the risks that irregularities may occur either as a result of fraud or error;
- the results of our enquiries of management and members of the Board of Trustees of their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the Trust's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members and Trustees of The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited

- identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the company for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: (i) the recognition of revenue, (ii) the allocation of income and expenditure between restricted and unrestricted funds. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the Trust operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2022, and Health and Safety legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the Trust's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These included Data Protection Regulations.

Audit response to risks identified

As a result of performing the above, we identified the recognition of revenue and the allocation of income and expenditure between restricted and unrestricted funds as the key audit matters related to the potential risk of fraud.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations described above as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management and members of the Board of Trustees concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with relevant authorities where matters identified were significant; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments;
- assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members and Trustees of The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited

- evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and its Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

3rd Floor
44 Peter Street
Manchester
M2 5GP



29 September 2025

Jamielee Johnston (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited
Statutory Auditor

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Statement of Financial Activities

Year ended March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2025	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income							
Donations and legacies	2	629,408	651,054	1,280,462	680,267	35,104	715,371
Charitable activities	3	1,186,344	1,801,564	2,987,908	1,680,859	1,124,453	2,805,312
Investments	4	45,488		45,488	18,672		18,672
TOTAL		1,861,240	2,452,618	4,313,858	2,379,798	1,159,557	3,539,355
Expenditure							
Raising funds	5	273,343	104,551	377,894	308,224	80,461	388,685
Charitable activities	6	1,608,410	1,690,635	3,299,045	1,923,535	1,143,261	3,066,796
TOTAL		1,881,753	1,795,186	3,676,939	2,231,759	1,223,722	3,455,481
Net income/(expenditure)		(20,513)	657,432	636,919	148,039	(64,165)	83,874
Transfers between funds		200,445	(200,445)	-	305,688	(305,688)	-
Net movement in funds		179,932	456,987	636,919	453,727	(369,853)	83,874
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		1,080,742	374,985	1,455,727	627,015	744,838	1,371,853
Total funds carried forward		1,260,674	831,972	2,092,646	1,080,742	374,985	1,455,727

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Balance Sheet

Year ended 31 March 2025

		Year ended 31 March 2025		Year ended 31 March 2024	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	12	833,676		592,144	
Heritage assets	12	316,046		316,046	
Total tangible assets		1,149,722		908,190	
Investments	13	100		100	
Total fixed assets		1,149,822		908,290	
Current assets					
Stock	14	3,142		3,415	
Debtors	15	910,959		814,781	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,072,687		1,579,048	
Total current assets		2,986,788		2,397,244	
Liabilities					
Amounts falling due within one year	17	(2,043,964)		(1,849,807)	
Net current asset		942,824		547,437	
Liabilities falling due in more than one year	18	-		-	
Total net assets		2,092,646		1,455,727	
The funds of the charity					
Unrestricted funds	20	1,260,674		1,080,742	
Restricted income funds	20	831,972		374,985	
Total funds		2,092,646		1,455,727	

The notes on pages 27 to 43 form part of these financial statements.

Signed:

Bill Stothart

Bill Stothart

29 September 2025

Signed:

Jamie Richards

JPR

29 September 2025

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Statement of Cash Flow Year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	23	788,949		(7,252)	
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment		540		2,800	
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(295,850)		(43,129)	
Net cash (used in) investing activities		<u>(295,310)</u>		<u>(40,329)</u>	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			<u>493,639</u>		<u>(47,581)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period			1,579,048		1,626,629
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period			<u>2,072,687</u>		<u>1,579,048</u>

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies

1.1 General information

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited is a charity incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales. The registered office is Bickley Hall Farm, Bickley, Malpas, Cheshire, SY14 8EF.

1.2 Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019). The figures in the accounts are rounded to the nearest £ and the presentational currency is sterling.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical costs or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

1.3 Fund accounting

1.3.1 Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

1.3.2 Restricted income funds

These funds are given to the Trust for a particular purpose to be used in accordance with the wishes of the donor.

1.3.3 Designated funds – projects

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for specific projects. These projects may only be partly funded with the unfunded element set aside from general funds.

1.4 Incoming resources

The Trust was formed in 1962 by volunteers and continues to benefit from their support in both financial and non-financial ways. Examples of financial support include membership income, donations and legacies. These contributions are included in the accounts within voluntary income.

Voluntary income is received by way of donations, gifts, subscriptions and fundraising activities. The income is credited to the SOFA on the earlier of receipt or when the receipt is probable, the value can be ascertained, and the Trust gets the legal right to the income. Tax refunds on gift aid income are, however, accrued as earned.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

Legacy income is included in the accounts when the amount due can be quantified with reasonable probability and the timing of the receipt is known.

Grants receivable which are not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant. These are recognised as 'Income from donation and legacies'.

Grants receivable that relate to the delivery of a specific performance by the charity are recognised when the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. A number of these grants are retrospective and where these are outstanding at the year end for work completed, they are accrued. These are recognised as 'Income from charitable activities'.

All grants receivable are charged to the SOFA in the period to which they relate.

1.5 Resources expended

All expenditure, other than that which is capitalised, is included in the SOFA, recognised on an accruals basis as a liability when incurred.

Charitable activities consist of the costs incurred in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity.

Costs of raising funds consists of expenditure associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of fundraising and maintaining memberships.

Support costs relate to expenditure incurred in support of the charitable objects of the charity. These include the provision of premises, personnel, information technology, insurances and audit fees and have been allocated on the basis of direct staff wage costs.

Many of our volunteers provide non-financial support covering a wide range of activities from acting as Trustees to assisting in conservation activities including surveying, as well as providing administrative support. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Capital purchases are included in the accounts at cost. Capital purchases of less than £250 are expensed.

1.6 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is partially exempt. Irrecoverable VAT is allocated to the appropriate cost categories.

1.7 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. As such the Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

1.8 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset, except for land, over its estimated useful life:

Plant and machinery – 25% per annum reducing balance

Fixtures and fittings – 25% per annum reducing balance

Motor vehicles – 25% per annum reducing balance

Computer equipment – 33% per annum straight line basis

No depreciation is provided on freehold land.

Capitalised expenditure on leasehold improvements is depreciated over the remainder of the lease period.

1.9 Heritage assets

Heritage assets are nature reserves, capitalised at the date of addition. Any assets donated, where the cost is unknown, are capitalised at fair value at the date of addition. Further details are disclosed within Note 12 to the accounts.

1.10 Stock and work in progress

General stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, where cost comprises purchase price.

1.11 Deferred income

Restricted funds received for projects which are substantially incomplete or not commenced at year end are recognised in the year in which they are received and carried forward in the balance of restricted funds. The restricted funds are reduced each year by an amount equal to any expenditure on such projects which have been incurred in the year.

1.12 Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. Contributions payable are included in the SOFA in the year they are payable.

1.13 Finance and operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA over the period in which the cost is incurred. The Trust has no finance leases.

1.14 Provisions

A provision is recognised when the Trust has a legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events and it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation.

1.15 Taxation

The Trust is a registered charity and is not liable to United Kingdom income tax or corporation tax on charitable activities.

1.16 Material uncertainties/judgements

There were no material uncertainties or judgements contained within the presented figures.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

1.17 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand and deposits held at call with banks.

1.18 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the company transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans, are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations & legacies	86,283	601,520	687,803	87,848	310	88,158
Subscriptions	543,125	-	543,125	532,854	-	532,854
Appeal income	-	49,534	49,534	59,565	34,794	94,359
	629,408	651,054	1,280,462	680,267	35,104	715,371

3 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising	26,379	-	26,379	35,361	40	35,401
Grants	-	1,799,564	1,799,564	481,209	1,124,413	1,605,622
Earned income	1,159,965	2,000	1,161,965	1,164,289	-	1,164,289
	1,186,344	1,801,564	2,987,908	1,680,859	1,124,453	2,805,312

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts
Year ended 31 March 2025

4 Investment income

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Interest received	45,488	-	45,488	18,672	-	18,672
	45,488	-	45,488	18,672	-	18,672

5 Expenditure on raising funds

	Donations & legacies	Fundraising	Total 2025	Donations & legacies	Fundraising	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	4,890	202,038	206,928	7,642	216,191	223,833
Membership costs	-	51,044	51,044	-	55,094	55,094
Other direct costs	5,067	46,898	51,965	187	39,626	39,813
Support costs (Note 7)	1,606	66,351	67,957	2,388	67,557	69,945
	11,563	366,331	377,894	10,217	378,468	388,685

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Conservation & reserves management	Community engagement	Total 2025	Conservation & reserves management	Community engagement	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	943,741	551,030	1,494,771	835,308	562,976	1,398,284
Reserves costs	942,986	95,738	1,038,724	935,189	54,636	989,825
Motor & travel	34,816	18,471	53,287	27,684	16,534	44,218
Professional fees	3,274	-	3,274	13,248	2,293	15,541
Sundries	141,800	33,208	175,008	126,789	26,975	153,764
Depreciation	34,687	8,396	43,083	26,569	9,651	36,220
Support costs (Note 7)	309,934	180,964	490,898	256,243	172,701	428,944
	2,411,238	887,807	3,299,045	2,221,030	845,766	3,066,796

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

7 Support costs

	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£
Training	6,384	11,666
Insurance	37,199	30,716
Light & heat	7,260	9,955
Repairs & maintenance	35,287	16,131
Legal & professional	30,055	25,444
Staff & volunteer expenses	7,911	4,419
Motor expenses	1,916	718
Telecoms	10,240	7,101
Post & stationery	3,292	2,903
Sundry expenses	10,082	7,824
RSWT contribution	24,274	24,160
Bank charges	1,486	1,910
Depreciation	7,647	6,615
Admin salaries	275,446	246,104
Audit fees	8,240	8,100
Computer expenses	26,596	27,359
Premises costs	60,855	63,140
Recruitment	1,350	500
Irrecoverable VAT	3,335	14,124
Doubtful debts		(10,000)
	558,855	498,889

Allocation of support costs

	2025	2024
	£	£
Raising funds	67,957	69,945
Charitable activities	490,898	428,944
	558,855	498,889

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

8 Net movement in funds

The net movement in funds is after charging/(crediting):

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Auditor's remuneration		8,240	8,100
Operating lease payments		1,812	1,812
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets		2,058	(904)
Depreciation	12	51,721	43,592

9 Staff costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages & salaries	1,642,877	1,553,970
Social security costs	143,790	133,040
Pension costs	190,478	181,211
	<u>1,977,145</u>	<u>1,868,221</u>

The average number of full-time equivalent employees, analysed by function, was:

	2025	2024
Charitable activities	40	39
Generating funds	8	10
Management & administration	6	6
	<u>54</u>	<u>55</u>

One employee received total employment benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of between £60,000 and £70,000 during the year (2024: one employee).

Total remuneration (excluding employer pension costs) paid to key personnel during the year totalled £205,322 (2024: £194,200).

10 Pension costs

The trust operates a defined contributions pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the trust in the independently administered fund. The pension costs charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £190,478 (2024: £181,211).

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

11 Related party transactions

No Trustee or any person connected with the trust received any remuneration from the trust during the year (2024: £nil).

During the year Trustees were reimbursed travel expenses of £nil (2024: £nil).

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts
Year ended 31 March 2025

12 Tangible assets

	Heritage assets £	Land & buildings £	Plant & machinery £	Fixtures & fittings £	Motor vehicles £	Computer equipment £	SFP entitlement £	Total £
Cost or donated value								
01 April 2024	316,046	581,379	144,952	42,553	114,554	99,467	10,258	1,309,209
Additions	-	209,445	55,178	2,636	9,890	18,701	-	295,850
Disposals	-	-	(3,100)	(19,941)	(7,000)	(35,890)	-	(65,931)
At 31 March 2025	316,046	790,824	197,030	25,248	117,444	82,278	10,258	1,539,128
Depreciation								
01 April 2024	-	113,684	99,656	33,205	62,715	81,501	10,258	401,019
Charge for the year	-	-	19,681	2,158	15,389	14,493	-	51,721
Disposals	-	-	(2,497)	(19,260)	(5,687)	(35,890)	-	(63,334)
At 31 March 2025	-	113,684	116,840	16,103	72,417	60,104	10,258	389,406
Net book value								
At 31 March 2025	316,046	677,140	80,190	9,145	45,027	22,174	-	1,149,722
At 31 March 2024	316,046	467,695	45,296	9,348	51,839	17,966	-	908,190

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

Heritage assets

The focus of the Trust is the protection and enhancement of wildlife habitats and biodiversity within Cheshire. As such the Trust owns and maintains a number of nature reserves that fall within the definition of heritage assets in accordance with FRS 102.

The Trustees consider that, owing to the intrinsic nature of the Trust's reserves, conventional valuation approaches lack sufficient reliability and that, even if valuations could be obtained, the costs would be onerous compared with the additional benefits derived by the Trust and the users of the accounts. As a result, these assets have been capitalised at cost and, being land, have not been depreciated.

Nature reserves acquired by gift are not capitalised unless a reliable enough reference value of the deemed cost of the asset is available without undue expense to the Trust.

The costs of maintaining heritage assets are expensed through the Statement of Financial Activities when incurred as part of the Trust's charitable activities.

There have been no transactions or movement in the heritage assets in the last five years.

Capital commitments

At 31 March 2025, the Trust had a capital commitment of £nil (2024: £209,445).

13 Investments

Cheshire Wildlife Trust Limited owns the entire share capital (1 ordinary share of £100) in its subsidiary, Cheshire Ecological Services Limited, which is incorporated in England and Wales.

The subsidiary was dormant for the full financial year and as such the financial statements presented for the Trust have not been consolidated as they are immaterial to the understanding of the results of the Trust.

The net assets of Cheshire Ecological Services Ltd are £100.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

14 Stock

	2025	2024
	£	£
Stock	3,142	3,415
	<u>3,142</u>	<u>3,415</u>

15 Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	597,570	267,108
Prepayments and accrued income	313,389	338,228
Other debtors		209,445
	<u>910,959</u>	<u>814,781</u>

Trade debtors is stated net of a provision of £8,078 (2024: £8,078)

16 Taxation

The company is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

17 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	144,137	284,473
Deferred income	1,457,992	1,224,246
Taxation & social security	75,099	87,273
Accruals	366,736	253,815
	<u>2,043,964</u>	<u>1,849,807</u>

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

18 Commitments under operating leases

At 31 March 2025, the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Land & buildings		
Within one year	67,556	67,556
Two to five years	67,556	-
Greater than five years	-	-
Total	135,112	67,556
Other		
Within one year	1,812	1,812
Two to five years	585	2,397
Greater than five years	-	-
Total	2,397	4,209

19 Analysis of restricted funds

Restricted funds represent monies (including donations and grants) which have been received for specific purposes as outlined by the donor. The Trust has a number of such funds and for the purposes of statutory reporting these have been grouped together under the four headings below.

Transfers out of restricted funds are made where a project is completed and no funding is required to be returned to the funder. Transfers into funds are made when a project is completed and the shortfall in funding is made up from the Trust's general funds.

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

	As at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	As at 31 March 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	As at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted income funds									
Capital grants	133,450		(6,787)	(133,578)	(6,915)	599,970			593,055
Community engagement funds	170,352	286,552	(184,482)	(44,886)	227,536	364,605	(161,765)		430,376
Conservation & reserves	441,036	873,005	(1,032,453)	(127,224)	154,364	1,268,617	(1,398,574)	(200,445)	(176,038)
Natural England SRP						219,426	(234,847)		(15,421)
	744,838	1,159,557	(1,223,722)	(305,688)	374,985	2,452,618	(1,795,186)	(200,445)	831,972

Capital grants represent grants received to fund capital purchases including land for habitat creation.
Community engagement funds and conservation & reserves funds represent grants received to carry out the Trust's charitable activities.

Funding has been granted by a variety of organisations including:

- William Dean Trust
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Defra
- Severn Trent WaterEnvironment Agency
- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West & Chester Council
- Biffa Award
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Westminster Foundation
- Natural England
- Scottish Power Foundation

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31 March 2025

Unrestricted funds	As at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	As at 31 March 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	As at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General fund	465,821	2,379,798	(2,231,759)	178,464	792,324	1,861,240	(1,881,753)	245,489	1,017,300
Designated fund	161,194	-	-	127,224	288,418			(45,044)	243,374
	627,015	2,379,798	(2,231,759)	305,688	1,080,742	1,861,240	(1,881,753)	200,445	1,260,674

THE CHESHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST LIMITED

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025 Total
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	570,054	263,622	833,676
Heritage assets	57,362	258,684	316,046
Stock and work in progress	3,142	-	3,142
Investments	100	-	100
Debtors	613,912	297,047	910,959
Cash at bank and in hand	1,335,421	737,266	2,072,687
Liabilities	(1,319,317)	(724,647)	(2,043,964)
Total net assets	<u>1,260,674</u>	<u>831,972</u>	<u>2,092,646</u>

21 Share capital

The charity has no share capital being a company limited by guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £2 per member in the event of a winding up situation.

22 Control

The charity is controlled by the Trustees.

23 Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	636,919	83,874
Depreciation	51,721	43,592
(Profit)/Loss on the sale of fixed assets	2,057	(904)
Decrease in stock	273	1,264
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(96,178)	102,339
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	194,157	(237,417)
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activity	<u>788,949</u>	<u>(7,252)</u>

	As at 1 April 2023 £	Movement in year £	As at 31 March 2024 £	Movement in year £	As at 31 March 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	1,626,629	(47,581)	1,579,048	493,639	2,072,687