Dear Prospective Parliamentary Candidate

The General Election on 12th December is a crucial moment for wildlife.

We are all witnesses to the current, unprecedented declines in nature. Demand for leadership and action to halt this catastrophe has never been greater.

A recent YouGov poll showed that two-thirds of people agree that the environment and climate emergency is the biggest issue facing humankind. It also showed its importance at this election, with 54% of people saying it would influence how they voted.

A healthy environment and flourishing nature is not a luxury. We are utterly dependent on nature for our wellbeing and prosperity. Along with climate change, nature’s recovery is one of the biggest issues at this General Election because it underpins all others.

As a supporter of Devon Wildlife Trust, I would strongly urge your Party to commit to these ambitious measures that will help wildlife’s recovery:

1. **ambitious new environmental laws which puts nature’s recovery at the heart of Government, with legally binding targets and a Nature Recovery Network to create and restore habitats.** In Devon’s uplands less than one fifth of protected sites are in good condition. Of our locally designated sites, only a third are in good condition and areas are damaged and destroyed each year.
2. **sustainable new policies which reward farmers and land managers for providing public goods such as healthy soils, clean water, wildlife recovery and natural climate change mitigation**. 75% of Devon is farmedbut soil erosion and degradation is a problem across much of the county. This is one of the reasons why less than one fifth of Devon’s rivers are in good condition.
3. **a new Marine Strategy, ensuring our fisheries are managed sustainably, giving strong protection to our Marine Protected Area and a suite of Highly Protected Marine Areas.** Close to the coast ofDevon a1,000 square kilometre site in Lyme Bay is of international importance for whales and dolphins to breed and feed. Yet it remains unprotected.  We desperately need to secure the future of such areas if these charismatic creatures are to continue thriving around our shores.
4. **action for climate change.** We require commitment and action nowto achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030. All Devon’s local authorities have signed up to the climate emergency and committed to ambitious carbon reduction targets. They will need strong support from central government if they are to achieve their ambitions.

I would be interested to hear what your Party’s views are on these crucial topics. Please also tell me how the policies outlined in your Party’s manifesto address the environmental crisis which will shape the future of wildlife and us all.

Yours sincerely,