

# Devon Wildlife Trust's income and spend in 2019-20

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters and the great work undertaken by the charity, 2019-20 saw another strong financial performance for Devon Wildlife Trust.

We secured income of £5,406,904 against expenditure of £4,369,391. This gave us a surplus for the year of £1,037,513 enabling us to grow our strategic reserves – funds that we will use over this Strategic Plan period to support key Trust objectives and ensure that we can thrive into the future. Gifts in Wills from generous individuals have played a key role in building our financial resilience in 2019-20.

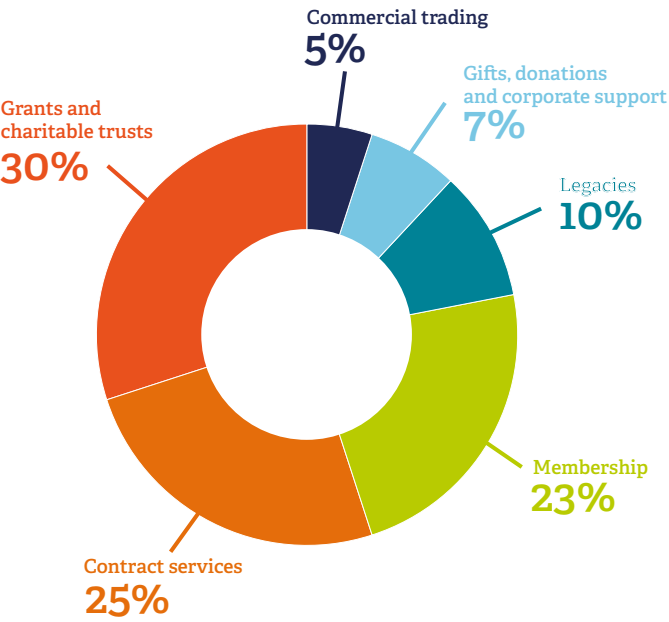
Once again, the vast majority - 87% - of our spending was on the delivery of charitable activity. We spent 5% on governance and resources and 8% on commercial trading. At DWT we always work with effectiveness and efficiency at the forefront of our minds and everyone at DWT - whether delivering direct conservation activity or supporting the organisation behind the scenes - is committed to our cause and goes the extra mile for Devon's wildlife. Every penny we spend at DWT supports our mission.

As always, we must thank the many individuals, grant giving bodies, trusts and businesses who continue to support our work. With Covid-19 presenting real practical and financial challenges for us, at a time when the work we do is more urgent than ever, we simply couldn't do it without you.

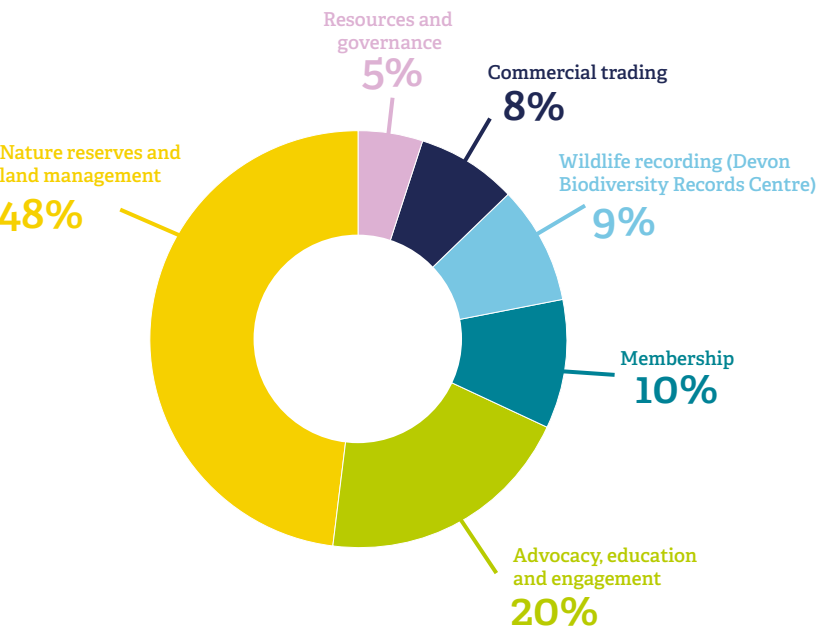
Please see our full Annual Report and Accounts on our website for more details. If you want to support us and get involved in our work, please do not hesitate to get in touch.



**Penny Mason**  
Director of Resources and Marketing



Devon Wildlife Trust's income in 2019-20  
**Total £5,406,904**



Devon Wildlife Trust's expenditure in 2019-20  
**Total £4,369,391**



My name is Matt Boydell. Together with my dedicated team I look after Devon Wildlife Trust's 58 nature reserves. It's a huge challenge to sustain these places as havens for wildlife and people, and just one of the ways that we're working for nature across the county.

**We're able to meet this challenge because of the community of support that exists around us. This Devon Wildlife Trust community includes:**

- **Our 35,000 members**
- **Our 300 volunteers**
- **Our county-wide network of volunteer-led Local Groups**
- **The charitable trusts, foundations, businesses and grant giving bodies who support us**
- **All those who donate to our fundraising appeals**
- **The people who choose to leave a gift to us in their Will**

Your support is making a world of difference to Devon's wildlife. Thank you to you all.

**Matt Boydell**  
Nature Reserves Manager, Devon Wildlife Trust

For a fuller list of the people and organisations who support Devon Wildlife Trust go to [www.devonwildlifetrust.org/what-we-do/about-us/our-supporters](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/what-we-do/about-us/our-supporters)



Emsworthy Mire nature reserve. Photo: Isaac Ogden



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

## A charity you can trust

As a member of the Fundraising Regulator, Devon Wildlife Trust follows the Code of Fundraising Practice. We make a public promise to adhere to best practice, honesty, transparency, clarity and accountability in all fundraising activity.

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Devon Wildlife Trust is a registered charity, number 213224.  
Vat no. 585473501



**Devon**  
Wildlife Trust

# Your Support

Winter 2019-20



We thought 2019 was a momentous year but 2020 has tested us even more and in very different ways. Covid-19 has cast a long shadow over the year, but it hasn't stopped this being an amazing 12 months for Devon Wildlife Trust.

Topping the bill was the Government's decision to allow the beavers on the River Otter to remain and spread. This is a true landmark in conservation history, being the first reintroduction of an extinct native mammal in England.

Our Action for Insects campaign was another huge success reaching 45 million people and generating 81 pieces of media coverage. We continue to push for a 50% reduction in pesticide use.

After our successful acquisition of land to expand Lower East Lounston nature reserve in January, we announced our 58th nature reserve, Ideford Common, in early November. Extending over 40 hectares of the Haldon ridge, this is reputedly the finest piece of lowland heath west of the River Exe and a haven for the nightjar, adder and other rare species.

As our departure from the EU looms, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment bills have all returned to parliament. We continue to lobby hard for improvements to these laws. The Planning White Paper is proposing some alarming changes to the land use planning system, proposing areas where development has permission in principle with no local ability to control it. With your support we have lobbied hard to prevent crucial environmental protections being undermined.

As the year comes to a close, we are reviewing our charity's long-term strategy, and we will be putting the ecological and climate crises at its heart. The challenges ahead are immense, but public support for action to tackle these crises has never been higher. And thanks to you, our amazing members and supporters, we are well placed to meet them.



Photo: Nick Hook

*Harry Barton*

**Harry Barton**  
Chief Executive, Devon Wildlife Trust

**Your support really is making a world of difference to Devon's wildlife. Thank you.**

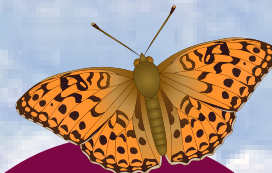


# Devon Wildlife Trust: our recent highlights

This is what your support has allowed us to achieve for local wildlife



It has been a history-making year for our work with beavers. It began with the submission to the Government of the River Otter Beaver Trial's **132-page Science and Evidence Report**. This was the key document upon which a decision on five years of work and the fate of Devon's (and England's) first wild beaver population for more than 400 years was made. In August the Government's decision was announced: **Devon's beavers could stay** and would be allowed to spread to neighbouring rivers.



**Devon Wildlife Trust** ended the year with nearly **35,000** members. Thank you for your loyal support – it is making a world of difference to local wildlife.

**Ideford Common** became our **58th** and newest nature reserve. With wonderful views over the Teign Valley and Dartmoor, its 40 hectares contain some of the best remaining heathland in the South West.



Our **Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area** project held **30 workshops** for local farmers in which they shared tips and techniques for more sustainable land management. The project team also worked with local farmers to restore or re-create more than **125 hectares** of wildlife-rich Culm grassland.

Our **Working Wetlands** project completed its five-year Upstream Thinking programme. The project team has worked with nearly **500 farmers** to reduce pesticide use and pollution in six of Devon's major river catchments. The Working Wetlands team is about to embark on a further five years of effort thanks to funding from South West Water.

It has been a frustrating year for our **volunteers**. Two lockdowns put a temporary halt to the efforts of the **300 people** who regularly dedicate their time to us. But between these periods some volunteering did resume, particularly on our nature reserves where it was easier to observe social distancing. We look forward to welcoming back all volunteers in 2021.



We retained our **Investors in People** accreditation this year and continue to hold **Investing in Volunteers** status, demonstrating our commitment to proper support for the staff and volunteers we depend on.

The **Devon Biodiversity Records Centre** (DBRC), hosted by DWT, ensured that 12 new County Wildlife Sites were designated this year. DBRC also increased its data holdings to 5.5 million records (from 4.6m last year) making it one of the UK's leading regional centres for wildlife recording.



It was a stop-start year for our **Education Team**. But it was only during the weeks of lockdown that they had to suspend their normal routine of making school visits and teaching the value of nature to Devon's children. Even with social distancing and limits to group numbers, the team were able to continue in their important task.

We retained our **Environmental Management System** accreditation ISO 14001, and invested in new resources which will help us develop and implement plans to reduce our carbon emissions to **net zero by 2030**.

2020 saw progress on two projects which promise to develop natural solutions to flooding. We gained funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for the **Caen Wetlands** (near Braunton) – an innovative project which will explore the feasibility of securing 'natural capital' investments for flood risk management, habitat creation and wider public benefits from a dynamic landscape in North Devon. Further south, the **Ottery St Mary Natural Flood Management project**, supported by the Environment Agency, began its efforts to improve natural habitats to reduce flooding impacts on the local community.



It was a busy year of speaking up for wildlife. Our headline campaigns included **Action for Insects**, and the launch of **30by30**, which is asking for 30% of the UK's land and seas to be connected and protected for wildlife by the year 2030. Meanwhile, Devon Wildlife Trust also promoted the national **Planning for Change** campaign which looked to put the needs of the natural world at the heart of the Government's proposed reforms to the planning system. Thank you to the hundreds of you who responded to these campaigns.

Our national campaign **Action for Insects** built momentum. Nearly **20,000** people have pledged their support so far. We've been busy helping them by producing guides for schools, communities and individuals on how to take practical steps to reversing insect declines. The guides are free to download from the Devon Wildlife Trust website.

More than **57,000** people now see our daily updates on social media. **20,000** people also keep up to date with our work for wildlife via regular e-newsletters. If you don't yet receive these free news bulletins, then turn your inbox wild by signing up at [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org)

The Wildlife Trust's annual **30 Days Wild** campaign seemed to strike a special chord this year. A record **3,500** people in Devon signed up to take part in 'random acts of wildness' designed to get people to enjoy the natural world local to them.



New work began in the shape of our **Torridge River Restoration Project** (TRRP). This ambitious initiative will see more than **£400,000** invested over two years in capital works to improve the health and wildlife richness of the Devon river. The project was made possible after a successful application for a Water Environment Grant through the Rural Development Programme for England and the Environment Agency.



Our **Wembury Marine Centre** fell victim to the Covid-19 pandemic as it remained closed during the spring and summer seasons. However, staff were busy planning for when Wembury's marine education activities can begin again in 2021. Look out for a taste of what is to come with the launch of the Centre's **new website in January**.

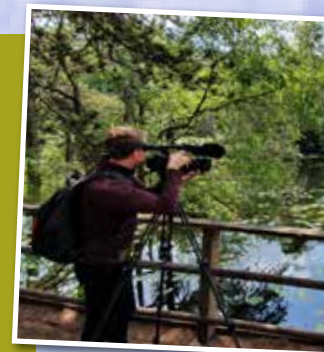
The creation of **22 new ponds at Emsworthy Mire** was just one of the highlights in a series of improvements across our **58 nature reserves**. Hedge bank planting at Believer Moor and Meadows, an expansion to the size of Lower East Lounston and wildflower planting at Ludwell Valley Park were others.



**Marine Education Officer**, Coral Smith was part of a team who delivered a series of public workshops across the South West on how to identify and then deal with **non-native species** in freshwater and marine environments. It's estimated that the damage caused to human infrastructure, to business and to native wildlife by non-native species costs the UK economy up to £100 million each year.

Restrictions on social gatherings meant our regular calendar of **wildlife events moved on-line**. We offered a series of free talks ranging from 'Rewilding' and 'Beavers' to 'Action for Insects' and 'Creating Wildflower Meadows'. Some of the events saw more than **500** people signing up from Devon and beyond. Look out for more in 2021 on the 'What's on' pages of our website.

Devon Wildlife Trust continued to make media headlines in 2020. Among more than **100** TV and radio appearances, highlights included our Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project featuring on BBC1's Countryfile, while news of the River Otter Beaver Trial's success was beamed around the planet via Al Jazeera, BBC World Service and the news channel of The World Economic Forum.



**Devon**  
Wildlife Trust



A **newly built bat roost** saw its first residents occupying it within weeks of completion. The roost was the result of cooperation between our **Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project** and the Axe Valley & District Conservation Society and East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The specially adapted building was quickly colonised by both greater and lesser horseshoe bats – species that have struggled to find suitable roosting places in recent decades.



Our East Devon visitor attraction **Seaton Jurassic** addressed this most challenging of years by ensuring that when it re-opened to visitors in July it was Covid-19 compliant. Feedback from visitors was universally supportive of our new measures which included timed entry tickets. During October half-term we promoted DWT's **Saving Devon's Treescapes** project by displaying local artist Marcus Vergette's wonderful Chalará Tower, while also distributing saplings to visitors to take home and plant. Our 'tree wall' flourished with **250 pledges** from people; each of them committing to take positive environmental action at home. We look forward to 2021 with optimism.