



Gloucestershire
Wildlife Trust



Bringing Nature Back Strategy to 2030

gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Registered Charity Number 232580

Turning around wildlife declines – with you



Nature is disappearing faster than at any point in human history. We are facing climate and ecological emergencies – and year on year we’re seeing growing evidence of the disruption this is causing.

We need to do much more than conserve what remains of Gloucestershire’s wildlife. We need to stop and reverse wildlife declines, not just because that’s the right thing to do, but because it will help stabilise the climate, ensure food security and support the wellbeing of people living in our county.

That’s why at GWT we want to up our game to reverse wildlife declines. We’re determined to be bolder, think bigger and continue to work with others on nature’s recovery. We need to think well beyond our nature reserves and work closely with local partners, farmers, and our supporters. Our strategy highlights the need to create more places for nature to thrive on a much bigger scale, the importance of partnership working and the urgent need to think differently.

We can’t do any of this alone. We’ll only put nature into recovery if we act together and if communities are empowered to take action. We’ll need to harness the energy of young people and support them to inherit a Gloucestershire where restoring nature is both possible and desirable. And, like everything we do, we’ll only be able to achieve success with our amazing partners, supporters, and members – you.

These plans are unashamedly ambitious. But the next eight years are crucial – and we need to act for nature at scale and at pace. We look forward to working with you.

Roger Mortlock

Roger Mortlock
CEO, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust



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Who are we?

We are Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, the largest charity in the county dedicated to nature’s recovery.

We want everyone in Gloucestershire to value, enjoy and share wildlife in the county and believe strongly that nature matters, not only in its own right, but for the benefits it brings to people.

We aim to play a central role in tackling the ecological and climate emergencies, working closely with local communities and our partners in the county. We manage over 1,000 hectares of nature reserves and work with farmers and landowners across Gloucestershire. Nature’s recovery depends on people. 28,000 members in Gloucestershire support our work, with hundreds regularly volunteering time and energy.

Our values

- 1 We are champions for wildlife – passionate and pioneering for nature’s recovery.
- 2 We are rooted in our communities – making nature inclusive
- 3 We are caring colleagues – supportive and honest.

Our vision

Our vision is for a natural world in recovery, where nature-based solutions are tackling the climate crisis, and everyone is inspired to take action for wildlife.

Our purpose

Our purpose is to ensure nature's recovery together with the people of Gloucestershire.

Our approach

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust is part of a network of 46 independent Wildlife Trusts across the UK. Together we are ambitious not just to slow, but to reverse the declines in wildlife. We speak with a bold and confident voice, to tell the truth about the state of nature and what needs to be done to put it in recovery.

Our strategy is rooted in Gloucestershire and the specific challenges we face here. We look to establish common cause and work in partnership with others, to develop new, innovative ways to do what's right for nature and deliver impact in support of our vision. Our plans require working at scale and are dependent on working closely with farmers and landowners across the county. Our work is underpinned by the Nature Recovery Network which maps how we could achieve nature's recovery in Gloucestershire.

We hope to demonstrate what is possible, and inspire, empower, and enable people from all ages, backgrounds, cultures, identities and abilities to bring about our vision with us, embracing the diversity of our society to change the natural world for the better. We want young people, in particular, to play an increased role in shaping our work.



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Our enabling priorities

To achieve our three goals, we will need strong foundations to support the organisation to deliver these ambitious targets. We call these our enabling priorities.

Grow and diversify our funding

Our plans need more resources and a wider support base. We want to develop more opportunities for people and organisations to support us.

Value and invest in our staff and volunteers

People power all our work. We want to upskill and develop our staff, and increase the number of active volunteers to 650.

Steward our assets and measure our impact

We want fit-for-purpose systems, infrastructure, and technology to deliver our goals as effectively as possible – measuring the impact we have.

Lead and develop an ecological evidence base for Gloucestershire

We will continue to lead the Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (GCER) and develop the Nature Recovery Network, using evidence to guide our work.

Live our values

Our values guide our approach. For example, we want to be carbon positive by 2030 and our staff, volunteers, and work to reflect the diversity of Gloucestershire's population.



JON HAWKINS/SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

Our three goals set out what we believe needs to happen by 2030.

While they are set out as distinct objectives, they are highly connected and interdependent.

Our three goals

1

Stopping and reversing wildlife declines

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world and in Gloucestershire alone, we've already lost 70% of traditional orchards and less than 1.5% of wildflower-rich meadows remain. If declines in Gloucestershire's nature cannot be halted before 2030, then losses will be irreversible. But there's still time to turn things around.

What we will do

- Strategically expand our nature reserves**
We will grow land owned or managed by GWT from 1,100 to 1,700 hectares by 2030, supporting ten Nature Recovery Zones around the county.
- Deliver 30% of land managed for nature**
We want 30% of all land in the county managed to support nature's recovery – that's around 30,000 additional hectares in Gloucestershire. At GWT we want to work with farmers and landowners to deliver one third – or 10,000 hectares – of that target.
- Nature on your doorstep**
We will create or improve 300 hectares for people, wildlife and climate, including a new Nature Park in Gloucester, with 90,000 people across the county benefitting from improved access to wildlife-rich green spaces.

2

More people taking action for nature

People are key to nature's recovery. We need nature, yet we are increasingly disconnected from the natural world. As Sir David Attenborough has said: 'No one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced'. We want to engage and empower people to value, enjoy, speak up and take action for wildlife.

What we will do

- Nature for all**
We want to make sure that the benefits of the natural world are accessible to all, extending our reach to 1 in 4 people in Gloucestershire. We want to expand our education offer to reach 25,000 school children and a further 30,000 young people.
- Build a movement**
Of all the people we reach, we want more of them to take meaningful actions to reverse wildlife declines. We want to mobilise 15,000 people and support 100 communities in the county to take action.
- Bold champions for wildlife**
We will tell the truth about the state of nature and be a bold voice for the natural world. We want key decisions to put nature first, with 4,000 citizens empowered to influence decision makers, and more developments meeting our Building with Nature standards.

3

Normalising natural solutions to climate change

We believe that the climate and ecological crises are inextricably linked. We can't solve one without addressing the other. Climate change is driving nature's decline and the loss of wildlife and wild places leaves us ill-equipped to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change.

What we will do

- Lead Severn Treescapes**
We want to support 2,000 hectares of enhanced tree cover through a new woodland corridor linking the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley with the Wyre Forest in Worcestershire. The project aims to capture 1,700 tonnes of carbon.
- Establish a wetscape network**
We will create 300 hectares of new wetlands to improve the resilience of the wetland network in the Severn Vale. We want natural processes to be used in 30% of the river catchments in the Severn Vale.
- Support regenerative agriculture**
Farmers are key to tackling the climate and ecological crises. We want to support them to create or enhance 5,000 hectares of farmland for wildlife and the climate, expanding the size and scope of the advice we provide.

Our strategy in action

Working with farmers

We'll be working with farmers more closely than ever - supporting their work and advising on wildlife-friendly practices.

This partnership will enable us to create and enhance 5,000 hectares for wildlife and the climate, making productive farmland more permeable to wildlife. This will ultimately enable us to expand our work to stop and reverse wildlife declines beyond our nature reserves.

Over 70% of the land in Gloucestershire is dedicated to farming. What we eat and the way we farm it plays a central role in tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

With the right support, we think farmers and landowners can be the wildlife heroes of the county.

Wildbelt

Along the River Severn, we'll be creating a 'Wildbelt' - establishing 300 hectares of new wetlands, allowing land to be enhanced and connected to support nature to recover and thrive in the county.

We'll also be working with partners to improve land next to the River Severn near Gloucester through the creation of a new Nature Park, providing a space for people to experience the wellbeing benefits of the natural world.

Resilient wetlands, estuaries, rivers and floodplains are crucial in tackling the climate emergency. They store carbon, support wildlife, and hold back flood water, as well as providing areas for people to connect with nature.

Plus, we'll also be looking into the role beavers could play in nature's recovery across Gloucestershire. In fact, our Natural Flood Management work with local landowners has been modelled in part on the role beavers would naturally play in creating well-functioning aquatic habitats.



Severn Treescapes

Further up stream, our Severn Treescapes project will increase woodland cover over three counties, resulting in 3 million new trees and 2,000 hectares of new woodland.

This will not only capture thousands of tonnes of carbon per year but will provide a space for over 600,000 people to experience the healing power of tree-filled habitats for themselves.

Alongside this, we will be protecting our existing woodlands so that they continue to help in the fight against climate change and provide green spaces for local people.



Conservation grazing

Species-rich grasslands are important carbon stores and are vital habitats for many of Gloucestershire's plants, insects and animals. They are also one of our most threatened habitats. In the Cotswolds alone, these grasslands have decreased from 40% to less than 1.5% since the 1930s.

The use of livestock in conservation grazing programmes across the county can help us to protect and enhance these important environments, creating healthy ecosystems that can support much-loved species such as large blue butterflies, adders and nightjars.

By enhancing our conservation grazing work and establishing new grassland and heathland mosaics, we'll see more wildflowers in Gloucestershire's species-rich grasslands, and we'll be increasing the area we manage through conservation grazing by over 60%.

Working with nature

We want nature to thrive on your doorstep, creating wildlife highways from your front door out to Nature Recovery Zones.

Building with Nature is our vision for new development in the county that puts nature at its heart - rethinking the approach to housing, roads and other infrastructure.

We'll be connecting with 25,000 young people through formal learning sessions and a further 30,000 in new programmes that aim to engage and inspire people.

Now more than ever we need people to take action for wildlife and we want nature to be as inclusive as possible, reaching 1 in 4 people in Gloucestershire. Through tools like WilderGlos, our new digital action platform, we'd like to see 15,000 people and 50 communities take action for nature, becoming wildlife champions and increasing their engagement with the natural world.



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PAUL HARRIS/2020VISION