

## Quarterly strategic update for Volunteers and Local Branch Group Committees,

3<sup>rd</sup> July 2026

### Update on the first quarter of 2026/7 financial year (April, May, June)

#### **Governance**

We have advertised for and interviewed prospective new trustees this quarter and will announce the successful applicants in the coming weeks. Trustee Becca Hadaway has taken on the role of Chair of the People Committee which oversees all aspects of HR relating to staff and volunteering.

Work continues on developing our **new strategy** with a survey launched for volunteers and members to share their opinions and feedback and an in-person meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

This quarter, we held our summer quarterly Volunteer Voice Forum. Notes from this are available here: [Notes & Actions\\_Volunteer Voice June 2026.pdf](#)

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#### **Nature recovery...**

- Restoring Bartonsham Meadows project. We now have cattle grazing the rewilding area of the site, checked daily by volunteer monitors. There have also been some changes to the team. Jenny has left the role of Community Officer and we welcomed Izzy Smith to take this up at the end of June. Trainee Phoebe has also finished her time with us and we welcome new trainees Immy Spencer and Ellie Nixon.
- Hereford ~ River City project. Jenny Mottershead was successful in applying for the role of Project Manager and is getting the project off to a flying start. She will be joined by Eva Basnet from 6<sup>th</sup> July as Community Officer and Holly Thompson from 20<sup>th</sup> July as Nature Recovery Officer.
- The 'Wye Adapt to Climate Change' project has been approved for a three-month extension (to end Nov/early December).
- External Partnership Working:
  - staff attended the River Restoration Centre's National Rivers Conference in Newport in April
  - Ian Grafton attended the Natural Flood Management Steering Group in May

- Ian , Rosie and Leo attended the Big Gathering a bi-annual gathering of the whole of the Wildlife Trusts Federation in Stroud
- Ian, Saul and Lewis attended the Woolhope Club 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference on Parklands at the start of July in Hereford. Ian and Saul chaired sessions.
- Sales have now been completed on all five of the nature reserves selected for divestment; all being bought by people who intend to continue with sympathetic management: Rookhill Coppice, Merrivale Wood, Romers Wood, Motlins Hole, Upper Swingley.
- We have spent the £30,000 allocated last year for new equipment to support our nature reserves staff and volunteers. This covered: a new BCS cutter for meadow management, a cut and collect tractor-driven mower and an upgrade to our trailer.

## **Nature Action...**

### Youth & Wellbeing

- Our new Nature Tots sessions have been running for over a month with every session fully booked.
- In June we ran a work experience week, with six successful applicants taking part in activities across our estate to give an insight into roles within the conservation sector.

### Volunteering & Membership

- We held two well-received Discovery Days at Tretawdy Farm in Llangrove and at Woolhope
- We had two great volunteer training days at Birches Farm on wildflower and grasses identification
- We ran a Voluntary warden and Task Leader training day at Queenswood

### Community Action & Campaigning

- Our Spring meeting focused on the wheres, whys and hows of species recording in the county and was well attended and well received.

### Communications

We published annual publication *The Herefordshire Naturalist* (formerly The Flycatcher) and the Spring *Wildside*.

## **Sustaining our future...**

## Fundraising

- We took part in the Big Give's *Earth Raise* campaign in April and secured £10,000 of public donations which were match funded by Big Give donors, securing us the maximum target of £20K within the week-long campaign.
- Current grant applications in development include:
  - a partnership project with Radnorshire Wildlife Trust focused on the River Lugg;
  - a partnership project with the RSPB focused on lesser spotted woodpeckers;
  - An application to the Environment Agency's Water Environment Improvement Fund
  - A partnership project with the Wye Valley National Landscape

## Queenswood

- We continue to progress plans for a third charity shop, to be located in Ross-on-Wye.
- We hosted Herefordshire CPRE's Centenary Celebrations
- Site improvements continue with car park lines repainted
- Car parking charges have increased at Bodenham and Queenswood with Queenswood increasing by 20p per hour.
- Venue hire continues as a good rate with regular bookings contributing to the site income.
- We have hosted lots of schools visits this quarter
- We sold over 125 annual car park permits on our summer sale (£55 each, reduced from £65)

## Operations

- We underwent a Data Protection Audit conducted by The Wildlife Trust's Data Protection Officer. While there are areas we can improve with regards to our administration, our practices are sound with no areas of concern.
  - We have revised our job application forms to improve accessibility as part of our work on improving our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity
  - We have committed to becoming a Disability Confident employer
  - All line managers are taking part in a range of training modules run by The Wildlife Trusts to support them in their roles through the course of the year.
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**Staff updates:**

- Alex Boswell began as Operations Assistant
- Lewis Goldwater rejoined the Nature Reserves team this quarter
- We welcomed Nature Reserves Officer Adam Toulson-Hampshire to the team also
- Izzy Smith started as Community Officer for Bartonsham Meadows
- Eva Basnet starts as Community Officer for Hereford ~ River City on 6<sup>th</sup> July

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**Financial update**

*To follow*