



**Birmingham &  
Black Country**



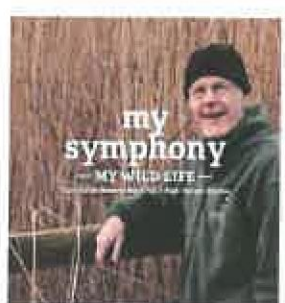
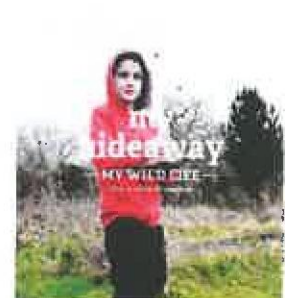
# Making Space for Nature Across Birmingham and the Black Country

**Annual Report of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country**

[A Company Limited by Guarantee Company Number 1650938]

For the financial year ended 31st March 2015

Registered Charity Number 513615



## Contents

1. **Statement of Particulars**
2. **Chairman's Introduction**
3. **The Annual Report for 2014 – 2015**
4. **Our Vision and Mission**
5. **Our Governance and Structure**
6. **Financial Highlights Report**
7. **Highlights – Our Year in Numbers**
8. **The work of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country 2014 – 2015**
9. **Reserves Policy**
10. **Pensions**
11. **Statement as to disclosure of information to Auditors**
12. **Auditors**
13. **Thank you**
14. **Full Audited Financial Report for 2014 - 2015**



## DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

### 1. Statement of Particulars

**REGISTERED NAME** The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Ltd

**COMPANY NUMBER** 1650938 (England and Wales)

**CHARITY NUMBER** 513615

**TRADING SUBSIDIARY** Land Care Associates Limited

**REGISTERED OFFICE** 16 Greenfield Crescent, Birmingham, B15 3AU

**BANKERS** Nat West Plc

Chamber of Commerce House

36 Highfield Road, Edgbaston

Birmingham B15 3BJ

**AUDITOR** Stephen W Jones FCA

Chartered Accountant & Registered Auditor

King Edward House

82 Stourbridge Road

Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3UP

The Wildlife Trust was established in 1980, and is a registered charity, a company limited by guarantee and an environmental body.

<b>Patron</b>	Miss Gitta Tangye
<b>President</b>	Professor David Bellamy OBE
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Professor Chris Baines Peter Shirley MBE (Chair of Trustees) Professor Ian Trueman

#### Trust Council (Trustees and Directors)

<b>Chair</b>	Peter Shirley	Appointed October 2014
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Dr Alison Millward	Appointed October 2014
<b>Acting Treasurer</b>	Martin Smith	Appointed October 2014
<b>Secretary</b>	Dr Peter Jarvis	Appointed October 2014
<b>Trustees</b>	Dr Chris Young	Appointed October 2012
	Dr John Gerrard	Retired May 2015
	Elaine Clarke	Appointed October 2014
	Jack Wilson	Appointed October 2012
	Aishah Brown	Co-opted April 2015
	Nicolas Crombie	Co-opted April 2015
	Simon Needle	Appointed October 2014
	Phil Evans	Retired October 2014
<b>Chief Executive</b>	Georgia Stokes	Appointed October 2014





Castle Vale Meadow created in 2013

## **2. Introduction from the Chair of Trustees, Peter Shirley MBE FRES Dip EM**

Welcome to our Report for the year ended 31 March 2015. It is pleasing to reflect on a successful conclusion to an extremely difficult year, during which the Trust went through a radical transformation. We were, and are, not immune from the current period of austerity, especially as a significant proportion of our income is derived in various ways from the public sector. This includes Service Level Agreements with our five local authorities, for example to support EcoRecord, and central government funding, which included the Nature Improvement Area.

At the same time circumstances were such that we had major changes at senior levels. The changes included the appointment of a dynamic new Chief Executive, Georgia Stokes, a new Chair, and we began the process of recruiting skilled and dedicated new trustees who subsequently joined Council and are now making vital contributions to our development and sustainability. The downside was that we had to reduce our establishment and say goodbye to a number of staff for whose work and achievements we were very grateful. Some long-serving trustees also left us and we are also grateful for their sterling efforts on our behalf.

When you read the Report I hope that you will agree that despite the difficulties we have continued to achieve a great deal for the people and wildlife of Birmingham and the Black Country. This is despite labouring under many people's perception that there are limited opportunities to create space for nature in an urban area like ours. We have been working on this for 30 years and, as this Report demonstrates, we have a rich and diverse natural landscape that provides a home for a huge variety of wildlife. With the hard work and commitment of our staff, volunteers and members we have been able to make significant enhancements to our natural environment, making space for nature that people and wildlife will enjoy for generations to come.

Two groups of people absolutely essential to our success are our members (there are now more than 10,500) and our 1600 volunteers. Some people are both, and that's great, but each makes their

own unique contribution. Our members' subscriptions and donations provide an invaluable source of revenue, and our volunteers provide a willing workforce. My personal thanks go out to all of you.

Other things that jump out of the Report for me are the development of our innovative Eyes on the Ground and FIN projects, and the figure of 7,000 schoolchildren using EcoPark. These activities build on our tradition of community involvement in nature conservation – once a radical idea but now a mainstream activity throughout the country.

As for the future, now and for the next two years major funding from Esmee Fairbairn enables us to continue with the Nature Improvement Area work, the EcoPark will continue to be developed, we will progress our plans for a combined new centre and main office, and we will maintain our often unsung but vital planning, advocacy and policy work.

It is a privilege to be the Chair of this Trust and my thanks go out to everyone who has helped with our successes: staff, trustees, members, volunteers, partners, and funders. Despite our achievements, and those of other organisations, wildlife is still diminishing in the UK and habitats remain under threat. With the help of all of you we will continue to address these fundamental issues.

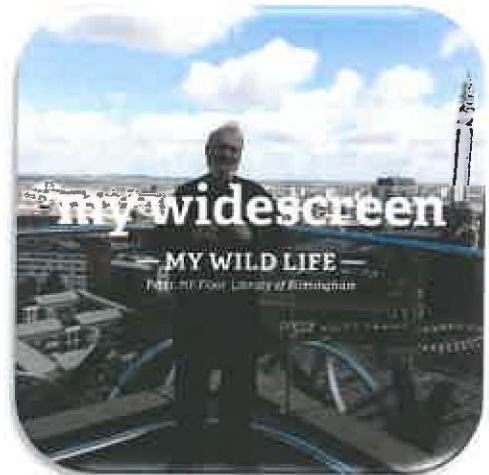
Signature



**Peter Shirley**

**Chair of Trustees**

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2015



The board of Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

### 3. Annual report 2014-2015

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country exists to achieve our vision of an environment rich in wildlife for everyone living and working in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall.

The Trust is a registered charity (No. 513615) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 1650938). We were established in 1980 to protect our local natural heritage and encourage people to engage, enjoy and get involved with the natural environment. We are a membership organisation, governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The Trust is managed by a Council of voluntary Trustees, elected from its members, who provide the overall strategic direction for the development and work of the charity. On a day-to-day basis our work is carried out by a staff of 16 (at 31 March 2015), assisted hugely by a large number of volunteers. The charity has a subsidiary consultancy Landcare Associates.

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is one of 47 independent charities, which form a national partnership - The Wildlife Trusts through the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

Together we have 839,745 members and 2,500 nature reserves throughout the UK. The Trust's family membership is also part of the national environment club, Wildlife Watch, which provides projects for members and affiliated schools, so involving them directly with environmental issues.

During 2014-2015, the membership of the Trust in Birmingham and the Black Country totalled around 10,600. If you would like to join, or find out more, please contact us:

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

16 Greenfield Crescent

Edgbaston

Birmingham

B15 3AU

Tel (0121) 454 1199

Email: [info@bbcwildlife.org.uk](mailto:info@bbcwildlife.org.uk)

Internet: [www.bbcwildlife.org.uk](http://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk)



Coir rolls bring habitat and wildlife to canalsides in Birmingham, funded through the Nature Improvement Area. Photo: A. Slater. 2015.



#### 4. Our Vision

Our vision for Birmingham and the Black Country is to create an environment rich in wildlife that is cherished, protected and enriched by everyone. We do this by:

##### **CREATING WILDLIFE HAVENS**

Aim: To secure a positive future for wildlife in our urban environment.

##### **ACTING AS WILDLIFE CHAMPIONS**

Aim: To stand up for the interests of our urban wildlife.

##### **INSPIRING PEOPLE**

Aim: To motivate educate and inspire people about their local wildlife.

##### **PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING**

Aim: To improve the quality of life of people in Birmingham and the Black Country, by encouraging their involvement with local biodiversity and sustainability issues.

##### **DEVELOPING OUR ORGANISATION TO DELIVER MORE EFFECTIVELY**

Aim: To make the Trust a fitter organisation, better able to secure the resources and publicity it needs to achieve its objectives.

#### 4.1 Our Mission

Our mission is to create a [living landscape](#) across Birmingham and the Black Country. We work, in partnership wherever it will increase our impact, to:

- Manage our sites to high standards for wildlife and biodiversity
- Create wildlife corridors connecting nature rich spaces so wildlife can move between suitable habitats.
- Educate, engage, inspire and motivate people to cherish and act for nature.
- Build strong local communities that are motivated to act to restore nature.
- Enhance and expand natural sites managed by others to become nature rich
- Increase the knowledge and understanding of wildlife (species and habitats) and geology in Birmingham and the Black Country
- Raise people's awareness and understanding of the importance of acting for [living seas](#).
- Encourage, support and inspire people to lead sustainable lifestyles that reduce damaging impacts on the environment.

## **5. Structure, Governance and Management**

The Council of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the Trust. The Trust's Council is elected from the membership in accordance with its governing documents at the Annual General Meeting: Trustees are either co-opted during the year or elected at the Annual General Meeting. Co-opted Trustees must stand for election at the Annual General Meeting immediately following their appointment. Council may co-opt additional members from time to time as it sees fit.

The Trustee is provided with copies of the charity's key documents, including its Memorandum and Articles, Governance Handbook, latest Annual Report and Accounts, minutes of recent Council meetings, policy documents and further information on the role and responsibilities of charity trustees.

Following election or co-option of a Trustee the Chair will introduce a new Trustee at their first meeting of Council. They will also participate in a formal induction process to familiarise them with the extent and nature of the Trust's operations. After election at the Annual General Meeting Trustees serve for a period of 3 years and may be elected for a further period of 3 years.

The relationship between staff and trustees is crucial to the Trust's continuing success. Trustees bring a range of skills and experience to the responsibilities of the role which requires them to have an understanding of all aspects of the Trust's work. Trustees meet at quarterly Council meetings each year where they review strategy and operational performance, set policies and agree budgets.

### **5.1 Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities and Corporate Governance**

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the annual report and financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the financial activities of the charity and of its financial position at the end of that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity or its subsidiary will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- The Charity is operating efficiently and effectively
- All assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposition and are properly applied
- Proper records are maintained and financial information used within the Charity, or for publication, is reliable
- The Charity complies with the relevant laws and regulations.

Trustees are also required to comply with the 2006 Charities Act section 4 to have had due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission. The trustees confirm compliance with section 4.



The Charity and Consolidated Accounts for the year are not easy to understand because of our necessary compliance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (SORP) and the nature of the financing of our activities. These can be divided into two clear streams. In the first stream, the Trust receives funds from members and other funders which it can spend at its discretion and are described as “unrestricted”. Apart from adjustments to reserves, what is received in the year is spent in the year. In the second stream, the Trust may receive “restricted funds” to a particular project, which may then run over a number of years.

For a restricted fund grant, for example, SORP would show a grant of £200,000 to be spent over two years (at £100,000 a year) as an increase in assets of £100,000 in the first year and a decrease in assets of £100,000 in the second year. In the financial year 2013-4, substantial designated funding was received to be spent over both years 2013-4 and 2014-5. The Accounts show the substantial increase in assets one year, decrease in assets the next year effect described above.

Processes are in place to ensure that performance is monitored and the appropriate management information is prepared and reviewed monthly by executive management and regularly by the Board of Trustees. All trustees sit either on the two sub committees of Council, Resources and Operations which review in more detail, the Trust’s activities. Financial and management information of the Trust is progressively being loaded onto files viewable on the Internet.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide assurances against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- a rolling annual year budget and work-plan approved by the Trustees;
- regular consideration by the Trustees of financial results, variances from budget, non - financial performance
- delegation of day to day management authority and segregation of duties;
- identification and management of risks.

### **5.2 Risk Management**

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of a Risk Management Strategy, reviewed annually, and by peer review by Trustees and by external advisors. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, policies and procedures including frequent audit of health and safety protocol. We take every effort to minimise our environmental impacts and intend to work towards full environmental impact assessments and audits.

External risks are analysed and attempts made to mitigate or plan for them where possible. Currently identified external risks include (in no particular order) the impact of public sector funding cuts, recent negative fundraising media stories, climate change and globalisation, and the increasing pressures and competing demands for land use for housing, transportation and economic regeneration purposes.

### **5.3 Public Benefit**

The advancement of environmental protection and improvement is recognised as a charitable purpose and is regarded universally as producing a public good. The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country exists to promote the care and protection of the environment and therefore provides a clear public benefit. The Wildlife Trust’s philosophy is based on the belief that the natural world deserves conserving for its own sake and, since this is widely perceived to be a worthy aim of

public policy, it may fairly be regarded as a benefit to the public at large. However, the public benefits provided by The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country go much further.

Firstly, our nature reserves are used by the public, and many have access on way-marked routes. At most sites information and interpretation is provided to visitors. There are a few cases where there may be a conflict between management requirements and unfettered access, but where this occurs we strive to keep any restrictions to a minimum.

Secondly, our education programmes are aimed at schools, colleges, adult groups and the wider public. Education is also, of course, recognised as a charitable activity in its own right.

Thirdly, our information gathering and provision of expert advice and opinion to local authorities and others helps to ensure that planning decisions are made on a rational basis taking full account of the public benefit of wildlife.

Fourthly, we can exert influence through our membership at local level, and nationally through our membership of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. It is also our belief that the involvement of many volunteers in our work provides an outlet for altruistic endeavour, which is of special benefit to those involved as well as delivering benefits to the wider public.

Promoting the enjoyment of the natural world is an important part of what we do: contact with the natural world and the appreciation of wildlife and wild places provides great pleasure to many people and contributes towards wellbeing and health. Our nature reserves and activities are available to all and we try to make special provision for the disabled and disadvantaged wherever possible.

#### **5.4 Organisational Structure**

The Wildlife Trust is governed by an elected Council and is therefore directly accountable to the members of the charity. The Memorandum and Articles of Association gives Council the powers to:

- (i) Administer the affairs of the Charity
- (ii) Exercise all the powers of the Charity
- (iii) Determine the policy of the Charity

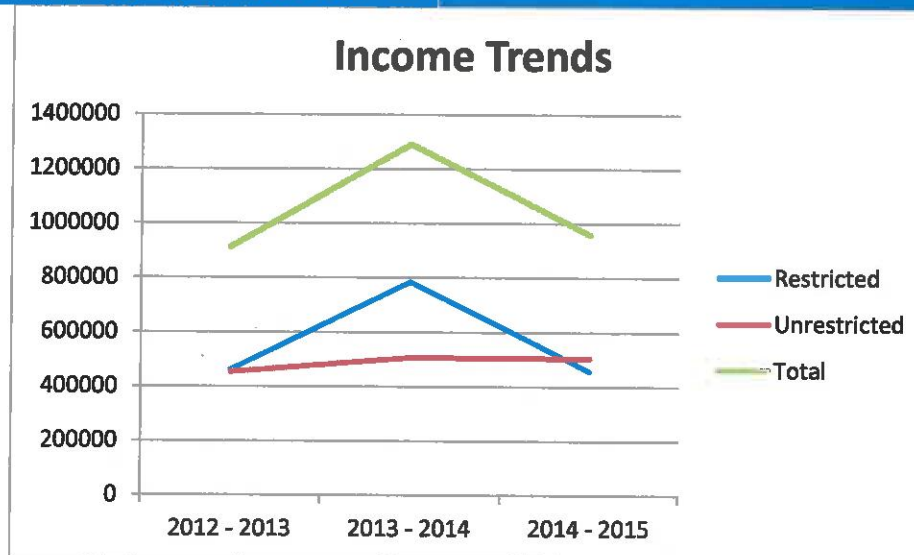
Council formally delegates certain functions and responsibilities to several committees which deal with specific policy and organisational issues. The day to day management of the Charity's affairs is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is accountable exclusively to the Council for achieving, via the Development Plan, the Wildlife Trust's aims and for complying with Council policies. A team of professionally trained staff report to the Chief Executive.

The Trust is also grateful to a large body of volunteers, drawn from both within and beyond our membership without whose assistance our effectiveness would be greatly diminished.

#### **5.5 Related Parties**

The Charity owns a small consultancy providing ecological services to such customers as developers, Land Care Associates Limited. This consultancy has not found it possible to produce targeted returns for the charity and has closed down after the year end.

6. Financial Highlights Report 2014 - 2015



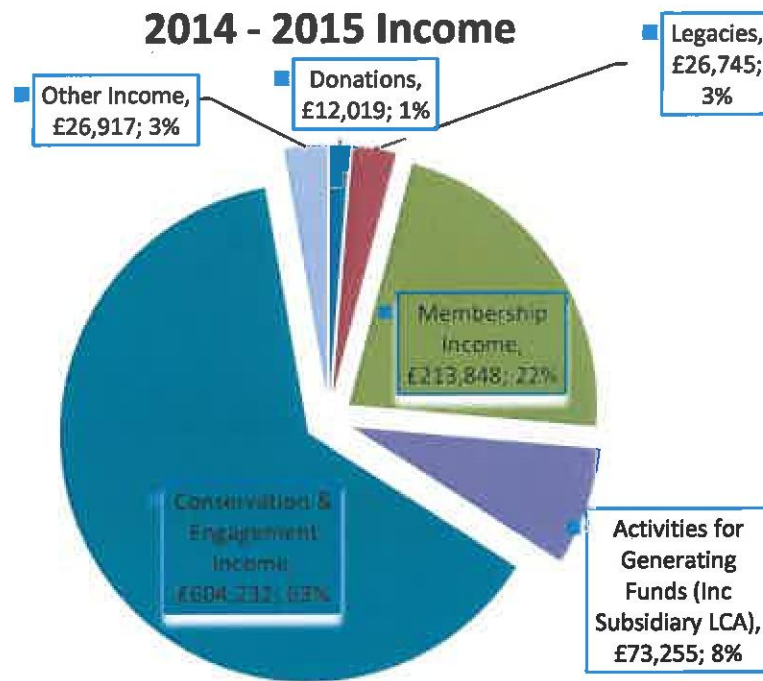
This summary of our Accounts for the year includes figures for our subsidiary consultancy, Land Care Associates.

**Restricted income** for the Trust is usually grant funding applied for to deliver specific projects on designated sites. Trends show our restricted income for the year 2014 - 2015 is roughly level to financial year 2012 – 2013. The restricted income figure for 2013-2014 is distorted due to an exceptional grant from Natural England for Nature Improvement Areas (NIA). This funding ended 31st March 2015.

**Unrestricted income** for the period in the chart above shows a gradual rise. During this period the Trust began working with a wholly owned Wildlife Trust membership recruitment company Wildlife Fundraising Central (WFC) in 2012. WFC began working well with high membership recruitment numbers in 2013 continuing into 2014. This unfortunately has not been sustained into 2015 resulting in a slight decline in membership which is projected to continue. Reasons for a declining membership are varied but include difficulty recruiting and retaining recruiters, a crowded market, negative news stories regarding charity fundraising and continued austerity measures. Membership recruitment and unrestricted income generation are priorities for the Trust. A significant legacy was gratefully received from the Estate of M. J. Firman during this period which has significantly improved unrestricted income.

**Total Income** trends reflect the spike in restricted income. The ratio of unrestricted income to restricted needs to be improved to secure the sustainability of the Trust.

6.1 Income 2014 - 2015

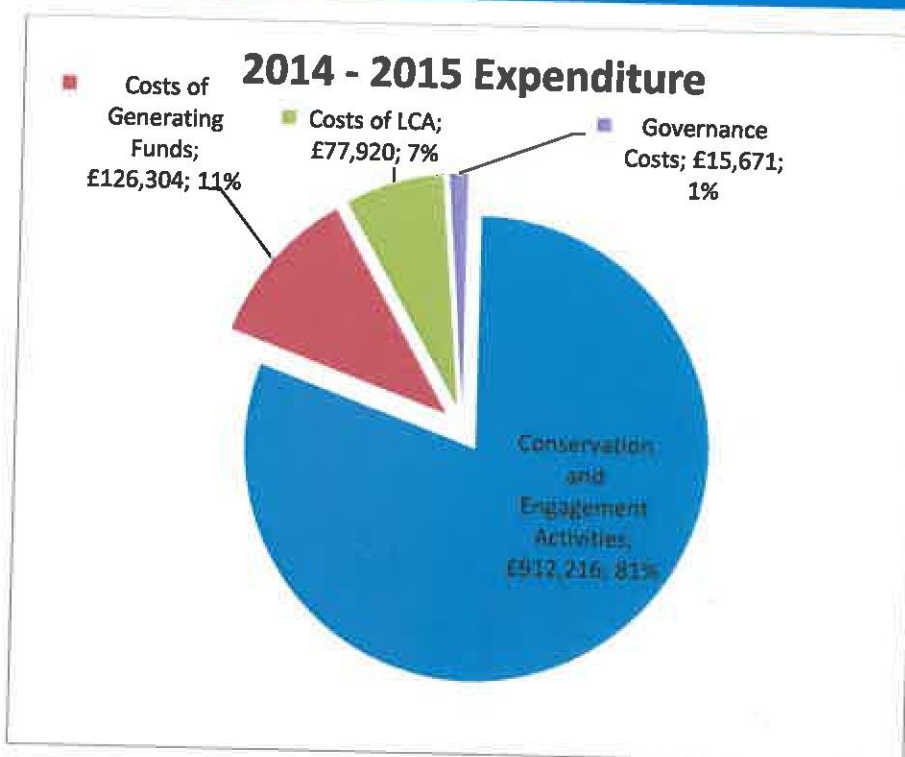


Project funding for our Conservation, Engagement and Education work makes up the largest part of our income for this financial year including final payments for the DEFRA funded NIA, £30k initial payment as part of a new funding relationship with People’s Postcode Lottery for forest school delivery at EcoPark, schools contributions for EcoPark, and Heritage Lottery Funding for Peascroft Wood. Income also includes Service Level Agreements with local authorities and key partners such as Natural England for delivery of EcoRecord, and for providing the secretariat to the Local Nature Partnership, the Biodiversity and Geodiversity Partnership and the Tame, Anker, Mease Sub-Catchment. Due to the impact of the NIA funding described above total income for Conservation and Engagement work in 2014 – 2015 was down by 38% on the previous year.

Donations towards our work totalled £12k, equating to 1% of our overall income but an increase on last year by 37%. Donations this year included sponsored runners in the Birmingham half marathon, donations from the Martann Trust, and donations raised by Friends groups. Membership income including gift aid reached £213,848 making up 22% of the Trust’s income. This equates to a slight increase in membership income from the previous year of 3%. This was achieved through higher gift amounts in spite of a decline in total membership numbers.

Land Care Associates generated an income (net of sales to the Trust) of £73,255 an increase of 15% on the previous year.

6.2 Expenditure 2014 - 2015



We make every effort to reduce our back office costs to ensure we spend as much as possible on nature conservation, education and engagement activities. The majority of the money we spent went directly to Conservation and Engagement Activities totalling £912,216, 81% of our total expenditure (this rises to 87% taking only the Charity's finances into account).

Spending on membership and fundraising is crucial to creating a financially robust organisation. Local authority and statutory budgets are continually reducing meaning we need to generate sustainable income. As a member organisation our ability to recruit new and retain existing members is key to our future and capacity to deliver conservation, engagement and planning activities. This is becoming more difficult and requires investment. We spent £120,905 on membership and development activities, 11% of our total expenditure. The expenditure of LCA totalled £77,920 (against income of £73,255).

6.3 Accounts At A Glance

Accounts Snapshot	2014 - 2015	2013 - 2014
Income	£957,016	£1,289,941
Expenditure	£1,132,111	£1,128,502
Net Income and Expenditure	-£175,095	£161,439
Funds Brought Forward	£268,732	£107,296
Funds Carried Forward	£93,640	£268,735
Assets Less Current Liabilities	£173,560	£279,297
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>£58,898</b>	<b>£54,330</b>

The figures shown here are a snapshot of key details from the full balance sheet. The key figure, reflecting the financial strength of the Trust is the value of "unrestricted funds" shown in the Balance Sheet in bold below. The closure of Land Care Associates has caused the Trust

substantial losses, but we should be pleased that, even taking account of this, the Trust has maintained its "unrestricted funds" value at a similar level to last year. We are grateful that the Trust also has the support of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts by way of a long term loan.

7. Highlights – Our Year in Numbers



**10,665 members**

**£213,848 membership income**

**633 new members**



**Over 7,000 pupil visits to  
EcoPark our environmental  
education centre in  
Birmingham.**



**More than 200,000  
visits to our sites**

**81 sites improved for wildlife  
7 new groups trained in  
monitoring and surveying**



**1,600 volunteers**

**13,289 volunteer hours recorded**

**198 days of nature conservation  
activity with volunteers**

## 8. The Work of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country in 2014 – 2015

### Objectives and Activities for The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country

The Wildlife Trust's objectives are:

For the benefit of the public, to advance, promote and further the conservation maintenance study and protection of:

- i. wildlife and its habitats;
  - ii. places of natural beauty;
  - iii. places of zoological, botanical, geographical, archaeological or scientific interest;
  - iv. features of landscape with geological, physiographical, or amenity value;
- in particular, but not exclusively, in ways that further biodiversity.

To advance the education of the public in:

- i. the principles and practice of sustainable development;
  - ii. the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation;
- in particular, but not exclusively, in urban areas.

### 8.1 Conservation Projects and Reserves



#### The Birmingham and Black Country Nature Improvement Area

The Birmingham and Black Country Nature Improvement Area was one of the first twelve Nature Improvement Areas in England. Over the last three years over 200 habitat-improving projects have been completed, involving over 2000 volunteers who between them contributed more than 25,000 volunteer hours. Our work to improve urban greenspaces for the people and wildlife of this area has included:-

- The creation of 40 new meadows
- 90 ha of woodland created or improved
- 10 km of corridor habitat created or improved
- 3 ha of heathland created or improved
- 20 geological sites improved

In 2015, management of our six local nature reserves focused on woodland management activities to increase biodiversity and improve access.

**Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood Nature Reserve, Birmingham:** For 2014 we secured almost £40,000 of funding from Biffa Award to continue our work to make Moseley Bog and Joy's Wood one of the most accessible nature reserves in the area. Together with woodland management projects, fantastic new interpretation boards are now in place. Working with the Friends of Moseley Bog and Joys Wood paths have been improved



and a new boardwalk allows access to wheelchair and pushchair users. New sculpture gates welcome visitors at the Pensby Close car park. The Biffa funded part of our work at Moseley Bog ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. A priority for the trust is to find further funding to continue developing Moseley Bog as an attractive and accessible nature reserve for the people of Birmingham to enjoy and discover wildlife.

**Hill Hook Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Sutton Coldfield:** At this hidden oasis amongst the residential streets of Sutton Coldfield, working with a committed volunteer Friends group species such as hazel and crab apple, have been introduced, together with 5 young rare black poplar trees. The northern meadow area was also cleared of bramble and scrub to benefit the colourful flowers, such as common spotted orchids, cowslips and ox-eye daisies are found here.



**Deer's Leap Wood, Birmingham:** This site dates back to medieval times and has now been designated a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). Major tree felling was carried out over winter to remove the Lombardy poplar plantation and replaced with a variety of trees and shrubs and woodland ground flora plants. Access has also been improved with new paths, steps and boardwalks. Ongoing habitat management has been carried out with the support of the Friends of Deers Leap.

**Portway Hill, Rowley Hills, Oldbury:** Work continued to manage this important grassland reserve particularly to benefit the field-layer flora and invertebrates. Assess and visibility of the dolerite rock exposures has also been improved.

**Turner's Wood, Pelsall:** A circular footpath through the wood has been created and bramble clearance opened up areas enabling us to plant hazel and primrose.



**Peascroft Wood, Wolverhampton:** The species mix, age structure of the trees and pathways were improved and the meadow area in the centre of the wood was restored by cutting back bramble to increase the amount of light reaching the area and planting new meadow flowers. This work will continue in 2015-2016 with a focus on increasing community engagement at these reserves being our main objective.

## 8.2 Engaging People with Nature

- Two trainees completed Wild Choices programme achieving their City and Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Work Based Conservation.
- Two new FIN groups trained
- Five groups trained to monitor grasslands and woodlands as part of Eyes on the Ground







### The Freshwater Invertebrate Network (FIN)

FIN is a partnership project between the Trust, EcoRecord and the Environment Agency helping local people take care of their streams using invertebrates to monitor stream health. The project trains and supports a volunteer network of 'Stream Champions' who regularly monitor the health of their local streams, helping to improve the quality of the more than 600 km of watercourses in Birmingham and the Black Country.



Watercourses, essential to people and wildlife, are vulnerable to pollution incidents that could remain undetected for long periods of time and result in significant ecological damage. FIN groups are able to identify pollution incidents through invertebrate presence and report them to the Environment Agency for resolution.

Two groups received training this year - Friends of Woodgate Valley Country Park volunteers (monitoring the Bourn Brook) and Walsall Arboretum user group volunteers (monitoring the Hoar Brook) - and we've already had some very useful information from both. We now have 17 groups and a total of around 50 volunteers monitoring the water quality of 15 water courses at 28 sampling points.

### Eyes on the Ground

Developed through NIA work, Eyes on the Ground trains friends groups and community groups to monitor grasslands and woodlands for indicator species that reflect good and poor biodiversity. Records are reported to EcoRecord to monitor the quality of these habitats, the development of NIA projects and enhance the flora data sets for Birmingham and the Black Country.



### Volunteers

The work we do would not be possible without volunteers. People choose to volunteer in many different ways from spending time in the office helping with administration, membership, communications and planning responses to joining volunteer days to running friends groups. Volunteers bring new ideas, commitment, energy and an amazing array of skills to our work.

During this financial year the trust has worked with volunteers on 198 days of nature conservation and habitat creation activity across our reserves and Nature Improvement Area sites. We work with friends groups, community groups, schools, corporate teams and individuals. During this year we have worked with more than 1,600 volunteers, who have between them recorded an amazing 13,289 volunteer hours. Thank you all.



## EcoPark: Our Flagship Environmental Education Centre in Small Heath, Birmingham

EcoPark provides a base for our education work. We work regularly with local schools and families offering outdoor learning sessions, forest schools, events and activities. The site plays a key role as the base for some of our other projects, such as “Growing local flora”, which is helping to transform plantation woodlands by introducing native species naturally occurring in more mature woodlands. During 2014 to 2015 we have:

- Recorded more than 7,000 pupil visits to EcoPark
- Delivered teacher training days for local schools on outdoor learning and forest schools
- Run sessions for local playgroups and the Muslim Home Educators Forum

We successfully applied for funding from Players of the People’s Postcode lottery in January 2015 to develop our work at EcoPark with the aim of engaging with an additional 180 families and eight new schools. We expect to exceed these targets. Thank you to Players of the People’s Postcode lottery for helping us to ensure that more children have access to wild play and Forest Schools learning.

Thanks to a grant from [Bunzl](#) we were able to significantly improve the facilities at EcoPark, putting in a new toilet block including a disability toilet and ramp enabling the site to be used by everyone. We were also able to improve the pond dipping area.



### Outreach Engagement and Education Work

As part of our NIA work we have worked with local people young and old to involve them in habitat management, woodland and meadow creation on sites all across Birmingham and the Black Country including Moorcroft Wood, Sedgley Beacon, Massy Bank, Milking Bank, Peascroft Wood, Cannon Hill Park, Moseley Bog and Joys Wood and along the River Rea.

In addition to the fantastic work staff and volunteers achieved through the NIA to engage with communities we ran lots of outreach events for adults and children to connect local people with their local environment throughout the year and inspire them with nature.

**The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country**

We have had lots of fun working with the following schools and clubs delivering forest school sessions, outdoor learning and after school clubs: Moorcroft Primary, Christchurch Primary, and St Bernadettes, the Pastel Care Scheme. We have built shelters, hunted mini-beasts, strewn hay and done lots more besides. We attended events such as CoCoMad and Bands on the Beacon and we worked with young people at our sites through The Challenge.

**8.3 Events**

The success of **International Dawn Chorus Day** continued with over 100 events registered on the website and some fantastic media coverage. The social media aspect of it was once again very lively with a huge amount of engagement both from people at organized events and also in their own gardens taking part. Our two events at Moseley Bog & Joy's Wood and Hill Hook were both very well attended with high numbers of birds recorded.

Bringing nature discovery right to the heart of Birmingham city centre; we held our first ever **Peregrine Watch at the Library of Birmingham** in the autumn of 2014. The peregrines on the BT Tower played their part with frequent appearances and, after a misty start, the weather held good for around a hundred people to take part in some high quality bird spotting and other nature-themed activities on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of one of our most iconic city centre buildings.



**South Birmingham Group**

Our first local group for the purposes of holding walks and talks (rather than conservation activities) launched in autumn 2014 and has been a huge success with a full hall for almost all of the talks over the October-March period. Not only are they educating more people about wildlife, both on a local and wider scale, with knowledgeable and entertaining speakers, but they are also playing a vital role in attracting more members to The Trust and raising more funds for us to do practical work to protect local wildlife.



**8.4 Advocacy, Policy and Planning**

Advocacy work priorities have focussed on the Birmingham & Black Country Local Nature Partnership (B&BC LNP) and engaging with the Catchment-based Approach (CABA) in the Tame, Anker, Mease Catchment, both LNPs and Catchment working being key elements of the government's Natural Environment White Paper (2011).

**The Birmingham and Black Country Local Nature Partnership**

Supported by a Secretariat provided by the Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust, the LNP Board comprises high level decision-makers representing business and the private sector, local authorities, the DEFRA agencies, partnerships that benefit the natural environment, the health and well-being sector and the voluntary sector.



The Trust has been working with the B&BC LNP to implement a Programme of Action. Priorities cover Place, Business and People with a target for *“every person living and working in Birmingham and the Black Country to have access to green space, including a diverse range of ideally natural green space, within 5 minutes (300m) of their home and workplace.”*

The Wildlife Trust would like to thank funders, those giving help in-kind, and other supporters of LNP work: Atkins, Birmingham City Council, Birmingham & Black Country Biodiversity & Geodiversity Partnership, Birmingham & Black Country Nature Improvement Area Partnership, Birmingham City University, Birmingham Third Sector Assembly Environment Network, Black Country Consortium, Black Country Councils – Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton City Council, Canal & River Trust, Carillion plc, EcoRecord, English Heritage, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Natural England, and Switch.

### **Catchment Based Approach to Managing the Water Environment**

Overseen by the Environment Agency, the Catchment-based Approach is exploring better ways of engaging with people and organisations at a catchment level in ways that can make a difference to the health of all our waters and habitats and to encourage greater local participation securing more for communities and the water environment.

As a member of the Tame, Anker, Mease Catchment Partnership and sub-host, the Wildlife Trust has worked to implement the management plan developing projects such as NIA improvements to the Hawthorn Brook in Birmingham, coordinating a successful application to fund 3 projects in the Catchment area with one delivered at Deer’s Leap Wood Nature Reserve, and liaising with partners about future projects.

### **Advocacy and Planning**

Thanks to the work of a team of volunteers the trust was able to screen 147 applications for biodiversity issues and engage in 45 responses where large scale impacts were predicted on the natural environment. There is continued pressure for local wildlife sites to be used in development making this function more important than ever, although difficult to fund. We have also responded to the draft Dudley and Birmingham Development Plans seeking to secure positive outcomes for the natural environment.

In relation to HS2, we responded to the Final Environmental Statement consultation, petitioned Parliament against the HS2 Hybrid Bill, and were successful in securing a series of assurances from HS2 set out in the formal Register of Assurances in respect of nature conservation concerns. In addition, we have engaged with a Landscape Vision initiative for HS2 in the Tame Valley led by Birmingham City University.

We have been part of a steering group advising on the development of Birmingham City Council’s Natural Capital Planning Tool which aims to secure net positive gain for the environment from development.

The Trust advocates on behalf of the natural environment in a variety of forums including Birmingham’s Green Commission, co-chairing the Natural Capital roundtable which plans to develop a 25 year natural capital plan for the conurbation, the Black Country’s Environment Forum and Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership’s Place Advisory Group.

## EcoRecord

The ecological database  
for Birmingham and the Black Country

**EcoRecord** continued to support the work of various local volunteer recording groups and societies. Two important ongoing recording schemes to highlight this year were the first year of recording for the Bat Atlas - the first systematic survey of all bat species found in B&BC which will make a huge difference to the knowledge of bats in our area and provide a better insight into the future conservation efforts required to help bat species thrive; and the launch of the Flora of Sutton Park. Sutton Park is not only one of our living landscape's nature improvement key core areas but it is also the only site in B&BC for a large number of species.



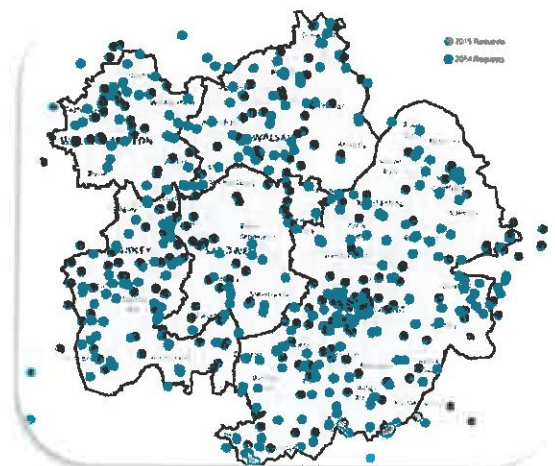
Left: Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) in Sutton Park

Below: local recording groups and initiatives in Birmingham and the Black Country



Monitoring the NIA success was also a key part of EcoRecord's work this year. Not only with regards to recording all NIA activity and helping to provide the necessary evidence basis and analysis to support the targeting process, but also in terms of developing the systems and initiatives that will allow the long term monitoring of the success of the NIA schemes such as "Eyes on the Ground".

We have also responded to a large number (over 400) of data enquiries from a variety of sources but mostly from environmental consultants.



Our social media presence, especially twitter, has expanded this year, helping to establish new contacts and communicate with new and existing audiences easily and effectively.

EcoRecord continues to develop strong relationships with partners. The EcoRecord partnership was funded by the following partners in 2014-15: Natural England, The Environment Agency, Birmingham City Council, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and Wolverhampton City Council.

### 8.5 Membership

Members are the lifeblood of the trust, and will continue to play a key role in the organisation's future. At the end of this financial year 10,665 people were members of the trust (March 2014 – 10,707) generously contributing £213,848 this year to support our core operations and allow us to design the projects that will make a difference to local wildlife for years to come. None of the work we do would be possible without this money. Thank you.

Despite recruiting 633 new memberships this year and trialling new methods including online and different leaflets, overall membership has declined slightly by 0.2%. This is disappointing and highlights a priority area of activity for the trust moving forwards. We are however finding that people's donations are increasing in value with new members giving 20% more on average than existing members.

### 8.6 Fundraising

We are continually looking to diversify our funding streams. During this financial year we were able to celebrate runners' achievements in The Great Birmingham Run. Thanks to Joe Peacock and his sponsors. We gratefully received grants and donations from the following funders. Thank you all.

#### Funders During 2014 – 2015 (in no particular order)

BIFFA

Natural England

Players of the People's Postcode Lottery

The Challenge

Joyce Farley Educational Trust

Skills for the Future

Big Lottery

Friends of Moorcroft Wood & Joy's Wood

Friends of Moseley Bog

Friends of Hill Hook

Friends of Pitts Wood

Friends of Cotteridge Park

Ratcliffe

Foundation

HLF

SITA Trust

Martann Trust

Baron Davenport

Lady Tangye

Charitable Trust

ASDA community

donation

Charles Brotherton



#### Legacy

The Trust is very grateful to Michael John Firman who was passionate about urban wildlife and remembered the Trust in his will.

#### Corporates:

Vine House Farm

Western Power

South Staffordshire Water

**In Kind Gifts:** Michael Sheehan donated over 100 hours of his time to create two beautiful oak posts in Moseley Bog and Joys' Wood.

### 8.7 Inspiring People through Marketing and Communications

- We recorded the highest ever use of the Trust's website
- Dramatically increased social media reach and engagement
- Central TV coverage of NIA projects

**Social Media:** We have been able to reach many new people through social media including facebook and twitter. We reached more than 75,000 people over the year.

**Website:** More than 112,000 visitors spent time on our website this year, doubled from last year (53,911) with 58,000 new visitors.

### 8.8 Plans for the future: 2015 and Beyond

We have achieved a lot this year but there is much more to do. We have been successful in securing continuation funding for Nature Improvement Area projects from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for three years from May 2015.

#### Our priorities for the next year are to:

- Build on the work of the NIA by developing a 25 year partnership vision for the natural environment of Birmingham and Black Country and a strategy for achieving it celebrating our unique urban landscape
- Develop EcoPark as a flagship environmental education centre for Birmingham and the Black Country
- Manage our reserves to protect and increase biodiversity and wildlife
- Work with landowners to ensure the best outcomes for biodiversity and wildlife in a challenging environment with many pressures on land use.
- Develop a strategy to continue the NIA at strategic and delivery level, continuing to involve partners and working more closely with strategic bodies such as the LNP
- Recognising that people and nature are co-dependent we will put people at the heart of our nature conservation strategy to achieve key health and well-being, education, skills and training outputs for people across Birmingham and the Black Country
- Inspire and engage more people to care for their local greenspaces
- Develop sustainable funding streams that allow the Trust to operate efficiently and effectively
- Recruit new trustees and develop our governance systems to ensure best practice is used



#### 9. Reserves Policy and Funds available

The Trustees have received advice that ideally, they should aim to acquire sufficient free reserves equivalent to three months core operating costs equating to approximately £100,000. Such reserves would be held in case of any sudden decline in income or unexpected cost or risk exposure, and to ensure that the commitments to meet contractual obligations to staff, premises and funding partners can be met.

The Trustees have some way to go to meet this aim and instead, manage each element of expenditure on a risk assessment process, not committing to expenditure unless income is assured. Substantial reductions in staffing and property costs were instigated in the year. The Trustees continue to be mindful of the requirement to operate within tight financial constraints.

Working capital for the Trust's activities currently comes from payment received upfront in respect of funding awarded to the Trust for projects running over a number of years, loans from the RSWT, and the use of a bank overdraft when required.

Whilst there can be no certainty in relation to the timing and amount of charitable grants and receipts the Directors and Trustees believe that the Trust's record of obtaining further funding will continue, albeit, with uncertainties as to when cash actually becomes available. Increasing private sector funding replacing has been obtained to partly replace reducing public sector funding.

However, whilst the Trust may be considered to punch above its weight (in terms of resources available compared to some other County Wildlife Trusts), in what is delivered, its financial constraints are limiting delivery to the vision it has.

#### 10. Pensions

The Charity operates a Group Personal Pension scheme where contributions of 3% minimum from employees are matched by 7% from the Charity. The scheme is optional to all staff once they have completed a probationary period, and transportable should they leave. The Trust's auto-enrolment date is May 2016 and preparations are well underway for us to meet this deadline.

#### 11. Statement as to disclosure of information to Auditor

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the Charity's auditor is unaware, and each Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

#### 12. Auditors

A resolution proposing the re-appointment of Stephen W Jones FCA as auditor of the charity will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

#### 13. Thank you

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country is your organisation. Together we protect and improve local wildlife and natural spaces. The Trust is the natural home for people with a passion for the environment, nature conservation, wild places, Birmingham and the Black Country. Our work is more important than ever as the space for nature decreases with mounting pressures for housing, transportation, food and economic regeneration.



At the Trust we work hard for local wildlife and for local people. We know that the health of our natural environment and our own health, well-being and even prosperity are closely linked. We couldn't do this work without the support and commitment of you, our members or the dedication of our staff and inspirational volunteers.

We would like to thank you all for supporting us during 2014 and 2015 and look forward to working with you in the years to come. We know there are many challenges ahead but also opportunities. Together we can achieve a truly sustainable future for Birmingham and the Black Country where nature flourishes along with people.

#### **Approval of the Financial Statements**

This report was approved by the Board on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors and Trustees



**Peter Shirley**  
**Chair**

**The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country**

**THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM  
AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**



**Company Number 1650938**

**Charity No. 513615**

**THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD  
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE</b>
Auditor's Report	29
Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities	31
Consolidated Balance Sheet	32
Charity Balance Sheet	33
Notes to the Financial Statements	34

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD  
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

I have audited the financial statements of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country Ltd for the year ended 31 March 2015, which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Charity Balance Sheet and the related notes on pages 34 to 42. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditor**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities the trustees (who are also the directors of The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Ltd 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.

My responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

**Scope of the audit of the financial statements**

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's and group's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Report of the Trustees to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my report.

**Opinion**

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2015 and of the group's 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.

**Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In my opinion the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.



**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD  
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**Matters on which I am required to report by exception**

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires me to report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by me; or
- the 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
- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Stephen W Jones (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
for and on behalf of **STEPHEN W JONES FCA**  
Registered Auditor  
Chartered Accountant  
King Edward House  
82 Stourbridge Road  
Halesowen  
West Midlands  
B63 3UP

Date 5 November 2015

**THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES** **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

	Notes	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total 2015	2014
		£	£	£	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Voluntary income	2	699	251,913	252,612	249,199
Activities for generating funds	2	-	100,172	100,172	68,797
<b>Income resources from generated funds</b>		<b>699</b>	<b>352,085</b>	<b>352,784</b>	<b>317,996</b>
<b>Income from charitable activities</b>		<b>454,359</b>	<b>149,873</b>	<b>604,232</b>	<b>971,945</b>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>455,058</b>	<b>501,958</b>	<b>957,016</b>	<b>1,289,941</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
Costs of generating funds:					
Costs of generating voluntary income	4	-	126,304	126,304	107,200
Fundraising trading : cost of services and other costs	4	-	77,920	77,920	71,638
<b>Costs of generating funds</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>204,224</b>	<b>204,224</b>	<b>178,838</b>
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4	<b>634,721</b>	<b>277,495</b>	<b>912,216</b>	<b>933,511</b>
<b>Governance costs</b>	6	<b>-</b>	<b>15,671</b>	<b>15,671</b>	<b>16,153</b>
<b>Total resources expended</b>	4	<b>634,721</b>	<b>497,390</b>	<b>1,132,111</b>	<b>1,128,502</b>
<b>NET (EXPENDED)/INCOMING RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS</b>		<b>(179,663)</b>	<b>4,568</b>	<b>(175,095)</b>	<b>161,439</b>
Gross transfers between Funds	12	-	-	-	-
<b>NET (EXPENDED)/INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>(179,663)</b>	<b>4,568</b>	<b>(175,095)</b>	<b>161,439</b>
being net movement in funds					
<b>Total Funds Brought Forward at 1 April 2014</b>		<b>214,405</b>	<b>54,330</b>	<b>268,735</b>	<b>107,296</b>
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward at 31 March 2015</b>	13	<b>34,742</b>	<b>58,898</b>	<b>93,640</b>	<b>268,735</b>

The notes on pages 34 to 42 form part of these financial statements.

The Statement of Financial Activities contains all the recognised gains and losses of the year and it reflects in its entirety the continuing operations of the group.

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

31 MARCH 2015

		2015		2014	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible Assets	8		146,206		151,924
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	9	157,539		287,160	
Cash at bank and in hand		11,951		175,750	
		<u>169,490</u>		<u>462,910</u>	
<b>Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)</b>	10	142,136		335,537	
<b>Net current assets</b>			27,354		127,373
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>173,560</u>		<u>279,297</u>
<b>Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)</b>	10		(79,920)		(10,562)
<b>Provisions for liabilities and charges</b>					
<b>Net Assets</b>			<u>93,640</u>		<u>268,735</u>
<b>Funds</b>					
Restricted funds	12		34,742		214,405
Unrestricted funds	3	57,420		2,565	
Unrestricted funds - Designated	14	1,478		51,765	
		<u></u>	<u>58,898</u>	<u></u>	<u>54,330</u>
<b>Members funds</b>	13		93,640		268,735

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to small companies, and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

Approved by the Board of Directors and Trustees on 5 November 2015 and signed on its behalf.

  
Martin Smith - Director and Trustee

The notes on pages 34 to 42 form part of these financial statements.

**THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD**

**CHARITY BALANCE SHEET**

**31 MARCH 2015**

		2015		2014	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible Assets	8		145,840		151,317
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	9	151,145		292,002	
Cash at bank and in hand		11,940		175,740	
		<u>163,085</u>		<u>467,742</u>	
<b>Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)</b>	10	<u>131,020</u>		<u>320,599</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			32,065		147,143
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>177,905</u>		<u>298,460</u>
<b>Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)</b>	10		<u>(79,920)</u>		<u>(10,562)</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>			<u>97,985</u>		<u>287,898</u>
<b>Funds</b>					
Restricted funds	12		34,742		214,405
Unrestricted funds	3	61,765		21,728	
Unrestricted funds - Designated	14	<u>1,478</u>		<u>51,765</u>	
			<u>63,243</u>		<u>73,493</u>
<b>Members funds</b>			<u>97,985</u>		<u>287,898</u>

**Limited Liability**

The company is limited by guarantee and in the event of liquidation each member's contribution as defined in clause 7 of the Memorandum of Association is limited to a sum not exceeding 50p (fifty pence).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to small companies, and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

Approved by the Board of Directors and Trustees on 5 November 2015 and signed on its behalf.

Martin Smith - Director and Trustee

The notes on pages 34 to 42 form part of these financial statements.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31 MARCH 2015

**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.1 Preparation of the financial statements and going concern basis**

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions in Financial Reporting Statement No. 1 from producing a cash flow statement. The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005), applicable Accounting Standards, the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Directors and Trustees believe that the charity will be able to continue to operate within the current financial arrangements for at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The Trust is now in a state of change and it is recognised that during this period of change there will continue to be financial challenges. The ongoing monitoring of budget and cash flow projections indicates the need for income increases and cost reductions (or both) in this period. The Trustees believe this is achievable.

**1.2 Basis of Consolidation**

The consolidated financial statements comprise The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country Ltd (the Charity) and its subsidiary Land Care Associates Limited (the Group). The summarised profit and loss account and balance sheet from latest draft accounts available of Land Care Associates Limited are given in note 3. In accordance with the exemptions granted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and paragraph 397 of SORP 2005 no separate Statement of Financial Activities, or income and expenditure account, is presented for the charity itself. The retained deficit of income for the charity for the year was £189,913.

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country along with seven other Trusts formed a company - 'Wildlife Fundraising (Central) Limited' (by guarantee) following the demise of another fundraiser company. Details of the related party transactions are disclosed in note 15 of the accounts. No minority interest is adjusted in these accounts as the share of the company and its results are currently immaterial.

**1.3 Income and Expenditure Account**

The company is a non profit making organisation and the results of the year have in accordance with SORP 2005 been presented in the form of an income and expenditure account.

**1.4 Incoming Resources**

Income is generally recognised on a receivable basis and is reported gross of related expenditure, where the amount is reasonably certain and when there is adequate certainty of receipt. The specific bases used are as follows:

- Voluntary income includes members subscriptions, donations (including related gift aid tax) legacies and grants of a general nature.
- Subsidiary trading income is the total amount received for goods and services provided, excluding VAT. Intercompany transactions are excluded on consolidation.
- Contractual income is recorded when receivable.
- Grants received during the year which relate to the following financial year are carried forward in creditors.

**1.5 Resources expended**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been allocated to the appropriate heading in the financial statements.

- Costs of generating funds relate to expenditure incurred in raising voluntary income and fundraising trading costs.
- Charitable activities' expenditure relates to expenditure on meeting the charitable objects. This includes materials and bought in services, staff costs, information systems, communications, rented accommodation and general management directly chargeable to projects, thereby covering both

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.5 Resources expended (continued)**

internal costs and external charges for such costs. Such costs incurred internally are apportioned to projects based on direct staffing levels.

- Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the group and relate to the professional costs of running the charity.
- Support costs including staff costs, information systems, communications, office accommodation and general management, are fully apportioned to other cost categories, and are primarily based on direct staffing levels.
- Membership recruitment costs, where an agency charges the trust a fee based on the first years membership income for recruitment of new members, are charged to the accounts over a period of 10 months. Surplus new income is therefore only accounted for after this period has ended and this policy is viewed as being prudent.

**1.6 Depreciation of fixed assets**

Depreciation is calculated to write off the book value of each tangible fixed asset over its expected useful life at the following rates:-

Centre Of The Earth	4% straight line (see note 8)
People and Wildlife Centre Design	not provided
Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment	25% straight line
Motor vehicles	25% reducing balance basis
Land	not provided

Expenditure on fixtures, fittings and general office equipment purchased by the charity for projects is currently written off in the year in which the expenditure is incurred, expenditure incurred for administration purposes is capitalised and depreciated as stated above.

No depreciation is charged on the expenditure incurred on the People and Wildlife Centre. This is an asset comprising professional fees in design studies for future accommodation requirements which will only be built when funds become available.

No depreciation is charged on land owned by the charity.

**1.7 Operating Leases**

Payments under an arrangement which is in substance of a rental nature (operating leases) are charged in the financial statements as incurred.

**1.8 Pensions**

The group makes payments of employers contributions into independently administered money purchase pension policies for qualifying employees. Pension costs are charged in the financial statements on an accruals basis.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.9 Volunteer help**

It is not our current policy to place a value on the time volunteered by Trustees, Directors or temporary or occasional volunteers.

**1.10 Fund Accounting**

Restricted funds - these are funds received for undertaking an activity specified by the donor.

Unrestricted funds - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

**1.11 Irrecoverable Vat**

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

**2 Analysis of Income from Generated funds**

	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total 2015	Total 2014
	£	£	£	£
<b>Voluntary Income</b>				
Members subscriptions & donations (including gift aid)	-	213,848	213,848	207,012
Other donations	699	11,320	12,019	8,787
Legacies	-	26,745	26,745	33,400
	699	251,913	252,612	249,199
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>				
Subsidiary trading income (note 3)	-	73,255	73,255	63,252
Other income	-	26,917	26,917	5,545
	-	100,172	100,172	68,797

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

3 Details regarding the trading subsidiary and its net income.

The charity controls Land Care Associates Limited, a company limited by guarantee, operating from the same head office premises as the charity. It carries out environmental consultancy work that is not appropriate for the charity to do because of its charitable status.

Land Care Associates Limited is incorporated in the UK and registered in England, the accounts are audited and filed at Companies House.

The following information is taken from the company's latest draft accounts and therefore includes transactions undertaken with the charity.

Profit and Loss Account	DRAFT	AUDITED
	2015 £	2014 £
Turnover	77,305	83,533
Cost of sales	<u>2,639</u>	<u>4,645</u>
Gross Profit	74,666	78,888
Administration expenses	<u>83,319</u>	<u>78,072</u>
Operating loss	(8,653)	816
Interest payable	34	(1,040)
Loss on ordinary activities before taxation	(8,619)	(224)
Tax on Loss on ordinary activities	-	-
Loss for the financial year after taxation	(8,619)	(224)
Reserves brought forward	<u>(19,163)</u>	<u>(18,939)</u>
Reserves carried forward	<u>(27,782)</u>	<u>(19,163)</u>

Due to past losses resulting in an overall negative position, the current competitive state of the market and with no prospect of returning the company to profitability in the short to medium term the directors of Land Care Associates Limited have taken the decision to obtain professional advice on an appropriate course of action which advised they should cease trading.

Following such advice and with limited funds available the company has invited creditors to accept a proportional payment of their debt in order to avoid the expense of liquidation to the disadvantage of all. In the event of agreement being reached, and when payment has been made in accordance with the agreement, application will be made to the Registrar of Companies to be struck off.

In order to permit the maximum pay out to creditors The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country (parent charity) has proposed not to pursue the outstanding balance owed to them if agreement can be reached. The amount of £23,437 has therefore been treated as irrecoverable in the parent charity financial statements.

Balance Sheet	2015	2014
	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	367	608
Current Assets	6,405	9,952
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(34,554)	(29,723)
Provisions for Liabilities and Charges	-	-
Net assets	<u>(27,782)</u>	<u>(19,163)</u>
Reserves - Profit and loss account	<u>(27,782)</u>	<u>(19,163)</u>

Of the deficit of £27,782 the amount of £23,437 has already been provided for in the charity only financial statements. The charity has no further liability to Land Care Associates Limited.

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

4 Analysis of Total Resources Expended

	Direct Costs £	Support Costs £	Total 2015 £	Total 2014 £
<b>Costs of generating funds:</b>				
Costs of raising voluntary income	49,953	76,351	126,304	107,200
Fundraising trading: costs of services and other costs	62,490	15,430	77,920	71,638
	<u>112,443</u>	<u>91,781</u>	<u>204,224</u>	<u>178,838</u>
<b>Direct charitable expenditure</b>				
Project management etc.	763,395	148,821	912,216	933,511
<b>Governance costs</b>	<u>15,671</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,671</u>	<u>16,153</u>
			<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
			£	£
<b>The above costs include:-</b>				
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets - owned			8,988	11,015
Operating lease rentals			31,707	30,933
Auditors fees			4,400	6,500
Pension costs			16,844	18,995

5 Allocation of Support Costs

	Cost of generating funds £	Charitable activities £	Governance activities £	Total 2015 £	Total 2014 £
Management staff costs	58,065	25,236	-	83,301	66,559
Premises and administrative	33,716	123,585	-	157,301	194,112
<b>Total support costs allocated</b>	<u>91,781</u>	<u>148,821</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>240,602</u>	<u>260,671</u>

6 Governance costs

	Direct Costs £	Support Costs £	Total 2015 £	Total 2014 £
Audit, accountancy & legal fees being				
the total governance costs	15,671	-	15,671	16,153

7 Staff costs

No remuneration was paid to the trustees in the year nor were any expenses reimbursed to them.

GROUP

	2015 £	2014 £
Total emoluments :-		
Staff wages	414,316	443,720
Pension contributions	18,306	18,995
Employer's national insurance	30,716	38,556
	<u>463,338</u>	<u>501,271</u>

Average number of employees by category

	2015	2014
Direct charitable work	19	20
Fundraising	1	1
Administrative	1	1
	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>

There are no employees earning in excess of £60,000.

The number of employees to whom retirement

benefits are accruing was as follows:-

	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>
--	-----------	-----------

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

8 Tangible Fixed Assets

GROUP	Centre Of The Earth	Land	People & Wildlife Centre	Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Total
COST	£	£	£	£	£	£
1 April 2014	151,578	20,523	82,099	54,792	3,250	312,242
Additions	-	-	-	3,511	-	3,511
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-
31 March 2015	151,578	20,523	82,099	58,303	3,250	315,753
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>						
1 April 2014	114,204	-	-	43,316	2,798	160,318
Charge for the year	4,271	-	-	4,845	113	9,229
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-
31 March 2015	118,475	-	-	48,161	2,911	169,547
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>						
31 March 2015	33,103	20,523	82,099	10,142	339	146,206
31 March 2014	37,374	20,523	82,099	11,476	452	151,924
<b>CHARITY COST</b>						
1 April 2014	151,578	20,523	82,099	42,457	3,250	299,907
Additions	-	-	-	3,511	-	3,511
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-
31 March 2015	151,578	20,523	82,099	45,968	3,250	303,418
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>						
1 April 2014	114,203	-	-	31,589	2,798	148,590
Charge for the year	4,271	-	-	4,604	113	8,988
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-
31 March 2015	118,474	-	-	36,193	2,911	157,578
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>						
31 March 2015	33,104	20,523	82,099	9,775	339	145,840
31 March 2014	37,375	20,523	82,099	10,868	452	151,317

The Centre Of The Earth is built on land which is leased from Birmingham City Council on a twenty five year lease from 24<sup>th</sup> March 1998

The net book value as at 31 December 1997 is being written off over the term of the lease by equal annual instalments

Land includes (at cost) Rowley Regis - £10,522 Turners Wood - £10,000 and Deer's Leap - £1.

9 Debtors

	2015		2014	
	Group £	Charity £	Group £	Charity £
<b>Due after more than one year:-</b>				
Long term loan to associated undertaking (note 15)	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:-</b>				
Trade debtors	99,739	93,395	199,634	191,474
Amount due from subsidiary	-	-	-	14,200
Other debtors	30,332	30,282	37,053	37,053
Prepayments	17,468	17,468	40,473	39,275
	157,539	151,145	287,160	282,002

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

10 Creditors	2015		2014	
	Group	Charity	Group	Charity
Amounts falling due within one year:-	£	£	£	£
Bank overdraft (secured)	1,968	-	3,711	-
Other Loans - The Wildlife Trusts	-	-	65,416	65,416
Trade creditors	118,859	112,208	216,517	213,974
Amount due to subsidiary	-	-	-	584
Amount due to associated undertaking	-	-	11,442	11,442
Social security and taxation	7,404	6,895	21,482	15,551
Accruals & other creditors	13,905	11,917	16,969	13,632
	<u>142,136</u>	<u>131,020</u>	<u>335,537</u>	<u>320,599</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year:-				
Other Loans - The Wildlife Trusts	79,920	79,920	11,678	11,678
	<u>79,920</u>	<u>79,920</u>	<u>11,678</u>	<u>11,678</u>

A repayment holiday has been agreed with respect to the other loan and no repayment is due before 31 March 2016. This loan balance is therefore stated as due after more than one year.

The bank overdraft is secured by a legal mortgage over the Centre Of The Earth and a fixed and floating charge over all other assets of the charity, and a debenture together with a personal guarantee by some of the directors of the subsidiary in respect of the subsidiary's overdraft.

11 Other financial commitments

a) Project commitments

The charity and group have no commitments on its projects except where funding has already been received in advance at 31 March 2015.

b) Operating Leases - annual commitment for year to 31 March 2016.

Land & buildings:-	£
Leases expiring within one year	250
Leases expiring within two to five years	23,700
Leases expiring after more than five years	<u>3,950</u>

THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

12 Funds of the Charity

The restricted fund represents monies receivable for projects which can only be spent on their respective activities and are analysed as follows:-

	At 1 April 2014	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At 31 March 2015
	£	£	£	£	£
General administration	-	1,880	1,880	-	-
Moseley Bog	783	5,158	5,941	-	-
Catchment Hosting	-	6,000	6,000	-	-
Peascroft Wood	-	37,650	19,506	-	18,144
Parkhall Farm	-	2,000	2,000	-	-
Rowley Regis	-	30	30	-	-
Practical Conservation	-	10,004	10,004	-	-
Ecorecord	19,297	8,966	21,330	-	6,933
Biodiversity project	12,000	12,000	24,000	-	-
Education Coordination	17,500	5,000	22,500	-	-
Strategic Development fund	5,750	-	5,750	-	-
Environment Education	6,125	43,183	49,308	-	-
Promotions	-	700	700	-	-
Conservation Strategy	-	7,000	7,000	-	-
Conservation Projects	-	9,919	9,919	-	-
Membership	-	254	254	-	-
Moseley Bog Biffaward	-	28,391	28,391	-	-
Nature improvement Area Turners Wood	141,760	237,900	379,660	-	-
	11,190	-	1,525	-	9,665
Barr Beacon	-	21,223	21,223	-	-
Deers Leap	-	17,800	17,800	-	-
	214,405	455,058	634,721	-	34,742

Transfers are made between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at the time the specific restrictions have been fulfilled.



THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY LTD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

31 MARCH 2015

13 Analysis of fund balances between the net assets

	Consolidated Restricted Funds	Consolidated Unrestricted Funds	Consolidated Total 2015	Consolidated Total 2014
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	10,000	136,206	146,206	151,924
Debtors	40,918	116,821	157,539	287,160
Cash	15,910	(3,959)	11,951	175,750
Creditors- due within one year	(32,086)	(110,050)	(142,136)	(335,537)
Creditors & provisions- due after one year	-	(79,920)	(79,920)	(10,562)
	34,742	58,898	93,640	268,735

	Charity Restricted Funds	Charity Unrestricted Funds	Charity Total 2015	Charity Total 2014
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	10,000	135,840	145,840	151,317
Debtors	40,918	110,227	151,145	292,002
Cash	15,910	(3,970)	11,940	175,740
Creditors- due within one year	(32,086)	(98,934)	(131,020)	(320,599)
Creditors- due after more than one year	-	(79,920)	(79,920)	(10,562)
	34,742	63,243	97,985	287,898

14 Designated fund

The designated fund relates to the balance of funds received in the accounts for the year to 31 March 2014 remaining unspent but designated for use on our commitments for Deers Leap.

15 Related party transactions

Advantage has been taken of the exemptions under FRS 8(3) not to disclose transactions between parties eliminated on consolidation.

Non Consolidated Associated Company

Wildlife Fundraising (Central) Limited is a company set up in 2013 by eight Wildlife Trusts following the demise of a previously used fundraising company. As part of the setting up arrangement each trust was to provide a loan to the company. The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Limited provided £10,000 (secured by a fixed and floating charge) as shown in the balance sheet in debtors over 1 year and as such the new company is an associated undertaking. There is no share capital as the company is limited by guarantee. The Trusts liability is limited to £1 in the event of liquidation. At 31 March 2015 Wildlife Fundraising (Central) Limited has a net deficit of reserves amounting to £5,991. The trust has not consolidated the results on the grounds of immateriality. The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country Limited paid commission amounting to £38,177 (net of VAT) to Wildlife Fundraising (Central) Limited during the year, and the Trust owes the company a balance of £Nil (gross) at the year end for commission invoiced but not yet paid.

