



Together we can bring wildlife back

Cumbria Wildlife Trust's Five-Year Strategy 2020 – 2025

Just before the Coronavirus pandemic struck, our trustees approved the Trust's next Five-Year Strategy. Following many conversations, feedback from members and much analysis, we identified **wildlife decline, climate change and people and wildlife** as the key priorities for our work. Fundraising to expand the scale of our work and programmes was also recognised as a vital ingredient in achieving the success we want to see.

Covid-19 changes none of this, but to misquote Field Marshall von Moltke: "no strategy extends with any certainty beyond the first contact with the main hostile force".

We cannot ignore the obvious; Covid-19 is that first contact with a hostile force. We may well need to substantially change our strategy as we understand the full scale and scope of its impacts. The wider economic fallout and how the Trust's prospects are affected will be critical in this. We've already heard that the National Lottery Heritage Fund, amongst other funders, has postponed new applications for projects until October. This means our intended 'pipeline' of wildlife restoration

programmes will be disrupted over the next few years and we will need to work hard to find alternative funding.

With that in mind, we present the following outline of what we'd like to do over the next five years, but with the caveat that it will change to some degree. The Trust will need to be highly adaptable in the new circumstances. Our ambitions are enduring, but the timescales and tactics for how we achieve them may need to change significantly.

The outcomes we want to achieve

By 2025, we want to have achieved significant progress in reversing the declines of Cumbrian wildlife on land and in the marine environment. We want to bring more wildlife back to Cumbria by:

- **Reversing the downward trend in the variety and abundance of wildlife and wild places, with the natural environment recovering across Cumbria.**

With our nature reserves at the core, want to see more space dedicated (30% by 2030) to wildlife in Cumbria, with a better-managed and joined-up

network of wildlife-rich places on land, and a coherent network of marine-protected areas at sea. We need to restore broken ecosystems at a landscape scale, with missing wildlife returning on land, in freshwater and at sea.

- **Making the protection and recovery of habitats key to how Cumbria tackles the climate emergency and achieves the net carbon zero target for the county (i.e. 2037).**

We will work with fishermen, politicians and partners to protect our seas.



ALEXANDER MUSTARD/2020VISION

Nature conservation needs to extend beyond nature reserves like Whitbarrow to create a joined-up network where wildlife thrives in Cumbria.

- **Helping more people to enjoy and learn** about wildlife, and benefit from the 'natural health service' on their doorsteps. We want to support more people, local communities and organisations to get involved, with one in four people volunteering and taking action for wildlife near where they live.

Our approach

Guided by our values, the Trust will approach this vital work with a renewed sense of urgency, determination and focus. We will raise and invest more than £15m (a pre-Covid19 target) to deliver this Strategy.

The key means of achieving our ambitions will be to work in partnership with others to improve wildlife in Cumbria. We will collaborate to find nature-based solutions to shared problems, especially where they bring multiple benefits for people and wildlife ■

Our top three priorities

1 Delivering nature-based solutions on our own nature reserves and in the wider countryside. We will play a leading role in tackling the wildlife crisis and climate emergency on land and sea by:

- Continuing to look after and enhance our nature reserves. We will continue to increase the area of land in our care.

- Increasing the urgency, scale and scope of our work by, for example, delivering more peat, grassland and woodland restoration programmes.

- Providing more ecological advice to farmers, landowners and others.

- Speaking up for Cumbrian wildlife.

- Helping create a Nature Recovery Network across Cumbria.

2 People and wildlife. We will help make local wildlife even more relevant and important in the lives of people and local communities by:

- Expanding our activities to engage people with nature through events, promoting 'five-ways to nature' and our learning for all programmes.

- Improving access to our nature reserves.

- Developing Gosling Sike and its role in supporting health and wellbeing, in partnership with others in the City of Carlisle.

- Supporting and promoting local support groups, which have a vital role to play in our work.



3 Raising our game to meet the scale of the challenges for wildlife in Cumbria by:

- Generating new income and resources so that we can increase the scale of our work to match the scale of the wildlife crisis.

- Improving our governance arrangements.

- Expanding our capacity and capability by recruiting more staff and volunteers, and investing in their training and development.

- Investing in new Information Technology and processes to improve our efficiency and effectiveness, and to drive reductions in the environmental footprint of our activities.