



# **Ulster Wildlife Trust**

## **Annual Report & Accounts 2016/17**



**Ulster  
Wildlife**







Barn owl © Andrew Mason

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# Foreword from Chairman & Chief Executive

The past twelve months have been extraordinary following the UK's vote on 23 June 2016 to leave the European Union. Given the key role that the EU has played in raising the bar on environmental standards for the benefit of its citizens, this decision has potentially major and far reaching consequences for everyone in Northern Ireland.

Across the UK and together with our neighbours in the Republic of Ireland, we have a shared interest in protecting our environment and delivering a 'green' Brexit. As powers are returned from the EU, it is important that we all work closely together on the environment, fisheries and agriculture to deliver 'best in class' policies that safeguard our future. Brexit has been a significant focus of our work during the year and we have been collaborating with local and national environmental organisations and government in considering options for the way forward.

We need to protect and improve our environment and a new approach is required – simply halting or slowing down the deterioration of the environment is not going to be sufficient to support a prosperous and healthy region and reverse the degradation. We need to safeguard our natural world and the benefits it provides for the next generation, raising our ambition to enhance nature and promote its recovery.

During the last year, Ulster Wildlife has taken action to:

- Protect our beautiful and historic landscapes and seascapes through the management of nature reserves and delivery of conservation programmes targeting endangered habitats and species.
- Promote sustainable land use through contributing to the design of Northern Ireland's new agri-environment programme and commencing implementation of an Interreg project to restore valuable peatland sites.

- Deliver healthy and productive seas through contributing to policy development by leading the Northern Ireland Marine Task Force, working in partnership with other eNGOs and implementing a community engagement project to raise awareness of marine issues.
- Help nature thrive through directly caring for rare and protected habitats and species on the sites we manage and advising other land owners how to make a positive contribution to biodiversity. During the year we also developed and delivered wildlife awareness training aimed at preventing and protecting against wildlife crime.
- Provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to engage with, and learn about, nature and the environment.
- Showcase our work and build an evidence base which can be used to demonstrate best practice.



Roy Ramsay, Jennifer Fulton and Tony Juniper, President of the Wildlife Trusts, at the 2016 AGM

Greater knowledge and awareness help people to make informed choices about their impact on the environment and how they can help to shape and protect it. Moving forward we will continue to work with our farmers, fishermen and businesses to deliver environmental improvement through building understanding and appreciation of nature's value and how they can assist its recovery. We will also work in partnership with the public and community sectors to utilise the potential of our natural assets to address societal issues such as health and well-being and employability skills and the potential it can offer in providing effective low-cost natural solutions to issues such as flood alleviation.

Most importantly, we will continue our work to encourage the next generation to value nature, understand the impact of everyday choices on the natural world. Through targeted action in these areas we hope to achieve environmental improvements that will benefit nature and people alike.

Finally, we would like to thank our Trustees who continue to dedicate their time and expertise to the charity, along with our Honorary President – Joe Furphy OBE.



*Jennifer Fulton*

Jennifer Fulton  
**Chief Executive**



*R. Ramsay*

Roy Ramsay  
**Chairman**



Marsh helleborine at  
Milford Cutting © R Bradley



# Nature Matters

For over 35 years Ulster Wildlife has been driven and supported by people who believe that wildlife and wild places are important. Nature brings a host of benefits for society - it is fundamental to human well-being and underpins a sustainable economy. We are a local charity that champions native wildlife. We work with local people to secure space for nature in our countryside, towns, coastlines and seas.

**Our long-term vision is for a Northern Ireland with:**

**‘...a healthy, well cared for natural environment which contributes to enjoyment, quality of life, prosperity, health & well-being’.**

**Ulster Wildlife’s charitable objectives as set out in our Articles of Association are -**

- (1) The advancement of environmental protection and improvement, in particular the conservation of all aspects of Northern Ireland and its adjacent areas’ wildlife, biodiversity, geodiversity and associated natural beauty for the benefit of present and future generations by:

(a) safeguarding, maintaining and enhancing natural biodiversity and geodiversity through the management of nature reserves (however entitled or however established);

(b) practising, advocating, encouraging, influencing, advising and campaigning for best conservation practice involving land, sea and freshwater management practice in ways that favour biodiversity, geodiversity, ecosystem health, sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable development;

(c) undertaking action, independently or in partnership, to protect threatened habitats, sites of geodiversity or heritage significance, at local, national or international levels on or in water, land and adjacent seas;
- (d) taking account of other aspects of the natural heritage on which wildlife is dependent or to which it contributes, including landforms and landscapes;

(e) improving the quality of life of people through supporting a biodiversity, ecosystem, geodiversity and sustainability-led approach to the management and design of the natural and built environment.
- (2) The advancement of education by raising the public’s awareness and knowledge of all aspects of the natural and built heritage, biodiversity and geodiversity of Northern Ireland and its adjacent areas by promoting, undertaking and co-operating in research and gathering and sharing information on these topics.

(3) The advancement of citizenship through volunteering linked to natural heritage including the promotion of sustainable food production and sustainable lifestyles.

(4) The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage and science linked to natural heritage through events and project-based action.

(5) The advancement of health and wellbeing through activities linked to the natural environment.

**Our Charitable Objectives are delivered through the two Strategic Themes of Living Landscapes and Living Seas.**

**Our Living Landscapes work is about:**

- Working with people and communities to restore damaged and fragmented habitats, reconnecting these and linking them to the green space in our cities, towns and villages.
- Securing a society where people are inspired by, and engaged in, protecting wildlife and where they recognise the economic and social value of nature, and the many ways in which it improves their quality of life.

**Our Living Seas work is about:**

- Helping wildlife and habitats to recover from past decline as our use of the seas’ resources becomes environmentally sustainable.
- Inspiring people about marine wildlife and to value the sea for the many ways in which it supports our quality of life.
- Creating a network of marine protected areas as part of a long-term solution to the management of healthy seas.

**Public Benefit**

The Trustees have taken into account the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity’s aim and objectives and in planning our future activities.

This Trustees’ Report shows how we performed against these Strategic Goals and Targets in 2016/17.



Bottlenose dolphins at Ramore Head, Portrush © Geoff Campbell

Our work to achieve Living Landscapes and Seas is delivered annually focused around five strategic goals.

**Our Priorities for 2016 - 17**

This was the fourth year of delivery under our current Corporate Strategy ‘Wildlife in Trust’ which runs until the end of March 2020.

Our Five strategic goals are:

- 1. Inspire people** to champion wildlife and value nature.
- 2. Protect and restore habitats and ecosystems** through practical action and research.
- 3. Stand up for nature** by influencing government policy.
- 4. Promote health and well-being** through enjoyment of the natural environment.
- 5. Grow our success** and extend our reach.

**Our Fundraising targets for 2016/17 were:**

- > To secure at least 12,000 members or regular supporters.
- > To secure £373,598 income from Membership including Gift-Aid contributions.






Beach Clean at Mill Bay in April 2016

# At a Glance...2016/17

Over   
**135,000**  
visits to our nature reserves

Over   
**10,000**  
young people engaged in  
nature education sessions

  
**22.5km**  
of coastline surveyed

  
Over  
**7,500**  
volunteer hours  
contributed

  
**234** bags of  
rubbish collected at  
beach cleans

  
**102** NI Priority  
Species cared for on  
our nature reserves

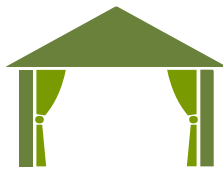
**682**   
hectares of nature  
reserves managed

  
**12,212**  
members supporting our work

Over   
**500**  
landowners benefiting  
from advice

  
Over  
**3,000**  
hectares of meadows  
under positive  
management in  
Fermanagh

  
Over  
**2,000**  
people attended our  
wildlife events

Over   
**22,000**  
people engaged with  
nature at shows, fairs  
and festivals

  
**205** sites  
surveyed for barn owls  
in summer 2016



# Inspire people to champion wildlife and value nature

We believe that in order to protect Northern Ireland's diverse landscapes and seas, and secure a future rich in wildlife, we must invest resources into re-engaging people with nature and educating our society to value the environment as a vital investment in our future health, well-being and economy.



Learning about Belfast's wildlife in the ParkLife project

## Education

### Inspiring people about nature and why it matters continued to play a large part in our operations during 2016/17.

We delivered environmental education programmes with hundreds of schools and community groups across Northern Ireland focusing on a wide range of subjects such as wildflowers and meadows, pollinators, birds, bats, squirrels, sea life and energy use.

Through our ParkLife project we ran six Saturday Clubs for young people in Belfast City Council Parks across Belfast. We also worked with 40 Primary Schools across Belfast and had 4,352 interactions with schoolchildren during the year.

Our Grassroots Challenge Project worked with nine Special Schools helping them to improve their understanding of wildlife and to take action in their school grounds. We held 63 sessions with these schools over the year and carried out activities including biodiversity surveys, wildflower planting, tree planting and making bird feeders.

We also developed and piloted an 'Environmental Leadership Programme' with four Secondary Schools in the Larne and Carrickfergus areas, in conjunction with our Corporate Partner AES, to engage young people in their local environment and encourage them to consider stem subjects in their GCSE choices.

Ulster Wildlife also continued to support two Wildlife Watch Groups in Lisburn and Belfast run by dedicated volunteer Leaders.

## Training

### During 2016/17, we continued to deliver our Heritage Lottery-funded project - Skills for Living Landscapes and Seas.

We moved into the final year of this project, welcoming seven new trainees to complete a year's full-time training with our Nature Reserves and Living Seas Teams. The trainees gain a wide range of skills including habitat management, species ID, biological surveying and community engagement. Also during the year we delivered survey training workshops for our Barn Owl and Squirrel Surveys and several training days on establishing a meadow and how to carry out shoreline surveys.

Our Grassroots Challenge Project worked with 19 Young Farmers Clubs delivering engaging wildlife education and training events throughout NI. The project also started the development of a Lantra-Approved 'Conservation on the Farm' training course for delivery in 2017/18.

In November 2016, 43 people attended our workshop on how to deal with live mammal strandings in partnership with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. This was attended by land owners, government staff and local authorities and served to provide best practice information to a range of stakeholders.

Parklife





Snorkel Safari at Groomsport in Aug 2016

## Volunteering

**Volunteers continued to be crucial in the delivery of our aims and objectives and helped us in a wide range of tasks including practical work on nature reserves, supporting wildlife surveys, as well as helping with our fundraising efforts.**

Over 7,500 volunteer hours were given in 2016/17 to support our conservation efforts. We will continue to develop high quality volunteering opportunities and hope to see this figure growing in future years.

Our Grassroots Challenge Project also worked with Duke of Edinburgh's Award leaders and young people to encourage and facilitate more nature-based volunteering through the Award. We also provided the opportunity for young people to develop practical conservation skills with the aim of them using those skills during their 'expedition' section of the Award.

## Events

**In 2016/17, Ulster Wildlife ran over 85 events for the public offering innovative and fun ways to learn about wildlife and get involved in their local areas.**

Events included talks, walks, rambles and clean-ups across the whole of Northern Ireland. Our snorkel safaris continued to be hugely popular, with over 80 people getting the chance to explore our local waters. Our Fireside Stories event through the Save our Magnificent Meadows project is always a highlight with over 100 attendees enjoying stories on meadow folklore and fables. Over 2,000 people attended our events in 2016/17.



Hay Raking at Bog Meadows



# Protect and restore habitats and ecosystems through practical action and research

We continue to promote the restoration of natural systems to provide maximum benefit for native species, habitats and people. This work centres around the protection and good management of core, high-nature-value sites, and seeks to promote habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors to form the basis of ecological networks within our landscapes and seas. We use our local presence and knowledge to carry out practical habitat management work, and assist others in doing so.

Umbra Nature Reserve

## Nature Reserves

**During 2016/17, Ulster Wildlife continued to manage and protect a suite of 18 Nature Reserves covering 682 hectares of land. These special places are managed for nature and people across Northern Ireland. They are home to at least 102 NI Priority Species and 19 NI Priority Habitats.**

Work throughout the year includes practical habitat management, access maintenance and species and habitat monitoring activities.

Significant scrub clearance was carried out at Ballynahone Bog, Inishargy Bog, Umbra and Slievenacloy during the winter period; bracken control took place at Glendun and Inishargy Bog; and grassland and glade management was carried out at Balloo Woodland & Wetland, Milford Cutting, Straidkilly and Feystown.

Each year, invasive species control is another major activity for the nature reserves team. Non-native invasives managed during 2016/17 included Himalayan balsam, rhododendron, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan honeysuckle and sycamore. The works ensure that these habitats are not overrun by non-native species and ensure that native flowers and trees can flourish.

The nature reserves team also worked with conservation graziers at several of our nature reserves to ensure that the stocking levels were correct and that grazing periods were adhered to under our Northern Ireland Countryside Management Scheme requirements. Cattle or sheep currently graze five of our nature reserves - Slievenacloy, Umbra, Glendun, Bog Meadows and Feystown - to help manage the grassland habitats. We will also be working to re-establish grazing at Inishargy Bog in the coming year.

A wide range of habitat and species monitoring is undertaken during the year to inform site management and input into National Surveys that give a wider picture on how a range of species are doing across the UK and Ireland.

National Recording Schemes that Ulster Wildlife contributes to or facilitates include: the BTO Breeding Bird Survey and Constant Effort Sites Scheme, the United Kingdom Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, the National Moth Recording Scheme, National Moth Night and the JNCC Seabird Monitoring Programme.

Species monitoring included moth and butterfly surveys at Slievenacloy, Inishargy Bog and Umbra; botanical surveys at Slievenacloy, Umbra, Milford Cutting, Feystown and Glenarm; bird surveys at Slievenacloy, Ballynahone Bog and Isle of Muck; and mammals surveys at Straidkilly, Glenarm and Balloo Wetland.





Small Eggar Caterpillar at Magilligan

## Protected Areas

**Our nature reserves team continued to work in partnership with the Copeland Bird Observatory members to support the management of the Copeland Islands Special Protection Area (SPA) just off the coast from Donaghadee in Co. Down.**

They helped with grassland management works to ensure suitable habitat for the Manx shearwaters which nest there annually.

**October 2016 saw the beginning of an exciting partnership programme between Ulster Wildlife and the Ministry of Defence (MOD).** The two organisations will be working together to review and implement management arrangements for two local training facilities at Ballykinler and Magilligan - two of the most important sites for wildlife locally, both within Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).

This new partnership sees the employment of a part-time Conservation Officer based with Ulster Wildlife and jointly funded by MOD and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. The new officer has been working since October 2016 carrying out a wide variety of tasks to help deliver the conservation management objectives for both sites in parallel to training requirements. The project targets over two years include a review of site management plans, the implementation of scrub management plans, supervision of contractors and graziers, as well as liaison with stakeholders.

**In 2016, we carried out surveys on Black Bog SAC in Co. Tyrone - one of the largest bogs in Northern Ireland - as part of our development of a 'Conservation Action Plan' for the site funded by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.**

Most of Black Bog is owned privately by seven individuals. For some, the land has been in their family for generations and they have shared their stories with us, which has been invaluable. Working with Forest Service and these private landowners we aim to take forward the works identified in the Action Plan over the next few years.

**Our partnership with AES UK & Ireland continued in 2016/17.**

The sea loughs surrounding Kilroot and Ballylumford power stations feature important habitats and support a wide range of wildlife - both Belfast Lough and Larne Lough are designated as Ramsar Sites, Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). Ulster Wildlife employs a Biodiversity Intern, funded by AES, who works with them to improve their environmental practices and their landholdings for wildlife. During 2016/17 work continued on the development of a 'Biodiversity Action Plan' for AES which will be launched in 2017/18.





Restoring a Meadow in Fermanagh –  
Save our Magnificent Meadows Project

## Landscape-scale Projects

**The Save our Magnificent Meadows project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, entered its third and final year in Spring 2016. The project aims to work across the landscape in Fermanagh and South Tyrone to protect, restore and link together some of the remaining fragments of species-rich grasslands that exist in these areas.**

The project delivers through a combination of practical work and community and landowner engagement. Activities carried out during the year included providing fencing to allow cattle to graze off choking grasses that are threatening marsh fritillary colonies - a European priority species, and removing some areas of scrub to protect and manage the habitat for the dingy skipper butterfly.

We also undertook brush harvesting of seed from flowers and grasses on high quality existing meadows and transported and seeded these into new and lower quality meadows to restore and expand species diversity.

The project also supported our high nature value farmers in the area by providing advice and equipment. To date the project has delivered advice to 191 farmers totalling 2,469 hectares. Our Project Officer has worked with landowners providing support and advice, helping them to care for the very special wildflower meadows they own and manage.

The project also aims to engage the wider community to inspire them about meadows and their wildlife. Events included butterfly surveys days, school mini-meadow creation, wildflower talks and meadow crafts and traditions. Our roadside verge restoration continued with 15 verges now under management as wildflower havens.

Save our Magnificent Meadows is UK-wide partnership project led by PlantLife. Ulster Wildlife leads on the delivery of the Northern Ireland delivery strand. This project has been supported by our local stakeholders at NIEA, Butterfly Conservation, European Forum for Nature and Pastoralism and the biodiversity officer from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

The project is due to complete in November 2017 and has been highly successful. Ulster Wildlife is already working with partners to develop a second phase of the Project to deliver further grassland improvement works in partnership with local farmers and landowners.





Red squirrel © C Cassidy

## Species Action

**In August 2016, we recruited our staff team and commenced delivery of the Red Squirrels United Project.**

This new three-year project will protect and promote red squirrels in Northern Ireland and the border Counties. It is funded by EU Life14 and Heritage Lottery Fund. *Red Squirrels United* is the biggest ever partnership of academics, practitioners and volunteers working together on a scientifically robust programme of red squirrel conservation across the UK. It is led by The Wildlife Trusts in collaboration with eight partners.

In Northern Ireland, Ulster Wildlife works with landowners, local communities and local red squirrel groups in four remaining stronghold areas for reds including the Mourne, Broughshane and Ballygally, Fermanagh and the North West to help prevent further spread of invasive grey squirrels through conservation and community engagement activities.

We will also be expanding the network of volunteers to establish new red squirrel groups to provide early warning and surveillance for grey squirrel encroachment into key areas and provide education and awareness of our iconic red squirrels.

Main activities of the project to the end of March 2017 include creation of a national survey methodology for red squirrels and pine marten, publishing a national strategy with NUI Galway for the control of grey squirrels and hosting a UK wide knowledge fair for red squirrel practitioners and academics.

**Our Be There for Barn Owls project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, ended in October 2016 after three years of action to increase knowledge of barn owl conservation and to raise awareness with landowners to protect this iconic farmland bird.**

Over the past three years our Barn Owl Officer, alongside many skilled and passionate volunteers, helped to increase the amount of rough grassland for barn owls by supporting landowners, supplying nest boxes for roosting and breeding, undertaking surveys to establish distribution, and raising awareness of the barn owls' plight.

Throughout the project 71 nestboxes were distributed, 1,300 landowners benefited from barn owl advice, 844 barn owl sightings were mapped and 121 volunteers supported the surveying effort.

Two chicks from a breeding pair of barn owls in a nestbox on the Ards Peninsula were ringed by licensed ringers from the British Trust for Ornithology in July 2016. This will provide valuable information on the dispersal of barn owl chicks post-fledging.

While the project has now ended, Ulster Wildlife will continue to champion the barn owl and its conservation as resources allow: a dedicated volunteer will help organise continued surveys and provide advice to landowners; volunteer fieldworkers will carry on monitoring their sites for signs of occupation; a centralised barn owl reporting system has been established for public sightings; and we will continue to seek funding for future barn owl conservation activities.



# Stand up for nature by influencing government policy

We believe that there is great urgency in achieving sustainability in how we use natural resources, and in safeguarding biodiversity. Our work with politicians and decision makers seeks to get a better deal for nature. We will contribute to emerging government policy, raising awareness of biodiversity, ecosystem services and natural capital.



Black Guillemot © J Crozier – one of the species protected by the new MCZs

## Marine Protection

**Ulster Wildlife continued its focus on marine policy development and protection through the Northern Ireland Marine Taskforce (NIMTF).**

The NIMTF is a coalition of 10 NGOs working for better marine protection in our local seas. Ulster Wildlife is one of the lead partners in the NIMTF and employs the Marine Policy Officer on behalf of the coalition.

In December 2016, we welcomed the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' (DAERA) designation of four new Marine Protected Areas - termed Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) - in our inshore waters. This is a great milestone in our advocacy for increased marine protection and follows on from the successful NIMTF campaign the previous year, which received over 1,450 letters of support for these new protected areas. An assessment of the NI network of Marine Protected Areas will be published soon and will identify any remaining gaps in our network. We will continue to work through the NIMTF to engage with DAERA and to promote the designation of further protected areas in our seas.

Ulster Wildlife's marine policy work in 2016/17 has also focused on the implications of Brexit for our marine environment. As part of a NI Environment Sector delegation, we have provided evidence at Brexit inquiries to both the UK and Irish Governments.

## Reform of Local Government

**Ulster Wildlife engaged in the Community Planning process across Northern Ireland.** The plans are one of the keys ways to secure environmental protection and enhancement in our local council areas into the future. We took part in several stakeholder workshops and responded to consultations on draft community plans across a number of Council areas including Fermanagh & Omagh, Ards & North Down, Newry Mourne & Down and Causeway Coast and Glens.

## Environment Policy Post-Brexit

**Following the EU referendum result in June 2016, Ulster Wildlife has been working closely with government and other NGOs to contribute to the development of environmental protection and agriculture and fisheries policies post-Brexit.**

Working in partnership with other environmental NGOs we have given evidence to government committees (North and South) and also to Westminster Committees.

The Wildlife Trusts collectively completed an analysis of the implications of Brexit prior to the referendum and we are now considering policy options for the future in collaboration with other Environmental organisations in NI/UK. Given the scope and scale of the challenges faced as the UK exits the EU, the complexity of this task is substantial.



# Promote health and well-being through enjoyment of the natural environment

Access to, and enjoyment of, wild places and wildlife has been shown to have a positive impact on our physical and emotional well-being and is important for people of all ages both in terms of preventing illness, and managing health conditions. Ulster Wildlife continues to provide opportunities to engage with nature and believes it is an important factor in achieving a healthy society.

Birds at Balloo Event  
in May 2016

## Promoting Nature as a Tool to Improve Health

**During 2016/17 we continued to provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to gain access to nature and the outdoors to improve both their physical and mental well-being. We continued to provide access to local green spaces through our nature reserves which we manage not just for wildlife but for people too. We manage 7.8 km of access paths on our nature reserves each year.**

In November 2017, we received a funding injection of almost £50,000 from the Alpha Programme, towards the development of an outdoor classroom area and improvements to access points for the local community at Bog Meadows Nature Reserve, in west Belfast. These works continued through the year and will be complete in October 2017.

We aim to encourage more people to visit the nature reserve, engage and inspire people of all ages about nature on their doorstep, and encourage a greater sense of ownership.

The Alpha Programme distributes funding through the Landfill Communities Fund to a range of community and biodiversity projects within a 10 mile radius of Mullaghglass Landfill site, on the outskirts of Lisburn.

**Visitor numbers to our nature reserves with visitor counters show that they are very well used by the local community.**

During 2016/17, Bog Meadows had over 75,000 visitors, Balloo over 29,000 visits and Slievenacloy over 12,000 visits.

We also provide opportunities for people to get active while learning about wildlife at guided walks across our sites. During 2016/17 we held food forays at Glenarm with Forage Ireland, a 'Big Dig' at Slievenacloy and a Bat Night at Bog Meadows.

Ulster Wildlife provides opportunities for people to volunteer on our nature reserves. These practical work days provide a chance to gain physical exercise in the outdoors while also learning new skills and meeting other like-minded people. We supported 605 volunteer days on our nature reserves in 2016/17.

**We also continued to work with Caring Breaks during 2016/17 to engage their clients in nature through an allotment project in the Castlereagh Hills.**

Caring Breaks delivers respite breaks for family carers in the Belfast area by providing activities for their sons and daughters who have a learning disability. The outdoor activities provide an opportunity for the clients to gain physical activity that they may not do otherwise and they gain new knowledge and skills which improves their self-confidence and self-esteem.



# Grow our success and extend our reach

As a locally governed charity, we will develop our committed, skilled and knowledgeable staff and volunteer base. We will continue to extend our reach in terms of fundraising to deliver impacts for nature and ensure we make the most efficient and effective use of our resources.



Celebrating the official opening of the Diversity Park in Portstewart

## Teamwork for Wildlife

**Ulster Wildlife is only as effective as our staff and volunteers, so we focus on recruiting, training and developing our people to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to deliver for nature in an increasingly competitive and difficult funding environment.**

At the end of 2016/17 we had 43 employed staff and 228 registered volunteers all working together to achieve our vision.

## Landfill Communities Fund

**Ulster Wildlife continued as a Distributive Environmental Body in 2016/17 working in partnership with a number of local councils to agree policies for the distribution of Landfill Communities Fund grants in a manner compliant with the scheme guidelines published by ENTRUST, the HMRC appointed regulator.**

This activity contributes to our goals of promoting health and well-being through enjoyment of the natural environment and protecting and rebuilding biodiversity and ecosystems by investing in practical action and research.

During the year, the downward trend in contributions continued as waste tonnages going to landfill reduced. The amount distributed to projects remained at c£500k. There were 13 active projects at the end of March 2017.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council are our only two remaining contributors of funds following closure of Newry, Mourne and Down's landfill sites. While the lifespan of the remaining contributing landfill sites is difficult to predict accurately, the downward trend in contributions to the fund is likely to continue. In the meantime we will continue to maximise the benefits of this activity towards meeting our strategic goals.



Ulster Wildlife Staff and Volunteers in Sept 2016



# Our Supporters

Our work is only possible with the support and generosity of our members and supporters. Fundraising through memberships, corporate members and legacies continue to be the main sources of unrestricted income for Ulster Wildlife.

## Membership

At the end of March 2016, we had 5,625 memberships and 12,212 members achieving our target of securing over 12,000 members. Membership income including Gift-Aid contributions during 2016/17 was £365,475 against a target of £373,598.

As well as providing essential funds for nature conservation our members give us a mandate when talking to Government and other decision makers about wildlife protection.

## Legacies and In-Memory Gifts

Nature will benefit through the help of legacies and in-memory donations from and on behalf of: George Acheson, Hazel Grove, Frederick John Thompson, Ellie Neill, Joseph Condry and Joy Davey.

£31.3K was left to us in supporters Wills and though donations in lieu of flowers in 2016/17.

## Corporate Members

We are grateful to all the businesses that provide support for nature in Northern Ireland through becoming a Corporate Member of Ulster Wildlife.

<b>Platinum</b>	AES UK & Ireland
<b>Gold</b>	Bombardier Dalradian Gold Ltd
<b>Silver</b>	Allstate Northern Ireland Belfast International Airport CES Quarry Products Ltd CTS Projects Ltd NIE Networks
<b>Bronze</b>	Belfast Harbour Denman International Ltd Henry Brothers (Magherafelt) Ltd Hutchinson Group Holdings (NI) Ltd Lafarge Cement
<b>Standard</b>	Firstsource Solutions UK Ltd Henderson Group Ltd Michelin Tyre Plc Peninsula Print & Design Ltd



Membership Recruitment on May Day 2016

# Thank you

To our community of over 12,000 individual members and donors and to the many other funders that support our work for nature we would like to acknowledge our thanks.

Below are some of the organisations whose vital contributions helped to make a difference for wildlife in 2016/17.

AES UK and Ireland	eMS
Alpha Programme (Groundwork NI)	Encirc Glass
Ards and North Down Borough Council	Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Belfast City Council	EU Life 14
Big Lottery Fund	Heritage Lottery Fund
Bombardier Aerospace Foundation	Ministry of Defence
Comber Rotary	Nineveh Charitable Trust
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland Environment Agency)	Plantlife
	The Stephen Clark Charitable Trust 1965



Celebrating the Access Improvement Grant from the Alpha Programme at Bog Meadows



# Financial Review at 31 March 2017

Ulster Wildlife’s financial position remained broadly stable during the year and a modest surplus on unrestricted activities was achieved.

## Unrestricted income and expenditure

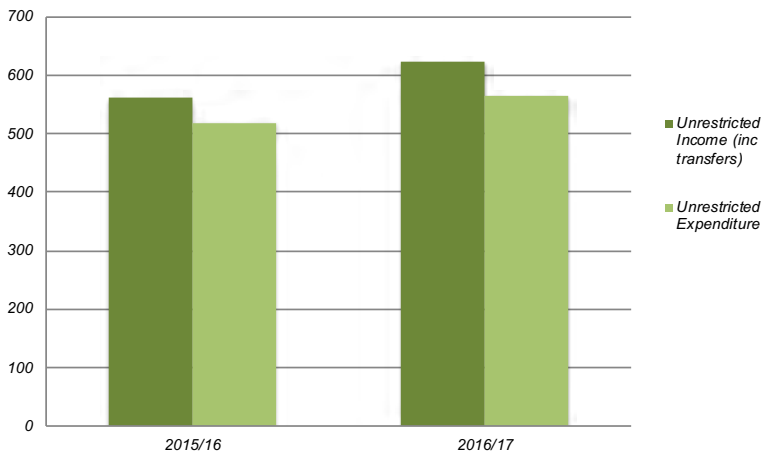
Unrestricted income is income generated by the charity for its general purposes. It can be used at the discretion of the charity on any of the charity’s objects.

Unrestricted income was slightly higher than in the previous year, (£19k). Unrestricted expenditure was also slightly higher, (£49k).

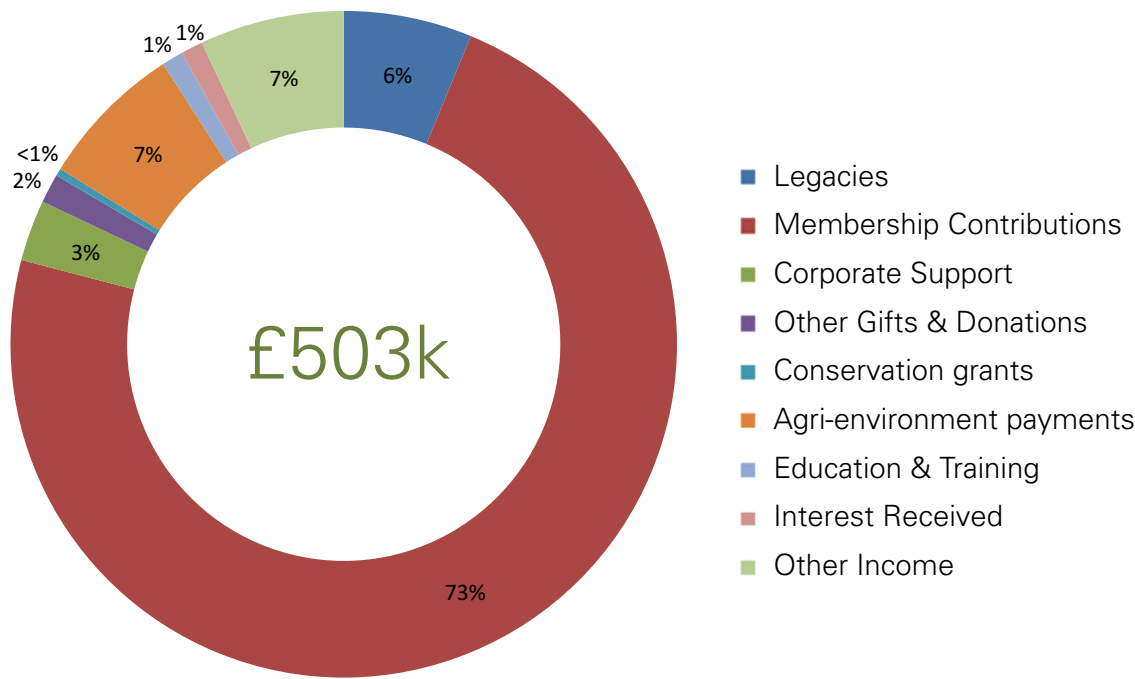
Taking into account transfers for contribution to core costs from restricted projects, an unrestricted surplus of £57k was generated. The majority of this surplus (£31k) related to legacies.

The small surplus is in keeping with the charity’s objectives which are to deliver conservation outcomes rather than a surplus of income over expenditure. A modest surplus is, however, necessary in order to maintain financial stability and help to secure the long term viability of the charity.

Unrestricted Income v Expenditure (£,000)



## Sources of Unrestricted Income 2016/17



## Restricted Income and expenditure

Restricted income is income given to the charity for very specific purposes. It may be a grant for a very specific piece of conservation work or education activity or funds to be awarded as grants to third parties, in line with specific grant guidelines.

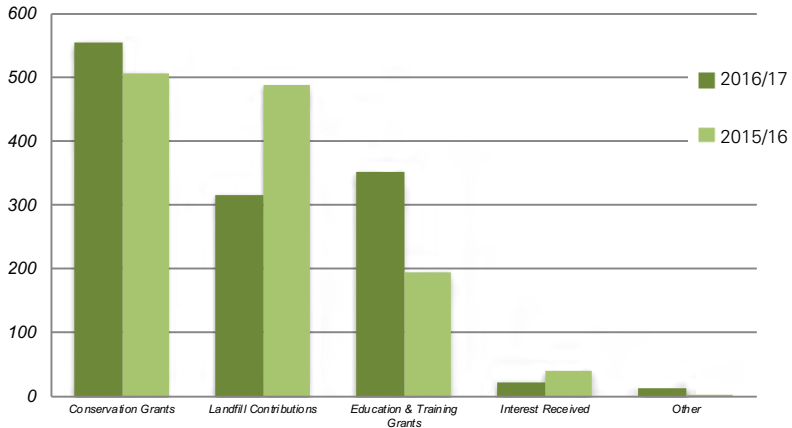
Ulster Wildlife’s restricted income has two main components, grants for specific conservation and education activity which is delivered by the charity and Landfill Community Funds where grants are awarded by the charity to third parties for purposes defined under the Landfill Communities Fund guidelines.

Restricted income in 2016/17 was c. £33k higher than 2015/16 (excluding fixed asset disposal proceeds). However, grants from third parties awarded to Ulster Wildlife for the direct delivery of specific conservation outcomes increased by £207k in the year. Contributions to the Landfill Communities Fund decreased by £171k. It is expected that this trend will continue and the charity is constantly engaged in seeking new sources of grant funding in order to continue and expand its conservation work.

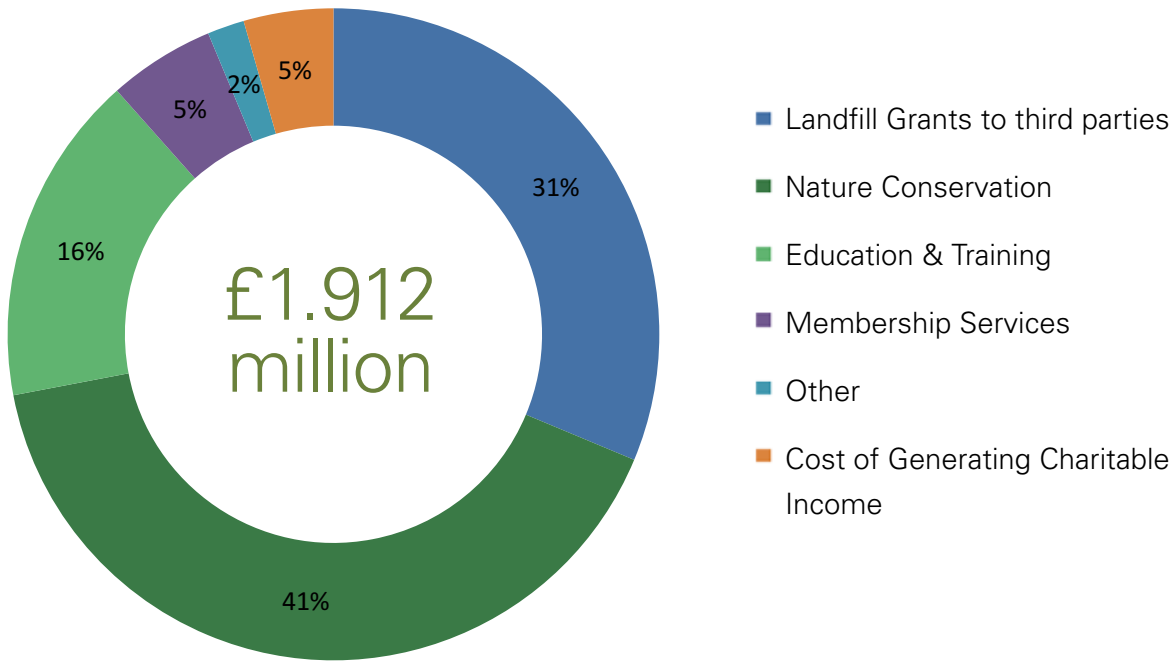
Restricted expenditure in 2016/17 was significantly higher than in 2015/16, (£200k). After transfers to unrestricted funds to reflect a contribution to overhead costs, the ‘deficit’ on unrestricted funds amounted to £204k. This ‘deficit’ represents expenditure on projects in the year to 31 March 2017 where the funds were received in prior years. The major part of this amount relates to Landfill Community Fund grants, (£198k).

Restricted reserves cannot be utilised by the charity, except for the very specific purposes set out by the funder. These reserves are therefore not available to fund general working capital requirements or fund any unexpected events.

Restricted Income (£,000)



## How the Charity spent its resources 2016/17 (restricted and unrestricted)





# Plans for the Future

2017/18 will be the fifth year of our current seven-year Corporate Strategy - 'Wildlife in Trust'. Our aims for 2017/18 remain focused on our five strategic goals -

1. **To inspire people** to champion wildlife and value nature.
2. **To protect and restore habitats and ecosystems** through practical action and research.
3. **To stand up for nature** by influencing government policy.
4. **To promote health and well-being** through enjoyment of the natural environment.
5. **To grow our success** and extend our reach.

## Our fundraising targets for 2017/18 are:

- > To secure at least 12,700 members or regular supporters.
- > To secure £375,979 income from Membership including Gift-Aid contributions.

Brexit and its implications for the natural environment and our own work will be a significant focus for policy and advocacy work in the coming months and years. It brings both challenges and opportunities for the sector and we will be working as a member of the Northern Ireland Environment Link Brexit Coalition to ensure that environmental protection isn't weakened through the process of leaving the EU. We will work together with other environmental NGOs and Government to support the development of new policies for Northern Ireland on marine and fisheries, agricultural support and environmental legislation and protection.

Looking to the future Ulster Wildlife will continue to deliver and develop projects that engage people with nature and encourage them to take action for wildlife in their local communities. Our Grassroots Challenge Programme will move into its second year and build on a very successful start in engaging Special Schools, Young Farmers and Duke of Edinburgh's Award participants in nature conservation. Our ParkLife Project will also continue across parks in Belfast. We'll also expand our work to engage people in our local marine life through events, surveys and festivals.

We will continue to develop training provision and help to build natural heritage skills in the sector through the provision of traineeships, volunteer placements and one-off specific courses.

Our habitats and species focused work will continue through our nature reserves suite along with our Red Squirrels United Project and our barn owl conservation activities. We plan to carry out a broad-ranging review of the nature reserves we currently own, lease and manage, to feed into a larger nature reserves strategy which will be developed once the implications of Brexit become clearer. We are also in the final stages of developing a marine species-focused conservation project which, should funding be secured, will allow us to set up a Northern Ireland specific Tagging Programme for sharks, skates and rays in our local waters. We will continue our focus on grassland and peatland conservation over the coming years.

Following funding approval in January 2017, over the next five years we will be working as part of a unique team of leading researchers, scientists, local authorities, charities and community groups from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland to address the decline in our precious peatlands and wetlands.

Ulster Wildlife is a partner in 'The Collaborative Action for the Natura Network' project, which has received €8.1m of EU Interreg funding for this vital conservation work, which is being delivered by a consortium led by Newry, Mourne & Down District Council.

Actions will include removal and control of invasive species; enhanced grazing management in upland areas; fencing; drain blocking; controlled burning and wildfire management; and nest protection for threatened species such as the hen harrier.

We will be working to protect and restore blanket and raised bogs, such as Cuilcagh Mountain in Fermanagh, Garry Bog in Antrim, Peatlands Park in Armagh, and Moneygal in Tyrone, and also assisting local landowners to manage these unique landscapes into the future for the vulnerable species that rely upon them, such as golden plover, red grouse and curlew.

In the coming years we also plan to develop more access improvement projects across our nature reserves as well as developing at least one large-scale health & well-being project to showcase the benefits of engaging with nature to our local communities.

We will continue to work to secure both restricted and unrestricted funds for our conservation activities. The recruitment and retention of individual members and supporters will remain a fundraising priority and we hope to continue with a small increase in members and income next year.

All our charitable activity is only possible with the support of our members and funders and we look forward to welcoming new members to the Ulster Wildlife family in 2017/18. We are also indebted to our dedicated staff and volunteer team who we will continue to invest in and support over the coming years.

Although we face a number of uncertainties in relation to Brexit and the status of the Northern Ireland Assembly, we are in a very positive position with a number of exciting new initiatives ahead to make a difference for wildlife and people.



# Structure, governance and management

Ulster Wildlife Trust, (operating as Ulster Wildlife) is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC101848) and is a not-for-profit company incorporated in Northern Ireland, limited by guarantee (NI 12711). It is an independent body, locally governed, although affiliated to The Wildlife Trusts, a federated network of 47 charities across the UK.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees (Council) comprised of up to 16 members, nominated and elected from the membership of the organisation. Council members are elected at the AGM each year to serve up to an eight-year term.

At the AGM at least one quarter of the Council must retire, and unless they have served for eight consecutive years, are eligible for re-election.

Details of the serving Council Members in 2016/17 can be found below:

<div>CHAIRMAN</div> <div><div><b>Roy Ramsay</b> (Appointed to Council for eight years from 05 September 2012) R, G</div></div>	<div>VICE CHAIRMAN</div> <div><div><b>Ken Brundle</b> (Appointed for eight years from 17 September 2013) F, R</div></div>	<div>HONORARY TREASURER</div> <div><div><b>Ross Boyd</b> (Appointed for eight years from 03 March 2016) R</div></div>	
<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Gillian Allen</b> (Appointed for eight years from 19 November 2015) G</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Duggie Anderson</b> (Appointed for eight years from 28 September 2011, resigned 05 October 2016) G</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Peter Archdale</b> (Appointed for eight years from 17 September 2013) E, G</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Lucinda Blakiston Houston</b> (Appointed for eight years from 14 May 2008, stood down 05 October 2016) E, G</div></div>
<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Bob Brown OBE</b> (Appointed for eight years from 29 September 2010) E</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Edith Finlay</b> (Appointed for eight years from 28 September 2011) E</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Ben Matson</b> (Appointed for eight years from 05 September 2012) G</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Jim McAdam OBE</b> (Appointed for eight years from 30 September 2009, resigned 01 December 2016) E</div></div>
<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Lorraine McCourt</b> (Appointed for eight years from 05 October 2016) F</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Craig McGuicken</b> (Appointed for eight years from 07 October 2014) F</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Fiona McVicker</b> (Appointed for eight years from 19 November 2015) R</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Doris Noe</b> (Appointed for eight years from 05 September 2012) E</div></div>
<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Howard Platt</b> (Appointed for eight years from 07 October 2014) E</div></div>	<div>COUNCIL MEMBER</div> <div><div><b>Ed Wright</b> (Appointed for eight years from 07 October 2015) F</div></div>		

## Changes to the Council

Changes to the Ulster Wildlife Council during 2016/17:

Duggie Anderson resigned from Council on 05 October 2016. Jim McAdam resigned from Council on 01 December 2016. Lucinda Blakiston Houston stood down from Council on 05 October 2016 having completed eight years of service.

The Board and staff would like to thank each of them for their dedication and contribution.

Lorraine McCourt was appointed to Council on 05 October 2016.

The governance sub-structure is made up of four sub-committees - Governance, Resources, Environment and Fundraising. This governance framework is designed to ensure that we are an accountable, effective and efficient charity and to manage risk at a reasonable level.

- The Governance Committee (G)** ensures that the Ulster Wildlife Council fulfils its legal, ethical, and functional responsibilities through adequate governance policy development, skills audits, recruitment strategies for Council Members, training programs, monitoring of Council activities, and evaluation of Council's performance.
- The Resources Committee (R)** supports Council in ensuring that the effective governance of Ulster Wildlife is maintained in relation to: Financial Resources, Human Resources, Physical Resources and Health and Safety.
- The Environment Committee (E)** provides ongoing strategic input into the organisation's work linked to Living Landscapes and Living Seas. The remit of this Committee encompasses nature reserves, environmental projects linked to habitats and/or species and input into regional policy issues.
- The Fundraising Committee (F)** provides ongoing strategic input to the organisation's fundraising activities - with a focus on unrestricted fundraising.

## Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Ulster Wildlife Trust) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company and charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently,
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP,
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2008. 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.


### Provision of Information to Auditors

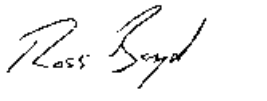
Each of the individuals who is a trustee at the time when this report is approved has confirmed that:

- there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

### Auditor

DNTCA Limited are deemed to be re-appointed under section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006 This report was approved by the Board on 22 November 2017 and signed on its behalf by

  
Roy Ramsay  
Chairman

  
Ross Boyd  
Honorary Treasurer



# Key Policies and processes

## Managing Risk

Ulster Wildlife Trustees are responsible for identifying and managing the risks facing the charity. They are responsible for ensuring that Ulster Wildlife has a system of internal control, management and audit to take advantage of opportunities and manage risk effectively.

Risk management is well established and is considered in every aspect of our work. We have an active risk management process in place to make sure that appropriate steps are taken to manage and mitigate risk across the organisation.

The Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team are clear that risk should be very carefully assessed in relation to the health, welfare and security of staff, volunteers and the public and in managing the reputation of Ulster Wildlife. Risks are also reviewed in the broadest sense and anything that might alter or impact on the charity's ability to fulfil its charitable objectives is considered.

Processes include:

- > Risk assessments are completed by all staff to identify, evaluate and manage risks.
- > Risk register with mitigation actions is reviewed at least quarterly by the Board.
- > A comprehensive risk management review is carried out once a year by the Governance and Resources Committees and reported to the Board Meeting.
- > Multi-year planning, with targets that are linked to delivery of Corporate Strategy.
- > Regular financial reporting and control which compares results with budget.
- > 'Value for Money' principles guide when and where we source goods and services.
- > Annual external audit.

The most significant risks identified in 2016/17 were:

- > Uncertainties arising from Brexit - leaving the EU may lead to a weakening of environmental protection and this may impact upon our work and funding for environmental activities. A watching brief was kept on developments in 2016/17 and more pro-active work will be implemented in 2017/18 to inform developing government policy in this area.
- > Fundraising environment - media coverage of a few charities' fundraising practices have affected public trust in the Charity sector as a whole - see opposite page, which outlines our public fundraising approach.

The main risks to be managed in the year ahead are:

- > Uncertainties arising from Brexit - environmental policy change and associated funding priorities will remain an area of risk for the organisation over the coming years. As outlined in Page 23, Ulster Wildlife will be working together with other environmental NGOs to secure a 'nature-friendly' Brexit.
- > Funding uncertainties due to lack of a Northern Ireland Executive - the ongoing lack of a local Executive and Assembly at the time of writing may lead to funding uncertainties for the charity in 2018/19.

## Our Fundraising Approach

As a charity founded by local nature enthusiasts we hold our supporters in the highest possible regard. We not only adhere to all legal requirements, we also strive to achieve the highest standards in our fundraising by following best practice guidance for the charity sector.

Ulster Wildlife is an organisational member of the Institute of Fundraising. In 2017, the newly created Fundraising Regulator broadened its remit to include Northern Ireland. Once Northern Ireland Charities have been invited to do so, Ulster Wildlife will register with the Fundraising Regulator. Regardless of registration status, Ulster Wildlife continues to follow best practice in fundraising, as laid out in the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice.

Ulster Wildlife fundraises primarily through offering membership of our charity to the general public and businesses. Membership promotion takes place at venues and events across Northern Ireland. Membership staff are branded and wear photographic ID at all times. In addition, we contact our existing members on an annual basis, via telephone, to give them the option of increasing their donation to our conservation work. Any external agencies who conduct this work on our behalf are required to do so in a respectful manner and in accordance with our standards and regulations.

Ulster Wildlife understands that our supporters have trusted us with their personal information and we will never sell our supporters' information to another organisation or individual.

Our supporters have the opportunity to opt out of any existing communications by any method at any time. Opting out does not affect membership mailings, some of which are a legal requirement (e.g. Direct Debit advance notice letters).

Any concerns about Ulster Wildlife's fundraising practices can be raised through our complaints procedure. Our complaints procedure is available on our website at [www.ulsterwildlife.org/Complaints](http://www.ulsterwildlife.org/Complaints).



Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Ulster Wildlife aims to be an employer of choice, for people from different backgrounds and through our Equality in the Workplace policy, we promote respect for the individual and equality of opportunity.

Our aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of the wider community and for each employee to feel respected and able to give of their best. Within Ulster Wildlife there is respect for promotion and protection of each individual’s human rights.

Ulster Wildlife promotes being at ease with all aspects of diversity, built on fairness and respect for all. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit are made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Ulster Wildlife recognises that such a policy is not only good management practice, but that it also makes good sense. Our Equality in the Workplace policy helps all those who work for us to develop their full potential and ensure that the talents and resources of the workforce are utilised to fully maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Sustainability

During 2016/17, Ulster Wildlife wrote our first in-house Environmental Sustainability Strategy with the help of Stephany Escudero, a student undertaking a Masters in Leadership for Sustainable Development at Queen’s University Belfast’s Gibson Institute.

Our aim of reducing our carbon footprint was assisted by solar panels which we installed on the roof of our main office in Belfast - McClelland House.

We also took part for the first time in Business in the Community’s environmental benchmarking survey and signed up to its ‘zero waste’ pledge.

Wider network

Ulster Wildlife is part of a collective of 47 Wildlife Trusts, represented nationally by The Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts (RSWT). The Wildlife Trusts collectively, act together where appropriate, in key policy areas and campaigns.

Financial Management

Financial Reserves Policy

Ulster Wildlife, in common with most charities, has an objective to set aside sufficient financial reserves to fund working capital and meet unexpected events, mainly in relation to the funding of our nature conservation activities. This is especially important as we increase the number and complexity of projects, including those where the grant funding is denominated in foreign currency.

To achieve this objective, the trustees seek to set aside financial reserves amounting to six months unrestricted payroll and support costs, which currently amounts to £284k.

The balance on unrestricted reserves at 31 March 2017 is £672k. After deduction of unrestricted fixed assets, unrestricted financial reserves amount to £245k which represents a major contribution to that objective.

Investment Policy

Ulster Wildlife does not have investments apart from cash balances held on short-term deposit. The policy is to safeguard cash in a manner which minimises risk but seeks to achieve a satisfactory level of return.

In line with this aim, cash balances are placed in short-term cash deposits (less than one year) in UK-based banks with a credit rating of P1/P2 (Moody’s) or equivalent.

Ulster Wildlife will seek to spread deposits over a number of institutions.

Remuneration Policy

Pay for all staff, is determined by a job evaluation system which places the role on one of eight pay scales. Inflation awards, which are currently capped at 1 %, reflecting the current economic climate, are dependent on affordability within the operational budget.

Benchmarking of payscales is undertaken periodically.

Advisors, Senior Personnel and Administrative Details

**Auditors**  
DNT Chartered Accountants  
Ormeau House  
91-97 Ormeau Road  
Belfast  
BT7 1SH

**Bankers**  
  
Danske Bank  
Belfast Finance Centre  
PO Box 183  
Donegall Square West  
Belfast  
BT1 6JS  
  
Ulster Bank Ltd.  
11-16 Donegall Square West  
Belfast  
BT1 5UB

**Solicitors**  
  
Edwards & Co.  
28 Hill Street  
Belfast  
BT1 2LA

**Company Secretary**  
Jennifer Fulton

**Senior Management Team**  
Jennifer Fulton  
Chief Executive

Dawn Miskelly  
Operations Director

Rosalind McSparron  
Corporate Services Manager

**Charity Registration Number**  
NIC 101848

**Company Registration Number**  
NI12711

**Registered Office and Operational Address**  
McClelland House  
10 Heron Road  
Belfast  
BT3 9LE



Independent Auditor’s Report to the Members of Ulster Wildlife Trust

We have audited the financial statements of Ulster Wildlife Trust for the year ended 31 March 2017 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and the related notes. 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) including FRS102 ‘The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland’.

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

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditor

As explained more fully in the trustees responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors 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.

Our 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 us 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 company’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, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Trustees Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Opinion on Financial Statements

In our opinion the financial statements: give a true and fair view of the state of the charity’s affairs as at 31 March 2017 and of its 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.

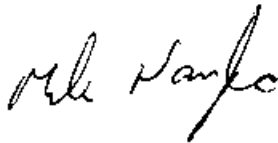
Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006.

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustee’s remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.



Mr M Nangle (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of **DNTCA Limited**  
**Ormeau House**  
**91-97 Ormeau Road**  
**Belfast**  
**BT7 1SH**

Statement of Financial Activities  
(including income and expenditure account)  
for the year ended 31 March 2017

		Unrestricted	Restricted	2017	2016
	Notes	Fund	Fund	Total	Total
		£	£	Funds	Funds
				£	£
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>					
Donations & Legacies	3	419,470	443	419,913	409,035
Conservation grants	4	1,840	558,327	560,167	503,733
Agri-environment payments		35,522	5,508	41,030	35,219
Charitable activities - landfill contributions	5	-	316,012	316,012	487,225
Education & training	6	5,256	352,124	357,381	211,140
Interest received	7	5,365	23,644	29,009	43,597
Other Income	8	35,221	6,600	41,821	32,440
		502,675	1,262,657	1,765,332	1,722,389
Proceeds on disposal of asset		-	-	-	115,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		502,675	1,262,657	1,765,332	1,837,389
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>					
Raising Funds	9	76,917	-	76,917	60,738
Charitable Activities	10, 11	488,908	1,346,484	1,835,392	1,611,209
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		565,824	1,346,484	1,912,308	1,671,947
<b>NET INCOME BEFORE TRANSFERS</b>		(63,149)	(83,827)	(146,976)	165,442
Transfers between funds	14	120,488	(120,488)	-	-
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		57,339	(204,315)	(146,976)	165,442
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:</b>					
Total funds at 1 April 2016		614,452	2,039,531	2,653,983	2,488,541
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2017</b>		671,791	1,835,216	2,507,007	2,653,983


The notes on pages 44 to 51 form part of these financial statements.  
The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year.  
All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

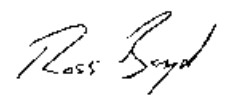


**Statement of Financial Position**  
**31 March 2017**

				2017	2016
	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible assets	16	427,134	473,973	901,107	912,155
		<u>427,134</u>	<u>473,973</u>	<u>901,107</u>	<u>912,155</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	17	213,167	14,273	227,440	126,410
Cash at bank and in hand		200,739	1,740,464	1,941,203	2,160,664
		<u>413,906</u>	<u>1,754,737</u>	<u>2,168,643</u>	<u>2,287,074</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
Creditors	18	153,751	69,831	223,582	205,201
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>260,155</u>	<u>1,684,906</u>	<u>1,945,060</u>	<u>2,081,872</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		687,289	2,158,879	2,846,167	2,994,027
<b>CREDITORS due in more than 1 year</b>					
Capital Grants	19	14,978	323,663	338,641	339,524
		<u>672,311</u>	<u>1,835,216</u>	<u>2,507,526</u>	<u>2,654,503</u>
<b>RESERVES</b>					
Unrestricted Fund	20	671,791	-	671,791	614,452
Life Membership Fund		520	-	520	520
Restricted Funds	21	-	1,835,216	1,835,216	2,039,531
		<u>672,311</u>	<u>1,835,216</u>	<u>2,507,526</u>	<u>2,654,503</u>

These financial statements were approved and signed by the members of the committee and authorised for issue on 22 November 2017.

  
Roy Ramsay, Chairman

  
Ross Boyd, Honorary Treasurer

The notes on pages 44 to 51 form part of these financial statements. Company Registration Number: NI 12711

**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**Year ending 31 March 2017**

	2017	2016
	£	£
<b>Cash Flows from operating activities</b>		
Net income/(expenditure)	(146,976)	50,442
<i>Adjustments for</i>		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	24,466	20,395
Release of deferred capital grant	(7,763)	(6,580)
Accrued expenses	21,687	1,326
Changes in:		
Trade and Other Debtors	(101,030)	124,934
Trade and other Creditors	<u>(3,306)</u>	<u>64,635</u>
Net cash (used in)/from operating activities	(212,922)	255,152
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Purchase of tangible assets	(13,416)	(198,179)
Disposal of Asset	-	115,000
Capital grant received	6,877	-
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(6,539)</u>	<u>(83,179)</u>
Net (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(219,461)	171,973
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year</b>	2,160,664	1,988,691
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year</b>	<u>1,941,203</u>	<u>2,160,664</u>



## Notes to the Accounts

### 1 Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2008.

### 2 Accounting policies

#### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

#### Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

#### Transition to FRS 102

The entity transitioned from previous UK GAAP to FRS 102 as at 1 April 2015. Details of how FRS 102 has affected the reported financial position and financial performance is given in note 22.

#### Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

#### Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to

be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it is regarded as restricted.

#### Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by the charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

#### Depreciation

Purchased assets, which individually exceed £1000 at cost are included in the balance sheet at historic cost less depreciation and any impairment in accordance with FRS 102.

Fixed Assets are depreciated over the period of their useful lives as follows:

Land	not depreciated
Buildings	2.5% straight-line
Equipment	10% straight line
Computers	25% straight line
Vehicles - cars and vans	15% straight line

#### Grants

Government and other grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable. Grants are not recognised until there is reasonable assurance that the charity will comply with the conditions attaching to them and the grants will be received.

#### Foreign currency

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated at rates prevailing at the date of the transaction.

#### Pensions

Ulster Wildlife operates a defined contribution pension scheme and matches employee contributions to the scheme at a maximum rate of 7% of salary.

#### Reclassification

In prior years, certain income and expenditure was netted off and described and surplus/deficit on farming activities. It has been agreed that this treatment should change as the Trust is managing the property for conservation. This change in policy was implemented from 1 April 2016 and the comparative prior year figures were adjusted to reflect this change.

## Notes to the Accounts

### 3 Donations & legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Legacy & in memory giving	31,328	-	20,593	-
Membership contributions inc. gift aid	366,125	-	366,292	-
Corporate support	14,925	-	12,808	-
Other gifts & donations	7,092	443	9,185	157
	419,470	443	408,878	157

### 4 Conservation Grants

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Government grants	-	231,321	-	179,643
Capital grant credit	1,840	5,923	-	6,575
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	116,767	-	47,464
MOD	-	17,374	-	-
EU- LIFE	-	-	-	86,709
Tubney Charitable Trust	-	3,277	-	6,550
HLF	-	105,843	-	134,790
Biffaward	-	22,924	-	12,678
Peter de Haan Trust	-	-	-	10,231
AES	-	51,550	-	19,093
Nineveh	-	3,348	-	-
	1,840	558,327	-	503,733



## Notes to the Accounts

### 5 Landfill environmental projects

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Landfill contributions received	-	316,012	-	487,225
	-	316,012	-	487,225
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Entrust administration fee	-	9,354	-	11,304
Direct project expenditure	-	501,181	-	430,924
Direct Costs	26,110	3,500	26,648	12,000
	26,110	514,035	26,648	454,228

### 6 Education & Training Grants and Income

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Big Lottery	-	151,832	-	25,260
HLF	-	112,319	-	94,600
BCC	-	83,256	-	66,151
Bombardier foundation	-	1,333	-	1,667
AE Harvey	-	-	-	4,424
Other	5,256	3,384	15,302	3,736
	5,256	352,124	15,302	195,838

### 7 Interest received

Interest received in Restricted Funds is the interest earned on landfill tax receipts held prior to disbursement, and interest received which is used to fund expenditure on nature reserves. Interest received in unrestricted funds is bank interest earned on other cash balances.

## Notes to the Accounts

### 8 Other Income

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016
Consultancy	17,790	-	17,787	-
Sundry income	17,431	6,600	8,053	6,600
	35,221	6,600	25,840	6,600

### 9 Expenditure on raising donations & legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £
Travel	5,708	3,754
Venue Costs	3,633	1,825
Professional fees	4,131	5,068
Printed materials, misc	2,958	2,888
Wages & salary costs	60,487	47,203
	76,917	60,738

### 10 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Total Funds 2017 £	Total Funds 2,016 £
Landfill environmental projects	26,110	514,035	540,145	480,875
Nature Conservation	156,343	546,135	702,477	620,049
Environmental Education & Training	2,641	280,392	283,032	195,313
Membership Support Costs	91,592	-	91,592	85,991
Organisation Support Costs	186,369	-	186,369	201,406
Depreciation	18,542	5,923	24,465	20,395
Bank Interest & Charges	3,452	-	3,452	3,360
Auditors remuneration	3,860	-	3,860	3,820
	488,908	1,346,484	1,835,392	1,611,209



## 11 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Staff Costs	Other direct costs	2017	2016
	£	£	£	£
Landfill environmental projects	22,440	517,705	540,145	480,875
Nature Conservation	440,068	262,409	702,477	620,049
Environmental Education	148,692	134,340	283,032	195,313
Membership Support Costs	39,616	51,976	91,592	85,991
Organisation Support Costs	105,916	80,453	186,369	201,406
Other - depreciation, bank charges, audit.	-	31,777	31,777	27,575
	756,732	1,078,660	1,835,392	1,611,209

Other Direct Costs	Landfill Envir. Projects	Nature Conservation	Environmental Education	Support Costs	Total
Direct project costs	514,035	82,851	91,271	27,887	716,043
Premises costs	2,778	11,320	1,706	32,114	47,918
Postage, printing & stationery	-	451	1,069	38,436	39,956
Staff travel and vehicle costs	892	50,658	9,440	4,595	65,585
Contracted services	-	98,309	24,873	8,277	131,459
Staff training	-	7,254	2,936	1,887	12,077
Council Costs	-	-	-	3,953	3,953
Information Technology	-	11,567	3,046	15,279	29,892
	517,705	262,409	134,340	132,429	1,046,883

## 12 Depreciation

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
	2017	2017	2016	2016
	£	£	£	£
Motor vehicles	1,006	3,425	-	3,425
Equipment	9,221	1,782	7,584	2,433
Buildings	8,315	717	6,236	717
	18,542	5,924	13,820	6,575

## 13 Staff Costs

	2017	2016
	£	£
Salaries and wages	727,809	564,169
Social Security Costs	57,351	43,276
Pension Contributions	32,059	17,246
	817,219	624,691

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000. The average number of employees during the year, calculated on the basis of full time equivalents, was 29. (2016- 23).  
The key management personnel comprise the trustees and the members of the senior management team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel was £138,760 (2016: £131,909).

## 14 Transfer between Funds

	2017	2016
	£	£
Landfill contribution to organisation support costs	26,110	34,833
Project contribution to organisation support costs	91,570	39,174
Conservation work at Glendun	2,808	2,875
	120,488	76,882

## 15 Council remuneration and related party transactions

No members of council received any remuneration during the year. Travel and subsistence costs amounting to £991 (2016-£925) were reimbursed to 1 (2016-1) member of council.

## 16 Fixed Assets

	Nature Reserves	Land & Buildings	Motor Vehicles	Equipment & Computers	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£
COST OR VALUATION					
At 1 April 2016	349,372	674,149	47,157	230,974	1,301,652
Additions	-	-	13,416	-	13,416
Disposals	-	74,862	-	136,006	210,868
At 31 March 2017	349,372	599,287	60,573	94,968	1,104,200
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 April 2016	-	196,371	34,600	158,524	389,495
Charge for year	-	9,032	4,431	11,003	24,466
Disposals	-	74,862	-	136,006	210,868
At 31 March 2017	-	130,541	39,031	33,521	203,093
NBV at 31 March 2017	349,372	468,746	21,542	61,447	901,107
including restricted assets of Glendun farm has been included at probate value of £150,000.	309,372	150,717	9,132	4,752	473,973



**17 Debtors**

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Debtors and prepayments	27,224	14,273	24,341	11,829
Grants	169,307	-	35,592	38,373
Tax refunds due	16,636	-	16,275	-
	<u>213,167</u>	<u>14,273</u>	<u>76,208</u>	<u>50,202</u>

**18 Creditors falling due within one year**

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Sundry creditors and accrued expenditure	<u>153,751</u>	<u>69,831</u>	<u>109,629</u>	<u>95,569</u>

**19 Creditors falling due after more than 1 year**

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Capital grants	<u>14,978</u>	<u>323,663</u>	<u>9,941</u>	<u>329,588</u>

**20 Movement on unrestricted funds**

	Unrestricted Funds 2017 £	Unrestricted Funds 2016 £
Balance at 1 April 2016	614,452	570,422
Surplus for the year	57,339	44,030
Balance at 31 March 2017	<u>671,791</u>	<u>614,452</u>

**21 Movement on restricted funds**

	Restricted Funds 2017 £	Restricted Funds 2016 £
Opening balance	2,039,531	1,918,120
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	(204,315)	121,411
Closing balance	<u>1,835,216</u>	<u>2,039,531</u>

Some funders pay in advance and other funders issue payment only after the expenditure has been incurred. The movement on restricted funds in any year is a result of timing differences between receipts of grants for restricted projects and the related expenditure.

**22 Transition to FRS 102**

These are the first financial statements that comply with FRS 102. The charity transitioned to FRS 102 on 1 April 2015.

**23 Contingent Liability**

A portion of grants received may become repayable if the charity fails to comply with the terms of the relevant letters of offer.

**24 Taxation**

As a charity, Ulster Wildlife Trust is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the Trust.

**25 Company Status**

Ulster Wildlife Trust Limited is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.





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**For further information,  
visit [www.ulsterwildlife.org](http://www.ulsterwildlife.org)  
or Email: [info@ulsterwildlife.org](mailto:info@ulsterwildlife.org)**

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Cover Image - ParkLife Project - Belfast  
Back Cover - Ragged Robin at Lough Navar, Co. Fermanagh -  
Save our Magnificent Meadows Project

Ulster Wildlife Trust, (operating as Ulster Wildlife) is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC101848 and is a not-for-profit company incorporated in Northern Ireland, limited by guarantee NI 12711.

