



## Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From

07/12/2021 To

31/03/2023

**Charity name:** West Dorset Wilding

**Charity registration number:** 1196964

### Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>The <b>objects</b> of the CIO are:</p> <p>To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment by promoting biological diversity and restoring degraded ecological systems.</p> <p>To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.</p>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p><b>Activities</b> include:</p> <p>To deliver environmental projects for the benefit of the public;</p> <p>To educate the general public, particularly farmers and landowners, about the benefits of natural process led ecosystem restoration, through meetings, emails, online or other activities;</p> <p>To consult and discuss with the general public about issues in nature conservation;</p> <p>To undertake and disseminate research into the nature of the Charity's focus area;</p> <p>To recruit members for the benefit of education and fundraising;</p> <p>To undertake fundraising for the delivery of the above activities.</p>

Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, and have a standing item at board meetings to remind them of their role and function.

## Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>West Dorset Wilding (WDW) was founded in December 2021 by a group of Dorset farmers, landowners and ecologists with a shared vision for nature recovery in the Brit catchment and beyond.</p> <p>During the period of this report, we have made excellent progress on a number of fronts including membership, branding, governance and financial plans, project development, awareness raising and fundraising. This has led to the development of a broad portfolio of projects during the period, all of which focus initially on the Brit catchment in West Dorset and are for wider public benefit with regards to the conservation of nature.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Landscape scale change.</b> The largest and potentially most impactful of these is the early development of the <b>Brit Catchment Recovery Project</b>, which intends to undertake large-scale extensive ecosystem restoration across the Brit catchment, focusing primarily on riparian zones and adjoining areas for habitat creation. We are doing this by bringing together farmers, landowners, NGOs and agencies into a single project. This work will be developed into a single Landscape Recovery funding application later in 2023, which, if successful, could be of benefit to the whole catchment, if not wider.</li> <li>2) <b>Baseline.</b> During this period, we were awarded £13,000 funding from Rewilding Britain to establish an ecological and environmental baseline</li> </ol>

for the catchment by looking at land cover, above ground carbon and bird diversity/abundance as an indicator for wider biodiversity. This money also paid for the membership and community engagement work set out below.

- 3) **Beavers.** We have undertaken research about the suitability of the catchment for a wild release of beavers. This involved habitat feasibility research, dam capacity mapping and social and cultural feasibility. We also prepared for a public consultation which took place in the subsequent period. This project was funded by an £8,000 grant from Natural England.
- 4) **Community engagement.** Our work in this area has been led by the development of a membership scheme to involve and inspire local people, and help them engage more deeply and frequently with nature. We have also started work on a community engagement strategy, in which target groups will include farmers, landowners, teens and young adults, and low-income families.
- 5) **Events.** WDW held a successful wilding conference of 50 people in April 2022, and later a well-received launch event at Bridport Town Hall which was at full capacity and attended by over 100 people. The event illustrated the breadth and depth of local support for the objectives of West Dorset Wilding, and the concern shared by many about the perilous state of our natural environment.

Overall, it has been a very productive first year, with several core projects underway and ambitious plans for a large scale Landscape Recovery bid.

## Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	As a small new charity, the financial position was solid at the end of the period. The majority of funds remaining came from restricted grants and related to work to be completed in the next period. Securing sufficient core costs over and above voting member membership continues to be challenging.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	With no payroll staff, a two-week termination clause on self-employed contracts and negligible overheads, it was determined by Trustees that sufficient reserves were needed only to meet these items.  This figure was estimated at £2,000 and was agreed within the period, then ratified at the Trustees meeting of 5/9/23.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	At the end of the financial year the surplus was £16,575, of which £14,287 was restricted. This left £2,288 as reserves, which met the policy.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	n/a
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	n/a
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	The Trustees agreed that the charity can continue to operate as a going concern.

## Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	CIO by Association
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	Election at AGM or co-option, no organisational appointments

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	West Dorset Wilding
Other name the charity uses	n/a
Registered charity number	1196964
Charity's principal address	<p>           SYMONDSBURY ESTATE OFFICE            UNIT 6 MANOR YARD            MILL LANE            SYMONDSBURY            BRIDPORT            DT6 6HG         </p>



## Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	n/a
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	n/a
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	n/a

## Additional information (optional)

### Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Accountant	Leigh Hansford	Coombe Hope Accountants 60 West Street Bridport Dorset DT6 3QP

### Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Samuel Rose – Executive Director (self-employed)

## Exemptions from disclosure

### Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

n/a



## Other optional information

n/a

## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Luke Montagu	Philip Colfox
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	29/12/23	