

The Wildlife Trusts' **Diversity Report** 2025



Wild About
Inclusion

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About us

The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement of people from a wide range of backgrounds and all walks of life. We believe that we need nature and nature needs us. We have more than 945,000 member, over 33,000 volunteers, 4,100 staff and 600 trustees. There are 46 local Wildlife Trusts and each is an independent charity formed by people getting together to make a positive difference to wildlife and future generations, starting with where they live.

Collectively, The Wildlife Trusts are committed to bringing about nature’s recovery. This is so that people can live close to nature, with land and seas rich in wildlife. To achieve this, the individual Wildlife Trusts work together and with a central charity, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT). RSWT supports the development of the movement and strengthens its collective voice.

The past year has been immensely challenging for many of us working to make our world more inclusive and fair. Regressive and damaging rhetoric from overseas and from within the UK threatens to roll back years of progress on making our workplaces and public spaces welcoming for everyone.

This puts huge pressure on organisations to scale back and cut teams which work on building equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) – but rather than cave in to this pressure, The Wildlife Trusts have made a pledge to go further and faster. Building on our work over the past six years, we are more committed than ever to putting equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our movement.

If we are to realise our vision of a thriving natural world, then we need everyone in society to be part of this vision too. We want as many people as possible to be inspired to get involved, feel welcome and valued, and have the opportunity to experience the joy of wildlife in their daily lives. We need everyone to feel that they can be themselves, that diversity is celebrated, and that all of us feel empowered to play our part in shaping a better future where nature matters.

But we know that for too long, too many people have felt that the nature sector does not represent them. While we still have a long way to go, I am hopeful that the work of The Wildlife Trusts is starting to change this.

This year, 17 Wildlife Trusts have increased the ethnic diversity of their staff, which means that ethnic diversity from across the movement has increased from 2% to 3%. This is still a long way from where we want to be to reflect the ethnic diversity that exists in the British public, but we are – at least – starting to move in the right direction.

We are also supporting more staff with disabilities and caring responsibilities, providing these people with the opportunities to excel in a workplace which recognises their needs.

Career development has been a core focus of our work over the past year, providing more opportunities for everyone to progress in the workplace. We are pleased to report that 44% of staff across our movement have progressed to a better paid and/or more senior role, with 32% of these progressions made in the last 12 months. We have specifically looked to improve opportunities for young people, taking on the *Environmental Leadership Programme 2.0* in spring 2025, welcoming T-Levels placements and continuing our ‘Wild Future’ career event after its hugely successful launch in 2024.

We have made huge strides in 2025 in supporting others to make the spaces they manage more welcoming for more people. Our good practice guide, *A Space for Everyone*, provides advice and resources for anyone who looks after publicly accessible land such as nature reserves,

Introduction

walking trails, lakes and rivers – from local councils to recreational site managers and nature charities to university campuses. We want everyone to be able to enjoy being outdoors in wild places – whoever manages them.

As we look forward to 2026, we will continue to make sure nature is protected and restored in ways that are fair and inclusive, so that people and wildlife can benefit. Embracing social justice as a core element of nature’s recovery is key to this.

Injustices can prevent people from feeling connected to nature or from having a say in decisions that affect their local environment. The Wildlife Trusts will champion everyone having equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, no matter who they are or where they come from.

We are making progress, but there is still a huge amount to do. I hope this report provides you with the information you need to help The Wildlife Trusts continue to move forward on this journey.



A word from our President

The nature and climate crisis is the greatest challenge of our time. We are utterly dependent on a healthy planet and its life support systems to be able to thrive. As planetary boundaries continue to be breached, it is more essential than ever to find solutions that include diverse approaches, and that reflect the needs of all communities and cultures across the British Isles. We are stronger together, and with perspectives rooted in equality, diversity and inclusion, we will undoubtedly speed up the ripple effect of change our planet needs.

The Wildlife Trusts are a federation committed to reflecting these values in our workforce, and to supporting and progressing EDI initiatives throughout the environmental sector. Building a diverse and therefore thriving community is essential to the transformations needed to restore nature and effectively tackle climate change.

This much-needed report demonstrates our progress in certain areas, and what urgently needs to improve. Such reports are crucial if collaborative discussions and effective, actionable plans are to follow. Our Race Equity Action Plan reflects an area where we, and the environmental sector as a whole, must change. At the heart of this vital work are people, and the passion and dedication of our Staff Networks, driven by initiatives such as 'A Space for Everyone', our inclusive land-management guide. Achieving the Silver Award in the Talent Inclusion Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) is an important milestone, but it also reminds us that we must continue to overcome obstacles - from increasing ethnic diversity to reducing our pay gaps to zero.

Together, we are working to make The Wildlife Trusts a place where everyone truly belongs. Nature is for all, and our movement must be too.

Liz Bonnin,
*President of
The Wildlife Trusts*

At a glance

Ethnic diversity

Our diversity survey shows us that 17 Trusts have increased the ethnic diversity of their staff this year, which has led to an increase for the federation.

Pay gaps

This is the third year we have looked at multiple pay gaps.

- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Ethnicity

This year we have also voluntarily reported on our carers’ pay gap.

All of our pay gaps remain below the national figures (where these are available).

Wild Futures

A core focus this year has been on taking action to diversify our talent pipeline. This took us to the Big Bang Fair, which is the largest Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) fair in the UK. We also hosted our second online careers event, attracting a staggering 2,000+ signups.

Race Equity Action Plan

This year, we developed and launched our Race Equity Action Plan to strengthen our commitment to equality diversity and inclusion. The plan sets out our clear actions to address racial inequalities, foster an inclusive culture and one that promotes belonging, and ensure equitable opportunities for all.

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What is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?

Equality is all about fairness. It's about making a society where everyone can take part and fulfil their potential. Equality is also about looking beyond what is happening right now. It is about looking at the wider world, about the journeys people have been on and what barriers someone might face and what we can do to remove those barriers. By looking at equality in this way, we can recognise that our social identity impacts on our life experiences. This includes but is not limited to gender, ethnicity, disability, age, social class, sexual orientation and religion.

Diversity is about our differences. To be diverse, we need to understand each other and embrace how we are all different and have different experiences and points of view to bring. Supporting diversity is about celebrating the value that this difference brings, whether it comes from someone's identity, knowledge, skills, ideas or experiences. Through diversity, we can become stronger by having a wider view of the world and by embracing our communities more. This helps us become more effective as a movement.

Inclusion is also about our communities, taking action to create places where everyone belongs. Being inclusive is about showing people respect, removing barriers that people may face when trying to contribute and creating a place where people can reach their full potential, without hiding their best selves from others. We all have a part to play in creating an environment where everybody feels they belong and can flourish.

Becoming Wild About Inclusion

We put equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of The Wildlife Trusts. We want to ensure that everyone can experience the joy of wildlife in their daily lives.

We're *Wild About Inclusion!* This means inspiring, enabling and engaging people from all backgrounds, cultures, identities and abilities, to change the natural world for the better. It means creating workspaces where difference is celebrated, everyone can be themselves and flourish, just like nature.

We aim to better understand and address the inequalities experienced by many communities in accessing nature. We recognise that the conservation sector is one of the least diverse professions in the UK. Access to careers and educational opportunities needs to be significantly improved.

We believe being *Wild About Inclusion* is critical to the future of The Wildlife Trusts, the health and well-being of our communities and to wildlife.

We're Wild About Inclusion!



Why we are Wild About Inclusion

There are huge benefits to being *Wild About Inclusion* and embracing equality, diversity and inclusion, for The Wildlife Trusts, for our people and for nature.

We need radical inclusion at all levels, so we are benchmarking EDI across The Wildlife Trusts to help us monitor and report on our progress.

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Our staff will be happier and healthier. An inclusive working environment means everyone has equal opportunity to develop, progress and be recognised at work.

More people will have access to and will benefit from wildlife and the natural environment. People from all parts of society will be supporting nature's recovery.

Our organisational performance will be stronger. Diverse and inclusive organisations have higher innovation, employee satisfaction and creativity.

Our volunteers and supporter base will increase. By being more inclusive and relevant to diverse communities, we will attract and engage a wider range of people.

Our Approach to EDI

Federation-wide EDI vision

The Wildlife Trusts have embedded a culture of inclusion and anti-racism championed by all, with equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of everything we do. As a federation we are committed to fair and equitable treatment, understand injustice within the environmental sector and beyond, and are leaders for inclusion within conservation as a whole.

The Wildlife Trusts' vision

Our vision is of a thriving natural world, with our wildlife and natural habitats playing a valued role in addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, and everyone inspired to get involved in nature's recovery.

The Wildlife Trusts purpose

Our purpose is to bring wildlife back, to empower people to act for nature and to create an inclusive society where nature matters.

Our diversity data

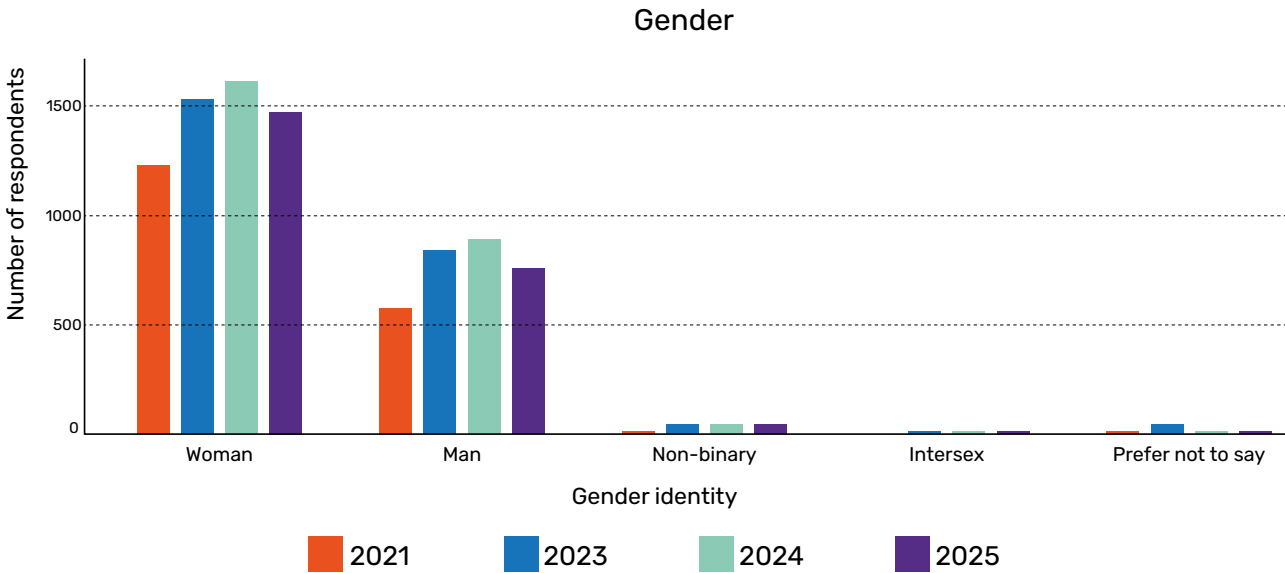
We collect basic demographic diversity data on an annual basis. We also collect data to monitor staff retention and progression.

For this survey we had 2,486 participants, which is a 63% disclosure rate from our staff and trustees (Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust did not take part in 2025). Due to the small number of trustees, these are predominantly staff-only figures.



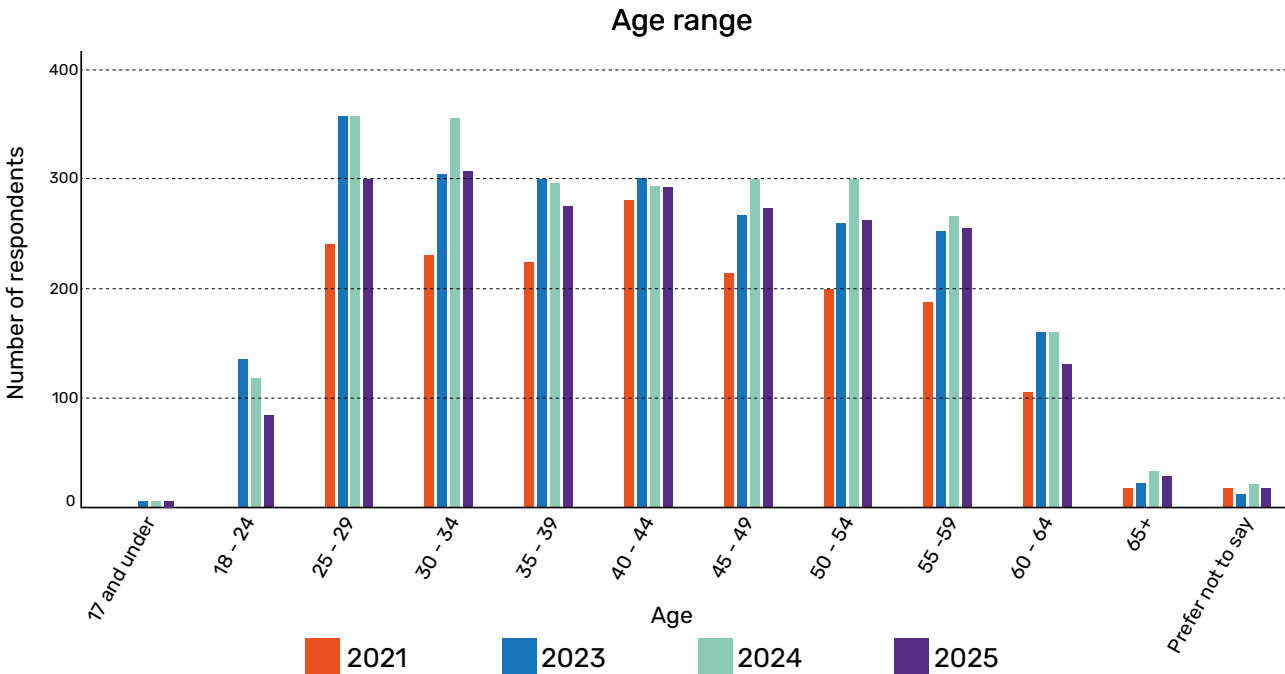
Gender

There has not been any change in the gender splits for staff (women 65% and men 33%), with the workforce remaining predominantly women. However, for our trustees this is reversed; they sit at 58% men and 41% women, with the remaining percentage of respondents identifying as non-binary, intersex or preferring not to say.



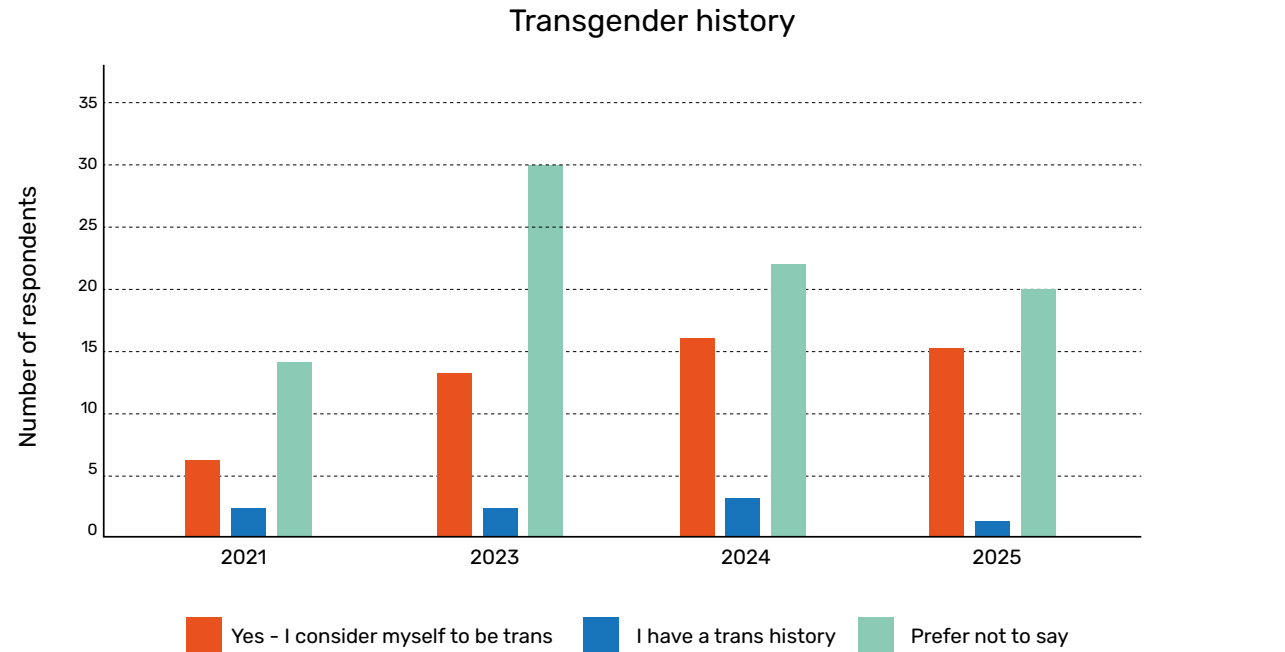
Age range

The age ranges of our staff and trustees have not changed much over the last year. We have seen a slight decrease in under 34 year olds but less change in the older ages. 18 to 24 year olds have decreased to only 3.5%. We are continuing to do additional work with emerging adults to try and address that imbalance. The older age bracket is seen on our boards, with 32.4% of our trustees being over 65.



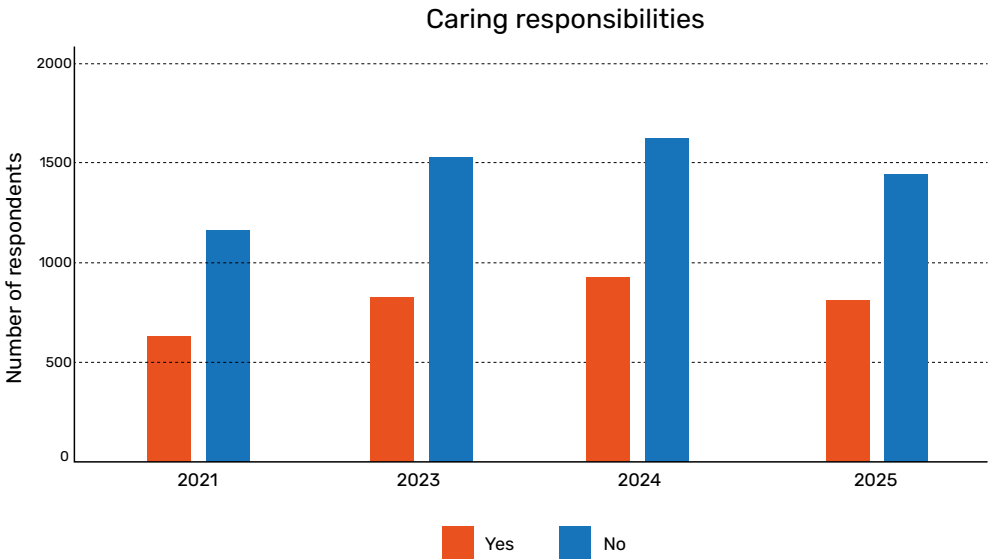
Transgender history

The percentage of staff identifying as either trans or having a trans history sits at 0.7%. This is just above the national (England and Wales) average of those who said they do not identify as the gender registered at birth, which is 0.5% (ons.gov.uk).



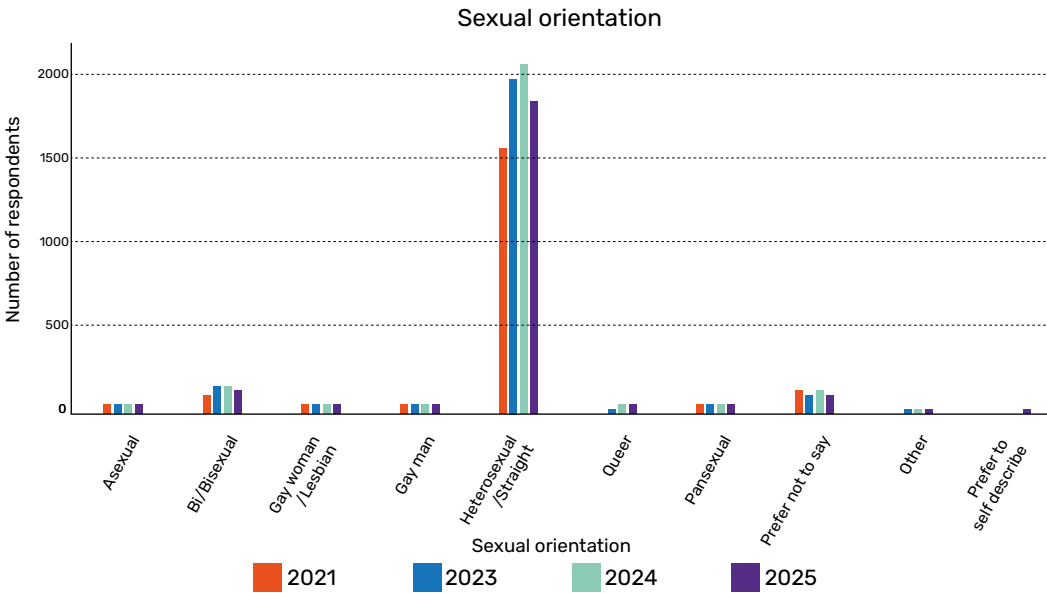
Caring responsibilities

Following last year’s trend, we are seeing an increase in the number of staff with caring responsibilities, which is now at 36%. The graph shows the overall number of respondents, which has decreased in 2025. There is no representative data at national level as we include caring for children in our data.



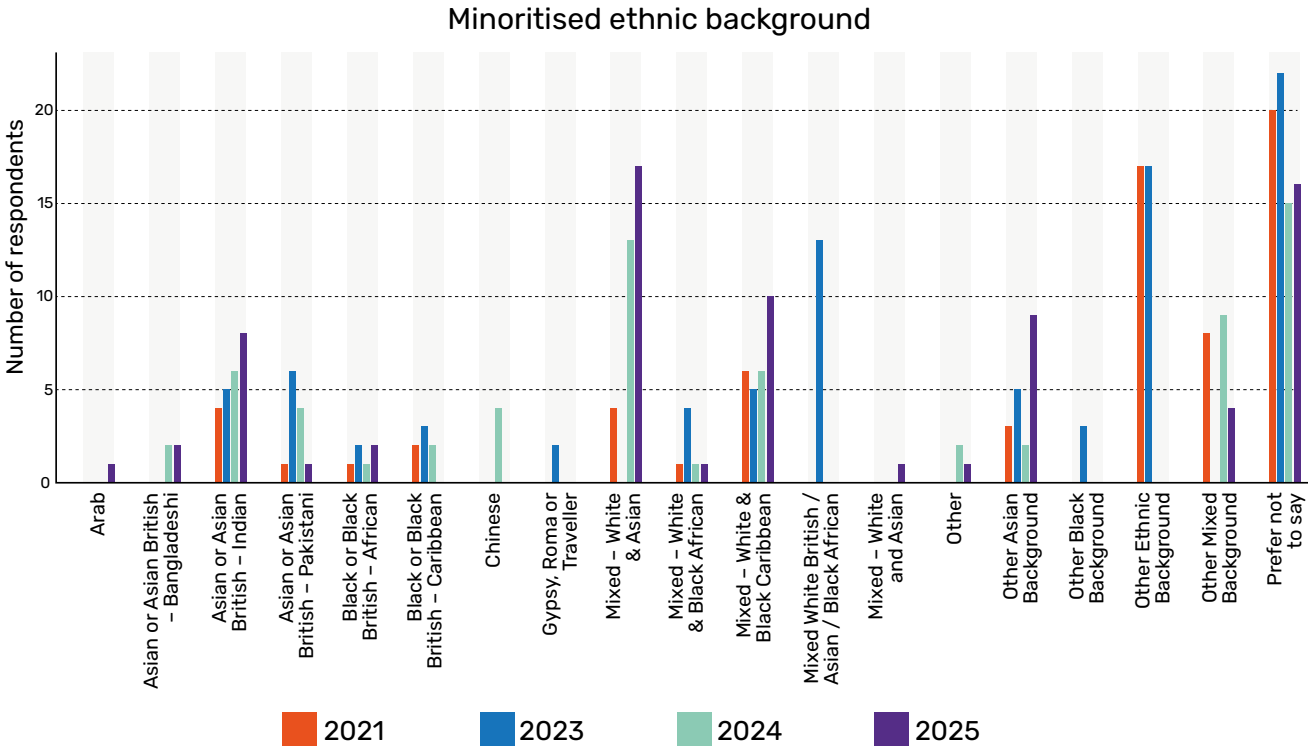
Sexual orientation

Our LGB+ staff (see above for transgender figures as we report separately) remain at 15% this year, which is again well above the national (UK) population statistic of 3.3% (ons.gov.uk).



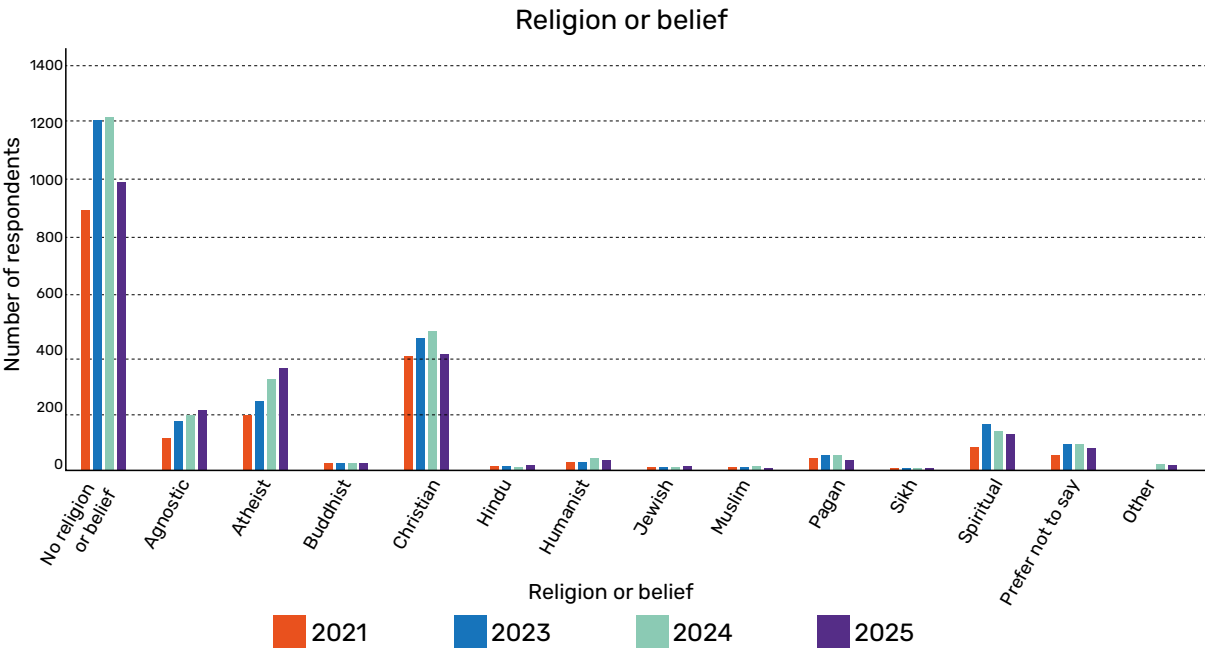
Ethnicity

Our staff figures have changed slightly since last year. With an increase of 1%, whilst still well below where we aspire to be, it is a move in the right direction. We also have 17 individual Wildlife Trusts who have increased the ethnic diversity of their staff from last year. We continue at pace to work on racial equity in the workforce and you can find out more about our ongoing work later in this report.



Religion

Whilst the number of religions represented within our staff has increased, the largest two groups are still No religion or belief and Christianity. We now have 28% of our staff who have a religion other than Christianity, which sits at 18%.

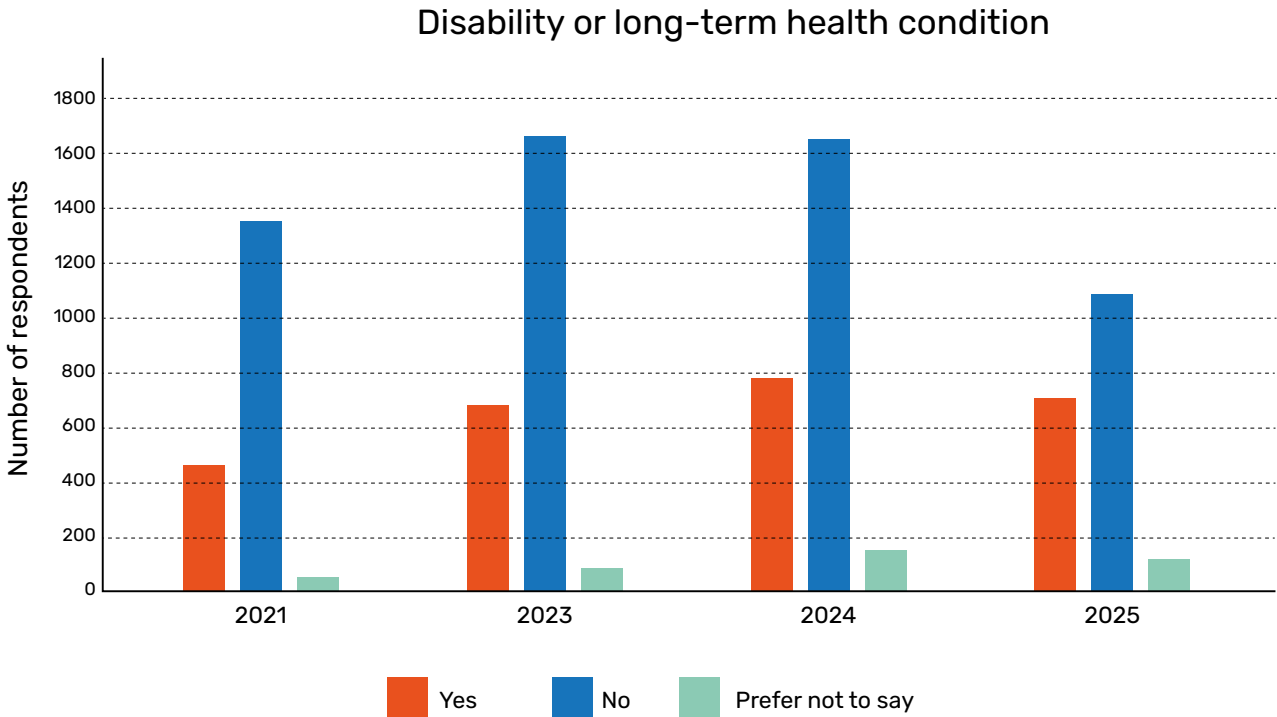


Disability

For this category we include the following:

- Dexterity (for example, lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
- Hearing (for example, deafness or partial hearing)
- Learning, understanding or concentration
- Memory
- Mental health
- Mobility (for example, walking short distances or climbing stairs)
- Social or behavioural (for example associated with neurodivergence, including autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and dyslexia)
- Stamina, breathing or fatigue
- Vision (for example, blindness or partial sight)
- Prefer not to say
- Other.

The number of disabled staff who work for us now sits at 31%, which is above the average of 17.8% in England and Wales (ons.gov.uk).



Retention and progression

We know that a key indicator of work satisfaction is whether staff are staying and progressing within our federation. In total, 44% of staff have progressed to a better paid and/or more senior role. 32% of these progressions have been in the last 12 months.

We also asked our staff* some culture questions where they ranked their response to statements out of 10 (with 10 being the highest), as below.

* 2,243 members of staff, 204 trustees and 39 trainees responded.

Within these responses, there are some areas that we are keen to target for improvement for next year. In particular, we want to see what we can do to make sure that more members of staff, trustees and trainees feel greater connection to The Wildlife Trusts.

Question	Member of staff (Average out of 10)	Trustee (Average out of 10)	Trainee (Average out of 10)
How connected do you feel to The Wildlife Trusts federation?	6.5	7.1	6.5
How important is it for you to feel connected to The Wildlife Trusts federation?	7.4	7.8	7.1
I feel that my Wildlife Trust is an inclusive place to work for all colleagues/trustees	8.1	8.6	8.0
I am able to be my full self at work/ in my trustee role and feel heard in my role	8.1	9.1	7.8
I feel like I belong at The Wildlife Trusts	8.1	8.7	7.8
I think that leadership supports and promotes a culture where people feel like they belong	7.8	8.9	8.0
I think that values of The Wildlife Trusts align with my own personal values	8.5	9.0	8.3
I feel comfortable providing feedback on issues related to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging	8.0	8.8	7.5
I speak out when I see racism in action and help to create a truly anti-racist movement	8.5	8.8	8.4
I believe that people are treated with fairness and respect	8.2	9.1	8.4
I understand how my role contributes to the achievement of my Wildlife Trust's strategy	8.7	9.3	8.1
I would recommend my Wildlife Trust as a great place to work	8.3	9.1	8.3

Our pay gaps

Pay gaps look at the difference in pay between groups of people doing similar jobs. The Wildlife Trusts have decided to voluntarily report on our gender pay gap (between men and women); our disability pay gap (between disabled and non-disabled staff); our sexual orientation pay gap (between heterosexual/straight staff and LGBTQ+ staff); and our ethnicity pay gap (between white ethnicities and minoritised ethnicities including people of colour). New for 2025, we have also reported on our carers’ pay gap, between those with caring responsibilities and those without.

We compare the mean pay (average) so that we are comparable with those organisations where reporting is compulsory.

The results cover staff only (not trustees or trainees). A total of 2,243 employees responded and some question responses are grouped or focus on the groups where a large enough data set was provided.

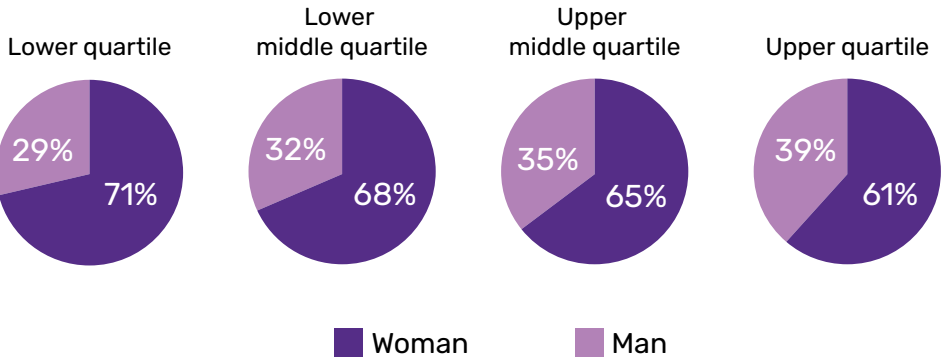
Gender

The data below only includes responses from employees that responded with their gender as being a woman or a man. This is because the number of responses in other categories are too small for robust analysis.

The baseline for all staff shows that 65% are women and 33% are men. Overall, women on average earn 4.6% less than men. The national (UK) gender pay gap is currently 7% (ons.gov.uk).

Year	2023	2024	2025
Mean pay gap	8.2%	5.6%	4.6%

The quartiles are split by position in the federation, with the lower quartile defined as trainee and entry level roles, and the upper quartile defined as chief executives and directors.



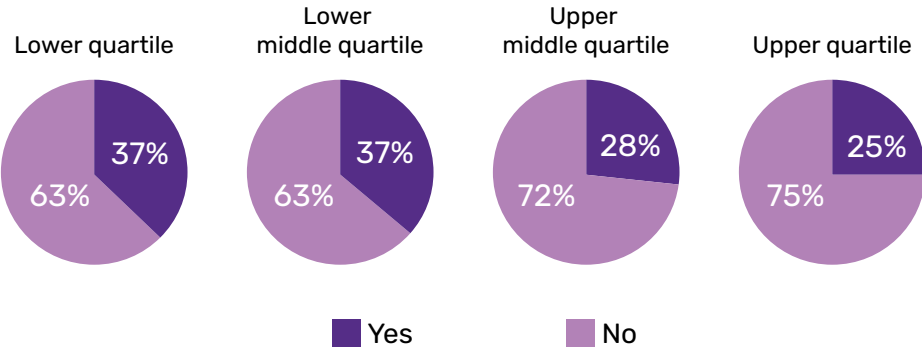
Disability

Almost a third of staff (30%) said they had at least one disability.

Our disability pay gap is 9.4%, while the national (UK) disability pay gap is 12.7% (ons.gov.uk) showing we are well below the national level.

Year	2023	2024	2025
Mean pay gap	5.1%	7.1%	9.4%

The quartiles are split by position in the federation, with the lower quartile defined as trainee and entry level roles, and the upper quartile defined as chief executives and directors.



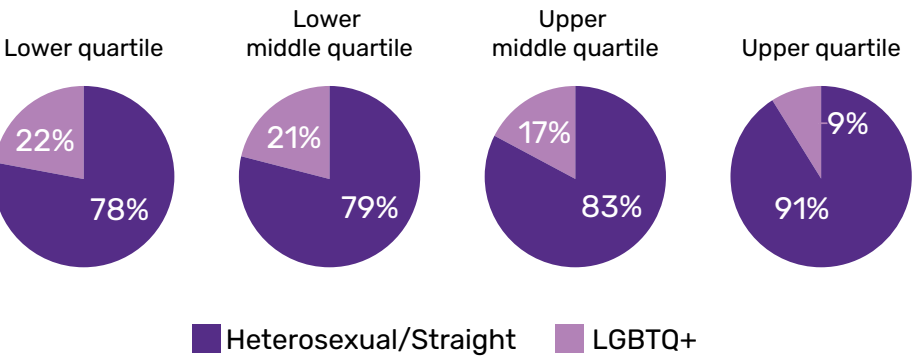
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Sexual orientation

Our sexual orientation pay gap is -1.4%. There is no reliable national statistic for this currently.

Year	2023	2024	2025
Mean pay gap	8.2%	7.7%	-1.4%

The quartiles are split by position in the federation, with the lower quartile defined as trainee and entry level roles, and the upper quartile defined as chief executives and directors.

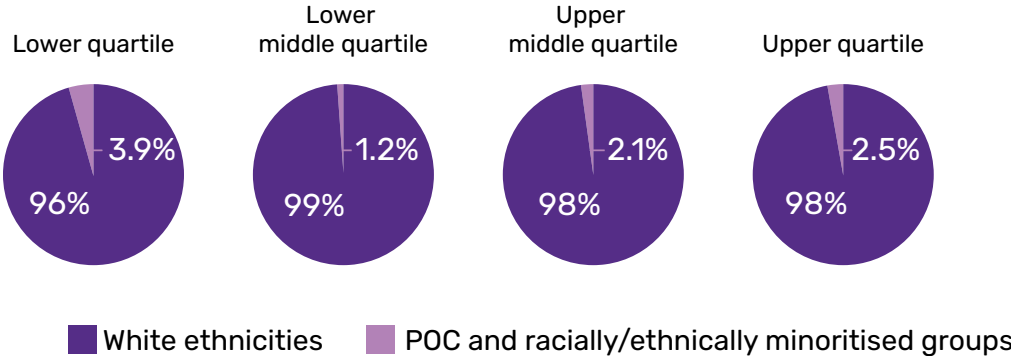


Ethnicity

Our ethnicity pay gap is 7.2%. Currently there are no reliable national figures for ethnicity pay gaps. We are using last year’s data as a baseline and are monitoring our data annually moving forward.

Year	2023	2024	2025
Mean pay gap	5.1%	1.2%	7.2%

The quartiles are split by position in the federation, with the lower quartile defined as trainee and entry level roles, and the upper quartile defined as chief executives and directors.



Carers

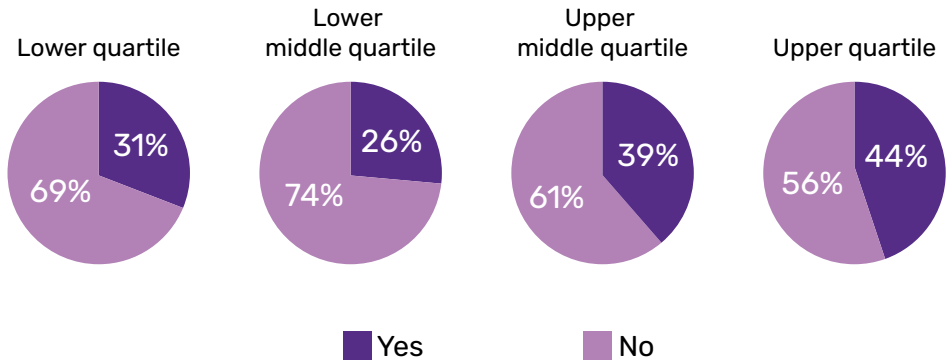
This is our first year of measuring this data. As we are seeing the number of staff with caring responsibilities rise, we decided to report on our carers’ pay gap and this represents any staff who have a caring responsibility including looking after children.

Year	2025
Mean pay gap	-2.7%

Our carers’ pay gap is -2.7%, demonstrating that staff who are carers on average earn 2.7% more than staff without caring responsibilities.

Carers are also well represented at all levels of the federation.

The quartiles are split by position in the federation, with the lower quartile defined as trainee and entry level roles, and the upper quartile defined as chief executives and directors.

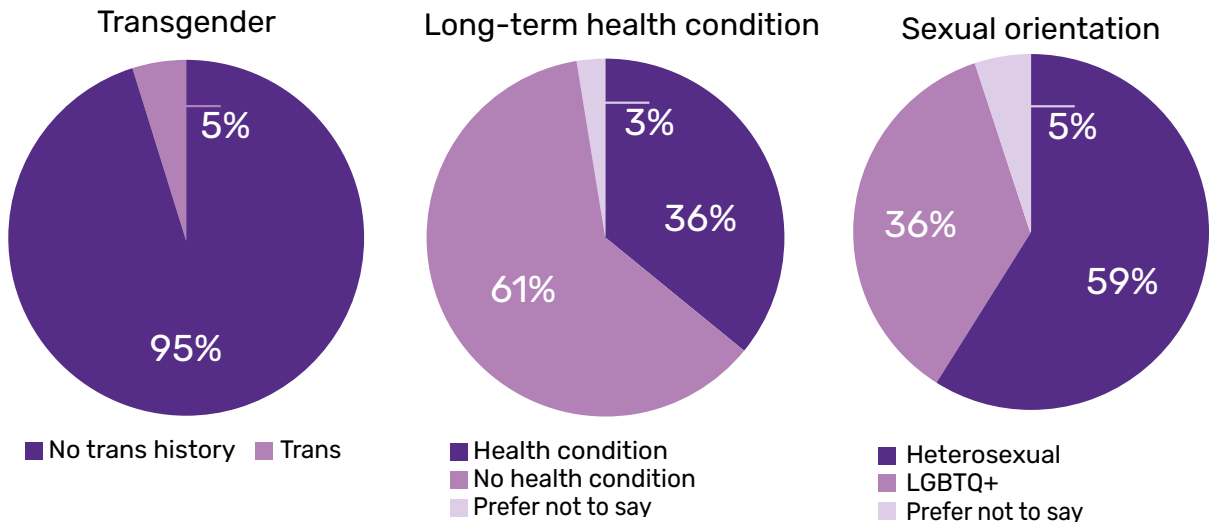


Trainee data

This year, we have published a wider range of traineeship data. We understand the importance of our trainees and the importance of providing work experience within our sector to enable young people to view it as a potential career choice. We hope that these traineeships will give underrepresented communities exposure to and experience of the careers in the environmental sector.

No trainees have progressed or moved from their traineeship in the last 12 months but 7.7% have been extended.

Only 53.8% of trainees work full time and none are on permanent contracts.



Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work

At The Wildlife Trusts we have pledged to put people at the heart of everything we do. We know that if we want to succeed in tackling the nature and climate crises, we need everyone to take action for nature – and we really do mean everyone.

This year, we have continued to see improvement and progress across many diversity characteristics. We have increased our staff profile representing minoritised ethnic backgrounds, though we are aware that we are not yet where we want to be. We are focused on long-term and systemic change from our recruitment processes through to retention and general workplace support.

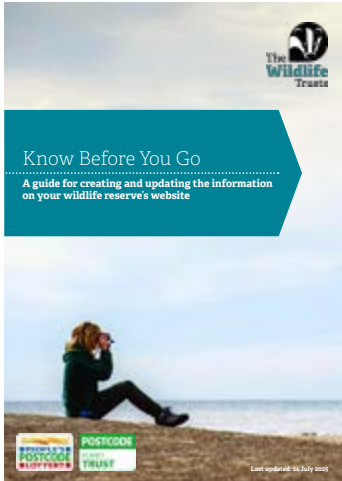
Our LGB+ members of staff are highly represented, with 15% of the workforce identifying in this demographic; this is far above the UK average of 3.3%. We also exceed the UK average of 17.8% members of staff with a disability or long-term health condition, as 31% of our workforce fall into this category.

However, we – like others – continue to face the negative and anti-EDI rhetoric that is on the rise. We have committed to supporting our national EDI team and to actively seek ways to work even harder in this area. Now, more than ever, we must double-down and be a louder voice for the minority and minoritised groups in our society.

Our new public resources

We are always keen to share our work with others and this year launched a public-facing document, *A Space for Everyone: a good practice guide*. The Wildlife Trusts led its creation with other organisations and it contains both case studies and recommendations for any landowners opening their nature spaces to the public. It looks at all the protected characteristics and highlights the most effective changes landowners and managers can make to ensure their space is safe and accessible to all.

Alongside this guide we have also publicly launched our *Know Before You Go* template which helps landowners and managers give useful information to potential visitors before they make the journey to a nature space. This template provides useful information on whether locations are fully accessible and helps to give potential visitors an introduction to the space, which is particularly important for those who have felt excluded from such places in the past.



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The Environmental Leadership Programme

The Environmental Leadership Programme 2 (ELP2) represents a key development in The Wildlife Trusts' work with young people. Led by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts in partnership with Shropshire Wildlife Trust and funded by The National Lottery's Community Fund, the programme supports 18 to 25 year olds from underrepresented and underserved communities across the West Midlands to develop environmental leadership skills and connection with nature, creating pathways into Wildlife Trust careers and environmental action.

The Environmental Leadership Programme was originally led by the youth development charity, UpRising. In February 2025, the programme with its associated team transferred from UpRising to The Wildlife Trusts, bringing their crucial youth sector expertise into the movement. This helped to move the programme from being a standalone project into a much more integrated, movement-building initiative.

To ensure we are recruiting truly diverse participants for this programme, we have undertaken research that has identified critical barriers to young people's participation in the green sector. There has been a 73% decline in youth service spending, which creates infrastructure gaps. 68% of young people say that financial insecurity prevents them from getting involved. When young people are asked about their primary motivators, 30% respond with financial stability as being key and career satisfaction is important to 27%. Only 11% cite environmental causes as being their main motivator. This clearly shows that we need to do more to meet young people where they are and make nature and the nature movement more relevant to them.

The programme has actively built networks beyond the environmental sector. This year included cross-sector conversations with Birmingham Youth Service, Cultures in Unity, the Chinese Community Centre Birmingham and Hindu Climate Action. An external event in October 2025 attracted 22 attendees, including nine from regional Wildlife Trusts, with the aim of sharing learnings and supporting one another to improve our offering to young people. 'Green Pathways' workshops have also been developed to deliver insights and connection from the federation to wider groups of young people outside of those engaging directly with the programme, with three delivered so far.

Participant feedback demonstrates the programme's effectiveness. Across both completed cohorts, participants showed significant development in confidence, networks, skills and knowledge in line with the programme's Theory of Change. Professional network building improved by 54% in Year 1 and 29% in Year 2, with participants increasingly identifying as leaders. Green career confidence and understanding of sector pathways improved substantially. Nature connection also showed measurable gains, with both cohorts increasing their connection across all Nature Connection Index measures.

Since participating in the programme and joining the growing alumni network, several participants have started volunteering with local Wildlife Trusts. Some participants have now gone on to serve on Wildlife Trust boards and one has become the co-chair for the Early Career Trustee Community of Practice. As ELP2 integrates into RSWT and enters years three to four, it is positioned to support practice across The Wildlife Trusts movement, amplifying young people's lived experiences to develop more effective diverse recruitment and engagement practices.

Naturally Connected Young People

In late 2024, education and youth activism leaders from 36 Wildlife Trusts came together to vision how we can work more consistently with young people aged 11 to 16, both in school and as part of their local communities. Together, we co-developed our strategic plan for engaging 11 to 16 year olds, called 'Building the Bridge', which encompasses the next five years of delivery, governance and policy-related ambitions for The Wildlife Trusts.

To help deliver on this plan, from autumn 2025 to May 2028 we will be delivering a UK-wide programme of nature-connection projects to secondary-aged young people across the length and breadth of the UK, involving each of the 46 Wildlife Trusts called *Naturally Connected Young People*.

Funded by the Prudence Trust, this £2 million programme will enable Wildlife Trusts to rapidly scale-up their delivery of accessible and sustainable projects for young people aged 11-16. It will immerse participants in nature and develop personal pathways of nature connection that support their health and well-being, with benefits continuing beyond the funded period. It will allow Wildlife Trusts with the most experience and reach in this area to support and guide their colleagues across the UK to replicate, build or extend their models of delivery with new cohorts of young people, prioritising those from underrepresented and marginalised groups.

Naturally Connected Young People will specialise in supporting young people to connect with nature in ways that make sense and feel safe to them. Working across secondary schools and community groups, the programme will focus on reaching young people who traditionally face the greatest barriers when it comes to accessing nature, such as: children from ethnic minority groups, LGBTQ+ children, looked after children, forced migrants including asylum seekers and refugees and children who are facing poverty.

The programme will be externally evaluated, with a key driver to use the stories and findings from delivery to inform key policy initiatives around both children's mental health and the increasing inequalities relating to access to good quality natural spaces for everyone, regardless of background.



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Diversity, social justice and The Wildlife Trusts

At The Wildlife Trusts, we know social justice is not just a nice idea, but essential to achieving our values and goals. It means making sure nature is protected and restored in ways that are fair and inclusive, so that people and wildlife can benefit. And where people are involved in their local natural spaces, they value them and feel safe in them – and they work to protect them, ensuring the sustainability of nature’s recovery. That’s why we are working to make our movement more diverse and inclusive – so that we are more socially just.

Social justice is about making sure everyone has equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, no matter who they are or where they come from. We know that many people systematically face unfair barriers, from poverty to discrimination, even a lack of access to natural spaces. These injustices can prevent people feeling connected to nature or from having a say in decisions that affect their local environment.

People’s voices need to be heard and when they speak about changes, they need to see those changes happen. This is an essential part of achieving social justice. We use an approach called community organising, which starts by going out into communities and listening to them. We want to make sure that people are heard, feel that they belong and recognise that they can make a difference. We call this Team Wilder. When people feel part of something, they are more likely to take action to protect the places and wildlife they care about.

This approach includes looking at who holds power and who gets to decide what happens to land, water and wildlife. Conservation should not be something done to communities, but it should be done with them. When people have a say and feel ownership over their local environment, they are more likely to look after it and speak up for it. That’s good for nature and good for people. One of the strengths of The Wildlife Trusts is that we are rooted in local communities, which helps us build these strong connections.

Our future work could even go beyond the UK. Knowing that environmental and social injustice is a global issue, especially in places that have been colonised or marginalised, is crucial for our work to be successful. We are learning from our work with communities in the UK to help shape our international efforts. That means utilising the skills we have learned from our community organising, Team Wilder approach. We need to continue to undertake deep listening to community voices, challenging unfair systems, and supporting solutions led by local people.

Our strategy now includes putting people at the heart of nature recovery. By including social justice as well as environmental justice in everything we do, we are working towards a future where both communities and wildlife can thrive.

Staff networks

We have six staff networks, accessible to all employees across the federation. In total, they currently support over 500 staff. This year our staff networks hosted different events, from celebrating LGBTQ+ history month, to International Women’s Week and Black History Month. Our staff networks are a safe space for staff to discuss any thoughts and share lived experiences. We took part in more than 18 Pride events this year, promoting The Wildlife Trusts and the staff network at all of the events.

Our six networks are really important because they contribute to making the organisation into a more inclusive place, where colleagues have the space and time to meet regularly, feel safe, valued and supported at work. It’s also an opportunity to get voices heard and to find better ways to challenge inequalities together. We want to make sure people can be their full selves at work and can connect with colleagues with similar experiences.

Nature For All

Nature For All is a network for employees with disabilities: physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term negative effect on someone’s daily life. The aim of the network is to provide peer support, learn from each other and raise awareness around disability inclusion and accessibility in and outside the workplace.

Out For Nature

This network is for employees who identify as a part of the LGBTQ+ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Non-Binary, Queer and Questioning). The purpose of this network is to provide peer support, to raise awareness around LGBTQ+ history and ongoing struggles and to organise events to celebrate the achievements of the LGBTQ+ community.



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Colours Of Nature

Colours Of Nature is a network for people of colour. Members use the meetings as a psychological safe place to share both positive and negative experiences as well as to share general conversations and networking opportunities.

Women In Nature

Women in Nature is a network for women of all backgrounds, including trans women and non-binary people. The purpose of the network is to come together to share experiences, provide guidance, to improve inclusion and to connect women across all Wildlife Trusts.



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Next Gen Nature

Next Gen Nature is a network for young employees (under the age of 32 - this limit was chosen by the network to include the two years ‘lost’ to the pandemic). The aim of this network is to provide peer support, share experiences, provide guidance for other young people to join the conservation sector and ensure that young voices are represented and valued across all Wildlife Trusts.

Nature In Mind

This network is for employees who live with mental health conditions. The purpose of the network is to come together to share experiences, to raise awareness around mental health causes and to improve inclusion and well-being practices across all Wildlife Trusts.



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TIDE

On an annual basis, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts undertakes Onvero's Talent Inclusion Diversity Evaluation (TIDE). There were many changes to TIDE for this year including new topics such as training. It continues to be a valuable intersectional assessment and each year we receive a report suggesting which areas of work need to be a focus for the coming year. This year we are pleased to say our EDI progress has earned us the Silver TIDE Award for a second year. The bronze, silver and gold awards are given to the top scoring organisations each year.



Wild Futures - diversifying our talent pipeline

The Big Bang Fair 2025

This year we attended the Big Bang fair at the NEC, our first careers event and the largest Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) fair in the UK. There were 20,379 11 to 14 year olds over the three days and we had a constant queue at our stand. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust joined the national team and ran three hands-on science activities.

Our 'Careers with The Wildlife Trusts' event

As part of increasing our ethnic diversity we have been working on making sure we are reaching out to a much wider potential pool of applicants for our job roles. Part of this involves working with young people who are deciding their future career options as well as those looking for a career change. This year we hosted our second public careers webinar.

Wild Future: Careers With The Wildlife Trusts covered subjects such as the variety of jobs available at The Wildlife Trusts, some personal stories from staff that do not fit into the conventional route into the environment and conservation sector, and some important tips on how to put together a great job application. The session also included lots of other ways in which people have been able to get involved, such as through T-Level placements, youth forums and more.

We had over 2,000 registrants for the event from 13 different countries, including Bermuda, Brazil, India, Mexico, and New Zealand.



ROSS HODDINOTT/2020VISION

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T-Levels

Between May 2024 and September 2025, with support from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, The Wildlife Trusts ran a pilot of office-based industry placements for T-Level students. T-Levels are qualifications for 16 to 19 year olds that focus on vocational skills in subjects such as business, marketing, digital and finance.

While there is a wealth of experience in running traineeships and other forms of work experience across The Wildlife Trusts federation, T-Levels presented a new and unique opportunity. Having long recognised the need to become more relevant to and reflective of the wider society we are part of, reaching a future workforce who aren't on a traditional conservation career path – such as hands-on land management training or an ecology degree – is essential.

Four Wildlife Trusts provided over 800 industry placement hours for T-Level students; in Digital Production, Design and Development at Northumberland Wildlife Trust and in Management and Administration at Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the central charity, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

From the outset it was our priority to provide an accessible and high-quality experience. This started with the recruitment of students, such as sharing interview questions in advance and taking time to understand candidates' interests and the skills they hoped to develop. Nature knowledge was not an entry requirement.

We met so many bright young learners who challenged our assumptions and greatly informed our understanding of what The Wildlife Trusts need to implement to offer credible and contemporary early-career opportunities. Evaluation of the pilot found marked increases in students' confidence in crucial employability skills and identified organisational benefits including new ideas, development opportunities for existing staff and greater inclusivity. As one placement supervisor reflected, their Digital student "probably wouldn't have come through our doors at all without this placement, but staff are queueing up to learn about AI from him".

Thanks to this pilot, The Wildlife Trusts now have a bespoke toolkit of guidance and templates to enable more successful placements in the future, that deliver for students and organisations alike. The learnings have relevance not only for T-Level placements, but also wider-ranging strategic priorities such as furthering inclusive recruitment and building a culture of belonging.

The challenges facing nature and the climate over the years ahead will require The Wildlife Trusts to continuously innovate in emerging fields and develop new skills across our staff and volunteer networks. The importance of fostering relationships with educators and mentoring potential future employees through placements of all kinds is only going to continue.

Room to grow

The Wildlife Trusts are on a journey together and we need everyone to join in. This report is a reflection point on that journey: a chance for us to assess our progress so far and to reassert our beliefs and our vision.

We use our annual Diversity Report as a living document, not an end in itself. Last year, our report identified that we needed to analyse how and who we recruited to our workforce and we needed to be more inclusive. This year, then, we are able to report that we have made changes – we held our second careers event, attended the Big Bang Fair and offered placements to T-Level students. We are also excited at the potential for the Naturally Connected Young People project to make a tremendous impact.

We have made improvements. We can be proud of our approach to recruiting from a broad range of people who may have disabilities or long-term health conditions or who have a wider range of sexual orientations than the national average, and we can be pleased that we are closing the pay gaps.

Yet there is more to be done. We have to keep up the momentum. We have built our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work around long-term goals. Year on year, we will grow our staff networks, keeping them responsive and agile, making them work to reflect the staff that they represent through the staff that make them up. We will become more and more representative of the communities that we work with, and alongside, and for.

And we will continue to build a sense of belonging within The Wildlife Trusts. We will become a place that everyone can truly be their best selves and their authentic selves.

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The
Wildlife
Trusts

The Wildlife Trusts are a federation made up of 46 Wildlife Trusts and a central charity (the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts). Each is an independent charity with a shared mission.

Help us achieve our vision of 30% of land and sea to be connected and protected for nature's recovery by 2030.

- Join us as a member
- Remember us in your will
- Speak up for wildlife
- Volunteer your time
- Work with us

Get in touch...



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