



**Herts &
Middlesex**
Wildlife Trust

Wilder **Future**

Creating a wilder Hertfordshire and Middlesex by 2030



Wilder Herts and Middlesex 2030

If we work together, by 2030 wildlife will have space to thrive and our precious habitats and species populations will be recovering. People will feel more connected to wildlife and will be empowered to take action to give nature a positive future.

Wildlife is in trouble. The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world and we have lost up to half our biodiversity in the last century. We are facing a nature and climate crisis and people are less connected with nature than ever before. We must act now to reverse the declines in wildlife and wild spaces and re-connect everybody with nature.

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust believe wildlife should be able to thrive alongside our everyday lives and that everyone benefits from having access to

nature. If we work together as a community, nature will recover and we will create a greener, sustainable and wilder future.

This is a pivotal time and we must all take action for wildlife before it is too late. Based on the findings of the Trust's seminal report *Hertfordshire's State of Nature*, published in 2020, we have created a strategy for nature's recovery across Hertfordshire and Middlesex, underpinned by three goals:

More land in Hertfordshire and Middlesex is managed and protected for nature

Locally, nearly 20% of our wildlife is threatened with extinction. Habitat loss and fragmentation of wild spaces have sent populations plummeting. To combat this dramatic decline and to allow nature to recover, we need to see at least 30% of the land in our area protected and managed sympathetically for wildlife.

The Trust already cares for 40 nature reserves covering nearly 2,000 acres. These are important wildlife havens, but they are not enough to stop such a drastic wildlife decline. Landowners and managers, local authorities and individuals can all help to reach our target of 30% – from farms to parks and grass verges to gardens, nature needs more space to thrive.

By 2030 we want to see:

- At least 30% of land connected and protected for nature's recovery.
- Wildlife habitats are the best they can be for nature and are resilient to the challenges of a changing climate.
- Wild places are better-protected in law.
- Species declines are reversed and their populations are recovering.
- Greater understanding of local wildlife and its ecology.

More people are standing up for wildlife and taking action for nature's recovery

We all have a part to play in building a wilder Hertfordshire and Middlesex. It is only by working together that we can create a vibrant and sustainable future where nature can thrive.

We need a people-powered movement for nature's recovery. The Trust wants to support communities to connect with nature and take practical action to create space for wildlife. If 1 in 4 people join us to champion wildlife, we can create a sustainable community movement for nature.

The Trust will act as a hub which connects individuals and organisations wanting to take action. Caring for wildlife needs to be inclusive and welcoming where everyone can make a difference.

By 2030 we want people to:

- Have greater knowledge, appreciation and involvement in nature.
- Be working with the Trust to develop and deliver their own local action for nature's recovery.
- Put nature's recovery at the heart of local decision making.
- See involvement with nature as welcoming and open to all.

Nature plays a central and valued role in helping to address climate issues and people's health and wellbeing

The nature and climate crises that we all face are inseparably linked. Climate change is driving nature's decline and the loss of wild spaces is leaving us ill-equipped to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to change.

Restoring nature can help soak up carbon emissions – there are natural solutions to climate change. When healthy, our natural habitats can also reduce the risk of flooding, improve people's health and wellbeing, as well as maintain healthy soils, clean water and the pollinators needed for our crops.

National research has underlined the important role that a healthy natural environment and access to nature is for the health and wellbeing of our communities.

By 2030 we want to see:

- Natural resources are properly valued for their ability to address climate change.
- Greater understanding of the impact of climate change on local habitats and species.
- Sustainable land management that restores biodiverse, natural processes.
- Greater understanding of the value of nature to health and wellbeing.

FARMING
Nature-friendly farming is widely adopted and properly rewarded.



WETLAND
Well-managed wetlands provide a home for wildlife, help to store carbon and reduce the risk of flooding.

WOODLANDS
Existing woodlands are protected with natural regeneration and tree planting in appropriate areas.

PLANNING
Wildlife is central to planning policy and nature is protected and given space to thrive in our built environment.

GREEN SPACE
Urban green space like parks and road verges are managed with wildlife in mind.

FAMILIES
Children and young people are engaged and taking action for wildlife.

COMMUNITIES
Local communities are empowered to protect wildlife and combat climate change.

RIVERS
Our precious chalk streams are protected and cared for and endangered species like water vole are returning.



Building a **wilder future** together

This is a crucial time to address the nature and climate crises and we must act now. Our strategy for a wilder Hertfordshire and Middlesex is ambitious and can only be achieved if we all work together. **Our future must be wilder.**

Supporting action across our area

The Trust will continue the vital work to care for nature reserves, develop projects to protect and restore the natural world and fight for political and social change. We will also be increasing our efforts to support others to take their own action to address the nature and climate crisis. We are here to support you in putting nature first at home, at work and in your local community.

Together we must build a community of people who can champion nature and show that wildlife is an integral part of a resilient, sustainable economy. It's not too late for nature to recover – **but we have to act now.**

Thinking globally and acting locally

Actions we take locally will have an effect on the global climate crisis. Healthy, biodiverse habitats are better at storing carbon than degraded ones, so actions we take to restore our natural world will have a positive effect on carbon reduction. The more space we create for wildlife here in Hertfordshire and Middlesex, the bigger the impact on carbon reduction globally and the better able nature will be to meet the challenges of a changing climate.

Let's work together

The challenges facing nature and the climate are vast and we must think big to see meaningful change. We are lucky to work alongside many landowners, organisations and communities who are already working hard to create space for wildlife. But we must do more and act quickly. Everybody has a part to play in addressing the nature and climate crisis and **by working together we can create a wilder Hertfordshire and Middlesex.**

Find out how you can play your part here:



hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/Wilder2030

Inspirational Partnerships



Caring for the landscape

The Easneye Estate near Ware lies next to Amwell Nature Reserve. Estate owners, the Buxton family, have worked with the Trust for over 16 years at a landscape-scale to create natural habitats where a wide variety of species thrive. With the Environment Agency, we have prepared a restoration and management plan for seven kilometres of the River Ash. The work has already resulted in the return of water voles, barn owls, and breeding brown trout. **Whether you are a farmer, a golf course manager or a business with grounds, there's something you can do for nature's recovery.**



Communities taking action

The Trust's Wilder St Albans project is delivered in partnership with St Albans City & District Council and aims to increase the number of wild spaces across the district and support the community to take action for wildlife. By connecting schools, community groups and businesses, Wilder St Albans brings together small actions to create a big impact on wildlife. **By working together, local communities can build a better future for wildlife.**



Championing rivers

Our Living Rivers work is restoring local chalk streams back to good health and connecting them to a natural floodplain of wetlands, ponds, ditches and wet meadows so our aquatic wildlife can thrive. To do this, we work closely with farmers, river groups, the private sector, statutory bodies, local communities and volunteers across Hertfordshire. **Collaboration is key to caring for our county's rivers.**





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“We have the choice of a better – and wilder – future. A future where wildlife thrives alongside people. A future where nature helps us in the fight against climate change.

The time is now to create a wilder future.”

Sir David Attenborough
President Emeritus, The Wildlife Trusts



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