



REVIEW OF THE YEAR

1 February 2024 to 31 January 2025

It is a real privilege to be writing my first introduction to an annual review as Chief Executive of Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT). Having previously served as Head of Engagement, I was fortunate to witness much of this progress first-hand. I must also give credit to my predecessor, Leigh Morris, whose leadership helped make 2024/25 such a successful year.

This was a period of real progress and change for MWT. We welcomed new colleagues across conservation, engagement, communications, and administration, and developed the new Head of Conservation & Land role to give clear leadership in this vital area. We also invested in our infrastructure, modernising our IT systems and preparing for new opportunities through the generous gift of Thie Vunn in Peel – a home that will soon allow us to grow our internship programme for the next generation of conservationists and provide much-needed space for learning and collaboration.

Nature recovery requires collaboration, and I am proud that MWT's partnerships, nationally, and internationally – continue to flourish. From securing the UNESCO Biosphere Award, alongside the Isle of Man Woodland Trust for rainforest restoration at Creg y Cowin, to contributing at international forums, from corporate partnerships to expanding work with communities and schools, we are ensuring that the Isle of Man is at the forefront of conservation and sustainability.

As I begin my tenure, I look forward to building on these achievements with your continued support. Together, we can make even greater space for nature and enable people and wildlife to thrive across our Island.



Graham Makepeace-Warne
CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust

HOW WE RAISED OUR FUNDS



Public Donations £34k

We were humbled by the generosity of the Manx public. From bucket donations to online gifts, your support fuels everything we do.



Membership £60k

With more than 1,200 members, you are the lifeblood of MWT. Your support strengthens not only our finances but also our voice for nature.



Legacies £312k

Legacy gifts can transform our work. Some years we receive none, other years they are life-changing. Every legacy, large or small, helps us plan for a wilder future.



Contract Delivery £112k

Through carefully chosen Government contracts such as the Agri-environment Scheme and wildlife education and providing Calf of Man wardening services, we deliver vital work for people and nature.



Retail & Ecology Consultancy £46k

Our Peel and Douglas shops and Nature Discovery Centres raise important funds, supported by volunteers. Our consultancy, Ecology Vannin, provides expert ecological advice while generating income for MWT.



Corporate Support £464k

Businesses are increasingly turning to MWT to deliver meaningful conservation outcomes. In 2024, Aviva, Lloyds Bank International, Manx Telecom and others played a central role in our success.

HOW WE USED OUR FUNDS



Staff Costs £492k

Our people are our greatest asset. Fair pay in conservation remains a challenge, but investing in our people is essential to delivering results.



Project Delivery (Restricted Funds) £397k

Restricted funding allows us to deliver specific projects, though we continue to seek more flexible income to give greater stability.



Land Purchase £508k

Owning land gives us the strongest ability to safeguard habitats for wildlife and people.



Maintaining Our Nature Reserves £51k

Managing our reserves includes essential, and sometimes costly, work such as tree management to keep sites safe and thriving.

LOOKING AHEAD: 2026

Sustainable Income

Our focus is on replacing short-term project funding with secure, sustainable income. Nature finance, retail, consultancy, donations, legacies, and corporate partnerships will all play a role.

Speaking Up For Nature

With the Isle of Man General Election less than a year away, we will work to ensure wildlife and the benefits it brings – from climate resilience to health and wellbeing – are central to the debate.

Together, with your continued support, we will keep making space for nature.

Thank You!
To all our members
supporters, and partners.



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NEW TEAM MEMBERS

This year we welcomed several new faces to the MWT team. Katie Grace stepped into delivery of the Island's Agri-environment Scheme after David Bellamy was promoted to Head of Conservation & Land. Steve Wright joined as Administrator, ensuring the smooth running of our operations. Seb Swithinbank strengthened the conservation team, focusing on rainforest restoration and woodland work. In the Engagement Team, we welcomed Communications Officer Marnie Kelly and new Education Officer Rachel Jarvis Martin, while Amy Howse became our third Biosphere Artist in Residence.

IT UPGRADE

MWT began a long-awaited upgrade of our IT systems, moving to cloud-based computing. This has improved our ability to work remotely, enhanced cyber security, and streamlined how we handle data, which is becoming ever more important in our conservation work. Fibre broadband finally reached our Peel office, and with the help of Manx Technology Group, the transition has been smooth and effective.

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THIE VUNN (MUNN'S HOUSE)

We were humbled by the gift of Thie Vunn in Peel, which is currently being refurbished and will be ready by spring 2026. This wonderful building will host our new internship programme, initially accommodating tree-planting volunteers before welcoming interns in roles such as Consultant Ecologist, Engagement Officer, Marine Officer, and Woodland Ranger. The house also provides meeting space, a library, and much-needed extra capacity alongside our Peel office.



MWT CREG Y COWIN PLANNING GRANTED

The first site purchased under the Manx Rainforest Project, supported by Aviva through The Wildlife Trusts. Planning permission was unanimously granted in 2024 to allow large-scale tree planting – part of our goal to plant up to a third of a million trees. Working alongside the Isle of Man Woodland Trust, we were honoured to jointly receive the UNESCO Biosphere Environment Award for this work. As well as capturing carbon, the project will boost biodiversity, reduce flooding and wildfire risk, and create green spaces for health and wellbeing.

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DALBY MOUNTAIN EXTENDED

A generous donation from Resilience Asset Management enabled us to extend MWT Dalby Mountain Nature Reserve by 43 acres. This landmark gift marks a shift in local businesses investing meaningfully in nature as part of their ESG commitments. By recognising the value of natural capital, companies can help MWT secure a sustainable income stream and deliver more for people and wildlife.



10 MAJOR MILESTONES

TACKLING INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES

A survey of the Ballaugh Curragh, commissioned by DEFA and delivered by MWT, revealed an estimated 950-1150 feral wallabies living in the Island. These animals, along with other invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, Rhododendron, and Montbretia, present risks to both wildlife and land management. With new funding, we've been able to expand our efforts to remove invasive plants from key sites such as MWT Cooldarby Nature Reserve.



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EELGRASS SURVEYS & A NEW MARINE RESERVE PROPOSAL

With support from KPMG, MWT volunteer divers carried out seagrass surveys at Gansey, Laxey, and Ramsey in 2024, creating detailed maps of our eelgrass beds. These results have not only informed restoration plans but also helped pave the way for a proposed new Marine Nature Reserve at Bulgham Bay, along Maughold coast, protecting important eelgrass, saltmarsh, and seal habitats.

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MWT HAIRPIN WOODLAND PARK OPENS

On 9 May 2024, our Patrons, His Excellency Sir John and Lady Lorimer, officially opened MWT Hairpin Woodland Park. This flagship engagement site, developed with Rotary Club of Douglas and Milntown Estate & Gardens, offers a welcoming space where people can connect with nature. Features include an interpretation pavilion, Tot's Trail, 'Logstackle' Course and the growing Hazel Maze – now a magical woodland realm.



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CROSSAGS CARBON SCHEME

In March 2024 we launched the Island's first wholly local high-integrity carbon project at Crossags, part of MWT Hairpin Woodland Park. With support from Lloyds Bank International, PDMS, Hansard, and Resilience Asset Management, this pilot project provides a blueprint for sustainable income through carbon credits. Early results are encouraging, with a 98% tree survival rate, and the site design includes open glades for community use following consultation.



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GROWING OUR RETAIL PRESENCE

Our Peel shop now operates with a new EPoS system, making trading smoother, while new sustainable products strengthen the link between our retail and conservation work. At Christmas we trialled a pop-up shop at Douglas Sea Terminal – our first step towards a permanent presence in the capital. Alongside sales at our Nature Discovery Centres, retail continues to be an important income stream thanks to the tireless efforts of our volunteers.



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