



# Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT) Annual Report 2025–26

(1 February 2025 to 31 January 2026)

**Graham Makepeace-Warne, CEO**

*Note: I became CEO in June 2025; my predecessor, Leigh Morris, led MWT during the first four months of this reporting period. He has now taken up the Director – International post at The Wildlife Trusts.*

## At a glance (as at 31 January 2026)

- **Nature reserves:** 34
- **Total land managed:** 2,565.63 acres (1.82% of the Isle of Man)
- **Members:** 1,121 individuals
- **Corporate members:** 37 (£80,361)
- **Staff:** 27 (18.046 FTE)

## A. Driving the development of a Nature Recovery Network across the IOM

This year saw continued progress in expanding and strengthening the Island's Nature Recovery Network.

We increased our landholding through the acquisition of our largest site **MWT Glen Auldyn Nature Reserve**, at 1,127 acres, as part of the Aviva-supported Manx Rainforest Project, alongside **MWT Close Thompson**, **MWT Creggans** and **MWT Ballanoa Meadow Nature Reserves**, and additional Bona Vacantia land at **MWT Hairpin Woodland Park**. These additions strengthen habitat connectivity, long-term restoration potential and political leverage.

Investment in future habitat creation continued with the **expansion of our native tree nursery at Milntown**, supporting rainforest restoration ambitions.

Our conservation work was supported by strong scientific and partnership engagement, including:

- Hosting the **British Lichen Society field visit**
- Welcoming international collaboration through hosting the Inter Island Environment Meeting (**IIEM26**) for the first time



- Supporting research and awareness through talks on **Manx stoats** by the Vincent Wildlife Trust and non-native **wallaby health impacts** by Dr Arno Wuenschmann.

Recognition of conservation impact came through the **Awards for Excellence Sustainability Award** for our joint work with Manx National Heritage on the Calf of Man restoring Manx Shearwater populations from near extinction to over 1,500 breeding pairs.

## **B. Delivering and expanding nature-based solutions across the IOM**

We made substantial progress in demonstrating how nature contributes to environmental and economic resilience across the Isle of Man.

Key achievements include:

- Delivery of the **Manx Peat Partnership website, film and interpretation** under Government contract
- Development of **nature finance approaches**, including supporting the Sustainable Finance Initiative working group and recruitment of a **Nature Finance Officer, Stefan Renton**, to develop a Manx carbon standard
- Creation of the **User's Guide to Manx Marine Wildlife** with MWDW and DEFA
- Continued development of **Ecology Vannin**, including recruitment of a Business Manager, Mike Haigh

We also strengthened national and international positioning:

- CEO engagement with **Department for Enterprise Sustainable Finance Symposium**
- Participation in **Seeing is Believing** in Paris with The Wildlife Trusts
- Formation of the **Manx Nature Alliance**

Operationally, we improved organisational resilience through:

- Migration to **SharePoint with Manx Technology Group**
- Introduction of the **Team Kinetic volunteer management system**
- Ongoing **policy and health and safety review**



Support from partners was critical, including a significant multi-year funding commitment following a visit from representative of one of our funding foundations.

### **C. Connecting people to nature and MWT**

Engaging people with nature remains central to our mission, and this year saw strong growth in reach and impact.

Highlights include:

- Delivery of the **Go Wild Festival at Milntown** in partnership with Hello Little People
- Launch of **Monty Hall's Big Blue Bag** citizen science campaign with **Visit Isle of Man**
- Opening of a **retail presence at Douglas Sea Terminal**
- Delivery of **green prescribing trials** with the Northern Wellbeing Partnership
- Expansion of school engagement through interactive **Let's Get Wild sessions**

Creative and cultural engagement was strengthened through:

- **Artist in Residence Amy Howse** exploring plant sonification
- **Biosphere Photographers in Residence Adam Morgan and Ciara Hardisty**
- High-profile talks and events, including **Merlin Hanbury-Tenison**, author of *My Oaken Bones*

We continued to build community capacity:

- **Community organising training with The Wildlife Trusts - #TeamWildler**
- Celebration of our volunteers with the **King's Award for Voluntary Service** and an event at Government House
- Marking major contributions such as **Alison Skyner's 20 years of volunteering** with the Midweek Muckers

We also invested in people and teams, with recruitment across engagement (Carmel Croukamp – Head of Engagement), education (Rachel Martin and Tiphaine Claveau – Education Officer and Maternity Cover), ecology and land management (Corey Higham – Woodland Ranger and Chloe Hurst – Land and Nature Advisor).



## D. Governance, partnerships and sustainable funding

This was a year of strengthening governance, leadership and long-term sustainability.

Leadership transition was successfully delivered, with continuity ensured through internal promotion. New Trustees were appointed across both MWT and Wildlife Limited, strengthening governance capacity: Karen Ratzeburg, Kim Alcantara, Rachel Coomer and Greg Slater for Wildlife Limited.

We deepened strategic relationships across government and key stakeholders, including regular engagement with **DEFA**, and meetings with the **Chief Minister, Manx Birdlife and the NFU**.

National influence increased through:

- CEO appointment to the **UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man Board**
- CEO joining the **Visit Isle of Man Board**, championing ecotourism

Fundraising and sustainability were strengthened through:

- Growth in **corporate membership**
- Recruitment of Lucy Felton as **Partnerships Officer**
- Continued **legacy giving**, including gifts from the Wells, Howarth and Smith estates
- Development of our Ecological Consultancy and retail offers
- Exploration of new **nature finance mechanisms**

We also invested in future income generation through the refurbishment of **The Vunn (Munn's House)** to support interns and generate revenue during the summer.

## Looking ahead

This has been a year of momentum, growth and transition. We have expanded our land, strengthened partnerships, and increased our impact across conservation, finance and engagement.

The coming year will focus on core funding to support scaling delivery across all four strategic pillars, ensuring that nature recovery accelerates across the Isle of Man and that more people benefit from, and contribute to, a thriving natural environment.