

People

and

Nature  
Thriving

Our 2025 to 2035 strategy

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‘ On it the sun shines, over it the wind  
blows, and it belongs to you all and to  
every landless man, woman and child. ’

Octavia Hill, 1902



Female Black tailed skimmer perched  
on a ranger at Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk

©National Trust Images/Rob Coleman

# Foreword

We are delighted to bring you the National Trust's new strategy. It will set our direction and guide our decisions for the next 10 years and beyond.

At its core are three ambitious 2050 goals: to restore nature, to end unequal access to nature, beauty and history, and to inspire millions more people to care and take action. We will work toward them over the next decade.

They are societal shifts that we need to help make if we are to live up to our charitable purpose and leave a thriving natural and cultural world for the next generation.

Since our last strategy in 2015, the world has changed. Nature has plummeted further and faster. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed inequality of access to green space. Heritage and history have taken centre stage in public debates, while funding for local heritage has been squeezed and stretched. Fragmenting communities and declining public trust will only make it harder to fix these problems.

Yet we have more evidence than ever of how nature and heritage enrich our everyday lives. They give us joy and respite, inspire a sense of belonging, and connect us to one another.

It is these needs – the universal, everyday needs of people here in the UK – that are at the heart of our plans.

Delivering this strategy will require a monumental effort, and one we certainly can't make alone. You'll see us working much more in partnership with others, and much further beyond our own fence lines, in communities, towns and cities.

We'll look after places and collections with care and pride, and we'll work harder to make sure they are available and useful to everyone who needs them. Like the National Trust itself, this strategy is a collective endeavour. It has been shaped by the contributions of 70,000 people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. And it is built on 130 years of experience and hard work, from generations of people who have given their time, care and support to our cause.

The National Trust has never stood still. In each chapter of our history, we have adapted to the needs of the day.

We hope you too will feel proud of what the National Trust has achieved and ready to join us for the next chapter.

Thank you.

**Hilary McGrady and René Olivieri**



**Hilary McGrady**  
National Trust Director-General



**René Olivieri**  
National Trust Chairman

# The challenge ahead

It's 2050. Wild birds call across peatlands. Fish flash in streams. Bees drift across gardens and city squares.

People enjoy nature and culture everywhere.

Through hard work, undertaken by millions, nature has been restored and historic places are loved, used and shared.

## We can all shape that future

You're about to read the strategy that will guide us for the next decade. And 2035 is hard to imagine.

**Will river water run clear and clean in England?**

**Will wild flowers carpet valleys in Wales?**

**Will green corridors open up across Northern Ireland?**

We hope so. Because another vision of the future has climate change tipping nature out of balance, affecting our cities and coastlines – further harming people, wildlife, historic places and landscapes. As well as social problems fuelled by declining public trust.



**Muslim Hikers on the Lynmouth circular walk via Watersmeet and Countisbury, Devon**

©National Trust Images/James Beck

We **all need nature;**  
it's a matter of survival.

And **we all need culture;**  
it's what humans do.  
It makes us feel seen  
and connected.

It tells the story  
of who we are.

Planting snowdrops at Castlefield Viaduct, Manchester

©National Trust Images/Annapurna Mellor



Children on a school visit  
engaging with artwork at 575  
Wandsworth Road, London

©National Trust Images/Megan Taylor

History shows we have overcome challenges before.  
And with your help, we can overcome them again.

Our cause can be everyone's cause: helping people  
and nature to thrive. It was created for everyone's  
benefit, and it can benefit many more people.

Let's work together to restore nature, end unequal  
access to nature, beauty and history, and inspire  
millions more people to join our cause.



Rangers and volunteers helping to clear pathway drainage on the fells above Grasmere, Cumbria

©National Trust Images/Paul Harris

# It'll take all of us

Over the last 18 months, we've listened to more than 70,000 people.

We sat down to talk about the future with the people who know us best – our partners, members, visitors, volunteers and staff.

And we tracked down many people we hadn't met before – young and older – to ask, 'how can we serve you?'

The result is our strategy for 2025 to 2035. It comes from the people of our three nations. And it goes back to them as a call to join in – an invitation to the next, crucial decade of our mission.

Sun rising over the beach at Sandilands, Lincolnshire

©National Trust Images/John Miller

# The conversation starts here

To serve the whole of society, we need to engage the whole of society: people of all ages, ethnicities, abilities and social backgrounds.

This work starts with us asking questions

We've used every response to help create our new strategy. People told us what they want for themselves and their children, and what they want the Trust to do.

Public benefit was and is our starting point

The National Trust was founded 'for the benefit of the nation'. While we care for places, it's people and public benefit that must be at the heart of all our work. We will put people and nature first in all our actions.

This isn't the end of the conversation, it's the start

We plan to renew relationships between the people of our three nations and the nature, beauty and history we share, through our goals. Each of us has a part to play in this restoration, and we have the unique chance to shape the Trust's culture into one we can be proud of in the future – one where everyone can belong and find something they want to be a part of.



# Who did we hear from?

1,071

young people  
aged 16–24

130

peers – public, private  
and charity organisations

66,727

National Trust  
members

3,731

members of the public\*  
aged 25+

2,070\*\*

staff and  
volunteers

\*Some members of the public will also be National Trust members, however as this was only self-reported they are not included in 'National Trust members' numbers.

\*\*Number is estimated as there may have been overlap between the groups. For the purpose of this sample, we have estimated that at least eight staff/volunteers took part in each of the 244 workshop sessions.

# What did they tell us?



Visitors in the Parterre on a sunny day in June at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire

©National Trust Images/John Millar

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1

People feel **proud and optimistic** about green space, heritage and culture, even in challenging times.

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2

The public care about nature and recognise how beneficial it is. But they **don't feel nature is under threat** as strongly as our stakeholders do.

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3

Heritage doesn't feel highly relevant to the public in their day-to day-lives, but they appreciate it's important to the UK as a whole. Our stakeholders feel the heritage sector faces **challenges it's never faced before**.

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4

Lots of people have heard of the National Trust and feel positively about us, but associations are narrow. That limits the amount of people **who feel like the Trust is for them**.

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5

Our peers feel our current strategy has been a step in the right direction. However, they think the next decade will bring even **bigger and more urgent challenges than the last**.

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6

People see the **value in being a National Trust member**, from the free access it provides to how it helps our conservation work. Both those things motivate them to join us.

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# How our past inspires us to think and act

What we can do together,  
we could never do alone

Collaboration is at the heart of the National Trust – we were founded on the very idea. For 130 years in the face of industrialisation, development and commercialism, each generation has acted generously and used the Trust's power to protect our nations' nature, beauty and history. They have left us fresh air, open spaces, landscapes, beautiful buildings, art and crafts, and priceless treasures. From small parcels of land to the White Cliffs of Dover, from modest homes to astounding castles; the Trust has protected exceptional spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Nature, beauty and history were  
fought for, for us, by people like us

At the start of the last century, factory workers from Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Birmingham answered the Trust's appeal to save the Lake District from destruction. These were people who worked in unimaginable conditions, some of whom lived in poverty themselves. But they gave so others could have what they'd never seen or enjoyed.

After the carnage and destruction of the First World War, families who lost sons gave gifts of land so that great gables and peaks could be shared and enjoyed by everyone. Beatrix Potter used the proceeds of her books to secure farmland and countryside and gave them to the Trust for safekeeping. After the Second World War, people and governments came together to save buildings, gardens, and country estates so the whole nation could benefit from them. When faced with the demolition of Wordsworth's home, the people of Cockermouth came together to buy it and entrust it to us.

Once theirs,  
now everyone's

Now the daffodils that grow in the garden and Wordsworth's house are for everyone to enjoy. The tree where Sir Isaac Newton is said to have watched an apple fall still blossoms – aged and magnificent – in his garden.

Thanks to our predecessors' gifts and fundraising efforts, we all own the White Cliffs of Dover, the Needles, and the Giant's Causeway. You can walk the Cornish coast and watch the changing colours of the Atlantic waters that once inspired great painters and poets – that still do. You can hike the coastline of Wales from north to south, one step in every ten on land in the care of the National Trust. Collections of art, craft and books tell local and world histories – that represent the skill and knowledge of our ancestors around the world – once private property, now owned by all of us.



# The National Trust has never stood still, and it never will

**Nearly 6 million members support the work of the Trust. People make around 150 million visits each year to our treasured sites.**

**Aerial views of Mullion Cove, Cornwall.**

©National Trust Images/John Miller

That will continue and grow. Membership and visits to the National Trust remain the absolute foundation of all our work, and we will continue to push for greater quality, greater enjoyment, and more reasons to return.

We were founded to promote the permanent care of places of historic interest and natural beauty. We've never done this by working alone, or only on National Trust land. But the threats now faced by nature and historic places mean we'll need to stretch further than ever beyond our boundaries, to promote their care.

Because the Trust has been a constant movement of people working together to preserve our past, we know how to help many people act together to create a better future – for everyone.

# Our strategy

Here are our three goals for 2050 and a fourth showing how we will serve them in the next decade.



Restore nature:  
not just on  
National Trust land,  
but everywhere



End unequal access  
to nature, beauty  
and history



Inspire millions  
more people to care  
and take action



To achieve our goals  
we'll need to renew  
our ways of working,  
in a world that's  
changing fast

01

# Restore nature: not just on National Trust land, but everywhere

Godlingston Heath in Dorset, part of the Purbeck Heaths 'super' nature reserve. A protected lowland heath, home to all six native British reptiles, rare birds, plants and invertebrates.

©National Trust Images/John Miller

# Why restore nature?

We all need nature to survive:  
the supply of clean water,  
the pollination of our crops,  
the air that we breathe.

But our islands are in danger from  
climate change, and we've seen a  
higher depletion of nature here than  
almost anywhere else in the world.



Kingfisher (Alcedinidae) at Holnicote Estate, Somerset

©National Trust Images/Barry Edwards

## What we need to do

We need to reverse this over the  
next decade. We'll focus on local  
efforts to move toward the global  
target of protecting 30% of land.

We'll do this by putting the long-term  
interests of nature and people first in  
our decisions.

And we'll help millions of others, and  
those who serve them, do the same.

We'll revive ailing rivers, wetlands  
and coast, protect peatlands which  
are critical stores of water and  
carbon, and nurture rare species.

We'll help people to help nature –  
and nature will help us all.

## Goal

# Restore nature

## What we aim for by 2050

Restored natural processes, functioning ecosystems and expanded habitats have enabled nature to recover and flourish and have supported adaptation to a changed climate and environment.

Society is resilient and sustained through a nature and climate-positive economy; we played our part in meeting UK carbon net zero.

## How we'll measure success

### Area

At least 30% of UK land well managed for nature.

### Quality

Nature thriving, indicated by increased species abundance, diversity and distribution, habitat quality, clean water, carbon stored, healthy soils.

### Connected

Species can move and breed through the landscape in wildlife corridors, stepping-stones and hospitable habitats.

## What we'll do by 2035

Work with others and on our own land to create 250,000 hectares of nature-rich landscape where rivers flow clean, all peatland is restored, coastal systems are robust, and landscapes are connected.

Help society transition to a nature-rich, climate-positive future, including regulatory and economic systems that incentivise this in farming and land-use.



# So much achieved. So much still to do.

Restoration and renewal aren't new to us. Our land provides homes for plants and animals that are precious and rare. The Durham coastline now shines with golden sand rather than polluted by coal waste from the local mines – a change we've helped to make over the past 30 years. We've reintroduced species in landscapes and waterways. We have cleaned and cared for chalk streams, rivers and wetlands. But we can do so much more.

Nature-friendly farming practices have been vital to so much of our work. As part of our strategy, we'll support the network of farmers we work with across the land to be even bigger players in nature recovery and climate resilience, while producing good, healthy food and running sustainable businesses.

## Some projects that pave the way forward



Purbeck Heaths,  
Dorset



Peatlands  
in our care



Porlock Vale,  
Somerset



Sandilands,  
Lincolnshire

## Restore nature in action

# Creating natural history at Purbeck Heaths

We've teamed up with Natural England, RSPB, Forestry England, the Rempstone Estate Trust, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, the Dorset National Landscape team along with other partners and local communities, to create the UK's first 'super' nature reserve at **Purbeck Heaths**.

Spanning 3,331 hectares, the 'super' reserve at Purbeck Heaths brings together 11 priority habitats and provides a connected landscape for the many species that live here. Now we have such a large, connected landscape, we are reintroducing the natural processes that will allow nature to thrive and be more resilient: from wild grazing and free-living beavers to large scale peatland restoration.

Purbeck Heaths is already one of the most biodiverse places in the UK. By linking it back together as a single landscape, removing miles of internal fencing and restoring natural processes, we're creating a more dynamic, connected landscape that's more resilient to the impact of climate change. We've created a better landscape for people too – working across partners to provide better experiences for visitors and local communities, protecting fragile habitats while supporting a growing ecotourism sector.



**Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis*)  
at Studland, Dorset**

©National Trust Images/  
Ross Hoddinotte

**Creation of a wetter habitat  
for establishing a new wetland  
ecosystem with rare plants  
and wildlife at Greenlands Mire,  
Purbeck, Studland Bay, Dorset**

©National Trust Images/  
Sophie Bolesworth

“So much hard work  
over so many years,  
by so many people.”

David Elliot  
National Trust Head Ranger

## Restore nature in action

# Preserving peatland at places in our care

Healthy peat is hugely important to the environment, acting as a carbon store, wildlife-rich habitat and flood controller. We're restoring, conserving and managing the **peatlands in our care** to combat climate change and save these precious areas for generations to come.

Some of our peatland has been damaged in the past by drainage, over-grazing, burning and extraction. We're working hard to reverse these negative impacts and are now managing and restoring many areas to create resilient eco-systems, which will increase carbon storage capacity and reduce emissions.

We're working with both local and national partners at many of the peatlands in our care. Our collaboration with other organisations means we can engage communities in our work, restore areas more quickly and fund research for other projects in the future.

## 2%

of the total carbon in the UK is held in the peatland we care for in England and Wales



Rangers undertaking peat bog restoration tasks in the Mourne Mountains, Northern Ireland

©National Trust Images/James Dobson



Airlifting bags of Brash for covering dried peat bogs as part of a peatland restoration project at Kinder Scout, Derbyshire

©National Trust Images/Paul Harris

“ Peatland restoration is the biggest single thing we can do to combat the climate crisis.”

Shelly Rhodes

National Trust Local Partnerships Coordinator,  
Peatland Restoration

## Restore nature in action

# Helping nature and wildlife thrive at Porlock Vale

Rivers are in trouble, and so is the wildlife that depends on them. That's why we've worked with local farm tenants, volunteers and the local community around **Porlock Vale** to create river and catchment areas that are clean, healthy and rich in wildlife.

We delivered the UK's first large scale stage zero restoration: a novel technique to restore a river to its original state, prior to human intervention. The project reconnected 1.2km of modified river to its floodplain, creating 7 hectares of waterscapes and wetlands, vital for slowing water flow, storing carbon and providing homes for wildlife.

We've seen a huge surge in wildlife, including insects, amphibians and various bird species. In the future this will provide the perfect habitat for the Holnicote beavers, introduced to the estate in 2020. Increased floodplain connectivity and storage is slowing the flow, with a 38% reduction in peak flow, protecting downstream communities from flooding.

**25,000** trees planted

**4,000** wetland plants planted



**National Trust ranger monitoring the grounds at Holnicote one year on from the completion of the river restoration project, Somerset**

©National Trust Images/James Beck

**Beaver kit (*Castor canadensis*) at Holnicote Estate, Somerset**

©National Trust Images/Barry Edwards

“You can see it; you can hear it. Since the restoration there has been an explosion of wildlife.”

Ben Eardley

National Trust Project Manager

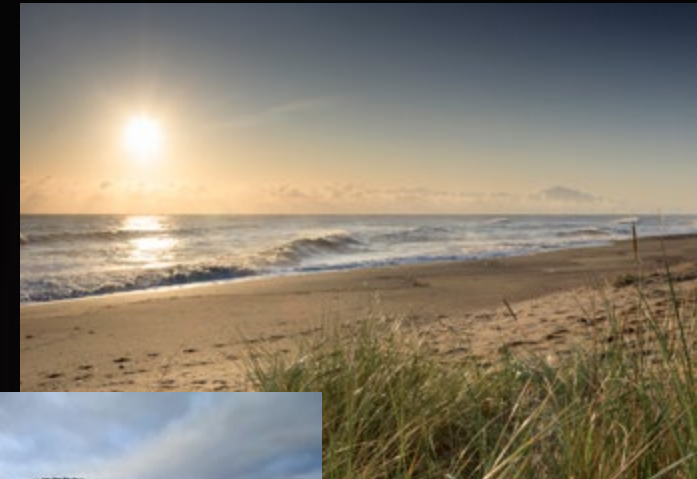
## Restore nature in action

# Creating a new haven for wildlife on the coast

We believe that the most precious parts of our coastline should be protected and shared. One of the most recent examples of this is the work that's been happening on the **Lincolnshire coast at Sandilands**.

Working in partnership with a number of local organisations, we're transforming a former golf course into a year-round nature experience for everyone. We plan to create new habitats for a variety of wildlife, especially migrating birds like black-tailed godwit, spotted redshank and spoonbills.

The transformation of the landscape will bring Sandilands back to its natural roots. In this new wetland reserve, there'll be open water, islands, reedbeds and ponds with walkways and boardwalks, as part of a space where everyone can enjoy the benefits of being in nature.



Sun rising over the beach at Sandilands, Lincolnshire

©National Trust Images/John Miller



Anderby viewing tower at Sandilands, Lincolnshire

©National Trust Images/John Miller

“Our goal is to develop a thriving coastal environment for wildlife, local communities and visitors.”

Katie Scott  
National Trust Area Ranger

02

# End unequal access to nature, beauty and history

# Why end unequal access?



Visitors walking the Ridge Trail at Divis and the Black Mountain, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

©National Trust Images/John Millar

The places that we care for as a charity were once held in private hands and enjoyed by only a few. Now these precious buildings, monuments, gardens and landscapes belong to all of us, welcoming more than 150 million visits each year. But inequality across our nations means many people don't have enough nature in their lives to be healthy, or enough cultural experience to feel valued. Using all that's been given to the National Trust, there's much more we can do, for more people.

## What we need to do

We'll work to benefit millions more people, wherever they live. We want everyone to have access to nature, beauty and history, everywhere.

We'll embrace the diversity of our places and the people who benefit from them, so they're loved and kept and used by many more.

We hope people from all walks of life will feel at home in them: read in the libraries; learn something new; put their hands in the earth of our gardens and feel the hum of the natural world.

But nature and culture must thrive beyond the places we own – in towns and cities, in coastal communities and villages. Two fifths of us don't have green space we can walk to in 15 minutes. Too many people lack trees and birdsong where they live. Too many people feel disconnected from their local surroundings. Local green places and local landscapes should be alive with people. We'll work with others to support this.

When we talk about increasing access, we're talking about being part of something everyone can benefit from. We're talking about removing practical barriers like distance, as well as emotional barriers like belonging. Because nature, beauty and history belong to everyone.

Goal

# End unequal access to nature, beauty and history

What we aim for by 2050

People enjoy universal access to high quality natural and historic places and feel the positive benefits in their everyday lives.

This access creates a greater sense of belonging and connection with heritage (past, present and future) and greater appreciation of the heritage of others.

How we'll measure success

Availability

% of people with access to nature and history.

Utility

Frequency and depth of use of places rich in nature and history.

Connected

% of under-represented groups who have access and enjoy the benefits.

What we'll do by 2035

Work with others to increase the availability of natural and heritage-rich places close to where people live.

More people benefiting on their own terms from their use of nature, beauty and history.

More equal access to nature, beauty and history, so more people can benefit.



# So much achieved. So much still to do.

We've worked in towns and cities, **often with local partners**, to serve more people. We've created **green corridors**, connecting nature and connecting people. We've created a '**garden in the sky**' in the centre of Manchester, using a historic viaduct. We've broadened our reach and seen thousands of people enjoying **Holi and Diwali**

**celebrations** at the historic sites we care for. We've increased the diversity of histories shared at National Trust places.

And we've given away millions of free passes to visitor attractions in our care, as well as hosting free school visits across the three nations we serve.

## Some projects that pave the way forward



Divis and the  
Black Mountain,  
Belfast



Castlefield  
Viaduct, Greater  
Manchester



Corfe Castle,  
Dorset



Portstewart  
Strand, County  
Londonderry

End unequal access in action

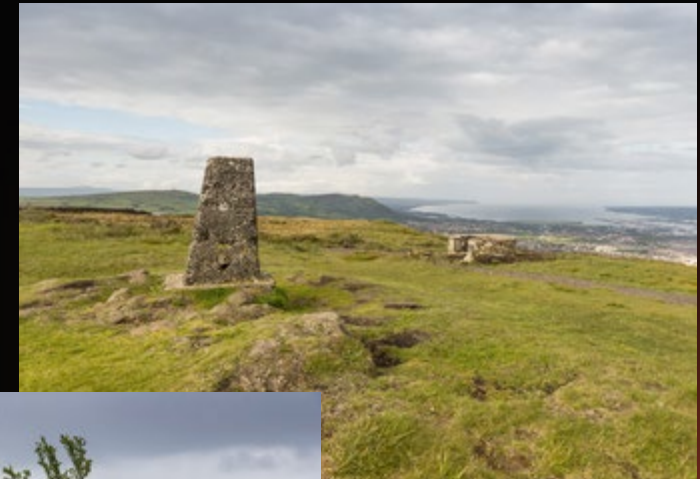
# Making urban green space more accessible

At **Divis and the Black Mountain**, we are co-creating one of the most accessible urban upland green spaces in these Isles, where people and place can thrive together in a healthy, nature-rich and beautiful wild landscape.

Over three years, we'll create a green corridor that will provide walking access from the city into its largest urban green space. We'll restore peatland and habitat, as well as improve infrastructure and interpretation to support our visitors, staff and volunteers. We'll also give local communities more opportunities to engage and benefit from the nature, beauty and history on their doorstep.

This project will ensure that local communities can easily engage with local heritage and natural beauty. From volunteering and employment opportunities through to the development of new spaces for community use, people will be able to get involved, learn skills and play a part in caring for this landscape for future generations.

**200,000**  
people visit here every year



Panoramic view at Divis and the Black Mountain, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

©National Trust Images

Walking at Divis and the Black Mountain, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

©National Trust Images/  
Chris Lacey

“ We’re absolutely delighted to have secured funding for this project which aims to make Divis and the Black Mountain inclusive in every sense of the word. ”

Heather McLachlan  
Director, National Trust Northern Ireland

End unequal access in action

# Bringing urban communities closer to nature

We're working with the city of Manchester to breathe new life into the Grade II listed **Castlefield Viaduct**. Together, we're transforming it into an urban park created by and for the benefit of local people.

In phase one, we created a temporary urban park covering half of the viaduct's deck. We worked with local partners to develop unique garden areas for visitors to explore and have welcomed well over 170,000 people so far.

98% of visitors have told us they want the viaduct to be permanent. Working with the community, we've developed a longer-term vision of a 1km, free-to-access 'green oasis' and through-route. It will be a space that respects the listed structure while celebrating its history, as well as complementing existing plans for the city.



**Aerial view of Castlefield Viaduct, Manchester, Greater Manchester**

©National Trust Images/Paul Harris



**1st anniversary celebration of Castlefield Viaduct, Manchester**

©National Trust Images/Paul Harris

“It’s crucial to have places like this, especially in cities where you don’t find a lot of green space.”

Visitor at Castlefield Viaduct, Manchester

## End unequal access in action

# Dancing together to celebrate the festival of colour

Working together with the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch (BPC) Indian Association, we celebrated **Holi** – one of India's most fun and colourful festivals – by inviting everyone to join a free event at **Corfe Castle** in Dorset.

Over three thousand people of all ages and backgrounds joined us for 'Rang Barse – Colours over Corfe Castle'. To mark the Hindu festival of colour, love and spring, there were vibrant, decorated stalls in the outer bailey offering Indian snacks and food, henna painting, arts and crafts and an area for Bollywood music and dancing.

Anjali Mavi, from the BPC Indian Association, said: 'Having it at the National Trust is extra special because it means we're reaching out to a wider and diverse audience, including people who might not usually visit. It's all about bringing different communities together and celebrating diversity.'



A visitor celebrating Holi in the grounds of Corfe Castle, Dorset

©National Trust Images/Sophie Bolesworth



Visitors enjoying the Rang Barse Holi event at Corfe Castle, Dorset

©National Trust Images/Sophie Bolesworth

‘ I miss celebrating in India. But it’s amazing to have the celebration by such a beautiful castle. ’

Nisha Sarkar

Visitor at 'Rang Barse – Colours over Corfe Castle'

End unequal access in action

# Creating a more inclusive coastal experience

Mae Murray Foundation is committed to making beaches across Northern Ireland accessible to people with physical, learning and sensory needs. At **Portstewart Strand**, we've worked together on the **Inclusive Beach project** to give more people the chance to enjoy the simple pleasures of the seaside.

As well as carefully designed access, changing and toilet facilities, the beach provides a free beach mobility equipment loan scheme. This includes equipment such as beach wheelchairs and beach walking frames, beach mats to allow wheelchair users and their families to enjoy the sand or a swim in the sea.

Together with Mae Murray Foundation, we've made Portstewart Strand fully accessible. It's now a space where people of all ages and abilities can feel like they belong.

## Over 650 visitors

have used the inclusive services here since 2022



Three children go bug hunting at Portstewart Strand, County Londonderry

©National Trust Images/John Millar



Bug hunting in the sand dunes at Portstewart Strand, County Londonderry

©National Trust Images/Chris Lacey

“I’m 34 and this is my first time ever on Portstewart beach ... it’s just amazing.”

Conor O’Kane

Visitor from Portglenone

03

# Inspire millions more people to care and take action

Children enjoying the Long Gallery ceiling after conservation work at Lanhydrock, Cornwall

©National Trust Images/Steve Haywood



# Why inspire millions?



A boy holding a tree sapling at a community tree planting day on the Holnicote Estate, Exmoor, Somerset

©National Trust Images/Trevor Ray Hart

We can't deliver the first two goals on our own – millions of people will need to join in. The Trust has a duty to previous generations – after all, we've inherited so much from them. To make sure we're doing our best to preserve and expand our natural and cultural inheritance, our ambition now needs to go way beyond National Trust places. There are millions of people who care and want to take action – we meet them every day in our work.

As Europe's biggest conservation organisation, supported by a huge volunteer force, we're uniquely positioned to inspire and drive change. Our members and volunteers are brilliant advocates for conservation. And we'll join together with other organisations to create a bigger movement for care and conservation.

## What we need to do

Inspire and enable people to care for nature and beauty on a bigger scale than ever before. In their daily lives and in their communities. There's been an explosion in tools and technologies that allow people to connect with the world around them and work together. We'll need to start with people – understanding and anticipating what motivates and empowers them.

We'll boost fundraising efforts and advocacy, collaborating with other charities to ensure giving matches the growing concern for nature and climate that we are seeing across society. And we'll need to equip children and young people to be the conservationists of the future. We want them, and future generations, to inhabit and inherit a thriving world.

Goal

# Inspire millions more people to care and take action

<p>What we aim for by 2050</p>	<p>At least half the population care about nature, beauty and history.</p>	<p>People have more nature, beauty and history in their lives; they understand, enjoy, use, and stand up for it.</p>	<p>A nation more invested in nature and culture, for themselves and future generations.</p>
<p>How we'll measure success</p>	<p><b>Reach</b> More people, across all backgrounds and geographies, feel connected to nature and their cultural heritage.</p>	<p><b>Action</b> The number of people who take action to support nature, beauty and history.</p>	<p><b>Influence</b> A societal shift with more people and partners working together.</p>
<p>What we'll do by 2035</p>	<p>Work with others to reach and inspire more people, with added focus on children and young people, so more people feel that our cause is for them.</p>	<p>Enable people from all backgrounds to encounter nature, beauty and history and take care of the world around them.</p>	<p>Work with leaders in businesses, government and other charities to make UK-wide positive change for nature and cultural heritage.</p>



# So much achieved. So much still to do.

Previous generations have used the power of the National Trust to inspire and take action. In the 1960s, our supporters launched Enterprise Neptune, to protect the coast from development. Thanks to them, more than 750 miles of coast are owned and cared for by the Trust and can never be built on. More recent campaigns have enabled us to buy the land on top of the White Cliffs of Dover for the nations we serve.

We've run Next Generation Nature workshops for thousands of children and young people and invited young scientists and artists to use the home of Isaac Newton to further their ideas. Our annual Heritage Open Days is the UK's biggest festival of history and culture. The National Trust is the most searched-for charity on the internet, with high levels of public trust and recognition. There is so much we can do to inspire people to join our cause.

## Some projects that pave the way forward



Heritage  
Open Days



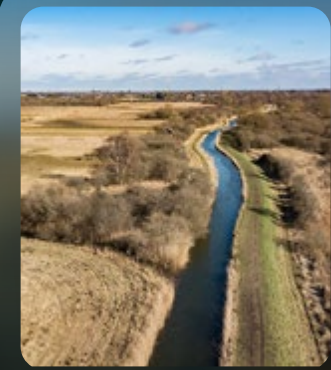
Blossom



Time + Space  
Award



Ogwen Cottage,  
Outward Bound  
Trust



Adopt a Plot

Inspire millions in action

# Inviting people to explore their local heritage

**Heritage Open Days** is England's biggest festival of history and culture. We present the festival nationally every year, supporting a network of more than 2,350 local organisers to offer free events and special activities that connect people to their heritage.

The festival offers a diverse annual showcase of heritage, from architectural wonders to cultural traditions like sea shanty singing. With regular support from the People's Postcode Lottery, it's completely free to access, reaching audiences who don't normally get the opportunity to experience their local heritage. For one fifth of visitors, it's their only visit to a place of heritage all year.

In 2024, the festival celebrated three decades of connecting communities and helping them discover stories on their doorstep. Last year, over a million visitors enjoyed the 5,427 events, contributing £11.5 million to the local economy, with two thirds of visitors making donations when given the chance.

**2,354 local organisers**  
help to run the festival



**Heritage Open Day at Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire**

©National Trust Images/Chris Lacey



**A couple taking selfie with the medieval musicians during the Heritage Open Days event in Gloucester, Gloucestershire**

©National Trust Images/Chris Lacey

‘I feel more connected to my local community.’

Visitor to Heritage Open Days 2024

Inspire millions in action

# Helping people and communities blossom

Blossom is the beauty we have on our doorstep. We're working with partners to connect people with nature and reach under-served communities, so as many people as possible can celebrate the beauty of blossom every spring. Together, we're organising events, creating green spaces and planting blossom trees across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Since 2020 we've reached nearly 100 million people with blossom, planted more than 68,000 hedgerows and trees, and held more than 3,000 events in local communities.

Many people struggle to connect to nature near where they live. In this project, we're working with communities to help create green spaces for them to come together and experience nature nearby.

## 500 blossoming trees

have been planted around  
Birmingham's Number 11 bus route



Visitors at the launch of the Nature's Confetti immersive experience at Outernet, London

©National Trust Images/James Dobson



Visitors enjoying the display of Azaleas in May at Sheffield Park and Garden, East Sussex

©National Trust Images/Arnhel de Serra

“It makes you realise that you're not separate to nature. You are nature.”

Marie-Claire Denyer

Co-founder of Street Trees for Living

Inspire millions in action

# Inspiring young people to shape the future

In 2024, we launched the **Time + Space Award**. Inspired by Sir Isaac Newton's 'year of wonders', it's a competition for 16 to 25-year-olds to win the resources they need to explore their own big idea in one of four areas: Science, Art & Culture, Society, and Nature & Climate.

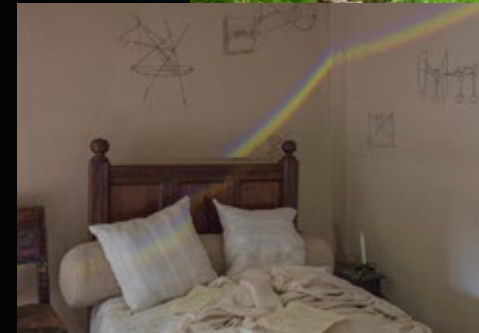
We received hundreds of inspiring ideas across our four categories. Each of the winning entries was selected by a panel of judges and experts in their fields, including David Olusoga OBE, Dame Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, Megan McCubbin and Tayshan Hayden-Smith. The winning ideas ranged from a mentoring scheme to support visually impaired and blind children, to a community and social history mapping project.

'National Trust places belong to the nation. We want to use them to inspire the future as well as explore the past. This award is about opening up a place that's fizzing with historic significance and inviting today's young people to use it to understand, explore, and challenge the way we see the world.'

Celia Richardson, National Trust Communications and Fundraising Director

## 3 million

young people aged 16–25 had an idea during the pandemic they've yet to make happen



**Time + Space Award winner in the Nature & climate category, Cristina Essien at Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire**

©National Trust Images/Trevor Ray Hart

**A rainbow of light in the Hall Chamber at Woolsthorpe Manor with scientific drawings on the walls.**

©National Trust Images/James Dobson

‘When we do connect with nature, we feel the need to protect it.’

Cristina Essien

Winner of the Time + Space Award for Nature & Climate

Inspire millions in action

# Helping more young people connect with the outdoors

**Ogwen Cottage** started operating as an **Outward Bound Trust** centre in 2015. Working together, we've continued to give more young people the opportunity to experience the natural environment of Eryri (Snowdonia) and develop themselves through challenging outdoor adventure experiences.

Each year, Outward Bound deliver residential courses in the Glyderau and Carneddau mountains to more than 7,000 children, many from urban and inner-city locations. Research has shown that their experience here has a positive effect on their resilience, interpersonal skills and emotional wellbeing.

We're proud to be working in partnership with the Outward Bound Trust to help young people live healthier and more fulfilling lives. It's an example of how we can achieve so much more when organisations like ours come together.

## 86% of students

improved their self-esteem

Students were from St. Marks Church of England Academy, South London.



Outward Bound instructor and climber overlooking Llyn Ogwen and Tryfan at Ogwen, Eryri (Snowdonia), Gwynedd

©National Trust Images/Tom Simone



Outward Bound instructor and climber at Ogwen, Eryri (Snowdonia), Gwynedd

©National Trust Images/Tom Simone

“Appearances don't matter. It's about your ability to get past obstacles, learn from your mistakes and become a better person.”

Ibrahim, 16

Visiting student at Ogwen Cottage in Eryri (Snowdonia)

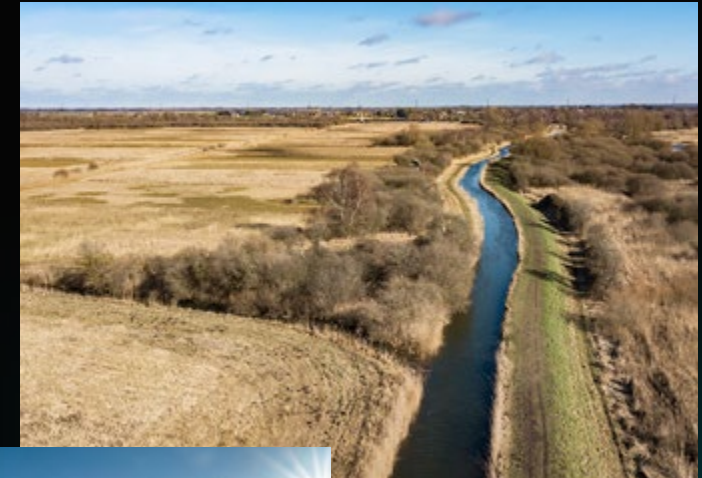
Inspire millions in action

# Helping nature one plot at a time

Nature gives us life: through the supply of clean water, the pollination of our crops and the air that we breathe. But our islands are in danger, and we've seen a higher depletion of nature here than almost anywhere else in the world. It can feel overwhelming, but together we can take action and make a difference. **Adopt a Plot** is a small way we can all take a big step towards bringing back nature.

For a monthly donation, people can help bring back nature to one of six 'nature super sites' specially selected for their potential to restore nature across whole landscapes. The sites are spread around the UK, covering woodlands, peatlands, grasslands, rivers, mountains and more. Among other nature restoration activities, donations could help us plant trees, restore and slow river flow, renew peatlands, reintroduce native species and create new meadows.

We want to do everything we can to allow our natural landscapes to thrive. More than anything, nature needs space to heal itself, which is why we're asking the public to help make that space and bring back nature, one plot at a time.



The oldest nature reserve in our care. **Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire**

©National Trust Images/Paul Harris



Gritstone tors on a sunny day, **Kinder Scout, Derbyshire**

©National Trust Images/Rob Coleman

04

To achieve our goals we'll need to **renew our ways of working**, in a world that's changing fast

# Why renew our ways of working?

To succeed in a world that's changing fast we'll need to expand our knowledge and skills and be able to share them more widely. And we'll need to grow and diversify our funding to deliver more for our cause.



**Monitoring the locations for airlifting bags of Brash to cover dried peat bogs as part of a peatland restoration project at Kinder Scout, Derbyshire**

©National Trust Images/Paul Harris

## What we need to do

Take advantage of the new tools, technologies and approaches that are open to us, to care for nature, wildlife and heritage on a bigger scale than ever before.

We'll need to be capable of working much more in partnership with others. And use new techniques to engage more people in caring for the world around them. Citizen science, public engagement, and building alliances are just some examples of the work we will need to expand.

Visitors will continue to expect brilliant experiences at the places in our care, and we'll need the creative and technical ability to reach greater heights.

We'll need a workforce of people of all ages, ethnicities, abilities and identities, working together to meet the needs of the changing nations we serve. And we need to equip younger people for the work of the future – caring for the natural world and bringing cultural heritage to life.

A healthy natural environment underpins human health including food production, and we'll build even stronger partnerships with farmers, communities, organisations and leaders to improve practice and policy for nature-friendly farming.

We will need to be more efficient and creative than ever. We'll need to fundraise more in the next decade than we have in the last century and explore new avenues including green finance. Every pound must provide maximum benefit for people and nature. From research and conservation work to managing data, every decision must be viewed in terms of the public benefit that will result.

Changes in our climate mean changes in how we approach conservation. We'll need to adapt buildings and landscapes to make them more resilient. And we'll need to find more cost-effective methods and make better use of technology if we are to sustain the things we look after, well into the future.



# So much achieved. So much still to do.

We've found many ways to share the knowledge and skill of our curators, historians, rangers and gardeners – from collaborating on major TV series and working with visitors on public art projects, to community citizen science projects. Our digital

and data work means we can share experiences of the National Trust with people at home and fundraise on a bigger scale than ever before. The new strategy calls for us to push on, meeting our new context with new approaches.

## Some projects that pave the way forward



Upton House,  
Warwickshire



Beningbrough,  
Yorkshire



Clandon Park,  
Surrey

Renew our ways of working in action

# Unlocking the stories behind collections with Smartify

Seasoned and first-time visitors alike now have the chance to delve deeper and discover more about the treasured art and porcelain collection at **Upton House**. Using the **Smartify** app, at the tap of a screen visitors can unlock the stories of Upton, the Bearsteds, and one of the most significant collections of European art assembled in the 20th century.

During a visit, you can use the app to scan and identify artworks to access more information about the paintings, porcelain and tapestries in the Bearsted Collection. As part of the audio tour, you'll hear a mixture of viewpoints, including an introduction from our Property Curator, stories from our oral history project and insights into the collection from our volunteers. You can also continue the experience back at home by saving your favourite objects to your own digital gallery.

This pilot project has been a resounding success and has been renewed for another 12 months. It's allowed more people to immerse themselves in the story behind the objects at Upton House, as well as extend their experience with us beyond the time of their physical visit. We've seen first-hand that object recognition can be a powerful tool in helping our visitors connect on a deeper level with the collections in our care.

## 85%

of surveyed users wanted to see more National Trust properties offer object recognition



Visitor using the Smartify app to identify art in the Picture Gallery, Upton House and Gardens, Warwickshire

©National Trust Images/James Dobson

Visitors using the Smartify app to identify art in the Picture Gallery, Upton House and Gardens, Warwickshire

©National Trust Images/James Dobson

“It really enhanced our visit and we'll be encouraging our friends to use it too.”

Visitor to Upton House

Renew our ways of working in action

# Bringing climate resilience to the gardens at Beningbrough

This summer, we unveiled an exciting new climate-resilient garden at Beningbrough in Yorkshire. Designed by award-winning designer Andy Sturgeon, this project has been possible thanks to a significant gift in will from the late Mr. Ian Reddihough.

An underused grassed area has been transformed into a garden that now feels like a Mediterranean hillside. Thousands of new plants from Mediterranean climate zones around the world have been planted, which will be better able to cope with extremes of heat and wet, ensuring the garden's resilience in the face of climate change. The Mediterranean Garden is the latest phase in a long-term vision to improve and in some cases reinvent the garden around the Italian-style hall.

Most of the 4,000 new plants are pollinator-friendly, bringing a huge biodiversity boost to the hall's garden, while a large tank beneath the garden will capture excess rainfall and slowly release it to prevent damaging flash flooding. The use of drought-tolerant plants means once established, the garden won't need supplementary watering – lowering the garden's 'footprint' and allowing the garden team to focus on other tasks. The garden has been hugely popular with visitors, encouraging them to explore, relax, and hopefully think about how they can adapt their own gardens to our changing climate.



Relaxing seating areas in the new Mediterranean Garden at Beningbrough, North Yorkshire

©National Trust Images/Rebecca Hughes

Child exploring the water feature in the Mediterranean Garden at Beningbrough, North Yorkshire

©National Trust Images/Rebecca Hughes

“ I think the success of this garden comes from the marriage of the ancient red brick walls, the presence of the Hall towering over it and the elegance and textural beauty of the new planting. ”

Andy Sturgeon

Designer

Renew our ways of working in action

# Creating space for more people to celebrate the stories of Clandon Park

The **Clandon Park** project is one of the largest and most complex projects the National Trust has ever undertaken. After an accidental fire in 2015, we are carefully conserving Clandon as a ‘country house laid bare’ – a place that celebrates the beauty of the surviving building, shares stories of the many hands who crafted it over centuries and provides space for creativity, artistry and community.

We’ve welcomed more than 75,000 people here since 2015, and their responses have shown us how powerful and evocative Clandon is. As a space, it’s already provided a platform for people to explore stories, such as artist Harold Offeh’s 2024 collaborative community art project ‘The Lounge’. As the first commission in a partnership between Lightbox Gallery and Clandon, Harold worked with community groups who took inspiration from Clandon and Woking to create their own expressions of ‘home’ for the piece.

Clandon’s importance is not fixed in time; it’s always evolving. In future years, we’ll welcome more and more visitors to the universally accessible house, to take part in tours, creative responses to the building and its history and make new memories. In turn, Clandon’s meaning and importance to the local community and beyond will continue to evolve.



Conservationists working on the Clandon Park restoration project, Clandon Park, Surrey

©National Trust Images/  
Andreas von Einsiedel



Heritage Open Day  
at Clandon Park, Surrey

©National Trust Images/Chris Lacey

“There is so much to learn and see that other country houses can never offer.”

Public exhibition attendee, 2024

# What happens next?



**Volunteering at Tynesfield, North Somerset. Tynesfield was home to the Gibbs family for many generations.**

©National Trust Images/Rob Stothard

This strategy will be turned into reality. We are working on delivery plans, success measures and ways to finance and fundraise for new areas of work. And we are working to ensure that the bedrocks of the National Trust – our membership, volunteers and the treasured places we care for, will continue to thrive in the coming decade.