

# 2019

**Our year in the woods**



WOODLAND  
TRUST





**The best of times, the worst of times. Before the upheavals of 2020, the Woodland Trust was toasting its most successful year to date. Our chief executive Darren Moorcroft looks back**

I BECAME THE TRUST'S chief executive last summer, at a pivotal moment in the history of the UK's woods and trees. 2019 was a year when our mission loomed large in the public consciousness, as the world woke up to the twin threats afflicting our environment – climate change and the mass extinction of species – and to the unique power of trees and woodland to help repair them. Since then humankind has endured an unprecedented crisis (*see right*), but you can rest assured that the Trust is still here fighting hard for the health and wellbeing of both people and our embattled native wildlife.

Over the coming pages you'll read about all we achieved in 2019, beginning with a handful of my personal highlights (*below*). It was a year of smashed targets and major firsts for the Trust – thanks to the support of people like you,

## Peakiness blinder

"Fancy buying a mountain?" Those startling words were whispered in my ear by Phil Gordon, the Trust's land boss in Scotland, and they set in train our most eye-catching purchase last year – the spectacular wilderness at Ben Shieldaig (*pictured*), on the shores of Wester Ross. We spent £4.4 million buying woods old and new in 2019, and Shieldaig was the biggie – a real beacon of the Trust's ambition. It's a compelling place: one of Scotland's most westerly Caledonian pinewoods, stalked by mountain hares and white-tailed eagles. It caught the imagination of our members too: you donated £1m to help save it for people and nature.

## Powerful signal

Talk about a baptism of fire! My first morning as chief executive began with a grilling from John Humphrys on his final day on Radio 4's *Today* programme. The line-up was me,

Tony Blair and Dame Edna Everage! I was invited mainly because John loves trees, but it was also a signal of how the Trust's agenda caught the national consciousness in 2019. And in a nice spin-off, John later appeared in our successful Channel 5 telethon with Chris Packham (*see page 4*).

## Testament of youth

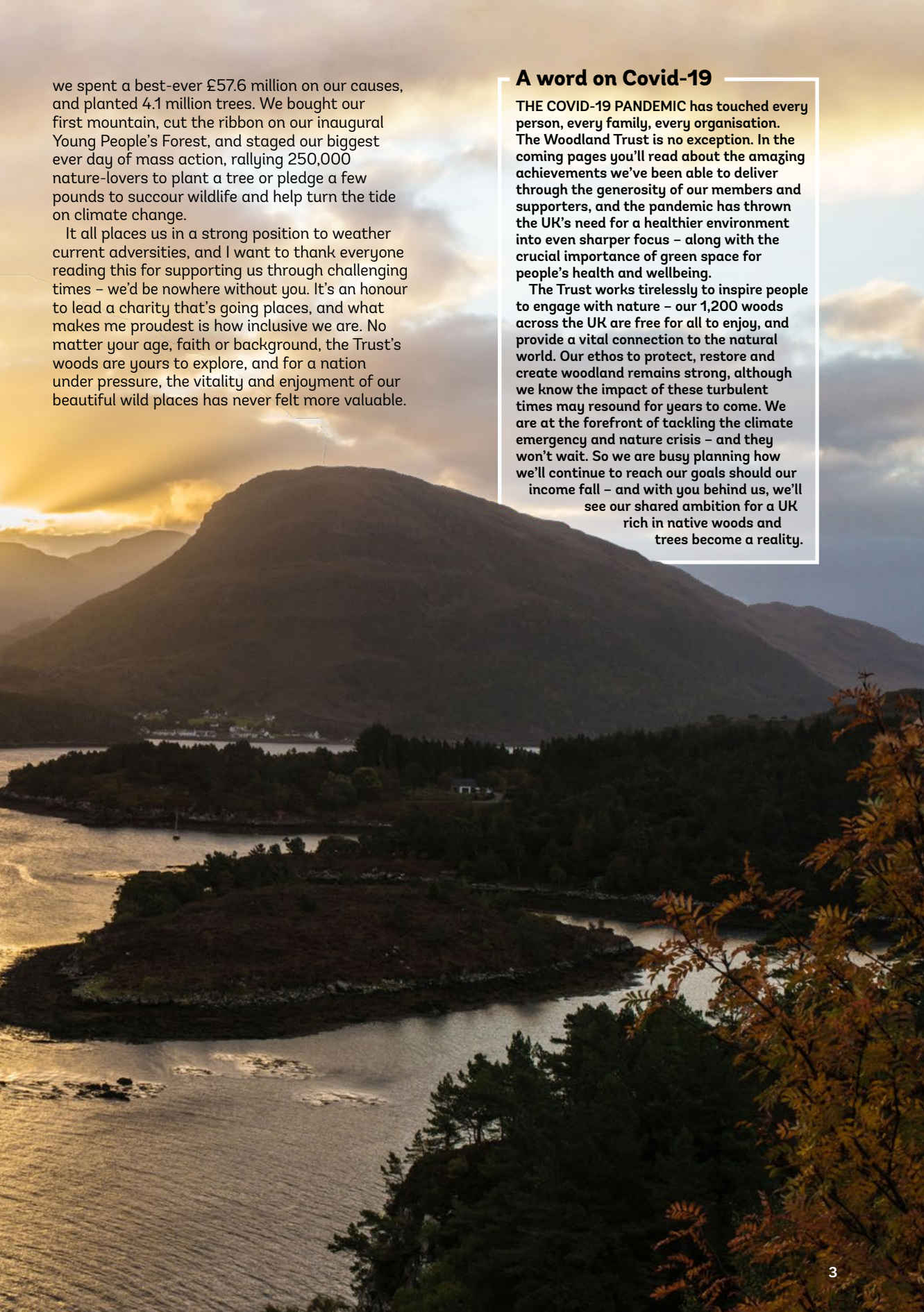
One stand-out memory from 2019 feels really personal: my 16-year-old daughter Olivia's ear-to-ear grin after she firmed in her cherry sapling at our new Young People's Forest in Derbyshire (*page 9*). On a misty morning in November, we joined hundreds of volunteers there as part of the Big Climate Fightback, the Trust's biggest day of planting action ever. It caught the imagination of people up and down the land, and raised £1 million for our cause. But what struck me forcibly was the variety of folk who united behind us that day – youngsters from Derby

College, a crew from the EcoSikh environmental group, even Bella Ramsey from *Game of Thrones*. Needless to say, I assured Olivia that her tree was the best of the lot!

## Giving a hoot

My favourite bird is the barn owl – maybe because I was once a night owl myself, in a previous life as a jobbing DJ! So my wildlife highlight from 2019 came when a pair swooped out in front of me at Brynau Farm, the slice of panoramic pastureland the Trust has snapped up outside Neath. We're going to plant 150,000 trees there to create our biggest ever new wood in Wales, and what I love is the potential to involve people – a fifth of the Welsh population live within 20 miles, and we'll invite as many as possible to help. Every tree counts, but it's easy to underestimate the unique value of the act of planting: it can forge a lifelong connection with nature.





we spent a best-ever £57.6 million on our causes, and planted 4.1 million trees. We bought our first mountain, cut the ribbon on our inaugural Young People's Forest, and staged our biggest ever day of mass action, rallying 250,000 nature-lovers to plant a tree or pledge a few pounds to succour wildlife and help turn the tide on climate change.

It all places us in a strong position to weather current adversities, and I want to thank everyone reading this for supporting us through challenging times – we'd be nowhere without you. It's an honour to lead a charity that's going places, and what makes me proudest is how inclusive we are. No matter your age, faith or background, the Trust's woods are yours to explore, and for a nation under pressure, the vitality and enjoyment of our beautiful wild places has never felt more valuable.

## A word on Covid-19

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has touched every person, every family, every organisation. The Woodland Trust is no exception. In the coming pages you'll read about the amazing achievements we've been able to deliver through the generosity of our members and supporters, and the pandemic has thrown the UK's need for a healthier environment into even sharper focus – along with the crucial importance of green space for people's health and wellbeing.

The Trust works tirelessly to inspire people to engage with nature – our 1,200 woods across the UK are free for all to enjoy, and provide a vital connection to the natural world. Our ethos to protect, restore and create woodland remains strong, although we know the impact of these turbulent times may resound for years to come. We are at the forefront of tackling the climate emergency and nature crisis – and they won't wait. So we are busy planning how we'll continue to reach our goals should our income fall – and with you behind us, we'll see our shared ambition for a UK rich in native woods and trees become a reality.



# Ten big milestones

It was the year when climate change propelled trees to the top of the agenda. Here's how the Trust made an impact

## Tree TV!

ONE THURSDAY EVENING last November the Woodland Trust went prime-time, as we partnered with the naturalist and campaigner Chris Packham for a star-studded celebration of Britain's woodland heritage.

Airing on Channel 5, *Plant a Tree to Save the Planet* featured famous tree fans John Humphrys and Dame Judi Dench, inviting viewers to donate to our cause online – and they responded in

droves. We raised over £500,000, enough to plant a whopping 339,000 saplings – more than three times our target.

The show was a curtain-raiser for an exciting ferment of activity the following weekend, as the Trust's Big Climate Fightback extravaganza saw hundreds of thousands of people nationwide come together to put down roots and do their bit for climate change. Public tree-planting events happened across the UK, including at eight Trust woods

## CLIMATE CHANGE

from Belfast to Bath, and everyone from Selfridges to the Women's Institute got involved. In all we mailed out more than 730,000 free trees to neighbourhood groups nationwide, raised £1 million, recruited 1,500 new Trust members and pulled off the biggest mass engagement campaign in our 47-year history. Heartfelt thanks to everyone who took part.



*"Trees don't just capture carbon and allow wildlife to flourish, they provide hope. The programme I made with the Woodland Trust showed there is a dormant desire to take practical action. We just have to wake it up."*

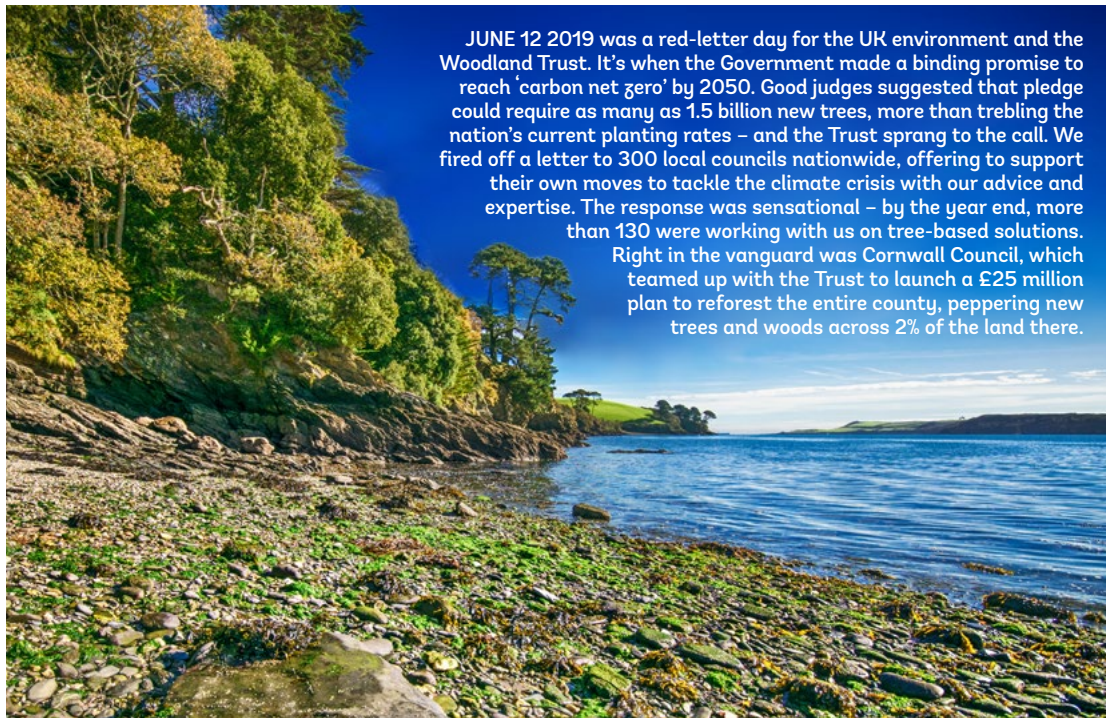
**Chris Packham**

PAUL CARTER



## Cornish dream

## PLANTING



JUNE 12 2019 was a red-letter day for the UK environment and the Woodland Trust. It's when the Government made a binding promise to reach 'carbon net zero' by 2050. Good judges suggested that pledge could require as many as 1.5 billion new trees, more than trebling the nation's current planting rates – and the Trust sprang to the call. We fired off a letter to 300 local councils nationwide, offering to support their own moves to tackle the climate crisis with our advice and expertise. The response was sensational – by the year end, more than 130 were working with us on tree-based solutions. Right in the vanguard was Cornwall Council, which teamed up with the Trust to launch a £25 million plan to reforest the entire county, peppering new trees and woods across 2% of the land there.

PIXELMEMOIRS/DEPOSIT PHOTOS





PHIL FORMBY/WTML

## Many hands

### VOLUNTEERING



THERE IS TOM WILLIAMS, who drives around in the dead of night mimicking bat calls to log the rare barbastelles of Dartmoor. There's Liz Bracken, who keeps watch on our osprey nest at Loch Arkaig, near Fort William, relaying its avian soap opera to thousands of followers on social media. And Ashley Peel, who roves Northern Ireland as part of our Observatree surveillance team, the first line of defence against

deadly ash dieback. The Woodland Trust would be nowhere without the passion and commitment of our brilliant volunteers, and their numbers are booming – 2,600 people devoted a record 318,000 hours to our cause in 2019, saving us £2.7 million. Last year also saw us scoop an 'Investing in Volunteers' kitemark – the gold standard, and a mark of how much we cherish every one of them.

LAURIE CAMPBELL/WTML

## Just gorgeous

ANCIENT WOODLAND is Britain's richest terrestrial habitat, and the Trust's determined campaigns team helped to save almost 100 centuries-old woods last year. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with nature-minded locals, we successfully saw off plans for an M4 relief road south of Newport, which would have decimated five woodland oases as well as wetland habitat in the Gwent Levels. And in North Yorkshire, almost 5,000 Trust supporters lobbied the county council to stop a £70 million bypass crashing through picturesque Nidd Gorge, near Harrogate (pictured). This delectable wooded ravine is a star of the Woodland Trust estate, bright with bluebells and kingfishers, adored by walkers and picnickers, and buffered by 50,000 trees planted by volunteers, including a wood to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and another marking 100 years of the Scout movement. Happily, it's now safe from the threat of development.



*"It's an enormous relief that this inappropriate scheme is finally off the table. It would have laid waste to 35 years of work by volunteers to enrich Nidd Gorge for nature."*  
**Keith Wilkinson, Trust volunteer of the year**



MARR SUNDERLAND/WTML

### CAMPAIGNS



## Northern roots

URBAN

THE NORTHERN FOREST is easily the biggest project the Trust has ever tackled – a £500 million drive to reforest the industrial north of England, forging new wildlife havens, mitigating flooding and air pollution, and enriching the lives of people all the way from Liverpool to Hull. It's being run in tandem with the region's four community forest organisations, and 2019 was its first full year.

Talk about flying starts. We helped plant 168,000 trees last year, including 3,000 at a primary school in Goole, 3,000 in Holmfirth to soak up floodwater, and 1,600 to create woodland for a colony of endangered willow tits in urban Salford. A big milestone came with the launch of our £2.1 million Partnership Innovation Fund, backed by Defra and designed to get corporates and councils thinking up new ways to green the landscape. Already the fund is bankrolling 300,000 trees for Britain's biggest ever natural flood management scheme, a £15 million plan to plant two million saplings and combat flood impacts in Leeds.



JILL JENNINGS/WTMAL

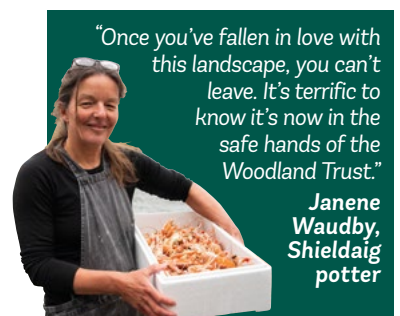
## Rainforest rescue

LANDSCAPES



THE TRUST ACQUISITION that made all the headlines last year was £1.6 million Ben Shieldaig, a jagged chunk of mountain scenery stretching across 1,500 hectares of Scotland's north-west coast (see page 2). Here we plan to collect seed from the ben's iconic Caledonian 'granny pines', doubling the tree cover to buffer and beautify its ancient ecosystems. But 2019 also saw us take custody of woods at Dunollie (above), down the coast at Oban – just as scenic, and like Shieldaig an oasis

for exceedingly rare fungi, ferns and lichens. Damp, lush and layered with life, these places are Scotland's own 'temperate rainforests', even rarer than the Amazonian variety. They will act as beacons of best practice as we work to influence neighbouring landowners under our region-wide Saving Scotland's Rainforest project. What's more, we are key partners in a similar drive in Wales – the £9m EU LIFE-funded Celtic Rainforest Project, launched last summer.



*"Once you've fallen in love with this landscape, you can't leave. It's terrific to know it's now in the safe hands of the Woodland Trust."*

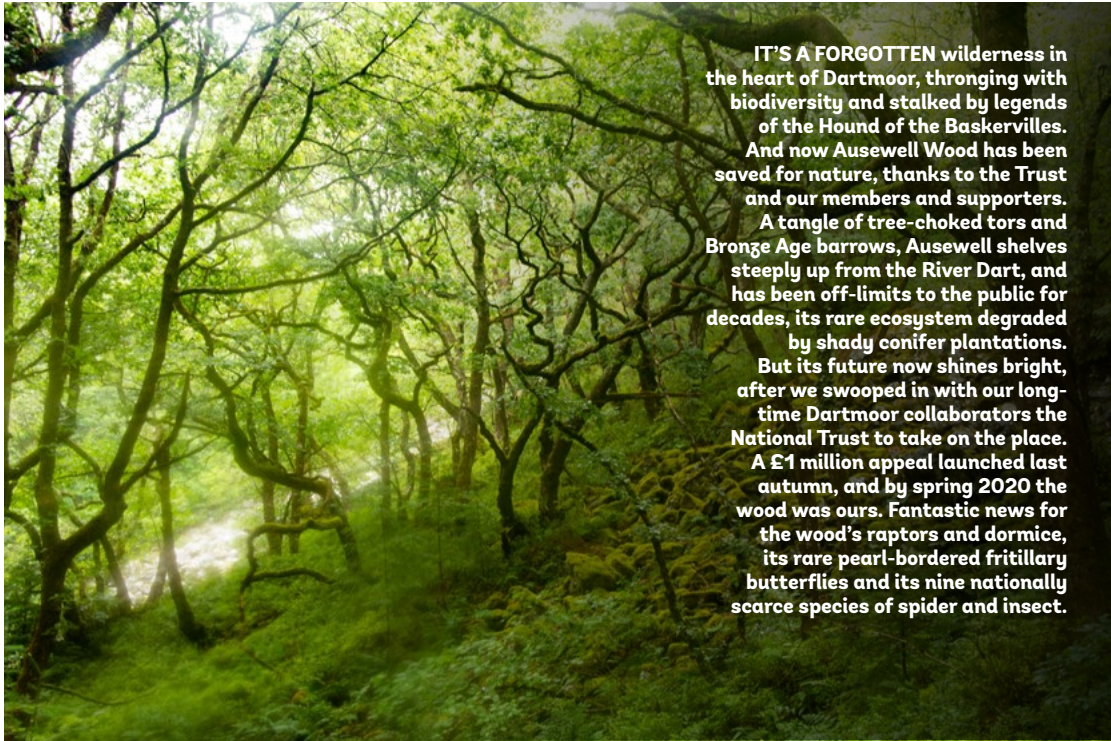
**Janene Waudby, Shieldaig potter**

DENNIS HARDLEY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; PHIL FORMBY/WTMAL



## Ausewell reclaimed

### RESTORATION



**IT'S A FORGOTTEN wilderness in the heart of Dartmoor, thronging with biodiversity and stalked by legends of the Hound of the Baskervilles.**

**And now Ausewell Wood has been saved for nature, thanks to the Trust and our members and supporters.**

**A tangle of tree-choked tors and Bronze Age barrows, Ausewell shelves steeply up from the River Dart, and has been off-limits to the public for decades, its rare ecosystem degraded by shady conifer plantations.**

**But its future now shines bright, after we swooped in with our long-time Dartmoor collaborators the National Trust to take on the place. A £1 million appeal launched last autumn, and by spring 2020 the wood was ours. Fantastic news for the wood's raptors and dormice, its rare pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies and its nine nationally scarce species of spider and insect.**



PHIL FORMBY/MTML; MIRCEA COSTINA/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; LAKESLIFE/STOCK NATURE PHOTOGRAPHERS LTD/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; MARTIN FOWLER/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

## Ash fightback

### SCIENCE

PESTS AND DISEASES continue to assail the UK's tree canopy, including imported ills such as oak processionary moth, which can strip trees bare. Thank goodness, then, for our 170-strong people's army of Observatree volunteers – citizen scientists trained by the Trust to detect first signs of disease. They logged a record 4,500 reports in 2019.

Fears that the ash dieback epidemic might wipe out 95% of Britain's ash trees now look unduly pessimistic, with mortality rates in Europe closer to 70% so far. That will still wreak a huge impact on our wooded landscapes though, and sends a chilling message that the UK must learn from past mistakes, and avoid sourcing trees from abroad. Meanwhile the Trust is supporting research by Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, which has sampled 800 trees from our woods at Marden Park in Surrey to look for resistant strains of ash.



MATTHEW ROBERTS/MTML



# Thanks!

Here are the organisations that supported the Trust's work last year to the tune of £5,000 or more. Many thanks, one and all.

## Partners

Asendia UK Ltd  
AXA UK PLC  
Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate Ltd  
Cargill Plc  
Charities Advisory Trust  
CNG Ltd  
Coherent Scotland Ltd  
Computershare Investor Services Plc  
Confer Ltd  
Delamere Dairy Ltd  
Disney Store Ltd  
Dorset Cereals  
DoubleTree by Hilton  
Epson (UK) Ltd  
Equitix  
Eurostar International Ltd  
Eurostove Limited  
Golden Acre Foods  
Golden Charter  
Good-Loop  
Guildhall Chambers  
GVA Grimley Ltd  
I G Design Group  
IKEA Ltd  
Independent Franchise Partners, LLP  
Innovia Technology Ltd  
Intertissue Limited  
Investec Asset Management  
Investec Bank PLC  
Joules Ltd  
Kernow Coatings Ltd  
Lakeland Limited  
Lazard Asset Management  
Marks & Spencer plc  
Mulberry Company (Design) LTD  
Nationwide Building Society  
Next Plc  
Players of People's Postcode Lottery  
Premier Paper Group  
PUR Projet  
Risk Decisions Ltd  
Sainsbury's  
Selfridges & Co  
Shanly Homes Ltd  
Skipton Building Society  
Sofidel UK Limited  
The Co-operative Bank  
Trailfinders Limited  
TK Maxx  
Wallacespace Ltd  
Wicked London Production Ltd  
Yoplait UK Ltd

## Charitable Trusts

ANT – Fonden  
Banister Trust  
BaxterStorey Foundation  
Bellingburn Trust  
B W Eddershaw Charitable Trust  
Carter Conservation Trust  
Casper Investment Trust  
Catalysts Foundation  
Eardstapa Trust  
Elm Trust  
Faslane Trust  
Fieldrose Charitable Trust  
Garfield Weston Foundation  
Hadley Trust

## A cool million

## COMMUNITIES



NOTHING FORGES A STRONGER link with nature than digging in a tree and watching it grow, especially for children. And as the Trust powers toward its target of a 'tree for all' by 2025, 2019 was another bumper year for our woodland creation team. We planted 4.1 million trees last year, more than anyone except the UK government, and created 2,142 hectares of new woods – both of those tallies are around 25% up on 2018. But top laurels must go to our community tree-pack squad, who mailed out more than one million free saplings to schools and neighbourhood groups up and down the land.

The scheme is paid for by generous partners including Sainsbury's, Yorkshire Tea, Selfridges and players of the People's Postcode Lottery, and among those signing up was the Spen Valley Civic Society in West Yorkshire (above). Its members planted 420 Trust trees to create a new nature haven in memory of their much-loved MP Jo Cox, who was tragically murdered in 2016. Jo was a great champion of green causes, and once said: "If there's such a thing as reincarnation, I want to come back as an oak."

Elsewhere, eco-campaigner Naseem Talukdar rallied 150 green-fingered locals to plant trees in Bristol, part of his drive to offset the environmental impact of the city's takeaway restaurants. And our tree-pack tentacles even reached Muckleflugga Lighthouse, on the northern tip of Shetland, where locals are planting 420 saplings to shelter their village allotments.

Meanwhile, our popular MOREwoods scheme to subsidise planting for landowners saw a tripling of demand. It pump-primed 400 hectares of new woods in the 2019/20 planting season, while its sister scheme MOREhedges added 75km of vital new wildlife corridors to farmland nationwide, improving soil quality and mitigating flood impacts to boot. Britain's gardens are getting greener too: the Trust saw a threefold spike in sales from our online tree shop.



*As a fifth-generation farmer with two young sons, I have always wanted to enhance the landscape and benefit people and wildlife.*

*My 2,300 new trees from the Woodland Trust meant I could plant two small woods, offering shade and shelter for our dairy herd."*

**Anthony Gothard, Sainsbury's farmer**





A FOREST TO ENGAGE and inspire young people on a massive scale. That's the pioneering ambition of our mega-project at Mead in Derbyshire, where we're transforming a former open-cast colliery into Britain's first ever Young People's Forest. Our £4.7 million masterplan for the site fired up last May, when 135 teenage volunteers gathered to plant the first of 260,000 trees.

Over the coming three years more than 160 hectares (395 acres) will morph into a dappled mosaic of woods, ponds and grassland, and a raft of partners is on board: the Pears Foundation, the Pears #iwill Fund, the Veolia Environmental Trust, Biffa Award and Nationwide Building Society. In all the scheme will create 520 hectares of unbroken land for nature, linking with both Shipley Country Park and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Woodside Farm reserve – badgers and short-eared owls are already roving.

The site was at the epicentre of the Trust's Big Climate Fightback weekend in November (see page 2), when people young and old flocked to dig in another 10,000 trees. But what's special is that the project's future will be shaped by youngsters themselves – Mead's budding youth forum will design and deliver a range of ecological pursuits there, turning the forest into a giant outdoor classroom for people aged between 10 and 20.

"It was great to get messy planting trees, and great seeing how many young people showed up to the event. A big thank you to the Woodland Trust – amazing to see the commitment put into the Young People's Forest."

**Abdul Moiz Siddiqi, Youth Mayor of Derby**



Helen and Michael Brown Charitable Trust  
Henry Nelken Charitable Trust  
Hilda & Johnny Gibb Charitable Trust  
Icthius Charitable Trust  
John Horseman Trust  
Jordan Charitable Foundation  
Maytham Trust  
Moondance Foundation  
Moto in the Community Trust  
Mr T H N Allen Charitable Trust  
Mushroom Trust  
Nancy Bateman Charitable Trust  
National Arbor Day Foundation  
Nebulus Trust  
Nelson and Jean Dance Charitable Trust  
Northwick Trust  
Oglesby Charitable Trust  
Oxygen House Foundation  
Pauline Meredith Charitable Trust  
Peacock Charitable Trust  
Portrack Charitable Trust  
Ptarmigan Trust  
Revere Charitable Trust  
Rev. Ted Baines Charity  
River Farm Foundation  
Robert Barr Charitable Trust  
Scott (Eredine) Charitable Trust  
ShareGift  
Stuart Heath Charitable Settlement  
Spear Charitable Trust  
Steel Charitable Trust  
Tanner Trust  
Whitley Animal Protection Trust

### Landfill Communities Fund

Aughrim Landfill/Groundwork NI  
Biffa Award  
Enovert Community Trust  
Lancashire Environmental Fund  
The Veolia Environmental Trust  
Viridor Credits  
Yorventure

### Grants

Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust  
Defra  
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs  
Endangered Landscape Programme – supported by Arcadia – a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin  
Environment Agency  
European Commission LIFE  
Forestry Commission  
Greater London Authority  
Lancashire Wildlife Trust  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
National Forest Company  
National Lottery Heritage Fund  
Natural England  
Natural Resources Wales – Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru  
Northern Ireland Environment Agency  
Pears #iwill Fund – Pears Foundation, National Lottery Communities Fund and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport  
Pears Family Charitable Foundation  
Point and Sandwick Trust  
Rural Payment Agencies  
Scottish Forestry  
Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate  
Scottish Natural Heritage  
Snowdonia National Park  
Welsh Assembly Government Rural Payments/Cronfa Datblygu Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru



# The year in numbers

Never before has the Trust invested so much in Britain's precious woods and wildlife. Here's how our record-breaking year totted up

**£7.9m**

## Public donations

Trust supporters have never been more generous than in 2019 – income from our public appeals almost doubled year-on-year. You chipped in more than £1 million to help us buy Ben Shieldaig (see page 2); and almost as much again to usher the lost oasis of Ausewell Wood into our care (page 7). Meanwhile a single £400,000 donation went to our flagship wood at Tring Park in Hertfordshire – we'll be using it to make Tring an even more enthralling place for visitors. Special thanks to all those who ticked the Gift Aid box, which added £2.6 million to our spending power last year.

**£9.7m**

## Companies, trusts and landfill tax

This chunk of our income rose sharply last year, as businesses flocked to do their bit in the battle against climate change. Our five-year partnership with Yorkshire Tea saw the last of 500,000 native trees in the ground, while Premier Paper reached a milestone too: £1 million in donations to mitigate its customers' carbon footprint. And our great friends at Sainsbury's planted another 150 woods with us in 2019 to celebrate their 150th anniversary.

**We raised  
£56.1m**

**£14.3m**

## Legacies

We're so grateful for the many gifts left to the Trust in wills by people who want to invest in woods and trees for future generations. Together they funded more than one in four of the trees we planted last year, and looked after fully a quarter of the woods in our care.

**£9.4m**

## Other income

This category includes almost £2.9 million raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery, whose decade-long support has now reaped more than £10 million for the Trust. A large chunk of that has gone toward improving trails, signs and visitor info at 250 of our most popular woods nationwide.

**£4.5m**

## Grants

Money from grants rocketed by a third in 2019. The National Lottery Heritage Fund alone supported half a dozen initiatives, while £689,500 came from the Pears #iwill Fund for our Young People's Forest at Mead (see page 9). Our plans for a mammoth new community wood outside Neath (page 2) came into focus thanks to £210,000 from Natural Resources Wales; while in England, a four-year, £1.9 million partnership with Defra to get children planting trees hit its target a year early – after sending 400,000 free trees to almost 3,000 schools the Trust had never worked with before.

**£10.3m**

## Membership

We love our members, and they've never been so numerous. As the Trust's message resonated ever more widely, our loyal band grew by more than 10% last year, to a record 289,000. All those new subscriptions swelled our income by an extra £1.2 million in 2019.



£11m

### Protecting woods and trees

Tree-planting is all for naught if we lose the wildlife-rich sanctuaries Britain has already, and sadly by the end of 2019 our campaign caseload of ancient woods imperilled by development had reached four figures for the first time. The chief threat comes from the HS2 rail scheme, and our battle to force a rethink of that project's ecological impact won the signatures of 44,000 supporters, a Trust record. In better news, just under 100 hectares of irreplaceable ancient woodland were spared the bulldozer thanks to our lobbying last year. Overall we spent almost £1 million more on protecting Britain's woods and trees than in 2018, largely thanks to our big-ticket purchase of Ben Shieldaig (p2), which includes rare fragments of Atlantic rainforest habitat.

£16.6m

### Restoring ancient woodland and other habitats

Our restoration teams nursed another 3,700 hectares of damaged ancient woodland back on the road to health in 2019, both on Trust land and in cahoots with other landowners. There is ample proof of the benefits at Fingle Woods, on Dartmoor, which we own in tandem with the National Trust. A new survey revealed that five years after we moved in there, tree pipsits are nesting, dormice are spreading, and the rare yellow starbursts of flax-leaved St John's-wort are brightening the forest floor. Elsewhere, we helped with the reintroduction of lost woodland flora and fauna: England's first pine marten releases in the Forest of Dean, and red squirrels and twinflowers at Ledmore & Migdale.

£19.6m

### Creating woods and planting trees

The Trust's outlay here grew by £4.5 million on 2018 – much of it accounted for by the £3.7 million we invested in land for creating vibrant young woodland, either by planting or by natural regeneration, where nature is left to do the good work for itself. With ash dieback raging UK-wide, we're especially happy to report almost 2.5 million of our 4.1 million new trees were planted outside woods – on farms and roadsides, in urban parks and gardens. That was more than 50% higher than our target.

£10.4m

### Generating funds

For every pound we invested in fundraising last year, we accrued £3.70 in return. This outlay covered the cost of recruiting thousands of new members and donors. Meanwhile the Trust spent 82p in every pound on our charitable objectives last year, 2p more than in 2018.

We spent  
**£57.6m**

**-£1.5m**

### Income less expenditure

**We deliberately spent more than our income in 2019, dipping into our reserves to advance our programme. More than 340,000 people supported us financially in 2019: heartfelt thanks to every one of you.**

*Our audited Annual Report and Accounts are available at [woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk).*



# Our 2020 vision

A landmark year followed by a shock to the global system. So what of the future? Here are four ways the Trust is looking ahead

## 1 We're hatching a new plan

December's general election saw every major party back a colossal increase in tree-planting in a bid to tackle the climate crisis. And in January, the Trust's first ever Emergency Tree Plan showed them the way – a bold blueprint for boosting the UK tree canopy from 13% to 19% by 2050. It demands new grant schemes for widescale woodland creation and places an emphasis on quality over quantity – the right tree in the right place. With new Agriculture and Environment Bills promising to overhaul farm subsidies and reshape environmental protections post-Brexit, the Trust will be lobbying harder than ever for transformative change.

## 2 We're plotting a new forest

Hard on the heels of plans for our biggest ever new wood in Wales (see page 2) comes a record-buster in Northern Ireland. We'll plant 100,000 trees at Aughrim Hill in the Mourne Mountains – the first step on a journey to restore the entire area as a woodland reserve. Local schoolchildren will dig in many of the saplings, and Aughrim will blaze a trail as the Trust's first site to bar the use of both plastic tree-guards and chemical sprays. Back in the Valleys, meanwhile, the Welsh Environment Minister cut the ribbon on our £2 million Brynau Farm wood in March this year – and used the occasion to unveil proposals for a new national forest for Wales, stretching from south coast to north. The Trust will be playing its part.

## 3 We're banking on a new partner

The Trust set out to create another 3,000 hectares of broadleaf woodland in 2020 – 40% more than in 2019 – and helping us do it will be Lloyds Banking Group, which signed the Trust's biggest ever corporate partnership deal last winter. Lloyds has pledged £36 million to our cause over the coming decade, which will plant a staggering ten million trees and lock up 2.5 million tonnes of carbon. The partnership is already helping tree-lovers like Dr Hayder Dyer (pictured), who's planted 3,000 subsidised saplings on his smallholding in County Fermanagh.

## 4 We're saving ancient woods

As the year turned, more than 1,000 ancient woods were threatened by development, 108 of them from the HS2 rail scheme. The Trust continues to lobby Government to mitigate its ecological impact. But there was good news too, when we learned that 900-year-old Smithy Wood, outside Sheffield, had been spared the axe following our long battle against plans for an M1 service station there. And in the South East, we've scooped a £347,000 National Lottery Heritage Fund grant to kick-start our Lost Woods project, which will repair miles of neglected woods across the Weald and Downs.

## Woods for health

The Covid-19 pandemic has driven home the importance of nature for people's wellbeing. When the crisis ends, the Trust's work will thus become even more crucial, so your continuing support is more valuable than ever. Please contribute if you can, at [woodlandtrust.org.uk/donate](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/donate).

## Our promise to you

We are committed to fundraising and communicating in an honest and transparent way. We pride ourselves on being respectful and responsible with your data and how we treat you. For more, visit [woodlandtrust.org.uk/promise](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/promise).

The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way,  
Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6LL;  
0330 333 3300; [woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk);  
[supporters@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:supporters@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

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