

## **Annual Report 2021 -22**

This report covers activities from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022

### **Introduction**

Over this period most of our work has focussed on the continuing development and maintenance of Gorse Hill Nature Reserve and this report concentrates on our progress and the monitoring of our flora and fauna. The Management Committee met once a month during this reporting period and sub groups met regularly to progress Publicity and Project Development; the principal officers are the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

### **Gorse Hill**

All the work on the Reserve is carried out by volunteers; we have no paid staff. Volunteer work parties meet every Wednesday and Saturday. There is also a group of adults with learning difficulties that work on the Reserve on Fridays. Open Sundays are run on the first Sunday of the month from April - September with a cafe and guided walks. The Reserve provides a wide diversity of habitats from ponds and wetlands to meadows, woodland and heathland; encouraging small mammals, birds (both resident and migratory), insects and amphibians.

### **Covid 19**

With our volunteer force back to full strength there were still some restrictions in place, particularly catering, where all volunteers had to bring their own flasks and events restricted.

### **Woodland**

Winter storms felled several trees and together with supplies from a local tree surgeon, empty log drying bays soon replaced the brisk sale of logs over the winter. We started measuring the moisture content of logs inline with advice from Woodsure and the Ready to Burn Government accreditation scheme being adapted for smaller producers. The log cutting process was speeded up with the construction of some frames that held more logs in place.

Woodland paths needed clearing more often and more hazels were coppiced, following the three-year rotation programme.

and following Snowdrop Sunday in February some of the larger clumps were split and re-planted.

The Blossom and Bluebell Day on 1<sup>st</sup> May attracted visitors for a guided walk to marvel at the blossom in the Heritage Orchard and the bluebells in Bluebell Wood.

### **Meadows**

The 5Acre was cut immediately after our National Garden Scheme Meadows Day. This reduced the interest for visitors over mid and late summer but was felt necessary to reduce the vigour of the grasses and let the wildflowers be more dominant in the future. There were two hay-making periods and more time spent pulling ragwort in the Cut Lane meadow. Annual watch on thistle and ragwort has reduced the time needed each year in their control. Margaret's Meadow had yellow rattle seed sown in mid-winter with the aim of suppressing the grass growth and benefitting the wildflowers.

A new hedge was planted along the fence at the back of Holly Houses gardens. This low hedge of holly, cotoneaster, berberis and honeysuckle is designed to attract bees and other pollinating insects.

### **Polytunnel**

The new log stores were completed and a good harvest of produce made. As temperatures cooled off in the polytunnel after the summer, wet days were used to clear beds and prepare for the following season. We found that ladders suspended from the polytunnel hoops kept the germinating seed and seedlings safe from mice and increased growth success considerably.

### **Orchards**

Summer work concentrated on hand clearing grass from round the trees in the 12Acre Orchard. To reduce the workload some ground-cover matting was removed from some trees in the Heritage Orchard, whilst the rest of the matting was scraped by hand to remove weed growth – an arduous task.

We have noticed that most of the trees have been cropping earlier each year. This was no exception, some of the later varieties had cropped by late September. With good cropping we were able to produce over 2000 bottles of apple juice.

### **Apple Weekend 1-2 October**

The Apple Weekend success was dampened by a wet first day that did effect sales, with the stalls being outside under breezy gazebos. The café was able to function but used the old barn (with large doors open) for ventilation and distancing purposes as Covid 19 was still a big issue. Numbers of the public doubled from last year. However, parking became an issue because the field became un-usable after the first day so cars had to park along Holly Lane.

### **The Narnia Experience 18-19 December**

A new collaboration with Christ Church, our neighbours, designed to raise funds and develop closer ties with the local community. A trail was designed through Cabin Wood with a number of stations acting out significant scenes from the book The Lion the With and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis and incorporating Father Christmas. This was a very successful event that involved considerable planning and much of our focus during the months preceding it. With Covid restrictions still in place, the café was held in our cold barn which limited sales.

### **Workshop**

A new equipment and tool store gradually took shape over 2022. This secure extension to the workshop is designed for limited access to our more valuable items. One of our existing small and less secure tool stores was converted into a store for cleaning materials.

### **Education and Monitoring**

The schools programme has not got back to normal but links with Edge Hill University continue to develop with four second year students from the new medical school choosing to volunteer with us as part of their course. The annual bird box cleaning, maintenance and surveying programme was aided by students from Edge Hill University and Myerscough Agriculture College.

### **Publicity**

The website, Facebook and Twitter have been kept up to date and two issues of Nature Trail published for our subscription supporters. The Northwest Bird

Watching Festival at Martin Mere was attended with our stand and we gave a Power Point talk in their lecture theatre. We also continued opening on the first Sunday of the month, providing a café and access to Cabin Wood during the later part of 2022.

### **Finance and Administration**

Our main income streams have come from grants, hay and log sales, subscriptions and gift aid. More detailed finances can be found in the annual accounts for this period.

### **Conclusion**

We are very grateful to the many volunteers who give up their free time to help with the work developing Gorse Hill Nature Reserve. We could not have achieved any of this without the dedication of our volunteers and supporters.

J. Atkins B.Sc. C.Biol. MSB  
Secretary to the Trust

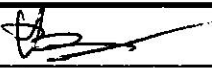
**INCOME EXPENDITURE REPORT JUL 21 - JUN 2022**

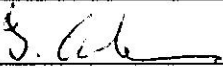
<b>Current Account</b>		
Opening Balance	1st July 2021	£30,798.70
Total Income		£32,131.90
Total Expenditure		£34,984.01
Closing Balance	30th June 2022	£27,946.59


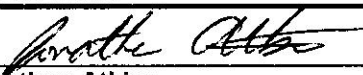
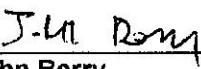
<b>Petty Cash</b>		
Opening Balance	1st July 2021	£197.88
Drawn from Current		£430.00
Closing Balance	30th June 2022	£157.86
Petty Cash Spent		£470.02

<b>Summary of 2021-22</b>		
<b>Assets at 1st July 2021</b>		
Cash at Bank		£30,798.70
Petty Cash		£197.88
<b>Total cash</b>		<b>£30,996.58</b>
<b>Assets Changes in 2021-2022</b>		
Total Income		£62,930.60
Total Expenditure (less petty cash drawn)		-£34,554.01
Petty Cash Spent		-£470.02
<b>Asset Change in year</b>		<b>£27,906.57</b>
<b>Assets at 30th June 2022</b>		
Cash at Bank		£27,946.59
Petty Cash		£157.86
<b>Total cash</b>		<b>£28,104.45</b>
<b>Net Change in Assets</b>		<b>£27,906.57</b>

**THE ABOVE IS A FAIR AND TRUE RECORD OF THE STATE OF THE ACCOUNTS OF  
NORTH WEST ECOLOGICAL TRUST FOR THE FINANCIAL PERIOD ENDING 30TH JUNE  
2022**

<b>Hon Treasurer</b>	<b>Dated</b>
	6.12.22
Kate Wildman	

<b>Hon Auditor</b>	<b>Dated</b>
	20.12.22
Ian Culshaw	

<b>Trustees</b>	<b>Dated</b>
	4/1/23
Derek Atkins	
	4/1/23
Jonathan Atkins	
	4-1-2023
John Berry	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

North West Ecological Trust

On accounts for the year  
ended

30/06/2022

Charity no  
(if any)

327788

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30/06/2020.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

20/12/2022

Name:

Ian Culshaw

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

Address:

27 Westover Road, Maghull

Liverpool

L31 7BT