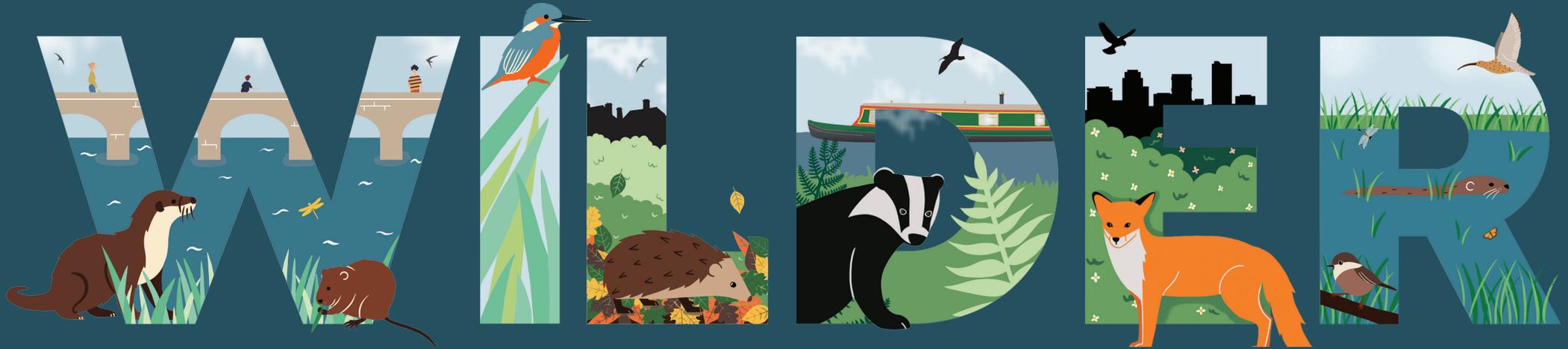




**Staffordshire
Wildlife Trust**



Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
Our manifesto for a Wilder Future



It is now clearer than ever how vital nature and our wildlife are to all of us.

During the pandemic the natural world has been a lifeline to so many of us; opening a window to listen to the birdsong, walking in a sun-dappled woodland, breathing in fresh, clean air. We depend on nature, for our homes, our water, our food, our physical and mental health, and even for our future prosperity. ***But nature is in trouble.***

The UK has become one of the most nature-depleted nations in the world and more than half of our species are in decline.

We are teetering on the brink of multiple extinctions brought about by decades of poor farming policy and practices, pollution, destructive development and climate change. We are battling a slow and steady decline in our wildlife in our county.

Insects are experiencing the largest extinction event since the Jurassic era. Bird numbers have drastically decreased and almost all of the UK's wildflower meadows have been lost in the last century.

Here in Staffordshire many species are being destroyed, including water vole, hazel dormouse, hedgehog and several invertebrate species such as the small heath butterfly and the native white-clawed crayfish.

The suitable habitats we have for wildlife are often in poor condition and are disappearing.

These losses will continue to gather pace if we don't do things differently.

It doesn't have to be this way!



Nature's recovery is the most important political and social issue of our time

The next 10 years are critical. It has to be a time of renewal, of rewilding our lives. If we act now and together, we can put nature into recovery. *We need at least 30% of Staffordshire to be connected and protected for nature by 2030*

Making more space for nature to become abundant once again will give our struggling wildlife and the natural systems we depend on the chance to recover. **30% is the minimum that nature needs.**

We need a Nature Recovery Network. Right now, wildlife is too often forced into fewer and smaller pockets of space, surrounded by urban development or intensive agriculture. **This is will only lead to further losses.** Instead we need more wild places, and for these to be joined up in a system across the county and nationally.

Creating this 'Nature Recovery Network' is vital. There are great examples underway already in the urban habitats of Stoke-on-Trent, the meres and mosses of Newcastle-under-Lyme, the species-rich grasslands of the Staffordshire Moorlands, the heathlands of South Staffordshire, Cannock and Lichfield, woodlands in East Staffordshire and floodplains of Stafford Borough and Tamworth. **Works like these must be expanded.**

We need you to champion the Nature Recovery Network for Staffordshire.

People need nature to thrive. People and communities benefit from thriving, accessible nature on their doorsteps as part of a Natural Health Service. Reconnecting with wild, green places improves the wellbeing and resilience of all. Children and young people need to learn about and experience wildlife. Local residents should be helped to stand up for nature on their doorsteps.

We need you to support wild wellbeing initiatives, local green spaces and opportunities for children to experience wildlife. We need you to help local residents to stand up for nature on their doorsteps.





We are asking all election candidates in Staffordshire to pledge to:

- 1) Champion a Nature Recovery Network** - help us ensure 30% of Staffordshire land is connected and protected for nature's recovery by 2030 by providing resources and funding to deliver a Nature Recovery Network.
- 2) Prioritise local solutions to the global climate and nature crisis** - drive investment in carbon capture in woodlands, wetland and peatlands and invest in nature-based solutions to climate challenges like flooding and pollution.
- 3) Back Natural Health and wellbeing** - by supporting Green Prescribing programmes and wild wellbeing, initiatives for young people, as well as ensuring everyone benefits from accessible local green spaces where nature thrives.
- 4) Ensure development that is good for people and for nature** - by protecting valuable wild spaces from destruction and making sure all new housing, commercial and infrastructure developments improve biodiversity by creating more nature-rich places.
- 5) Support innovative approaches to boosting the green economy** - by investing in training and job creation for the growing green economy, backing nature-based tourism, and rewilding depleted land.

**We know that people across our Staffordshire want and need nature to recover.
*Now is the time to act for a wilder future.***

**Email info@staffs-wildlife.org.uk for more information
www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk**

