

Impact Report

April 2018 - March 2019

Earth Trust Impact Report 2018-19

2018 was the start of a new era for Earth Trust with the launch of our five year strategy. Defining our work in this way presents clear action plans and is an exciting progression on the work we've previously undertaken. This report captures some of our key achievements from 2018-19 and sets the stage for how we will continue to achieve our strategic aims.

Lambing Festival

Opening up the gates to our working farm, our annual Lambing Festival gives visitors and school groups the opportunity to develop a stronger connection with their food by engaging them with the farm to fork journey.

Impact...

Food - its production, distribution and healthy eating - is a key theme at the Earth Trust and our role is to provide a platform to help visitors make their own informed choices. Over 6,000 people were engaged at the event, and 390 local school children benefitted from visits to the farmyard.

Championing accessible natural green spaces

As a founding partner of the Oxfordshire Environment Board, we have continued our work to influence the development decisions made at local government level, ensuring that there is a strong voice championing the vital need for access to green spaces for the health and well-being of us all. Earth Trust works with a number of other organisations with shared interests, such as BBOWT, CPRE Oxfordshire and Wild Oxfordshire, to amplify our voices and impact on key issues.

Impact...

In 2018-19 we helped launch the Oxfordshire Environment Board - building contacts with decision makers and creating strategies throughout the county. Our intention is to ensure environmentally sound solutions are found to managing and mitigating the impact of growth throughout Oxfordshire through spatial and infrastructure planning.

“**Our vision is to be a champion for accessible green spaces where the living world thrives and where people develop a deep understanding of their environment and their role in caring for it.**”

Engage

Engage the public with the environment through access to local natural green spaces as a means to advance their understanding of ecosystems and their role in looking after the planet.

Care

Care for, improve and interpret green spaces, improving education and knowledge of their biodiversity, ecosystems and heritage features.

Demonstrate

Demonstrate and communicate sustainable management to the public. Demonstrate the public benefits of the land through farming for the production of food and other products, forestry and the production of timber and wood products, and the management of water and the ecosystems on which clean water depends.

earth trust

MISSION: to give people access to and experience of the environment through the natural green spaces we manage. Together we can understand what we should do to care for our planet.

Earth Trust Strategy 2018-2023

Financially Sustainable

To deliver our vision and mission the Earth Trust needs to be financially sustainable and demonstrate the financial sustainability of our enterprises.

River of Life II

In spring 2019 we received a Water Environment Grant, through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, for an exciting new partnership project which will build on the success of River of Life. New ponds, backwaters and wet woodland will provide vital habitats for wildlife and slow down and filter water as it flows towards the river. The creation of these features, alongside a mosaic of other natural habitats, will improve the quality of the landscape.

Impact...

Key to the programme is the demonstration of the management of water and wetlands in the landscape and the importance and value of water to society. The creation of wetland habitats will demonstrate how wetlands can be managed on a landscape scale, in particular how floodplains can contribute to managing flood water, plus provide a range of other societal benefits.

Generating vital income

Earth Trust is incredibly grateful to all of our supporters: Earth Trust Friends, individual donors, corporate sponsors, and grant making trusts. 2018-19 saw increased funding from existing donors and we attracted new donors for our Countryside Skills programme. We also secured our first commercial sponsor for the Lambing Festival. Earth Trust was honoured to be able to commemorate the memory of 11 individuals with the planting of eight memorial trees and three new bench dedications.

Impact...

Generating income is vital to supporting our charitable aims. By engaging with new companies, donors and organisations we have expanded our supporter base. Larkmead Vets sponsorship of the Lambing Festival proved to be a valuable partnership, strengthening the event with relevant content for our visitors.

Architects appointed to bring Gateway vision to life

This year we partnered with an award-winning, sustainable architects practice: White Design. After securing funding we were able to start work on some truly inspiring design plans for Earth Lab and an Innovation Hub to provide a welcome and orientation space for our visitors. With a full Gateway team soon to be in place, we are planning a programme of exciting events through which our visitors can really engage with the build as it comes to life.

Woodland Collections

2018 marked the end of the Earth Trust led Living Ash Project, which sought to identify trees that showed tolerance to Chalara ash dieback. We hosted a Plant Health Conference where findings from the project were presented and future research approaches were discussed.

Impact...

Earth Trust holds a very special and important set of tree collections. The Defra funded Woodland Collections project is transformational in the identification of forestry resources: viewing them as living genetic libraries rather than sets of standing trees. The first phase of the project enabled us to scope out the assets and data held by Earth Trust and their value for science and society.

Impact...

Earth Lab will be at the heart of Earth Trust Gateway, providing a stimulating, inspirational education space. Supporting our objective to engage people with their environment, learning opportunities will be built into the fabric of the structure itself. The aim is to use the building as a demonstration of sustainability in action through the design, materials and construction methods used, together with the services on which the building will depend.

11th

consecutive Green Flag for Wallingford Castle Meadows and 5th consecutive Green Heritage Site Accreditation

14,539

hours contributed by volunteers, equivalent to 8 full-time members of staff

589

Earth Trust Friends made regular donations to support our work

25

schools benefitted from our continuing partnership with Thames Water to provide free visits to Didcot Sewage Treatment Works to learn about the importance of freshwater

21

weddings in Fison Barn provided vital income; the barn was granted a license for civil ceremonies, encouraging more couples to choose us for their celebration

7,584

people attended Festivals at the Earth Trust Farm, engaging with art, archaeology and farming

5,100

children attended Earth School and engagement sessions, using our green spaces as outdoor classrooms and learning about nature, history and the environment

70

young people from 5 schools, who found the traditional academic environment challenging, participated in our Countryside Skills course, which offers experience, self esteem and a qualification

£ 604k

of funds raised from individuals, community groups, trusts and corporate supporters

1,372

subscribers received weekly and/or monthly emails about our work, news and events

We would like to thank the following people and organisations for their support:

Trusts and Foundations:

- The Adrian Swire Charitable Trust
- Aspen Trust
- The Bothwell Charitable Trust
- The Childwick Trust
- CLA Charitable Trust
- The Dorothy Calme Charitable Trust
- The D'Oyly Harle Charitable Trust
- Hugh Fraser Foundation
- Lord Barnby's Foundation
- Mr And Mrs J A Pye's Charitable Settlement

Community groups:

- Didcot Runners
- Friends of Radley Lakes
- Hagbourne Parochial Church Council
- Hope Vineyard Church
- Long Wittenham Parish Council
- Long Wittenham Pre-School
- Watlington Environment Group

Corporate donors, sponsors and supporters:

- Imageworks
- Larkmead Vets
- Savills
- Unipart
- Wet 'n' Wild

All of our Earth Trust Friends and individual donors, including those who have shown their support via our new donation posts in our car parks.

The Quick Family, Sarah Bonham and all those who contributed to Thomas's Woodland Fund. In recognition of their gift, we are proud to have established Thomas's Meadow, in memory of Thomas Quick.

Farm Step tenants

- Brightwell Bees
- Cooper's Oxford Pork
- Emma's Ewesful Acres
- Hedgecraft
- Meadow Plant Nursery
- Norton & Yarrow Cheese

Our Trustees

- Robin Buxton (Chair)
- Lynda Atkins
- Mary Barkham
- Ian Davidson
- David Gilbert
- Paul Mason
- Chris Phillips
- David Rossington
- Julian Sayers
- Graham Shaw