

People at the heart of environmental change

Sir Martin and Lady Audrey Wood co-founded the Trust in 1982 with the land acquisition of Little Wittenham Wood, recognising that, as well as being important wildlife habitat, this was a valuable opportunity to provide access to the countryside for local communities. From our earliest beginnings, Earth Trust has grown to be an influential regional advocate and demonstration of people connecting with the natural world – and importantly, connecting with each other in order to so.

You, our Friends and donors, along with our volunteers, our staff, visitors and those that enjoy our spaces are all part of a community of change-makers that we are proud to be a part of. Together we are guardians of some extremely special and inspiring places rich in nature and heritage, through which we are able to inspire and influence others with the power of nature based solutions to climate change, biodiversity loss and human health.

As we enter our 40th year, it has never been more critical to provide access to green space and to engage more people deeply with nature – both for our own wellbeing and to inspire action to protect the natural world for the future. We need to address this directly by building green spaces and nature into our lives and places where we live and work – but to do this, we need to work with – and as part of – communities to identify barriers and needs. We are sad that Sir Martin Wood is no longer with us in this special year, but he will always be in our thoughts and behind our actions.



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Jayne Manley
Chief executive

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Our 40th anniversary marks the launch of a new 5 year strategic period for the Trust – and we are working hard to share and launch our new strategy – and celebrate our anniversary – in the summer. Our new strategy will be centred around the need to further develop our community of change, working in partnership and collaboration towards a society where accessible, engaging green spaces enable nature and people to thrive in balance.

Over the next year, you will start to see some changes in the way we communicate with you as Friends and donors – for example, with briefer – but more frequent – newsletters. We are keen to listen and learn more together. Our intention is to share more of our work, experiences and, yes, the challenges so that we can work together to bring more people into our community.

Everyone of us has a vital role to play in connecting with and caring for our green spaces so that people and nature thrive together. Your continued support is so valuable and (as we hope this newsletter will show) impactful in helping us to champion accessible green spaces so that together we can take action for people and planet. Thank you.

A group of about ten people, including men, women, and children, are walking through a field of tall, dry grass. They are dressed in casual outdoor clothing like jackets and jeans. In the background, there are rolling hills and a line of trees under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

Nature for Everyone

From listening to birdsong, to walks in the woods with friends, getting out in nature – for just 2 hours a week – has proven benefits for our physical and mental health. But not everyone can easily access nature-rich spaces.

One in three people don't have nature near their home, with the poorest communities and people of colour being twice as likely to live in nature-deprived areas.

We want this to change. We want everyone to have access to nature. That's why Earth Trust has joined more than 70 organisations to demand a 'legal right to nature' with the Nature for Everyone national campaign.

We're asking the Government to make equal access to nature, and the health and wellbeing benefits it provides, a core part of their Levelling Up plans. Along with other national organisations like WWF, Friends of the Earth and the National Trust, we want to see a legal mandate for developers and public bodies to provide access to nature-rich green spaces for everyone, and for the government to provide the funding to deliver this.

The Nature for Everyone campaign, launched by the Wildlife and Countryside Link, addresses one of the core objectives that has been at the heart of Earth Trust for many years, to champion natural accessible greenspaces for everyone. It helps to shine a spotlight on this subject and raise it up to a national platform and political position that has long been over-looked. Earth Trust has been working on this agenda, both through strategic relationships, as well as our role delivering high quality green spaces and nature for thousands of people across the District.

We actively manage and provide access to one of the region's largest natural greenspaces, but we go above and beyond providing access, by actively engaging people through programmes, volunteering, events and shared experiences.

We are already engaging the regional decision-makers and influencers to think differently about how to 'build nature in', not just to landscapes, but into built infrastructure, community assets and cultural thinking; this is no mean feat, but Earth Trust is taking steps to make this more of a reality.

Our location in the South East and Oxfordshire – one the most rapidly developing UK counties – positions us at the sharp edge of thinking through the challenges of creating and managing spaces that enable both people and nature to thrive in balance.

We are fully committed to advocating and advising on building nature and green spaces into existing and new development, to champion green infrastructure policies and practices in local authorities, and influence the planning system to ensure that access to green space is written into all future housing developments, starting in Oxfordshire and wider afield in future.

While we have long been working to influence change at a regional level, we have not previously taken part in a nation-wide lobbying campaign. We chose to join the Nature for Everyone campaign because the message is one we strongly believe in. We felt it was time to bring our experience of demonstrating and managing accessible green spaces to the table. To be united with so many like-minded partner organisations (as well as a few celebrity names) is empowering and a unique opportunity to have our many small voices amplified.



We will be using our 'on the ground' experience to support the ongoing WCL campaign's voice; channelling real life scenarios and examples through to national policy and social change – and we are hopeful that the campaign will provide Earth Trust with the extra 'step-up' to reach the ears and eyes of decision makers in Westminster and elsewhere. When people come together, positive change can happen. Let's make the Government take notice!



By protecting our existing access to nature, reviving run-down places, and creating new natural spaces within all future developments, we can put nature at the heart of every community.

So if you want to guarantee nature-rich neighbourhoods across England, please join us in asking the Government for a legal right to local nature.

<https://bit.ly/nature-everyone>

We already have almost 24,000 petitions signed. Could you help us reach 27,000? Please add your name to the petition and share it with your own message of support across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn.

Donations and Friends subscriptions helped more people than you may realise to get through the challenging year that was 2021...



Earth Trust's green spaces welcomed more visitors in 2021 than ever before – an increase of **247%**!

2,080 people from across the globe took part in our archaeology and heritage virtual educational events



2,000 subscribers were given access to our digital learning resources (supporting families home schooling children and providing a connection to nature)

702 children and young people made Covid-safe visits to Earth Trust for environmental education activities



Your generous donations made this work possible. Thank you!





News in brief

Rainwater garden

Capturing the rainwater which flows from the wildflower meadow atop Earth Lab, the Rainwater Garden is a beautiful new aquatic habitat. Designed by specialists, Ebb & Flow, the Rainwater Garden is nearing completion in May and uses 'flowform' vessels to create a healthy water ecology, as well as maximising the beautiful sights and sounds of flowing water.

Results of Friends' survey

Thank you very much to those who gave us your thoughts on the Earth Trust Friends scheme. We are very grateful for the feedback we received from more than 50 Friends. As we refresh how we communicate with Friends, and the benefits we offer, the information and insight you offered will be crucial. Thank you!

Big Give Green match fund

Friday 22nd April is Earth Day and sees the launch of the Big Give 2022, our latest fundraising appeal. We are aiming to raise £10,000 to help empower communities to care for their green spaces by providing enriching volunteer experiences and sharing skills to enable people to care for nature.

Staff changes

As we continue to build back from the effects of the pandemic, we are delighted to welcome new members of staff: Colin Shone is now a couple of months in to his role as Operations Manager, Laura Cook has joined our Communications team and this month we welcome Anna Wilson and Rowan Guthrie to the new Experience and Engagement team.

Finally, after just over six years with Earth Trust, Laura King, Development Manager, will be moving on to pastures new at the end of April. Laura has always provided excellent stewardship to our supporters and has played a key role in keeping our Friends updated and informed on our progress and developments. Needless to say, Laura will be missed by everyone at Earth Trust, and we wish her all the best for the future.



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