



Earth Trust Impact Report 2022-2023

Covering the period 1 April 2022-31 March 2023

Thank you to our growing community

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Thames Valley Orienteers

All of our donors, volunteers and Friends

Earth Trust has been proud to work in partnership with the following in 2022/23

Project Partners

Digventures
Environment Agency
Natural England
North Wessex Downs AONB
Oxfordshire Community Foundation
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)
South Oxfordshire District Council
Sylva Foundation

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Welcome from Earth Trust CEO and Chair of Trustees

As the loss of our biodiversity and impacts of climate change are being felt across our planet by local communities, we find ourselves at a critical crossroads where the fate of our planet and our economic future intersect to shape life on Earth. Our work is more relevant than ever.

This impact report shows how we are responding to some of the most perilous issues facing our planet and the profound need for local action to drive broader, transformational change. Our recent impact is shown here through the lens of practical activity, objectives, outcomes and influencing over the last 12 months. Together with our supporters, we are building communities to enable real change to happen.

The challenges facing our planet are undeniable. Temperature records are being broken, wildfires are spreading on a larger scale than ever before, storms are intensifying, and flooding is occurring on an unprecedented level.

We are no longer spectators of a distant environmental crisis, but active participants in a global emergency. The climate is changing faster than our ability to adapt, and the time for real action is now.

While the scale of the environmental crisis is global, the power to mitigate it lies with us and in our local communities. Local actions ripple outwards, catalysing wider change. The choices we make in our neighbourhoods, schools and workplaces are the building blocks of a more sustainable future. The fate of the planet, our willingness to be part of change and our economy are interconnected, and they all hinge on our collective effort to explore, learn and adapt.

The declining health of our environment is a universal concern that affects every living being on this planet. It transcends age, politics, county boundaries and ideologies, and will affect future generations. Eco-anxiety is now prevalent, but particularly felt amongst young people who are troubled by lack of action, or lack of commitments towards climate and nature targets. The health of our environment unites us in a shared vulnerability, but also as a common responsibility. The power of people united for a common cause is immense and this impact report shows the transformational impact of collective action.

Amid these challenges, the Earth Trust community stands as a beacon of hope and a testament to the impact that an 'on the ground' organisation can have. Dedicated to finding new solutions to our climate challenges, to enable nature recovery and provide opportunities for people to benefit from nature, we have supported significant change in the way policymakers think about access to green spaces; we have championed and influenced for Green Infrastructure Standards, and continue to build cross-sector partnerships and collaborations to build nature in to people's lives.

Located in Oxfordshire, Earth Trust has not only been at the forefront of local environmental stewardship but has also emerged as a regional, at times national, demonstrator of innovative approaches to tackling global issues. Its unique position as a local and national influencer places us at the forefront of organisations driving meaningful change.

At the heart of the Trust's mission lies a deep commitment to education and engagement. To create lasting change, we must empower this and the next generation with knowledge and inspire them to become champions of the environment. Earth Trust is not content with merely being a catalyst for change; with the enormity of the challenges, and the pace at which climate change is happening, we need to be bolder, louder and more impactful.

We recognise the importance of sharing learning and expertise, fostering a culture of collaboration and knowledge exchange. We are actively working to broaden and deepen our networks, working across sectors to share the challenge and collectively co-create solutions.

Through this impact report, we explore Earth Trust's journey, the accomplishments of its inspirational community of changemakers, and the challenges facing us and all of society. We reveal the potential for local actions to drive global change, emphasising the collective efforts needed to build a more sustainable world which is resilient, healthy and underpinned by thriving ecosystems. Our work continues, and our voice grows louder, as we inspire others to join our collective force for good.

Jayne Manley, Chief Executive Officer and Ian Davidson, Chair of Trustees



Earth Trust's belief is that together we can build a more sustainable world for generations to come

**Ian Davidson,
Chair of Trustees**



Championing accessible natural green spaces for everyone

Imagine a society where accessible, engaging green spaces enable nature and people to thrive in balance. Where everyone has access to nature-filled green spaces close to where they live, work and play. Where we all have a deep understanding of our ecosystem, and our role in caring for it.

This is the vision that Earth Trust are working towards, as we inspire people to address climate change, nature loss and a wellbeing crisis with the power of natural green spaces.

Demonstrate. Engage. Influence.

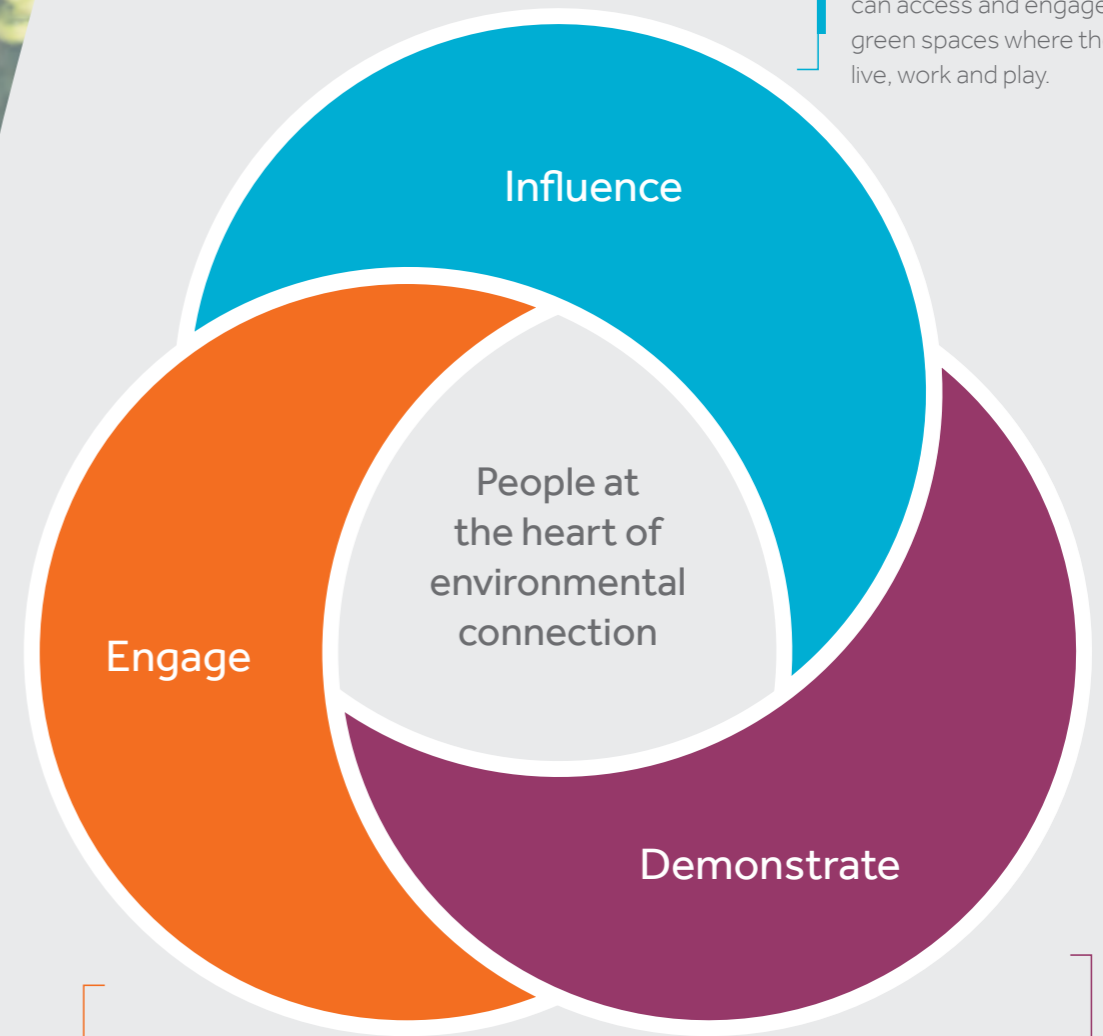
We understand that engaging people in nature can help to build a better world. A world where people understand their environment, the vital role healthy natural places can play in supporting biodiversity and addressing climate change, and their own role in caring for it.

For over 40 years Earth Trust has played a significant role in Oxfordshire, working to nurture and improve the green spaces in our care and to offer opportunities for others to experience them.

We use the places we care for to demonstrate nature based solutions and the power of engaging people with the natural world, in order to influence for more accessible and better green spaces – leading to people making good decisions for the environment and our planet, at home and through their work.



We influence decision makers so that more people can access and engage with green spaces where they live, work and play.



We engage and inspire people with the environment, empowering us all to make change happen.

We care for and improve the spaces we manage to demonstrate their role in addressing the climate, ecosystems and health crises facing our world

Connecting communities for change: Our strategy 2022-2027

We are facing a triple threat of biodiversity loss, climate change, and health & wellbeing. Humans have caused these crises, and it's our collective responsibility to take action, now.

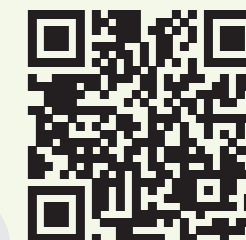
With the world in crisis, we recognise that we need to be louder and bolder in sharing our experience of balancing the needs of nature with the needs of people. To engage more people – in more ways – with the natural world. And, to do more than ever to ensure we are making a difference where it counts, prioritising our efforts on the big challenges we face, both nationally and regionally.

Earth Trust are rapidly growing a diverse community of individuals and partners, to achieve the following strategic goals:

- Managing a wide range and scale of green spaces
- Ensuring everyone has access
- Making our voice heard
- Engaging more people – in more ways – with nature
- Modelling financially sustainable land management
- On our way to net zero



See Earth Trust strategy for more.



Earth Trust is a values-led organisation, committed to putting people at the heart of connection to nature, and learning together to make change happen.



Strategy

Key achievements and impact: April 2022 to March 2023

During this year we focused on creating real world change by developing projects and partnerships to enable us to:

- Demonstrate best practice in nature-based solutions for climate, biodiversity, health and wellbeing.
- Build a connected, engaged community of support and action committed to championing accessible natural green spaces
- Establish a thriving, commercially-active, joined-up Centre for Earth Trust and its Farm

In order to deliver our strategy, we are transforming the way we work. Alongside significant achievements in delivering impactful work we have also been working this year to grow a healthy, engaged team who live the values of Earth Trust, and enable an efficient, effective, smooth-running organisation. We continue to diversify our income to deliver financial sustainability.





Environment Agency fish survey found **9 species** thriving with healthy numbers of fry at our new wetland

530m of hedgerow traditionally laid

280 new trees planted to supplement natural regeneration that's supported by the management processes in our woodlands

40+ farmland bird species, including 21 identified as being of conservation concern, were observed at Earth Trust

Carbon audit revealed farm operations are carbon negative at **-968.02 tonnes** per year



Wallingford Castle Meadows received **Green Flag award** for 15th consecutive year and the Green Heritage Site accreditation for 9th year in a row

1,429 tonnes of carbon captured by our woodlands



Demonstrate

We have continued to pioneer and demonstrate the impact of nature based solutions with new learning and research partnerships.

Showcasing the role of wetlands in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss.

Last year, we completed construction of the largest wetland habitat restoration project on the River Thames – known as River of Life II. Our ongoing monitoring work continues to generate new learning about the impact of wetland restoration, including new evidence generated on carbon capture potential of wetland habitat restoration with Bangor University. The Environment Agency's first fish survey at River of Life II indicates that the 46,000m2 of wetland areas we have created are providing a perfect breeding ground for supporting wildlife and enhancing biodiversity.

Recognition for UK's first biodiversity offsetting agreement

Earth Trust signed the UK's first formal biodiversity offsetting agreement with Taylor Wimpey in 2013, demonstrating how new partnerships can enable growth in business and improve the natural environment. The contribution and significance of Bushey Bank was recognised this year by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) 2022 Award for 'Best Practice – Small Scale Mitigation'.

Delivering Britain's first ever Tested Oak Seed Orchard

To achieve the UK target to increase tree and woodland cover to 16.5% of total land area by 2050, tree planting rates in England need to treble by 2025. We are working with Future Trees Trust to develop a dedicated orchard and source of valuable genetic resources for oak tree planting across the UK – the first of its kind in the UK.



Engage

We have been connecting more – and more diverse – people to nature.

Reducing barriers to green space access

The Growing Places project with Aspire Oxfordshire aims to give some of the most disadvantaged people in our communities a greater connection to their local landscape. This year, we piloted activities with the needs and interests of those who are facing homelessness and disadvantage at their heart.

Inspiring our future green leaders

Our education programme has been refreshed this year – ensuring that we offer the opportunity for young people to take their classroom-based learning and come to understand its importance in a real world setting. We have seen record breaking demand for immersive outdoor learning experiences from schools, with 3,472 pupils visiting from 85 schools.

Providing opportunities for action

Our volunteers carry out much of our vital work to champion accessible natural green spaces – our work wouldn't be possible without them. But volunteering also gives people an opportunity to engage with nature in a way that fosters social connection and wellbeing. This year, we have seen the highest ever recorded number of volunteering hours, with 187 people gifting us 15,797 hours of their time - a value of over £181,000.



24/7 public access resulted in **200K visits** across our 6 green spaces



240 trees planted on behalf of new UK citizens who settled in Oxfordshire in 2022 for Queens Green Canopy project



187 volunteers gifted us a combined total of **15,797 hours** of their time

3,472 school children participated in education visits

85 schools participated in our education sessions

26 public events, attended by **6,200+** participants

51% of our active volunteers are women



93 new volunteers were welcomed into our programme



Influence

We are supporting and encouraging our community to help make more change happen in pursuit of a world where nature and people can thrive together.

Making our voice heard

Building on our long history and experience of working to influence local policy and practice, we are now connecting local action to national change by joining forces with RSPB, National Trust, Eden project and others through environmental coalitions such as Wildlife & Countryside Link, South East Nature Partnership & EcoAttractions. Our Building Nature In event brought together a unique audience of 100+ representatives from planning, construction, social enterprise and environmental groups to enable cross-sector collaboration to develop an approach that puts people and nature at the heart of future developments.

Standing up for nature

Collaborating with environmental coalitions, we lend our voice to national advocacy, fusing local action with broader change. We have actively empowered our community to drive change through campaigns such as Nature for Everyone, NetZero, Climate Coalition, People's plan for nature.

Facing the future of farming together

The path to sustainable farming is paved through our partnership with the local farming community, fostering regenerative practices and sharing insights for a brighter future. With funding from the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, Earth Trust is working with the North Wessex Downs AONB to create a local culture of sharing and learning for farmers and landowners. Paving the way for a farm innovation cluster, we convened a series of Regenerative Agriculture workshops, supporting farmers with the practicalities of shifting towards economically sustainable regenerative practices. We are also demonstrating, and loaning out new equipment for, best practice management of wildflower meadows and grasslands.

PR reach extending beyond **300k** with 40+ opportunities to see/hear Earth Trust content in national & regional media

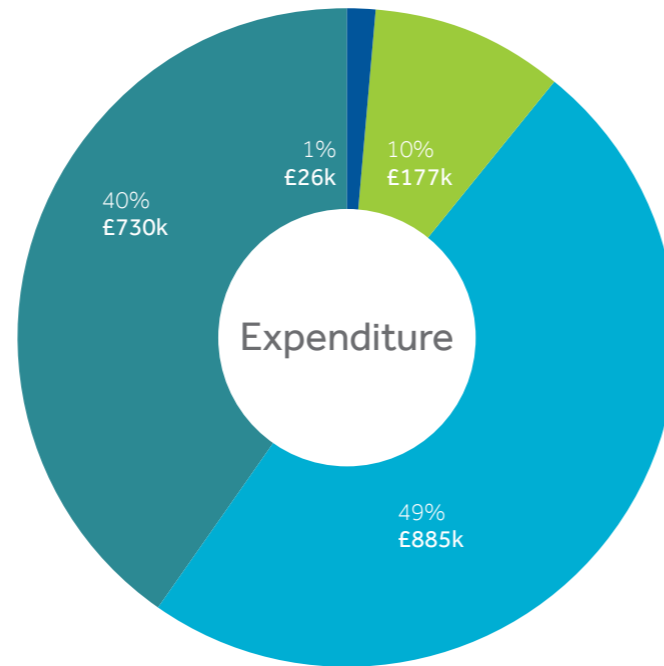
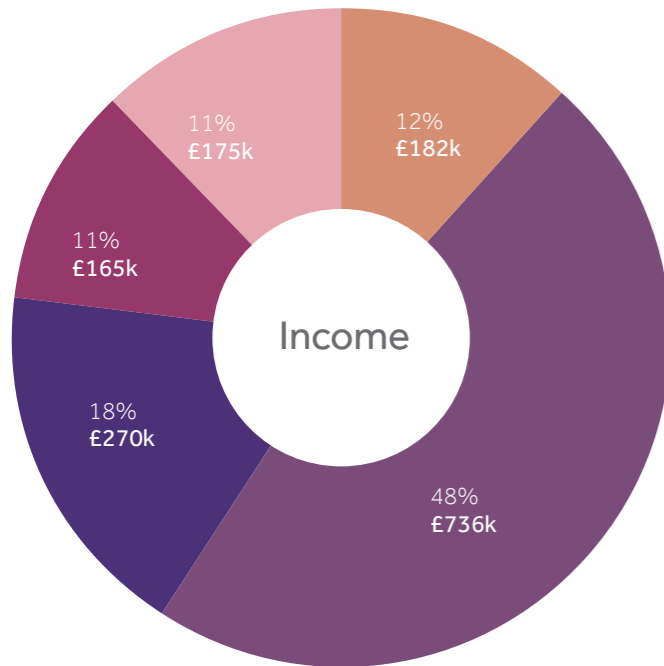


Advocating for nature & people at regional and national environmental networks, conferences & events

Social media reach of **460,000 users** (16% year on year growth) and 2x year on year growth in engagement

12 new partnerships with organisations actively supporting our work

Income and expenditure



- Grants and trusts **£182k**
- Donations **£736k**
- Farm income **£270k**
- Learning and engagement **£165k**
- Enterprise activities **£175k**
- Total £1.5m**

- £177k** Programmes for adults and children
- £885k** Programmes for landscape and wildlife
- £730k** Building communities for change
- £26k** Governance and administration
- Total £1.8m**



Financial summary

Total income to 31 March 2023 was £1.5 million (£3.1 million in 2021/22). Total expenditure for the same period was £ 1.8 million (£2.8 million in 2021/22).

Financial Year 2023 was a year of rebuilding our public-facing activities, including hire of our commercial and event spaces and reinvigorating our public programme of events and activities, whilst also looking to further develop Earth Trust centre in order to grow our capacity to welcome visitors in the future. Total unrestricted income was £1.5 million compared to £628k in 2021/22.

The progress achieved this year means we continue to move towards our goal of financial sustainability. The Trust's unrestricted general funds for the year to 31 March 2023 were in surplus by £104k (compared with a deficit of £341k in 2021/22).



Looking to the future - Our aims for 2023–24

From ensuring that the amazing green spaces in our care are supporting landscape-scale nature recovery, to reducing barriers to access for under-served communities - we continue to work tirelessly to enable nature and people to thrive in balance, while using this work to inspire change at a national level too.

Our supporters have a vital role to play as we look to inspire more people with the power of natural green spaces. We will be launching a new cause-led membership scheme to attract more people to our shared cause –to make our voice heard and to ensure our sustainability into the future. And will be working in partnership with more businesses – including launching a new corporate membership scheme – to help create positive social and environmental impact and boost your employee wellbeing and engagement.

In 2020, we embarked on an ambitious project to develop the Earth Trust Centre to welcome a larger number visitors and provide a gateway of discovery to the natural green spaces and heritage at Earth Trust. Over the next 12 months, we will continue our work on this, improving our infrastructure (car park, access track, toilets) and identifying partners for the next phase of this exciting development project to transform how we are engaging people with the natural world.

Demonstrate: Sharing the power of nature

Developing a new long term green infrastructure and nature recovery framework for the spaces in our care, to guide and support the delivery of a farm transformation plan, landscape-scale nature recovery, and the protection of sensitive, designated features while continuing to improve public accessibility and engagement with our green spaces.

Continuing to evolve our farm operations to reflect regenerative agriculture principles, introducing a series of try outs as part of our own journey to better soil health, and provide learning and engagement opportunities to other farmers, landowners and the visiting public on how farming with the environment can be economically viable while also addressing climate, biodiversity and health.

Engage: bringing people closer to their environment

Realising our vision for exemplar visitor experience centre, by undertaking a series of improvement projects which respond to audience needs and remove barriers to visiting our green spaces. We will continue to expand our Growing Places project, working with partners to engage diverse underserved communities and audiences with the natural world.

Continuing to evolve our education offer of immersive real world learning experiences which foster relationships between young people and the natural world. We will be reaching out to new audiences – including the launch of a 3 year project with Reading schools to inspire Future Green Leaders and engaging teachers in the power of narrative led, real world learning for STEM.

Influence: supporting change at a local and national level

Launching a new Catalysing Nature Recovery for People and Nature project, to establish a multi sector knowledge network (a 'network of networks') that will advance practical approaches for delivering nature recovery while building nature into people's lives.



Huge thanks to our volunteers. We simply would not be able to look after and champion our green spaces without their dedicated support.

Jayne Manley, Chief Executive Officer




Trustees

Ian Davidson, Chair
Julian Sayers, Vice Chair (*End of term of office – February 2023*)
Sarah Bar-Lev (*joined April 2023*)
Liz Buckle, Safety Committee chair (*From March 2023*)
Stephen Dance
Jemma Davey (*left June 2023*)
Clare Fairbrother (*joined April 2023*)
John Harwood
Terry Hurley (*joined April 2023*)
Chris Philips, Safety Committee chair (*End of term of office – February 2023*)
Nusrat Shah, Finance & Risk Committee chair (*left April 2023*)
Robin Tucker

Senior Leadership Team

Jayne Manley, Chief Executive Officer
Simon Atkinson, Director of Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery (*joined July 2023*)
Stephen Huggett, Director of Finance
Ian Nutt, Director of Programmes & Partnerships (*until February 2023*)
Dave Lewis, Director of Operations
Lee Ann Norris, Head of Fundraising
Paul Hill, Head of Environmental Land Management
Verity Warne, Head of Communications
Anna Wilson, Head of Experience & Engagement
Colin Shone, Centre Operations Manager
Sharon Ward, HR Manager (*until February 2023*)
Marianne Meering, Finance Manager



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Charity Number 1095057



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