

Lavell's Wetland Trust

Charity Number: 1176960

LWT c/o Dinton Pastures Country Park, Davis Street, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0TH

Trustees Annual Report for the period 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

Lavell's Wetland Trust's (LWT) aims and objectives are to enhance, protect and preserve the natural habitats, fauna and flora in the Loddon Valley for the benefit of the public and to advance public education and interest in the conservation of the countryside and wildlife

Type of governing document

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) association model constitution filed with the Charity Commission.

How the charity is constituted

CIO consisting of approximately 480 members.

Trustees and Committee Members for the period covered by this report

Chair:	Jane Campbell
Secretary:	Angela Gunn
Treasurer:	Phil Kinch
Membership Secretary:	Les Blundell
Chief Visionary Officer:	Fraser Cottington
Additional Trustees:	Renton Righelato (retired in June 2022), Ron Bryant
Committee Members:	Peter Scudamore, Bob Bennett (retired in June 2022)

Trustee selection methods

Volunteer trustees with appropriate skills are sought from the membership and nominated by the management committee or by individual members

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects

We undertake volunteer work parties attended by members of the CIO, members of the public, and those in programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. These take place at least monthly in order to maintain and improve the Lea Farm Lake reserve and the conservation areas within Dinton Pastures Country Park.

Further "one-off" work parties are arranged for local schools, scout groups, corporate bodies and others to encourage a wider understanding of nature and introduce more people to conservation and a healthy lifestyle.

We undertake monthly guided walks, open to the public, to identify the birdlife and other fauna that can be seen at Lavell's Lake local nature reserve, Dinton Pastures Country Park, and Lea Farm.

We provide a website to inform the public about Lavell's Lake & Lea Farm Lake, its wildlife and facilities and our work and events. This includes a history of bird recordings at the site that is publicly available for conservation, research or other purposes. The website includes photographs and sightings of other wildlife: flora, butterflies & moths, dragonflies & damselflies, and mammals.

We undertake larger improvement projects either using the funds of the charity, external resources, or a combination of the two.

We wish to recognise the great contribution that members of the CIO, members of the public and members of other organisations make through their efforts during the year. We could not achieve our objectives without their financial and practical support. The help and support of Dinton Pastures Countryside Service (DPCS) is invaluable.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Lea Farm Lake and Lavell's Lake

This year we built a new viewing screen with funding received through the Waitrose Give a Little Love campaign. We also needed to erect a new gate, lay a path to the screen, and plant shrubs to prevent footpath users from disturbing the birds. The gate and path will be the access route to the new Hide which we plan to build in 2023.

The improvement to the habitat of both the Lea Farm Lake and Lavell's Lake Nature Reserve sites has been delayed due to flooding earlier in the year. This project was possible thanks to a grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE), with funding provided by Network Rail. The funding has enabled us to train one of our volunteers to use a chainsaw and LWT has bought a chainsaw, first aid kits and other safety equipment. The following tasks are outstanding; coppicing willow to improve the habitat for Loddon Lily at Lavell's Lake (due to be completed in March 2024) and transplanting Phragmites for the new reed bed at Lea Farm Lake.

A donation from one of our members has enabled us to buy a storage container which is housed at Lea Farm Lake. This will be used to store equipment and tools used by work party volunteers.

Volunteer work parties

We held 11 regular weekend work parties with 9 to 24 people attending; the average attendance was 16. We were also able to continue with the additional week-day work parties, 18 in total. These were attended by 6 to 19 people with an average attendance of 9. The week-day team completed the major task of building the new Waitrose viewing screen, an access gate and the footpath to the screen as well as cutting trees to create a habitat for Nightingales on the large island at Lavell's Lake. Other tasks included transplanting reeds to the excavated reedbed site and planting shrubs to provide screening for the footpaths and pollarded willows.

Publicity and engagement with the public

We offer membership of various WhatsApp groups related to bird sightings and other wildlife chat. We have been able to maintain interest in the Trust through news items on our website and social media as well as a talks with the headmasters of local secondary schools.

We have received enquiries about possible corporate volunteer days and a group of Network Rail Volunteers joined us on one of our mid-week work parties. We were able to hold a Dawn Chorus walk this year as well as the 12 monthly bird walks.

The GoFundMe fundraising campaign for a new hide at Lea Farm Lake is ongoing and planning is in progress.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity maintains a reserve of £9,000 for emergency work and unforeseen events. Taking on Lea Farm Lake has meant a significant increase in the assets LWT has to maintain and replace. The trustees have therefore decided to build up an asset management fund by setting aside funds each year, starting with £1,000 in 2021 and adding a further £1.500 in 2022. This fund will be used to cover the costs of planned replacements and repairs to our major assets.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above. Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature:

J Campbell

Name:

JANE CAMPBELL

Position:

CHAIR

Date:

21/8/2023