

Countdown 2010

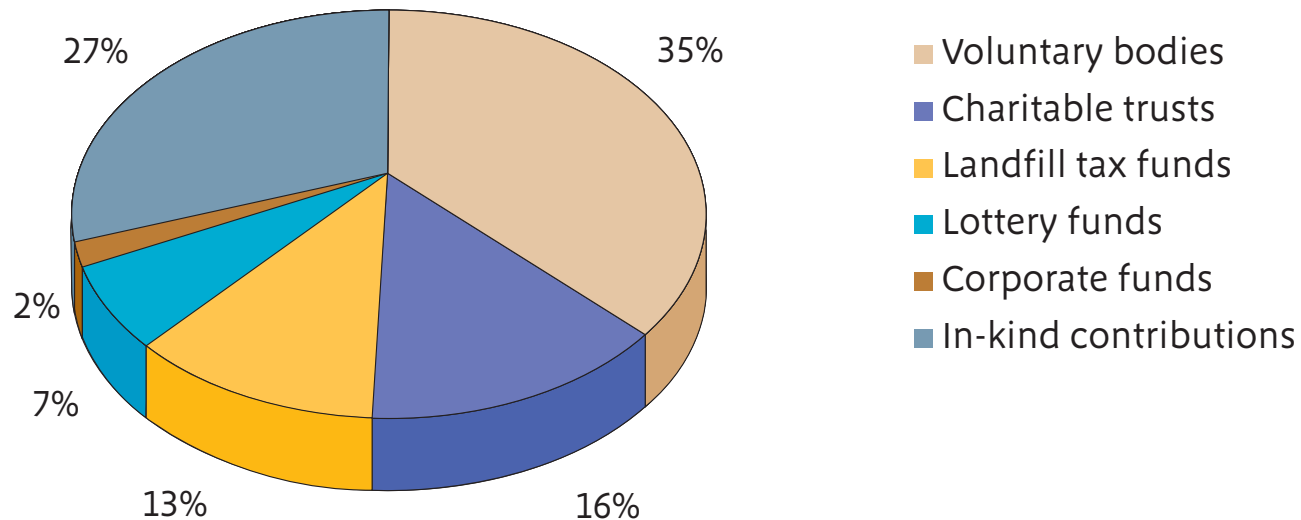
NATURAL
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Natural England's Biodiversity Action Fund
www.naturalengland.org.uk

2006 to 2008 – Our achievements

The 34 projects that were funded by the Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Action Fund in 2006 have now come to an end. This edition of the newsletter highlights the achievements of these projects and includes a collection of articles submitted by some of the organisations that we funded. Natural England paid out just over £3.8 million and this was matched by the projects with over £4.2 million from a variety of other sources.

Sources of matched funding



All of the projects were exceedingly successful and here is a snapshot of what has been achieved across the country.

- **1029** displaying male black grouse spread over **43** occupied 10km grid squares in northern England.
- **30 miles** of riparian habitat cleared of invasive plant species in the River Tweed catchment.
- *Bombus humilis*, a brown carder bumblebee, has doubled its range in the Thames gateway being recorded on **12** brownfield sites.
- Over **140,000** volunteer days have been given to the Countdown 2010 projects by a wide variety of groups and individuals.
- Engagement with over **240** schools in environmental education activities, including marine roadshows and eco-gardening clubs.
- **370 ha** of heathland restoration and expansion.
- **180 ha** of woodland restoration in the Yorkshire Dales.
- **85 ha** of calcareous grassland, **125 ha** of acid grassland and **240 ha** of neutral grassland improved or restored.
- **39 ha** of lowland raised bog restored in Lancashire.
- **18** ponds and **16** orchards restored or created, as well as **14,000** potential traditional orchards mapped.

Working towards a landscape-scale approach

Rebuilding biodiversity in Oxfordshire

The Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum (ONCF) has been working on 16 Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) identified across the county by using mapped distribution data of priority habitats. C2010 funding has allowed officers to work more closely with communities in several of these areas, bring biodiversity issues into mainstream thinking for parish councils. Work has also been underway to bring 5 important hay meadows into appropriate management using HLS in one of the target areas. While in another CTA a vision map has been produced highlighting the farms where habitat restoration or recreation would achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity.



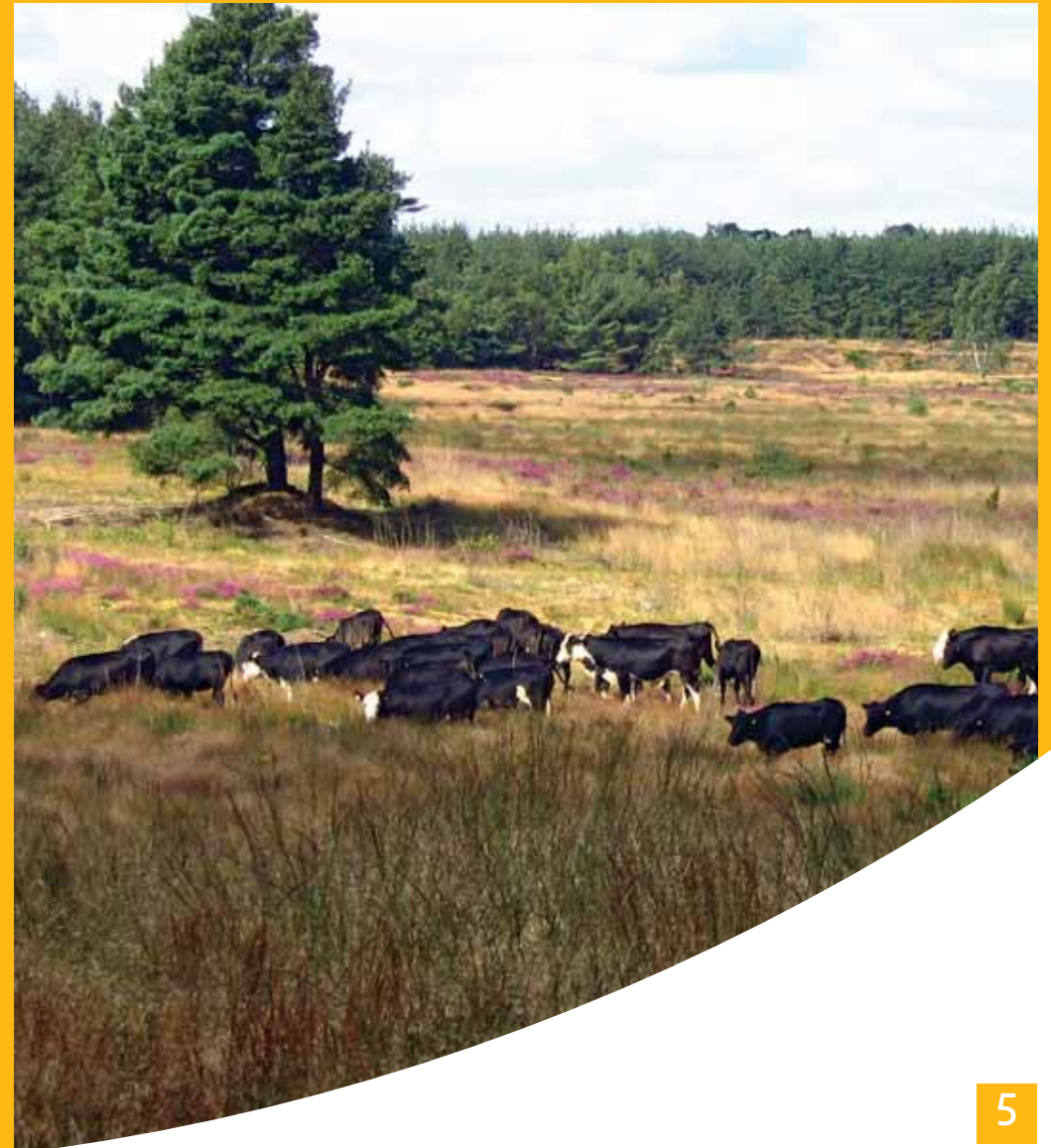
Oxeymead

© Jim Asher/BBOWT

Working towards a landscape-scale approach

Grazing for biodiversity in Hampshire

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's 'Grazing for Wildlife Project' has worked with the Ministry of Defence to successfully reinstate conservation grazing to large areas of heathland in north and east Hampshire. The wildlife on these army training areas, covering 400 hectares in total, will benefit greatly from grazing management that hasn't been seen here for over a hundred years. The Project team is working with local farmers, who are providing the special breeds of livestock required, and local people, who have volunteered to keep an eye on the cattle and help with practical work.



Working towards a landscape-scale approach

Wildlife corridors in the Lincs limewoods

One of the main achievements of this project, run by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, has been the production of a 'habitat re-creation opportunities and constraints map' using a variety of data collected from habitat and species surveys. The map shows areas where certain types of habitat creation should be targeted in three broad zones, namely woodland, farmland and wetland, and is supported by a report including management prescriptions for each zone. The aim of the map and report is to provide maximum benefits for biodiversity by linking and expanding remaining ancient woodlands, and creating other important habitats such as species rich grassland and hedgerows.



Lincolnshire Limewoods

© Liz Fleuty/Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

Habitat restoration and expansion

© Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust



Restoring heathland in the Charnwood forest

This project run by the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust focussed its work on lowland heathland at two important sites, Charnwood Lodge National Nature Reserve and Ulverscroft nature reserve. Over a two year period project staff, supported by over 350 volunteers, carried out 14 hectares of bracken control, 9 hectares of scrub clearance and 4.75 hectares of bramble and gorse control to encourage the spread of heathland flora and fauna. In addition to this valuable practical work, sensitive conservation grazing was extended in the area through the purchase of 20 hardy Longhorn cattle. All of this work has led to the restoration of 90 ha of lowland heathland.

Volunteers
gorse clearing

Habitat restoration and expansion

Mossland restoration programme

The Lancashire Wildlife Trust have restored nearly 40 ha of lowland raised bog using funding for a restoration project across 5 sites in Lancashire. It has enabled a rescue programme to be put in place to restore the original wet conditions that support lowland raised mire habitats. The restoration works have provided startling results in terms of raising water levels and achieving the re-wetting of large sections of what was originally dry and degrading mire habitat. A total of 13.5 ha of invading scrub/young woodland has been cleared off the mossland habitats, resulting in a more open mossland landscape and reducing the effects of evapotranspiration and drying out of the peat.



Creation of open water areas

Habitat restoration and expansion

Hay meadow and woodland restoration in the Yorkshire Dales

The Hay Time project was set up to restore and enhance species-rich meadows in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the North Pennines AONB. Project Officers in each of the areas, surveyed potential seed donor and receptor sites. Seed is harvested from donor sites and added to receptor sites where it stands the best chance of increasing the botanical diversity. To date, harvested seed has been added to over 115 ha of priority meadows. While in the Yorkshire Dales and Nidderdale AONB, more than 160ha of new native woodland has been created. This will help protect, expand and link smaller sites as well as to improve local wildlife habitats, encourage community involvement and provide other benefits such as carbon sequestration, reducing riverbank erosion and flood prevention downstream in towns and cities. Both of these projects were run by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.



Green hay spreading

© Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust



Tree planting

© Yorkshire Dales
Millennium Trust

Integrating habitats and species

Conserving butterflies and moths at a landscape level

One of the aims of this project run by Butterfly Conservation has been to work in collaboration with other organisations to improve management on sites supporting nationally important species of butterflies and moths. By the end of last year, advice had been delivered on around 200 sites across the Midlands and the East of England, with about 60 of these already showing signs of improvement. Good progress has been made with companies who have control of brownfield land, including Network Rail and St Modwen, who are starting to implement habitat improvements on their land. Over 30 projects have delivered targeted surveys and monitoring including surveying for the small pearl-bordered fritillary at Cannock Chase.



© Natural England

Cannock Chase



© Natural England

Small pearl-bordered fritillary

Integrating habitats and species

All of a Buzz in the Thames Gateway

This project run by Buglife has mapped and assessed the biodiversity of almost 7,000 hectares of brownfield land in the Thames gateway. The information has been made available to planning authorities and other stakeholders, so that new development doesn't impact upon the region's nationally important invertebrate populations. The Thames Gateway supports at least 16 priority species, and the project has discovered new sites for species such as the Brown-banded carder bee and the Distunguished jumping spider. All of a Buzz has also raised awareness of the threats facing brownfield biodiversity through public engagement, as well as working with schools and targeted media campaigns.



© Peter Harvey/Buglife

Brownfield site, Canvey



© Sam Ashfield/Buglife

Brown-banded carder bee

Integrating habitats and species

Dead wood beetles and traditional orchards

The Peoples Trust for Endangered Species has been mapping traditional orchards, a habitat associated with the rare noble chafer beetle, across nine counties. Existing information about this habitat was out-dated so this project has produced a fantastic digital map of over 13,000 orchards so that the extent, distribution and condition of the habitat could be assessed. With the help of 200 dedicated volunteers across the country nearly 4,500 of these sites have been surveyed. A noble chafer population has been found in Kent where it had been un-recorded for over 60 years. The map has been used to target orchards owners for Environmental Stewardship schemes and to discuss ideas of how to find new markets for orchard produce.



Volunteer orchard surveying

© PTES



Noble chafer

© Natural England

Engaging people

The Cool Seas Roadshow

The Cool Seas Roadshow run by the Marine Conservation Society toured over 150 schools around England with a range of life-size, inflatable marine mammals, sharks and turtles. The Roadshow introduced the wonder of UK marine biodiversity to well over 40,000 primary school pupils, and distributed over 55,000 activity booklets to participating pupils and to young audiences at outdoor events and festivals up and down the country. These resources were developed as web pages, including curriculum-linked exercises for teachers, to leave a lasting educational legacy in England's primary school classrooms. This project also supported the development of the Marine Local BAP Guidance Manual for England.



Cool Seas Roadshow event

© MCS

Engaging people

© Groundwork



Wild About Nature

The Wild about Nature project was initiated to manage and improve green spaces in the Amber Valley. Groundwork organised various events at these sites, including dragonfly walks, moth nights, local history walks, Christmas wreath making, Dawn Chorus walks, hedge-laying, coppicing and charcoal making. Over 400 children and young people have also been involved through environmental education activities in school time or through extra-curricular activities. The funding has also enabled a number of site leaflets and information boards to be developed in conjunction with the Friends groups from those sites. In all over 700 people have been involved in the project in some way, either working on sites or attending events held on them.

Autumn at Duffield
Meadows LNR

Engaging people

Wychwood ancient habitats

The Wychwood ancient habitat's project gathered new information on the extent and location of habitats such as species rich hedgerows, ancient woodlands, and wood pasture that characterised the former royal forest of Wychwood in Oxfordshire. The project was initiated by the friends of Wychwood and supported a diverse programme of practical activity, education and voluntary work. A hedgelaying group was established which laid over 500m of hedgerow and over 60 new trees were planted as successors to existing veteran trees. Restoration coppicing was undertaken by volunteers in four ancient woodlands and 8 workshops focused around developing skills in traditional woodland crafts were provided for volunteers, landowners and local contractors.



1,000 year old oak

© Nick Mottram

New £5.5 million scheme launched

Countdown 2010 was re-launched on 22 May 2008 with £5.5 million to spend over the next three financial years until March 2011. The new scheme will be supporting projects that benefit priority habitat and species in England using a range of approaches from landscape scale delivery through to targeted species recovery. The awards were announced on 6 October 2008, with 38 projects offered funding for a variety of species and habitats including several of the new additions to the revised BAP lists (for further details see Natural England's website).

List of funded projects, 2008 to 2011

1.	Cumbria Wildlife Trust	£97,700	19.	The Greensand Trust	£144,200
2.	BCNP Wildlife Trust	£95,500	20.	Isles of Scilly WT	£107,500
3.	Cornwall Wildlife Trust	£129,000	21.	Kent Wildlife Trust	£344,000
4.	National Trust	£268,000	22.	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	£136,600
5.	Butterfly Conservation	£138,500	23.	HCT	£93,000
6.	Devon Wildlife Trust	£340,000	24.	Norfolk Wildlife Trust	£108,200
7.	RSPB	£208,000	25.	Tees Valley WT	£102,400
8.	RSPB	£136,700	26.	Lincs Wildlife Trust	£115,400
9.	RSPB	£153,900	27.	Groundwork Derby	£76,800
10.	RSPB	£246,200	28.	Avon Wildlife Trust	£113,100
11.	PTES	£180,200	29.	FWAG	£64,800
12.	Vincent Wildlife Trust	£60,000	30.	Wild Trout Trust	£82,500
13.	The Shark Trust	£144,500	31.	Hampshire and IOW WT	£35,000
14.	Sheffield Wildlife Trust	£261,000	32.	Kent Wildlife Trust	£80,000
15.	Suffolk Wildlife Trust	£129,500	33.	Salmon and Trout Ass.	£107,000
16.	YDMT	£204,600	34.	Plantlife	£76,000
17.	Woodland Trust	£81,000	35.	Plantlife	£97,700
18.	FWAG	£77,500	36.	Froglife	£89,000
			37.	Eden Rivers Trust	£400,000
			38.	Bristol Zoo	£105,300



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