Playing our part

It’s just over a year since we launched Playing our part, our 10-year strategy for the National Trust.

Our vision for what the nation needs from the National Trust in the 21st century has been well received, and we’ve been working hard across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to translate our strategy into the day-to-day business of the Trust. You’ll find in this review some wonderful examples of what we have been doing in 2015/16. We have recreated a wartime merchant bank at Upton House, restored the roof at Dyrham Park and acquired species-rich coastland at Great Orme to promote a healthier, more beautiful natural environment on the North Wales coast.

2015 was not without its challenges, starting with the devastating fire at Clandon Park and ending with heavy flooding in the Lake District and other areas. Our teams responded brilliantly and the salvage operation at Clandon continues. Two centuries’ worth of survivors from the fire, including Meissen pottery and the State Bed. In the Lake District, we made our places safe, supported our tenants to get back on their feet, and offered resources and support to the communities affected.

Everything we do is built upon the support of our members, donors, staff and volunteers. So, thank you for enabling the Trust to spend more than ever on conservation, open our places to more people for longer, and create experiences that taught, moved and inspired in 2015/16.

Dame Helen Ghosh, Director-General

Timothy Parker, Chairman

Our finances 2015/16

Our fundraising 2015/16

The year ahead

Contents

4 Playing our part
6 Looking after what we’ve got
8 A healthier, more beautiful natural environment
10 Helping to look after the places where people live
12 Our finances 2015/16
14 Our fundraising 2015/16
15 The year ahead

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In this, our first impact review, you will find some great examples of what we have been up to in 2015/16.

Playing our part, the National Trust’s 10-year strategy, was launched in March 2015, and staff and volunteers have been working hard to meet our ambitions. Focusing on the performance of our strategy, we highlight some of the best examples of where the Trust has made an impact this year.

Look after what we have by:
• reducing our conservation backlog and funding our annual conservation needs; and
• reducing energy use by 20% and sourcing 50% of energy from renewables.

Play our part in restoring a healthy natural environment by:
• improving our habitats, soils and water to a good condition for nature on our estates;
• working with others to conserve and renew the nation’s most important landscapes;
• developing and sharing new economic models for land use that supports nature; and
• championing the importance of nature in our lives today.

Offer experiences of our places that move, teach and inspire by:
• raising the standard of presentation and interpretation at all the places we look after;
• making our outdoors experience better for all ages and needs; and
• exploring and revealing our cultural heritage through events and exhibitions.

Help look after the places where people live by:
• finding new solutions for managing local green space;
• celebrating local heritage and equipping communities to care for it; and
• engaging in shaping good housing and infrastructure development.

Over the next 10 years we’ve committed to:

Photograph ©National Trust/Paul Harris

Photograph ©National Trust/Amhel de Serra
Looking after what we’ve got

In addition to our day-to-day conservation work, we’ve continued to invest in major, exciting conservation projects, providing greater access and enjoyment for our visitors.

Wimpole Folly Restoration Project

The successful preservation of a designed ruin, restored and once again accessible to the public.

Closed-off in recent years due to the poor condition of its stone walls, the 18th-century Gothic Folly at Wimpole Hall in Cambridgeshire is once again accessible to the public. Designed and built to appear as a ruin, the Folly is a striking focal point in the landscaped park originally designed by Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown. The repair involved stabilisation of the stonework and reinstatement of lost elements of the structure, while at the same time maintaining the original ‘ruined’ appearance of the tower. The restoration project, funded by the National Trust and Natural England, was awarded the Europa Nostra Award in Conservation this year - Europe’s highest award in the heritage field.

Wendy Monkhouse, National Trust Curator in the East of England

We’re delighted to have been recognised by the European Commission and Europa Nostra for the restoration of the Gothic Tower – it’s the most prestigious cultural heritage award in Europe, and it means a lot to us. Now, with its reinstated crenellations triumphant on the main tower, it sits once more at the focal point of the specially designed idyllic landscape by ‘Capability’ Brown, whose tercentenary we celebrate in 2016.

Wendy Monkhouse, National Trust Curator in the East of England

Fan Bay Deep Shelter

A labyrinth of tunnels built on the order of Winston Churchill beneath the White Cliffs of Dover reopened to the public.

Located 23 metres underground, Fan Bay Deep Shelter was constructed in the 1940s as part of Dover’s defensive gun batteries, designed to prevent German ships moving freely in the English Channel. It accommodated and catered for four officers and up to 185 men of other ranks during counter bombardments. The shelter was decommissioned in the 1950s and later filled in and largely forgotten. In 2012 the National Trust bought the land with dedicated funds raised for the Neptune Coastline Campaign. The remarkably well-preserved tunnels were discovered during enabling works. Over the course of two years, more than 50 volunteers from all over the country gave 300 hours of their time to help this project which involved the excavation by hand of over a hundred tonnes of soil and rubble. Amongst the dedicated and hard-working team were researchers, builders, geologists, metalwork engineers, carpenters, concrete specialists and electricians to name just a few. Specialist volunteer guides now lead torch-lit tours 125 steps and 23 metres below ground into the heart of the White Cliffs.

This project would not have been possible without our volunteers and supporters.

Gordon Wise, White Cliffs volunteer

Other projects

- Fix the Fells, Lake District
- Brancaster Activity Centre, Norfolk

More than 50 hours

In addition to our day-to-day conservation work, we’ve continued to invest in major, exciting conservation projects, providing greater access and enjoyment for our visitors.
A healthier, more beautiful natural environment

We’ve undertaken a major assessment of the condition of our land. This will inform our future approach to its management and restoration as part of our wider ambition of managing land for nature.

Kinder Catchment Project

A £2.5 million project to restore Kinder Scout – the site of the 1932 mass trespass that contributed to the creation of National Parks

In 2015 the Kinder Catchment Project, to transform Kinder Scout and improve our drinking water, was successfully completed. The National Trust-led project, in collaboration with partners United Utilities, Natural England and the Biffa Awards Scheme, set an aspirational challenge to restore the natural environment of Kinder Scout. The results exceeded expectations. The once black and lifeless landscape is now green and revegetated and well on the way to becoming a living blanket bog once again. As the moorland vegetation re-establishes itself, local wildlife will also benefit, including priority species such as skylark, dunlin and curlew. The work is a major contribution to the National Trust’s High Peak Moors Vision, a 50-year conservation project – the biggest and most ambitious of its kind – which aims to restore and enhance a historic part of the Peak District.

In 2015 we were pleased to announce the successful acquisition of Parc Farm near the summit of Pen y Gogarth – The Great Orme, Llandudno. The headland includes the 59-hectare (145-acre) farm as well as 291 hectares (720 acres) of limestone grassland and heath, rich in rare flora and fauna. This also marked the 50th anniversary of our Neptune Coastline Campaign, the National Trust’s longest-running appeal, raising funds to help us acquire and look after over 775 miles of coastline in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Launched in 1965, the campaign has raised over £70 million to date.

The headland is an internationally renowned botanical site, home to the critically endangered Wild Cotoneaster, Cotoneaster cambricus, native only in the British Isles. It is also the habitat of several endangered species of butterflies and moths, most notably the Silver-studded Blue (Plebejus argus subsp. caernensis) and the Grayling (Hipparchia semele thyone). Its limestone expanses are home to numerous nationally vulnerable plants and invertebrates, as well as rare birds such as the chough. Not only is the site of national importance for nature conservation, it is also a much loved asset to Llandudno. We are working closely with the community and key partners such as Plantlife, RSPB, Conwy County Borough Council, Mostyn Estates and Natural Resources Wales to ensure its best possible future.

The Living Wandle project involves ten partners, including four London boroughs, Natural England, the Environment Agency and community groups, plus a £2 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, to deliver green infrastructure benefits to London.

Warmth from the woods, Croft Castle, Herefordshire

A biomass boiler using woodchip from the estate has been installed to provide heating for the castle, shop and offices, reducing the property’s energy use costs by £8,000 and saving 19,500 litres of oil each year.

Great Orme, Llandudno

One of the top five most important botanical sites in Britain

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Experiences that move, teach and inspire

We want to improve the experiences people have at the places we look after. We are being bold and innovative to create inspiring experiences in our houses and countryside.

Other projects

Great British Walk 2015
In partnership with Cotswold Outdoor, the Great British Walk campaign offered more than 1,000 downloadable walks. People were able to pick up a free National Trust walking guide at Cotswold Outdoor stores.

Fountains' follies, Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal
Temple and follies of this World Heritage Site garden were dramatically reimagined from their original use. Visitors who sought out the Octagon Tower, Temple of Fame, Banqueting House and Temple of Piety were amazed by installations created by twenty-first-century artists in response to the opulent past of this unique place.

Banking for Victory
A country house at war – recreating the bank that beat the blitz

In 2015 the clock was turned back at Upton House as the historic mansion was recreated as a wartime bank. The Bearsteds relocated their family-owned merchant bank to Upton for the duration of the Second World War to avoid London air raids. The family moved out to the Dorchester Hotel and 22 bank staff moved in. Marking 70 years since the end of the war, staff and volunteers at Upton re-presented 12 rooms as they would have looked during the war. 80 volunteers undertook extensive historical research and thousands of original objects were sourced, including wartime toilet rolls, to create an authentic 1940s feel. Heritage vegetables were grown in the garden and an Anderson shelter helped provide visitors with a property-wide wartime experience.

‘The whole place was run like a holiday camp but a little more austere…The meals were taken in the Long Gallery which is full of magnificent paintings and the finest collection of Chelsea china.’

Barney Adler, a member of bank staff in the 1940s.

Dyrham Park Rooftop
A roof with a view – a £3.8 million conservation rooftop conservation project with a difference

The Dyrham Park Rooftop walkway was a great success in 2015, giving visitors a rare chance to see the house from above and making the most out of essential conservation work to the mansion’s roof. Visitors were able to make use of a fully accessible lift to reach the walkway, and could watch builders stripping 46 tonnes of lead and 8,000 slates from the roof. The scaffolding was 29 metres high and took almost four months to complete. The project cost £3.8 million and was part funded by generous public support, raising over £670,000. Dyrham’s ‘Sign a Slate’ campaign, where members of the public could write a message on one of the new roof slates, raised £40,833 towards the project.
Helping look after the places where people live

The places that matter most are often those closest to home. We’ve been testing new ways to celebrate the local heritage that connects people with the places close to them.

Heritage open days

Your once-a-year chance to explore heritage on your doorstep, unlocked and completely free of charge

In 2015 the National Trust took over the national coordination of Heritage Open Days (HODs), England’s biggest heritage festival. HODs offer people the chance to see hidden places and local heritage, often not open to the public, for free over four days each September. HODs celebrate what makes communities and neighbourhoods special while stimulating curiosity and engaging people with the places in which they live. In 2015, Heritage Open Days saw 4,855 sites and events opened free of charge, helped by almost 40,000 volunteers and 1,684 local organisers. This enabled 3.4 million people to access their local heritage, 2 million of whom had never been to the event before. We are most grateful for the support received from players of People’s Postcode Lottery for Heritage Open Days.

‘With a record participation and a programme full of new discoveries, 2015 was Heritage Open Days’ best year yet. Free, local and relevant – its simple success formula has proved particularly powerful at a time when people are feeling the pinch, are looking to connect with their local and cultural roots and, against a backdrop of increasing virtualisation, are seeking authentic in-the-flesh experiences.

Katja Condy, Heritage Open Days Manager

Roundhouse, Birmingham – Partnership management

A project to breathe new life into Birmingham’s historic Grade II* listed Roundhouse

With an initial £225,000 development grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) this project marks a new partnership between the Canal & River Trust and National Trust and will transform the Roundhouse into a city base from which to explore Birmingham’s revitalised canals on foot or by bike.

The Roundhouse is at the heart of the city’s canal network and was originally designed as stabling for horses as part of a competition won by the famed architect W.H. Ward. The horseshoe-shaped building became integral to the ‘city of 1,000 trades’. On the basis that the grant application to the HLF is successful, the grade II listed building which is owned by the Canal & River Trust, will be restored over the coming years in partnership with the National Trust.

Other projects

Moseley Road Baths, Birmingham

Working in partnership with the Friends of Moseley Road Baths and the Prince’s Regeneration Trust to save the Grade II* swimming baths and ensure the continuation of swimming, together with securing millions of pounds for the essential renovations.

Porter Valley, Sheffield

Working with Sheffield City Council to maximise the recreational and commercial opportunities for this link between an urban city centre and open countryside.

Impact Review 2015/16 | 13
Our finances 2015/16

Where our money comes from and how we spend it

Expenditure on property projects

Income

Expenditure

£40.2m
£32.4m
£28.1m
£39.0m
£3.8m
£12.6m
£6.2m
£2.7m
£0.9m
£1.5m
£0.3m

Coast and countryside
Historic buildings
Gardens
Coast and countryside
Historic buildings
Gardens

£120m
£80m
£40m
£20m
£10m

£2 million
visits to our outdoor places

775 miles
of coast in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, equating to over 10% of the UK’s coastline

400,000
new members

£107 million
spent on conservation projects

4.5 million members

£2 million
from Sport England for our cycling programme

14 Impact Review 2015/16 | 15

Among the more financially significant acquisitions in the year were those at: Dunsbury Farm (£2.7m), Bank House Farm (£2.3m) and the Great Orme (£1.6m).

Impact Review 2015/16

#socialmediafollowers

1,426,693

Over 61,000
volunteers

Over 22 million
pay-for-entry visits

775
miles

400,000
members

200
million
visits to our outdoor places
Our fundraising
2015/16

In 2015, the National Trust celebrated 50 years of the Neptune Coastline Campaign, our longest-running and most successful appeal ever.

Since its launch in 1965, the campaign has raised more than £70 million, 90 per cent of which has come from generous gifts in Wills. With this support we have been able to secure and care for 574 miles of precious beaches and shoreline across the UK, from the Giant’s Causeway to the Isle of Wight. This means that we now look after 775 miles of coastline around England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

With each mile of coast costing £3,000 a year to maintain, donations to the Coast campaign have been used to save some of the best-loved parts of the coast for ever, for everyone. They’ve ensured access by maintaining footpaths, protected and enhanced coastal habitats, and helped us respond to the effects of climate change.

The celebrations throughout 2015 allowed us to thank the many supporters who help us to keep our coast healthy, beautiful and accessible. And the generosity continued last year as we raised £4.8 million in much-needed support for our ongoing work to care for the coastline.

Highlight projects
The Coast campaign funded investment in a seal breeding programme at Blakeney Point in Norfolk which has seen births of pups rise to 2,426 last year – up from just 25 in 2001 – making it the largest seal colony in England.

Funding for the coast is supporting the restoration of the salt-marsh at Cwm Ivy, on the coast of North Gower in Wales, part of the UK’s first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has been a tremendous success, resulting in the return of salt-marsh species such as otter and osprey, as well as ten species of flowering plants, including orchids.

Gifts and donations we received this year
£38,979,000
Historic buildings
£16,400,000
Gardens
£3,826,000
Coast and countryside
£32,374,000
Charitable Trusts
£3,826,000
Gifts and donations we received this year
£11 million
Grants
£19.1 million
Appeals & Gifts
£51.6 million
Gifts in Wills
£51.6 million
Charitable Trusts
£11 million
Acquisition
£16,400,000
Historic buildings
£38,979,000
Gardens
£3,826,000
Coast and countryside
£32,374,000

Where your gifts and donations made a difference this year

Photograph ©National Trust/Justin Minns/Corrinne Manning/Joe Cornish

Impact Review 2015/16 | 17
The year ahead

In 2016/17 the National Trust will push ahead with all aspects of our strategy, playing our part, working to conserve and promote the nation’s built and natural heritage.

We will work with our partners to restore wildlife to our fields and hedgerows, while continuing to develop and lead on sustainable farming and energy-management practices. We will continue to invest in our properties, creating experiences that inspire our visitors, and pioneer new ways to engage local communities with the heritage around them. The restoration and re-development of Clandon Park, the Palladian mansion decimated by fire in April 2015, will continue. We will fundraise to restore the landscape and statuary at Stowe, monitor and recreate the stories of Quarry Bank, and replace the storm-damaged paths and walkways across the Lake District.

2016/17 is also a year of celebration. We will celebrate 300 years since the birth of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, the world-famous landscape gardener who transformed many of the parks and estates in the Trust’s care, as well as the 150th anniversary of the birth of Beatrix Potter, one of our most generous benefactors. During the year, 15 new renewable energy sources will go online, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and dramatically cutting our carbon emissions.

The support of our members, visitors and donors is, as ever, crucial to the Trust’s success and we thank them for all they do.

As ever, we are indebted to the generosity of our supporters and donors for enabling the Trust to continue to look after the places in our care — for ever, for everyone.
Thank you for your ongoing support of the National Trust as a charity and as a cause, and enabling us to continue to look after the places in our care – for ever, for everyone.

Visit nationaltrust.org.uk/join-and-get-involved to find out more

Thank you.

National Trust

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