

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Our Statement of Ambition

At **Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust**, we believe that nature is fundamental to life, wellbeing and resilience — and that it should be accessible to everyone. As part of the wider UK conservation movement, we recognise that protecting and restoring wildlife cannot be separated from the people and communities who impact, depend on and care for it.

Our Place and People

Leicestershire & Rutland stands out for its remarkable diversity across people, place and nature. At its heart, Leicester is one of the UK's most ethnically and culturally diverse cities, renowned for its vibrant South Asian heritage and nationally significant celebrations such as Diwali and the Caribbean Carnival, its thriving international and East Asian communities in Loughborough, while the wider county encompasses thriving market towns and deeply rural landscapes. From the ancient woodlands and rocky outcrops of Charnwood Forest to the internationally important wetlands of Rutland Water Nature Reserve, the area also boasts striking ecological variety. Few places combine such rich cultural vibrancy with expansive countryside and nationally important wildlife within such a compact geography, making Leicestershire & Rutland distinctive in both human and natural diversity.

Our Vision

Our ambition is to ensure that nature is recovering across Leicestershire and Rutland, and that all people feel connected to, represented in, and able to shape that recovery. We know that the ecological and climate crises demand collective action. To succeed, conservation must reflect and involve the full diversity of our communities.

Nature underpins clean air and water, food security, climate stability, physical health and mental wellbeing. Access to wildlife-rich spaces builds resilience — strengthening individuals, communities and ecosystems alike. When people feel connected to nature, they are more likely to value and protect it. When conservation reflects everyone, it becomes stronger, more innovative and more enduring.

Why Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Matter

To achieve our mission and deliver our strategy, we must embed diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) into everything we do.

- **Diversity** means recognising and valuing the full range of differences that make people who they are — including background, identity, lived experience, skills and perspectives. A diverse organisation better understands the communities it serves and makes better decisions for nature's recovery.
- **Equity** means recognising that not everyone starts from the same place. Systemic inequalities and structural barriers have limited access to nature, influence and opportunity for many communities. Equity requires us to identify and remove those barriers, redistribute opportunity where needed, and ensure fairness in outcomes — not just in intention.
- **Inclusion** means creating a culture where everyone feels welcomed, respected, valued and able to contribute fully. It is not enough to invite participation; people must experience genuine belonging and have their voices heard in shaping decisions.

Together, these principles strengthen representation, build trust, and enable the most effective conservation that reflects the communities of Leicestershire and Rutland.

Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Embedding DEI across our governance, leadership, workforce, volunteering, membership and partnerships.
- Ensuring our decision-making reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.
- Identifying and removing barriers to engagement — whether physical, financial, cultural or systemic.
- Improving equitable access to wildlife-rich places across our sites and in local neighbourhoods.
- Listening with humility, learning continuously, and acting with accountability and transparency.
- Working collaboratively across sectors to address inequalities that affect both people and nature.

Within our organisation, we will foster a culture where difference is welcomed and where diverse experiences strengthen our work. We recognise that varied perspectives deepen our understanding, increase creativity and innovation, and ultimately improve outcomes for wildlife.

Our Strategy and Mission

Our strategy commits us to restoring nature, tackling the climate emergency, and inspiring people to value and take action for wildlife. These ambitions cannot be achieved without broad and inclusive participation. If conservation only reaches a narrow segment of society, it will lack the scale, legitimacy and resilience required for lasting impact.

By embracing diversity, equity and inclusion, we strengthen our ability to:

- Deliver nature's recovery at landscape scale.
- Build climate resilience across communities.
- Inspire the next generation of conservationists.
- Ensure wildlife-rich spaces are accessible and meaningful to all.
- Create a fairer, more representative environmental movement.

Our Aspiration

We aspire to be an organisation that reflects the communities of Leicestershire and Rutland — in our staff, volunteers, trustees and supporters. We want everyone, regardless of background, identity or circumstance, to feel that wildlife and wild places are for them.

Through reflection, collaboration and sustained action, we will drive meaningful and lasting change — within our organisation and across the landscapes we protect.

By embedding diversity, equity and inclusion at the heart of our mission, we strengthen nature's recovery and help create a future where people and wildlife thrive together.