

# Our 2030 strategy

## FOR NATURE RECOVERY IN CORNWALL



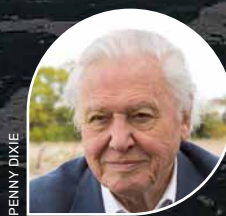
**Cornwall**  
Wildlife Trust



Creating a Cornwall  
where nature thrives



The truth is the natural world is changing. And we are totally dependent on that world. It provides our food, water and air. It is the most precious thing we have and we need to defend it.



**Sir David Attenborough**  
President Emeritus of the Wildlife Trusts

PENNY DIXIE



ADRIAN LANGDON

# It's time for **increased, collective action**



**Matt Walpole**  
Chief Executive  
Cornwall Wildlife Trust

Many of my favourite memories of Cornwall involve our wildlife and wild places. I grew up playing on our beaches, swimming in our seas, climbing trees, and spotting buzzards wheeling overhead. As an adult there are few things I enjoy more than walking the coast path, exploring our vibrant heathlands or seeing Cornish hedges come alive in spring. And I'll never forget the first time I saw a chough – on the cliffs between Perranporth and Crantock.

Not only is nature the source of so much joy and wellbeing - it underpins our very survival and existence. Through its vast array of species and habitats, it pollinates our crops, keeps our soil fertile, maintains our freshwater supply, and mitigates against and helps tackle climate change by increasing flood resilience and capturing carbon.

Yet nature in Cornwall, which provides joy to so many and is vital for our future, is in serious trouble.

Spotting a butterfly is no longer as common an experience as it once was. Many in Cornwall will

go years without seeing a hedgehog, which only a few decades ago were widespread across our countryside, towns and villages. And all too often, instead of sharing our seas with dolphins, seals and other fascinating marine life, we find ourselves wading through more and more waste and pollution.

## It doesn't have to be this way.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust has played a vital role in tackling nature's decline. For example, our 59 nature reserves, totalling more than 5,600 acres, have provided much-needed havens for wildlife as conditions elsewhere have worsened.

Nevertheless, our nature reserves, however vibrant, can only ever be part of the picture. More is needed if we're to avert an ecological catastrophe - more land managed for wildlife, more farmers and fishers using sustainable practices, more local and national

government policies shaped with nature in mind, more businesses improving their own practices, and more members of the public volunteering, donating, wildlife gardening, making sustainable consumer choices and speaking out for wildlife.

## In short, we need more people – from all spheres – taking action for nature.

Collective effort will make all the difference and this is the message at the heart of Cornwall Wildlife Trust's 2030 strategy. It's what is needed if we are to reverse nature's decline in Cornwall – so that future generations can experience the same joys and benefits of nature that many of us did growing up.

**We all have a role in delivering this strategy. Please, join us.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt".



Nature at sea has also been pushed to the brink.

SEAGRASS  
**90%  
LOST**  
IN THE PAST  
200 YEARS

# State of nature in Cornwall

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, with the situation in Cornwall no different.

While a small number of species have prospered, it is clear decades - if not centuries - of damaging human practices have had serious impacts on species richness (the number of species in an area) and abundance (the number of individuals of a species within an area).

With almost 75% of Cornwall's land used for agriculture, nature-friendly farming provides a huge opportunity for wildlife on land. Yet while there are excellent examples of sustainable farming in Cornwall, there could be many, many more. Intensive farming, alongside insensitive built development, has resulted in a disconnected landscape, where the few nature-rich areas remaining are often isolated. Beyond these, wildlife is being left without enough joined-up space to thrive.

Nature at sea has also been pushed to the brink. Pollution, over-fishing, coastal development, and the impacts of climate change threaten underwater habitats, with seagrass, vital for marine wildlife and carbon capture, experiencing a severe decline in the UK (with more than 90% lost in the past 200 years).

For too long we've presided over nature's decline and unless we turn things around now, it will be too late. We will lose much-loved species. Wild places will disappear. Future generations' experience of nature will be diminished. Our food security will be threatened and some of our best tools for tackling the climate crisis will be lost.

**We can do better for nature.**



ADRIAN DAVEY

# Our vision and strategic principles



## Our vision

**Imagine a Cornwall where nature thrives, with our wildlife and wild places valued and enjoyed by all.**

A Cornwall where currently rare and threatened habitats and species are once again a common part of our countryside, seas and skies. Where healthy oceans, soils, rivers, wetlands, woodlands, moors, grasslands, sand dunes, and other ecosystems are valued for the vital roles they play. Where every child in Cornwall grows up with access to beaches and green spaces. And where we're all connecting with, benefitting from, and taking action for nature.

**This is our vision. But we can't achieve it alone.**

## Our strategic principles

Behind this strategy sits three core principles to inform our work

### Collaboration

**Our efforts alone cannot turn the tide on nature's decline.** With everyone having a role to play in achieving a wilder future for Cornwall, we will partner with others to deliver change and increase impact.

### Innovation

If we value wildlife and want future generations to experience the joys of nature as part of their everyday lives, **we need to be creative, applying bold new approaches** alongside the things we know already work.

### Determination

**We are ambitious and determined to drive change,** and will focus our efforts on where we can make the biggest difference for Cornwall's wildlife.



# Theory of change

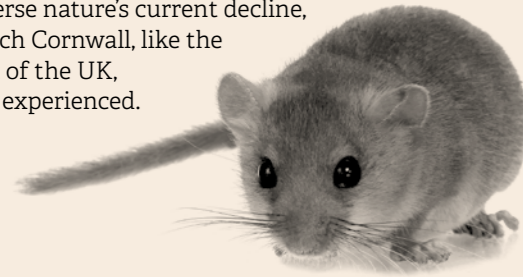


(L-R): TOBY ROXBURGH/2020VISION, PAUL HARRIS/2020VISION, JONNY EASTER, KATRINA MARTIN

## We want

### A Cornwall where nature thrives.

But first, we need to halt and then reverse nature's current decline, which Cornwall, like the rest of the UK, has experienced.



## We need

- **More space for nature** – bigger, better and more joined-up.
- **Active nature restoration** – not just the protection of what remains.
- **Reduced pressure on nature everywhere** – be that from development, pollution, habitat loss, intensive farming and fishing, or climate change.

## We will

Ensure more areas of land and sea are **managed well for wildlife**, by informing, involving, and inspiring more people, from all spheres, to take action for nature.

- More farmers and landowners adopting nature-friendly practices.
- More developers creating and protecting spaces for wildlife.
- More businesses tackling their carbon footprint and implementing wildlife initiatives.
- More policymakers, planners and financiers creating a more positive enabling environment for nature.
- More communities taking collective action for nature's recovery.
- More people who live in, visit and love Cornwall choosing to support our work and join us in taking action, speaking out and influencing others.

## How?

1

By demonstrating what is possible and **inspiring** others through our conservation delivery on the ground.

2

By supporting and **advising others** on how to reduce negative pressures and create positive outcomes for nature.

3

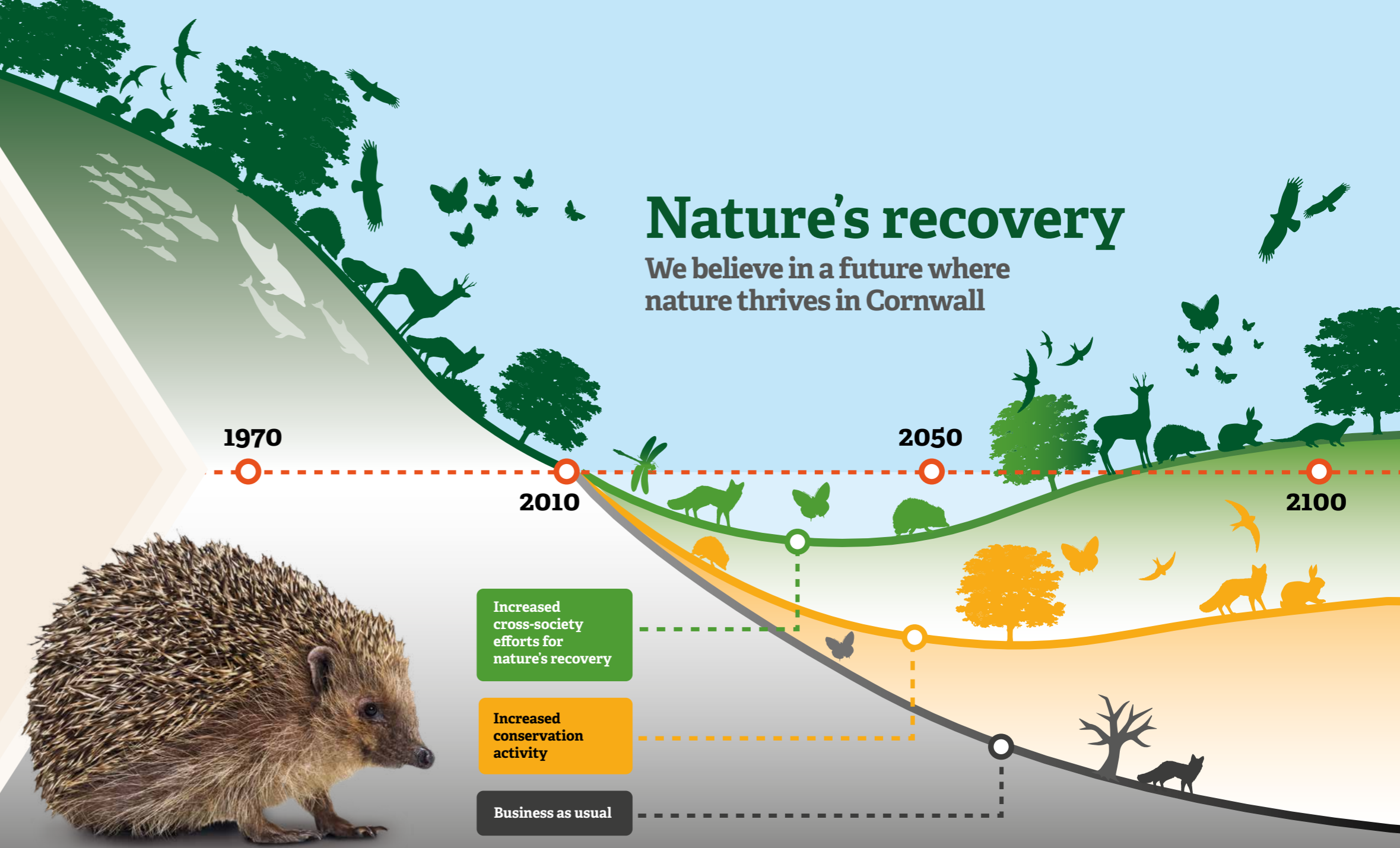
By engaging and **mobilising** individuals and groups to use their time and resources to participate in practical action.

4

By campaigning and **advocating**, as we use our collective voice to call for better decisions for nature from those in power.

# Nature's recovery

We believe in a future where nature thrives in Cornwall



1970

2010

2050

2100

Increased cross-society efforts for nature's recovery

Increased conservation activity

Business as usual

Adapted from Leclère, D., Obersteiner, M., Barrett, M. et al. Bending the curve of terrestrial biodiversity needs an integrated strategy. Nature 585, 551–556 (2020)



# 1

## Impact objective: Demonstrate & Inspire

Cornwall Wildlife Trust's nature reserves provide much-needed havens for wildlife and have the potential to be vibrant 'hubs' within Local Nature Recovery Networks. They also provide opportunity to bring some of the latest thinking in nature recovery to Cornwall, so we can demonstrate what's possible to others.



ANDY ROUISE

### What we'll do:

- **Create and restore vital habitats**, including heathland, wet woodland, and species-rich grassland, improving biodiversity, water quality and local flood resilience, using wild herbivores and native livestock breeds as natural land managers where possible.
- **Tell the story of nature recovery**, field testing different approaches and illustrating what works with robust evidence.
- **Develop at least six 'destination reserves'** that inspire others to take action through high quality access, interpretation, learning and participation.

### What we'll achieve:

- **By 2030...** All our nature reserves and other places we manage are the best they can be for wildlife or being actively restored as vital hubs for nature. As a result, they are more resilient to and helping mitigate climate impacts, while providing greater benefits to people.

**100%**  
OF RESERVES MADE  
BETTER FOR WILDLIFE



CHRIS GOMERSALL / 2020VISION

# 2

## Impact objective: Support & Advise

Nature reserves alone will not be enough to bend the curve on nature loss. It will require landowners across Cornwall to create connected spaces for nature within wider Local Nature Recovery Networks. At sea, we need everyone to adopt practices that allow marine wildlife to thrive. This work will ensure wildlife is not limited to a few nature-rich sites, but able to expand across our countryside and in our seas.



KARIN SAUNDERS

### What we'll do:

- **Support more farmers and other landowners** than ever before to adopt nature-friendly farming. Transitioning less productive areas into woodland or wildflower meadows can benefit wildlife and attract grant income for farmers. Eliminating pesticides can improve soil quality, improve the state of our rivers, and reduce farm costs.
- **Increase work with Cornwall's fishing sector** to reduce damaging practices, such as 'bottom trawling' (where nets are dragged along the ocean floor, destroying marine habitats) and support the transition to responsible practices amongst all marine users.
- **Engage businesses and developers on land and at sea** to reduce their ecological footprint and move towards having a positive impact for Cornwall's wildlife and climate.

### What we'll achieve:

- **By 2030...** A greater proportion of Cornwall's land and seas are better managed for nature thanks to Cornwall Wildlife Trust's work and support.

**50,000**  
ACRES MANAGED FOR NATURE



MARK HANBLIN



# 3

## Impact objective: Engage & Mobilise

Everyone has a role to play in tackling the nature crisis. Our 2030 strategy will engage and mobilise more people than ever before, including younger people, more diverse audiences and those not currently connected to us, to take action for nature.



EVIE AND TOM PHOTOGRAPHY

### What we'll do:

- **Mobilise more people to directly volunteer for wildlife**, through habitat management tasks, citizen science projects, community engagement activities, and other opportunities.
- **Support, strengthen and enable groups of people across Cornwall to take meaningful action for nature** in their communities, ensuring wildlife has a home along Cornwall's coast, in our seas, and across our towns, villages and countryside.
- **Inspire people from all backgrounds to spend time in and take action for nature** through public engagement initiatives and campaigns.

### What we'll achieve:

- **By 2030...** More people than ever before are engaging with us and taking action for nature in their own lives and communities, including 25,000 members and regular supporters and 10,000 volunteers.

# 100,000

PEOPLE ENGAGING WITH AND TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE



RICHARD OSBOURNE

# 4

## Impact objective: Campaign & Advocate

The interests of wildlife must be reflected in the policies and practices of government, business, and various public sector bodies locally and nationally – ensuring bold decisions are made for nature. The voices of people across Cornwall will prove crucial if political and business leaders are to engage with and champion the needs of nature.



LEANNE MANCHESTER

### What we'll do:

- **Work closely with key decision makers** in government and business to ensure they set the bar high in environmental policy, regulation and planning.
- **Raise our voice in credible and constructive ways** to make the case for nature and hold decision-makers to account.
- **Encourage people to speak up on things that matter most for nature** in Cornwall through local campaigns as well as training and supporting local campaigners to increase awareness and advocate for change in their communities.

### What we'll achieve:

- **By 2030...** Decisions by those in power are better for nature and people in Cornwall.

# Better decisions

FOR NATURE THAT BENEFIT US ALL



# Focusing efforts



(L-R): BEN WATKINS, BEN PORTER, WILDERNESS PHOTOGRAPHIC, MATT SLATER

We will work across Cornwall, from Land's End to the Tamar River and from the north coast to south, managing reserves, delivering nature recovery projects, and connecting with individuals and communities.

And to ensure the greatest possible impact with limited resources, we will focus certain activities in priority areas to establish effective Local Nature Recovery Networks, working with partners on the ground to deliver at scale and for the longer term.

## What is a Local Nature Recovery Network?

For nature to bounce back, we need strong, interconnected wild spaces that ensure healthy soils, clean rivers and thriving seas. This is essentially a Local Nature Recovery Network, where the principles of 'bigger, better and more joined-up' (the principles at the heart of the 2010 Lawton Report) are applied to increase and improve sites for nature. These are then connected by 'wildlife corridors', such as hedgerows and verges managed with nature in mind, all allowing wildlife to thrive across our landscape.

## From west to east, our priority areas:

### On land

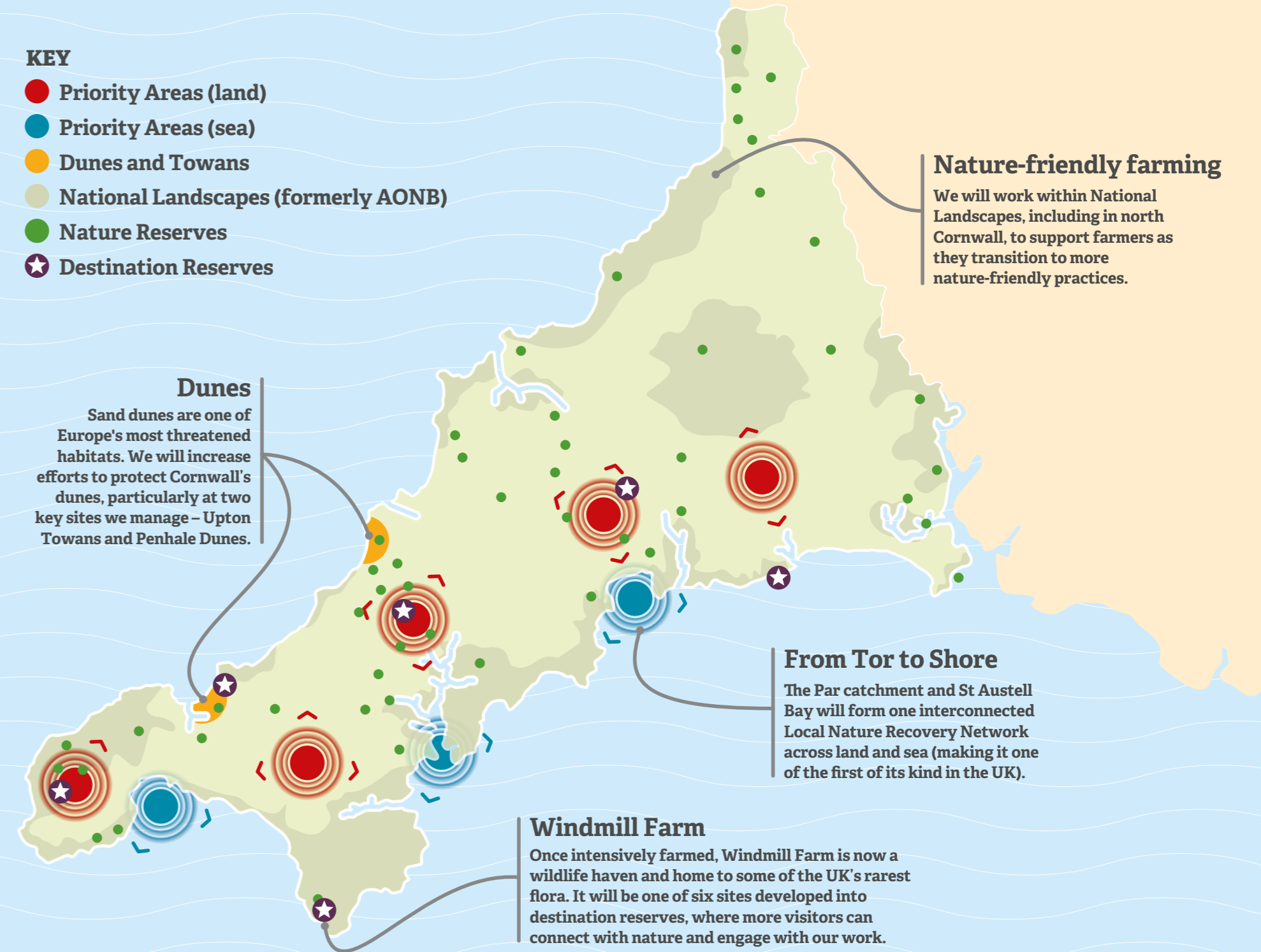
- **West Penwith**, among the oldest farmed landscapes in the world and home to a significant amount of Cornwall's lowland heathland - one of our rarest habitats.
- **The Cober catchment**, where we'll continue to collaborate with farmers and communities to improve local biodiversity and water quality.
- **The Fal catchment**, in particular the area surrounding Allet, where our Five Acres nature reserve and HQ is based, which will be developed into a destination reserve, where people connect with and learn about nature.
- **The Par catchment**, home to Cornwall Wildlife Trust's largest nature reserve, Helman Tor, where we will increase our use of rewilding principles and work with nearby farmers.
- **Bodmin Moor to Looe**, where we'll partner with others to restore temperate rainforests - damp woodlands characterised by features such as native trees, ferns, mosses and fungi.

### At sea

- **Mounts Bay**, where we'll continue work with the Local Marine Group (which, alongside other similar groups across Cornwall, is part of the Cornwall Wildlife Trust coordinated Your Shore Network) to monitor and protect the local marine environment.
- **The Fal estuary**, where one of the UK's oldest maerl beds (more than 4,000 years old) can be found. Maerl is an important habitat which in 2023 was classified by Natural England as 'irreplaceable' due to its fragility and the amount of time it takes to grow.
- **St Austell Bay**, home to one of the largest known subtidal seagrass beds in the UK, which - despite its importance for marine wildlife and carbon capture - has no formal protection. Work here will be complemented by activity in the Par catchment to reduce pollution entering the sea.

## KEY

- Priority Areas (land)
- Priority Areas (sea)
- Dunes and Towans
- National Landscapes (formerly AONB)
- Nature Reserves
- ★ Destination Reserves





# Enabling objectives



(L-R): PETER CAIRNS, JOSH KUBALE, NICK UPTON

To deliver the strategy's ambitious goals, we need to be the most effective, passionate, well-resourced and well-run organisation we can be, with a clear voice and the evidence needed to track progress and focus efforts where it matters most.

**As such, our impact objectives will be underpinned by four enabling objectives:**

- 1** **Increase awareness** of wildlife and nature recovery in Cornwall, and inspire engagement with our cause amongst a wider audience.
- 2** **Grow resources** through rewarding partnerships, supporter relationships and a range of income opportunities that keep us financially secure and deliver for nature.
- 3** **Ensure a healthy organisation** that's resilient, productive and a great place for our staff and volunteers to work.
- 4** **Capture evidence** to better monitor and understand the progress and impact of our work, using this to influence others and guide our own efforts.

## Aligning with others

### The Wildlife Trust movement

Cornwall Wildlife Trust is one of 46 local trusts within the Wildlife Trust movement. Together, by 2030, we have committed to work towards a number of collective goals with which our strategy aligns. These include:

- 30 by 30**  
At least 30% of land and seas actively managed for nature's recovery – a target adopted by governments locally, nationally and internationally.
- One in four**  
At least one in four people taking action for nature and climate.

### The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership

We are part of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership, a collaboration of local organisations working together to grow nature. The partnership, which also adopted the 30 by 30 target, is formed of individuals from across public, private and third sector bodies who recognise the importance of putting the environment at the heart of decision making.



LUKE MASSEY/2020VISION

# Getting involved

So that's the plan. We'll be working tirelessly to deliver it, but we need you to bring this strategy to life and make our vision of a wilder, wonderful future a reality.

We are looking for partners and champions who want to make their homes, schools, workplaces, businesses, neighbourhoods and communities wilder. If this sounds like you, please get in touch. If you can give time, money, space or skills, please do.

**Cornwall needs a wilder future and everyone has a role to play. Your voice matters and local action counts.**

**EMAIL:** [info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)  
**CALL:** 01872 273 939  
**VISIT:** [cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)



PAUL HARRIS/2020VISION





**Cornwall**  
Wildlife Trust

**Creating a Cornwall**  
where *nature* thrives

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 214929

**We believe in a visionary future for Cornwall, with our landscapes, coastline and seas alive with the sights and sounds of wildlife, and with more people than ever before enjoying and protecting nature. Cornwall Wildlife Trust's 2030 strategy provides a plan for this future – a plan in which everyone has a role.**



**Oliver Blount**  
Chair of Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust