

Annual Impact Review 2025-6

Chilterns. Community. Conservation.



Welcome to our first Annual Impact Review

Chiltern Rangers was established in September 2013 by John Shaw and Tony Speight. Since then, we've worked closely with our local community, partners, landowners, and volunteers to protect and care for the landscapes that make the Chilterns so distinctive.

After 12 years we decided it was high time for Chiltern Rangers' to publish their first Annual Impact Review. This review of 2025/26 marks an important point in our story, growth and development. We look forward to building on it in the coming years.

This impact report reflects the environmental & social progress we have made and recognises the shared effort behind everything we do. Our achievements are the result of collaboration between many organisations and individuals who share a commitment to protecting and enhancing the natural environment for the benefit of both wildlife and local communities.

Thanks to everyone who has played a part.



John Shaw
Managing Director



About Chiltern Rangers



'Enhancing the Chilterns habitats through conservation, education and community engagement' is our mission here at Chiltern Rangers.

Chiltern Rangers put local people at the heart of everything we do. By guiding, supporting and teaching those we work with through a practical, hands-on approach to conservation activities, people develop new skills, build confidence and foster a stronger connection with nature.

By working collaboratively with schools, businesses, landowners, and community groups, we bring together a wide range of people and resources to achieve a greater impact than any one organisation could alone.

This community-led, partnership-based approach not only improves local green spaces but also empowers people to take an active role in caring for their environment, creating long-term benefits for both communities and nature.



Our Team

This year we have taken on three new Assistant Rangers - Elspeth, Shelley and Ingrid. Welcome also to Tyler, our new Trainee Ranger.

We are now a team of 16 - plus Forest the team dog!

The Sum of Our Year

Schools joined us at 26% of our sessions	43 Be A Ranger Days 	218 New Volunteers
71 Work Experience and DofE pupils	Over 8k Social Media followers 	Bird & Bat Boxes 99 installed
4,277 trees planted 	We worked at 125 sites	132 Partner Organisations
1,842 wildflowers planted	29,240 volunteer hours 	711 sessions

So what does this mean?

- Rare species are returning to restored habitats
- More people of all ages, abilities & backgrounds are taking an active role in caring for the Chilterns
- Young people are building skills and confidence through nature conservation
- Strong partnerships are driving greater impact
- From industrial estates to chalk rivers, woodlands and grasslands, local green spaces are becoming better for wildlife.

High



Light!

On 3rd April 2025, we were delighted to welcome HRH Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO to our Community Tree Nursery in Winchmore Hill.

Project Snapshots

Rebel Rangers

Funding from Rebel Restoration allowed us to run 9 Rebel Rangers sessions for 11-16 year olds in the school holidays. The sessions take place in the river, woodlands and nature reserves and as well as being an educational day, we also make sure there is an element of fun such as a boat race after a river clean or whittling butter knives after a day in the woodlands.



“Just wanted to say the boys had an amazing time yesterday. They thoroughly enjoyed the activities. It has reignited their passion for whittling and have today chopped some branches in the garden and are creating something!”

Thames Water



Thanks to our partners at Thames Water, 16 sessions took place this year. Tasks included litter picks in the River Wye with local youth groups and repairing river banks in the Chess. We also cleared scrub and planted wildflowers to encourage butterflies. In addition we were able to hold relaxed plant tending sessions at our wildflower nursery for patients under the care of Oxford Health.

“Well done everyone, proper dedication from people who really care.”

Chilterns National Landscape - Access & Inclusion

We've been hard at work this year to grow and improve our engagement with young people, expanding our work experience programme, and ensuring our work is as accessible and inclusive as possible. Funding from CNL has enabled us to offer work experience to those with additional needs or who might be excluded for other reasons.



“M really enjoyed the placement and said that everyone was very welcoming and supportive. She got a lot out of it and I thought it was all very well organised compared to some of her friends placements so thank you very much!”

Project Snapshots

Chalfont St Peter Parish Council

Working in partnership with Chalfont St Peter Parish Council and Chalfonts Community College, we planted a new native hedgerow using a mixed variety of whips - Hawthorn, Buckthorn, Blackthorn and Hazel. As well as increasing biodiversity, we hope this will reduce groundwater flooding. We also mulched around some trees as they had roots which were getting heavily compacted and damaged by mowers.



“Excellent effort all round. Well done to everyone involved. Inspirational stuff.”

Origin Doors and Windows



Thanks to one of our key partners, Origin, we were able to use funds to plant over 400 trees and over 300 metres of hedgerow. We hosted 27 conservation sessions at 17 different sites and engaged with 372 under 18s in addition to our adult volunteers - nearly 3000 hours of volunteering. We worked with five schools planting a mixture of hedgerows and fruit trees. In addition to tree planting, we cleared scrub, planted wildflowers, led guided walks and cleared a lot of litter!

“The highlight was being out and about and doing physical activity to achieve something for the good of society.”

Cressex Bid & BAP Pharma

Working in partnership with Cressex BID and BAP Pharma we have helped to convert the lawn at Staytite into a mini meadow! After a few months we transformed the former green desert of a ‘lawn’ and we now have thousands of ox-eye daisy, hundreds of buttercups, swathes of our beloved bird’s foot trefoil and dozens of orchids! Yes in the middle of an industrial estate, when given the chance to escape the mower’s blade, we have 23 Bee Orchids and at least 15 Pyramidal orchids.



“Love, love, love this!! Well done and thank you Chiltern Rangers, CIC Cressex BID, Staytite and BAP Pharma!! More of these pollinator pit stops please.”

Project Overview

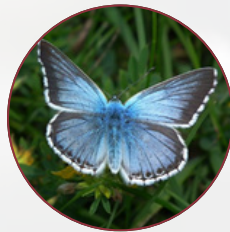
Sands Bank Local Nature Reserve

2025/26 has been a busy year at Sands Bank - a 27 acre chalk grassland habitat mosaic - a mix of species rich grassland and scrub of various ages and species, designated Local Wildlife Site (LWS) due to its value for wildlife.

The chalk grassland is home to many butterflies and our work is to sustain the food plants and habitat for these. We have planted Wild Strawberry, Wych Elm and Bird's-foot trefoil throughout the site and cleared scrub to allow them to thrive.



Grizzled Skipper



Chalkhill Blue



White-letter Hairstreak



Common Blue



Green Hairstreak



Adonis Blue



Dingy Skipper

334 volunteers have been out to Sands Bank this year, they joined us for a total of 1,521 hours. 128 of the volunteers who joined us were under 18 and 234 school children joined us at our school sessions for over 660 hours!

In addition to clearing 1400m² of scrub, we also:

- Cleared litter
- Maintained footpaths
- Planted 150 wildflowers
- Installed 4 bird boxes
- Planted three Wych Elm
- Took groups on guided walks of the nature reserve.



We were delighted to welcome the following groups to Sands Bank:

Juniper Hill, Disraeli, Carrington Junior, Booker Hill & Gt Marlow Schools, Amicus, Symrise, Johnson & Johnson, Origin, Bucks Council, Butterfly Conservation UTB, Florence Nightingale Hospice, WWFC Foundation and more!

People



We are extremely grateful to all of our volunteers. This year saw more volunteers than ever join us to help create habitats for wildlife. They gave over an incredible 22,500 hours of their time. 218 new volunteers signed up to join Chiltern Rangers.



9% of our volunteers came out 30 times or more – what a dedicated bunch!

Top volunteering days: Ashley-147, Keith B-92, Colin F-74, Jacob P-64, Andrea-55, Lucas-52, Brian-46, Immy-45, Sarah P-43, Jamie-43 – thank you!



132 organisations volunteered with us including 31 schools and colleges.



Congratulations to our volunteer award winners: Keith B, Henri, Sarah R, Andrea, Pat, Immy, Mike, Pete, Jill, Elspeth and Logan.

Recognition from The High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Pippa Kirkbride, for great and valuable services to the community.

High



Light!

Young People

Working with children in conservation is incredibly rewarding. Their curiosity and enthusiasm for protecting wildlife are truly inspiring. This year an impressive 6,740 hours was given by under 18s. In addition, 2091 school pupils enjoyed time learning in nature through various programmes.

In total we worked with **31 schools**: 17 primary, eight secondary, two further education and four SEN schools.

We run a Skills Builder accredited **work experience** programme both for school age children and those who have left education. We hosted 23 young people this year. Congratulations to Elspeth Scott and Logan Carter on your work placement awards!

Rebel Rangers funded by Rebel Restoration, gave the opportunity for over 30 young people aged 11-16, to attend one of nine sessions that ran in the school holidays.

Our **New Shoots** programme has seen 20 children attend 10 conservation sessions helping to hone skills and knowledge for the next generation. With thanks to River Thames Conservation Trust.



This year through our **Stepping Stones Employability Programme**, we partnered with seven schools giving young people the opportunity to become involved in and understand conservation. Thanks to funding from The Rothschild Foundation, we were able to host 64 sessions.

Our **Duke of Edinburgh** programme is a popular way for pupils to achieve their bronze, silver or gold award. Last year 48 pupils volunteered with us – many of them attending Wednesday evenings at High Wycombe Almshouses.



“The Y7 woodland project was a brilliant opportunity and the Y9 Stepping Stones project has been excellent. I am extremely grateful for the support you have given...it is very pleasing to see the impact coming through with the students really reflecting on their actions”

Wildlife Wins!

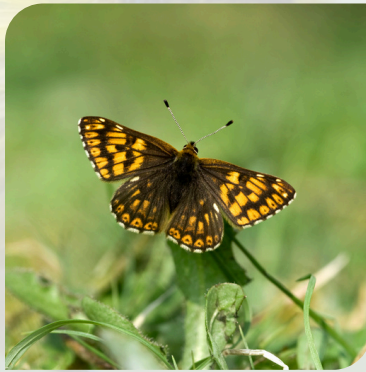


We are out in a variety of habitats nearly every day – planting trees and wildflowers, clearing scrub, planting hedgerows, river cleans, installing bird and bat boxes, creating river structures, coppicing trees, litter picking and heaps more.

So how does this help wildlife? Unfortunately, it is hard to tell how our inputs have helped nature because changes in the environment often happen very slowly over time. Many different factors, such as weather, pollution, and natural events, can affect our wildlife, making it difficult to know which improvements are the result of our actions. But we believe the work we are doing has a significant impact and these are a few examples of what makes us happy, proud and excited to do even more.



Spotting an egg of the elusive Brown Hairstreak on Blackthorn at Far Kingdom

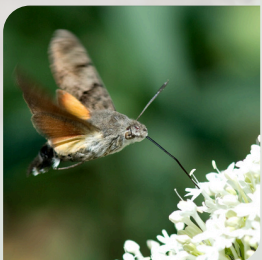


Over 40 Duke of Burgundy butterflies spotted at Far Kingdom

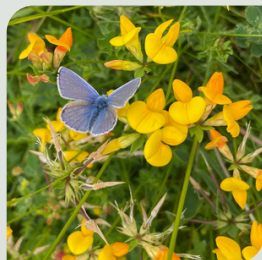


Brown trout seen at Edgewood after creating a meander to improve and vary the flow of the river Wye

Urban sites have benefitted too through pollinator friendly planting. This helps species move through the landscape. At High Wycombe Train Station we have seen Common Blue butterflies and a hummingbird hawk-moth. At High Wycombe Almshouses, pyramidal orchids & slow worms are a regular sight!



Hummingbird hawk-moth



Common Blue



Slow worm



Pyramidal orchid

Partnerships



We work with a diverse network of partner organisations who all play a vital role in protecting and enhancing the Chilterns' natural environment.

From local authorities, schools and colleges to community groups, charities, businesses, landowners and individual volunteers, these partnerships bring people together to deliver practical conservation projects and meaningful community engagement.

By collaborating with organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors, Chiltern Rangers is able to connect people of all ages, abilities & backgrounds with nature, support biodiversity, and create lasting environmental and social benefits throughout Buckinghamshire and the wider Chilterns.

Community

The real power of how we work is bringing the community (people and organisations) together to improve 'the place'. 7 priority habitats across 125 sites have been improved for nature.



People are better connected to the landscape and their community, people have improved health & well being, skills & knowledge.

Life for all is a little bit better from our projects.

"I felt like I was giving back to the environment and making the world a better place. It was also lovely meeting and connecting with new people."

Corporate

We are proud to have an array of amazing local business supporters. Our corporate partners help us to fund a range of activities and their funding helps us bring even more thus making impact multiply.



Our work with our corporate partners helps them to deliver tangibly towards their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Environmental, Social, and Governance Goals (ESG) and Sustainable Development Goals. (SDG).

This year 30 organisations joined us on one of our Be a Ranger days. These fun, impact-filled sessions are team building, corporate volunteering, CSR and health & well being days all in one.

"I loved meeting the amazing staff and volunteers and spending the day out in the sun having fun with everyone."

Places

We worked at 125 sites of which 39 were new this year. All of the sites we have worked at can be [seen here](#).

Alfriston School	Hall Farm, Dagnall	Saunderton New Woodland
Ash Hill School	Hermitage Primary School	Saunderton Train Station
Aspire Shortenills	High Wycombe CofE Primary School	Saunderton Tunnel Duke of
Austenwood Common	High Wycombe Town Centre	Burgundy Network Rail Site
AXA Kings Wood	High Wycombe Train Station &	Shardeloes Equestrian
Aylesbury Youth Concern	Brunel Sheds	Small Dean Bank
Barrowcroft Wood	Highfield Wood	St Mary's & All Saints Church
Beaconsfield High School Pond Area	Holly Green Farm	Beaconsfield
Bearbrook Combined School	Holtspur Bank	St. Peter's Park Burnham
Bedgrove Spinney	Horse Trust Speen	Staytite Cressex Business Park
Berkley Homes	Hughenden Garden Village	Strawberry Bank
Bledlow Village Hall	Hughenden River Wye	Studham Hall Farm
Bledlow Waste & Recycling Site	Hypnos	Swyncombe Downs
Bois Mill River Chess Site	Ivingswood Academy School Grounds	The Beaconsfield School Grounds
Boundary Park (Chalfont St Peter)	Juniper Hill General	The Little Firefly Forest School
Buckinghamshire New University	Juniper Hill School Planters	The River Wye (Guided Walk)
Bucksum Farm	Keep Hill	Tom Burt's Hill
Butlers Court Primary School	Kingsmead Recreation ground	Tree Nursery
Buttler's Hangings	Kingswood Primary School	Thames Water Berkhamsted
Carver Hill	Knotty Green Allotments	Thames Water Bowerdean
Castlefield and Rowcliffe wood	Long Orchard	Vincent's Meadow & Pond
Chairborough Local Nature Reserve	Long Shaw	Wadborough Field, Pitstone Hill
Chalfont Community College	Loudwater Combined School	Walk Wood
Chalfont St Peter Memorial Garden	Mandeville School	Wardrobes
Chenies Primary School	Marlow Studio Plot 4	Wardscoombe, Dagnall
Chesham Bois Wood	Millennium Wood	Waterside Primary Academy School
Chiltern Rangers Kingsmead Depot	MoD Bicester	Wendover
Cholsey Grange & Farm	Monks Risborough C of E School	Westcott Venture Park Disused
Christmas Gorse	Natural Progress	Railway Cutting
Collings Hanger Farm	New Barn Farm	Weston Turville CofE School
Colstrope Farm	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School	White Hart Street
Community Wildflower Nursery	Pebble Brook School	Whiteleaf Cross
Coombe Hill	Plomer Hill	Wigans Lane Woodland Bledlow
Cut Throat wood, Beaconsfield	Resthaven Bledlow Ridge	Wild Magic
Cuttlebrook Nature Reserve	Restore Hope Latimer	Wild Mind Well Being Farm
Dame Alice Farm	River Wye - Wycombe Retail Park	WInchester Wood
Dean Field House, Dean Farm	River Wye Boundary Road Rec	Woodhouse Farm
Deangarden Wood	Road Farm	Woodsaks Farm
Desborough Castle	Round Wood	Wycombe Almshouses
Desborough Recreation Ground	RSPB Otmoor	Wycombe Hospital Stroke Ward
Edgewood Sheltered Housing Scheme	Saffron House	Garden
Far Kingdom Nature Reserve	Sands Bank	
Funges Meadow	Sands Planters	
Gomms Wood	Sarratt River Restoration Site	
	Saunderton Network Rail Bridge	



**Chilterns
National
Landscape**

With thanks to Chilterns National Landscape for use of this image



Planet

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals were formulated in 2015 by the United Nations and are designed to serve as a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future".

They provide a framework to address the most challenging issues facing humanity and the planet including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, education, health, and peace and justice.

These goals are the golden thread running through Chiltern Rangers and we believe that by working with us, we can help organisations to align their efforts to achieve common objectives and sustainable development.

The work we do at Chiltern Rangers helps contribute to 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity.



Chalk of the Chilterns was the focus of Countryfile in May featuring many of our partners and volunteers.



Light!

Stay connected

It's good to talk...

We are passionate about of landscape and wildlife and so are you – our community.

We regularly publish across four social platforms. We really value your thoughts and feedback and its one way local people help us shape projects and keep us posted on what's going on near them.



2300 Followers



30 Followers



4200 Followers



1861 Followers

Another bittersweet river post....

Ranger Steph clocked up over 33,700 views on her post about clearing litter in the River Wye with Bucks College Group. [See the post here.](#)



River restoration update

Details of our restoration projects on the River Chess at Sarratt and the River Wye at Edgewood gained Ranger Paul nearly 13,000 views. [See the post here.](#)



To help keep in touch, our weekly e-bulletin reaches nearly 2,000 people letting them know about events and promoting activities run by partner organisations. Our quarterly review looks back at what we've achieved and forward for what's to come. If you would like to join our mailing list, please email info@chilternrangers.co.uk.

"I've just read your newsletter with a great deal of pleasure! How good it is to hear of positive things going on in our community with lots of partnership working. We are very happy to be associated with Chiltern Rangers who help us to manage our conservation field in tandem with our link with the local primary school. Even in the depths of winter nature flourishes – we have lots of small birds enjoying the berries on our field margin at the moment."

What's Next?

2025/26 has been an incredibly busy and impactful year for us. But we cannot stop now – there is still so much more to do – for our community and for conservation.

Chiltern Rangers believe that people care deeply about where they live and want to give something back. What they often need is the platform and infrastructure to make that possible and that's where we can help. We can provide the tools, transport and, critically, passionate rangers who lead activities, provide support, administer first aid when needed and, of course, keep everyone going with a cup of tea!

Spending time volunteering in nature can make a real difference to our mental wellbeing. Research, including *Healthy Outdoors* from Natural England (2026), highlights the positive impact that connecting with the outdoors can have on people's health and wellbeing.

We offer opportunities to learn, develop new skills and move towards employment. Through accredited work placements, formal and informal learning opportunities for volunteers, we provide practical experience that builds confidence, capability and employability.

This work our volunteers do is vital. With wildlife struggling to adapt to our unpredictable environments, we need to lend a helping hand. It seems our efforts are making a difference. Through projects such as Chiltern's National Landscape Tracking the Impact programme and similar surveys, we can see tangible results. Yellowhammer populations in the Chilterns have increased by 40% and Duke of Burgundy butterflies are returning and colonising new locations.

There is hope.

But to meet these challenges, we must work harder than ever.

If you would like to help, there are many ways to do so.

Please get in touch, and together we can explore the art of the possible.



Thank You



If you would like to help Chiltern Rangers protect and restore local habitats and wildlife and make a difference for nature, why not...



Volunteer with us?

Whether you love wildlife, your community or just want to give back.



Write a review or testimonial?

Enjoyed your time with us?
Leave a review!



Consider a donation?

Help us do more to help local people, places and wildlife to thrive.



Subscribe to our newsletter?

Don't miss out on our weekly updates or quarterly newsletter.



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