



Wildlife Trusts Wales

Your Local Wildlife Trust

Our staff

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Our history

▶ Charles Rothschild

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In May 1912, a month after the Titanic sank, Charles Rothschild held a meeting to discuss his radical idea about saving places for nature

This meeting led to the formation of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, which would become the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, and signalled the beginning of UK nature conservation as we know it. The Society worked hard to secure Government protection for sites across the UK they considered 'worthy of preservation', but it was not until the 1940s that nature conservation made it onto the statute with the National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act in 1949.

Meanwhile local conservation organisations, the forerunners to Wildlife Trusts, were beginning to spring up. The first was Norfolk in 1926, followed by Yorkshire in 1946 and Lincolnshire in 1948. The 1950s saw more and more groups beginning to form and by the end of the decade the Society took on the role of a national association to represent them. The Scottish Wildlife Trust was formed in 1964 and Trusts now covered the whole of Britain. The movement expanded further in 1978 with the formation of the Ulster Wildlife Trust. There are now 47 Wildlife Trusts covering the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney.

It is a fascinating story – the local Trusts teaming up with Rothschild's vision of an organisation to save places for wildlife. We will be marking the year in lots of exciting ways including publishing a book on our history - Wildlife in Trust: A hundred years of nature conservation by Tim Sands; producing a documentary film on our history and launching a series of public events around the themes of Our Wildlife & Our History.





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