

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2024 - 2025



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# LETTER FROM THE CHIEF OFFICERS

2024 was a difficult year for us, sadly having to scale back plans and reduce hours for the staff team, running a skeleton programme.

Our staff team reduced from 6 to 1 by the end of the year. In response to reduced funds our focus has on fundraising and thought leadership.

**We're delighted to share that our funding situation now is much brighter.** In early 2025 we began to see results from our fundraising efforts, securing two significant funding awards by April (Reaching Communities and the National Heritage Lottery Fund).

**From spring 2025 we entered a period of reflection, recovery and rebuilding.** We are ending the year with optimism, able to build back to a 5 person staff team and having secured the best funding the organisation has ever had; £415,000 (over 3 years, £182,600 for year 2025-2026).

We are on track for our 5 year aim of being a 15+ staff, £1.5 million turnover by 2030.

**We are delighted to have appointed Jodie Schram as our new Chief Operating Officer,** she will be leading on functions internally: finance, admin, operations, HR, Project Management. Jodie is an experienced senior leader, coming from the NHS where she ran divisional departments. We are excited about our capacity to scale, with her leadership.

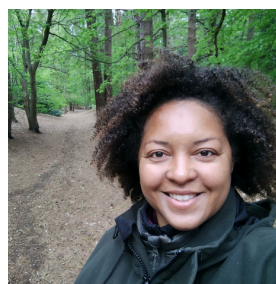
## A YEAR OF RESCUE AND RECOVERY

Our focus in 2026 will be on our Nature Connectors and Nature Guide programming, nurturing leaders of colour, and communications showcasing their journey and Black leadership in the environmental sector.

**We have been building momentum and galvanising support for a movement to challenge the lack of access to funding for POC led organisations** as we prepare to bring funders, mainstream and POC leadership together to honestly reflect on the systemic factors preventing diversification and POC led organisations full participation within the sector.

We will be entering 2026 with the budget and capacity to finally give voice to our under-represented perspectives and challenge the forums that don't see such voices as missing or omitted.

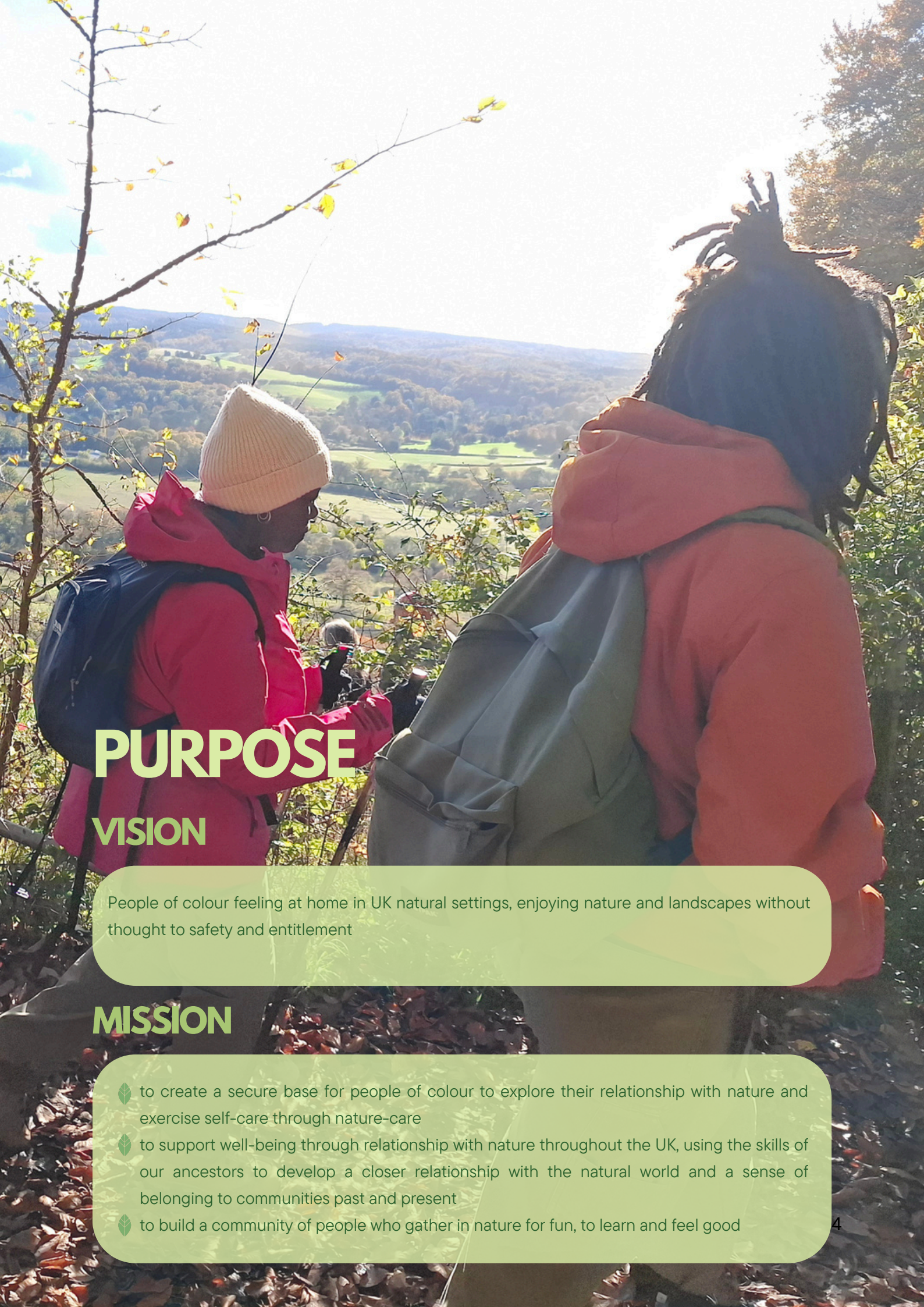
We are grateful to our partners and supporters who have helped us through an extended period of challenge and are excited to step into new opportunities with you in the coming year.



Beth Collier  
Chief Executive Officer



Jodie Schram  
Chief Operating Officer



# PURPOSE

## VISION

People of colour feeling at home in UK natural settings, enjoying nature and landscapes without thought to safety and entitlement

## MISSION

- to create a secure base for people of colour to explore their relationship with nature and exercise self-care through nature-care
- to support well-being through relationship with nature throughout the UK, using the skills of our ancestors to develop a closer relationship with the natural world and a sense of belonging to communities past and present
- to build a community of people who gather in nature for fun, to learn and feel good

# THERAPEUTIC PHILOSOPHY

People of colour currently spend less time in nature than white communities, and therefore miss out on the health benefits and are less involved in conserving green spaces.

We have a focus on supporting people of colour in accessing nature and the countryside, addressing the widely acknowledged lack of representation and lower levels of involvement of people of colour in nature-based activity.

We are building a bridge back into the oral tradition for learning about nature within families and community.

People of colour are more likely to live in areas with a deficiency of access to nature and in areas with higher levels of urban stressors such as air and noise pollution - which lead to poor health indicators.

Time in nature reduces stress, depression, anxiety, rumination and increases good mood and sense of belonging. There is a public health and social justice need to support more people of colour to access nature to support emotional and physical health.

**We are building a bridge back into the oral tradition for learning about nature within families and community**

Whilst people of colour are often connected to nature in our countries of heritage,

several factors contribute to a disconnect in the UK.

Over nearly a decade of ethnographic research, we have learned that these include, experiencing hostility from white communities less used to encountering Black people; feeling exposed and more vulnerable in areas where there aren't other people of colour; not having older generations/established locals who can teach us here.

Our findings show that people of colour want to feel connected to nature and respond more positively to time in nature when they see themselves represented within a group or leadership team.

**a secure base for developing positive relationships in and with nature**

As a therapeutically grounded organisation Wild in the City aims to build a community which is emotionally healthy. We place an emphasis on relationships and how we treat each other, and contemplating our personal relationship with nature. We aim to create a secure base for developing positive relationships in and with nature.

Our work is focussed on smaller groups, creating greater intimacy and depth, transferring confidence and knowledge which participants share with others. This leads to a larger ripple effect of people who are influenced, within our wider communities.



Our organisational philosophy draws from the theoretical approach of Nature Allied Psychotherapy. This modality of psychotherapeutic practice focuses on nurturing relationships with the natural world, in addition to our human relationships, knowing that nature is both something that we are part of and something that we can have a relationship with.

We use a relational approach to learning about nature around us as we sit or move through a setting, as things appear or attract our attention.

Our programmes incorporate overlapping themes of hiking, woodland living skills, natural history, conservation and rewilding principles and ecotherapy. These themes are interwoven to foster understanding of the habitat and its meaning to us, helping participants live their relationship with nature in response to what they learn.

## **as we are part of nature, caring for nature is a form of self care**

We facilitate a hands-on embodied experience which builds a sense of being in community, with nature.

As we are part of nature, caring for nature is a form of self care. In taking care of nature we are taking care of our self.

Our immersive experiences allows our members a somatic means to reclaim their emotional-spiritual and practical-heuristic relationships with nature; helping to address and overcome the loss and trauma in the means, process and impact of disenfranchisement from nature that people have endured.

Therefore our work is also a process of decolonising; our relationships with nature and systems within the environmental field. <sup>6</sup>



# ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

Wild in the City is a Black-led national nature organisation supporting well-being through relationship with nature.

We work from natural settings offering experiences in natural history, hiking, woodland living skills, conservation and ecotherapy.

We lead national conversations about people of colour's relationships with nature and attitudes that can lead to people feeling that they don't belong.

## WHAT WE DO

We create a welcoming community for people of colour to spend more time in nature, to learn about and to care for the natural world.

We offer programmes in;

- Natural History
- Rewilding and Conservation
- Woodland Living Skills
- Hiking
- Ecotherapy
- Research

🌿 We train people of colour as Nature Guides, leading communities in nature

🌿 Our ethnographic research highlights POC perspectives on our relationship with nature and barriers encountered

🌿 We support the environmental sector in diversifying and reflecting on issues of race and nature



## WHO WE WORK WITH

We collaborate nationally with environmental NGOs, academic and local authority partners to advocate for nature and increase understanding of issues affecting people of colours' engagement with nature.

During our 10 years of field delivery we have worked with children, families and adults.

We are currently focused on working with adults. Due to experiences of racism within the environmental field the best way to increase Black and brown participation is to increase adults' confidence to take friends and family into nature – creating a larger pool of adults who can in turn facilitate children's engagement in nature.

**We're building a community of people who gather in nature to have fun, learn and feel good**

Engaging children without engaging parents/carers has less impact.

Once we have established a wider leadership pool, we will go back to working with children and young people.



## **Beth Collier, Chief Executive Officer**

“These have been challenging times for speaking out on issues affecting Black participation; from lack of funds reducing capacity, to a more hostile external climate and response to our being in the countryside. It has often felt that the sector and the national conversation has stagnated, going back to pre 2020 mentalities.

However we are very excited about how we can demonstrate our leadership in the sector, with increased funding giving the capacity to extend our specialist delivery, amplify our insightful thought leadership and build stronger networks.”



**Janine Douglas-Hall**  
**Non-Executive Director**

“Joining Wild in the City at this moment gives me real hope.

With more funding secured, the business has room to breathe, regrow and strengthen. The leadership team can now build the kind of long-term infrastructure the business has planned for. Wild in the City can continue its specialist delivery and grow into the national institution it is meant to be, using this moment of stability to build lasting strength, visibility and influence.

Together, we can amplify black leadership, deepen community connections and ensure that nature is a place where people of colour feel a sense of belonging and representation.”

# STRATEGY

Our five-year strategy sets out our ambition to be a well resourced national Black Institution for learning about and caring for nature; supporting people of colour to exercise self and community care through nature-care.

## 2030 STRATEGIC AIMS

Our strategic aims are to create a secure base for our communities in nature and to decolonise the environmental field by changing the landscape of provision and delivery by increasing the number of people of colour leading and participating in experiences with nature.

- ❖ We want to be the point of reference for people of colour wanting to know how to identify a flower or learn how to dress for the outdoors in the winter
- ❖ We want to be the point of reference for the mainstream environmental field in learning about people of colours' perspectives about the natural world
- ❖ We want to be a resource for building community amongst POC-led nature/outdoors organisations

### Thought leadership: research, policy, networks and forums

- ❖ We will achieve national reach and influence by further developing online resources, such as a Black Natural History Unit producing YouTube content on wildlife and topics of interest to people of colour, identification resources and "how to" info

- ❖ We will lead policy and advocacy conversations; participating in high level policy forums, issuing press releases and policy statements highlighting Black and brown perspectives on topical issues
- ❖ We will conduct and disseminate primary research into topics of interest to people of colour and issues and challenges the sector is facing
- ❖ We will also provide a non-competitive space to bring together and support POC-led organisations, offering facilitated meetings, mentoring, conferences and peership

## to be a well-resourced national Black Institution for learning about, and stewardship of the natural world

### Field delivery: community, land and conservation

- ❖ We will inspire our communities to enjoy nature and to feel part of nature
- ❖ We will deliver field events nationally, with Nature Guide teams throughout the UK
- ❖ We will manage a range of habitats throughout the UK
- ❖ We will create opportunities for people of colour to exercise self-care through nature-care

# STRATEGY

Our five-year strategy sets out the road map to achieve our ambition to be a well resourced national Black Institution for learning about and caring for nature

## OUR VISION

People of colour feeling at home in UK natural settings, enjoying nature and landscapes without thought to safety and entitlement

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to create a secure base for people of colour to explore our relationship with nature and to exercise self-care through nature-care



## 2030 AIMS

### A WELL RESOURCED NATIONAL BLACK INSTITUTION

Our ambition is to create a secure base for our communities in nature and to decolonise the environmental field by changing the landscape of provision and delivery by increasing the number of people of colour leading and participating in experiences with nature.

#### Inspire more engagement

By 2030 we will develop a high quality media and resource hub with capacity to reach audiences of colour nationally

By 2030 we will inspire more people of colour to feel that nature is something for us, spending time in nature with community and enjoying self-care through nature-care

#### Community relationships

#### Influence new ways of thinking

By 2030 we will mainstream the experiences of people of colour within the environmental sector

By 2030 we will diversify leadership by building the capacity of POC-led organisations and developing people of colour as field and policy leaders

By 2030 we will change the landscape of provision and delivery within the environmental field, making it more inclusive

#### Land and conservation relationships

#### Transform the leadership landscape

By 2030 we will caretake habitats throughout the UK, through ownership, leasing and collaboration

By 2030 we will be a well-resourced national black institution providing opportunity and voice for people of colour in the environment sector

#### Sector relationships



## 2026 AIMS

#### Field leadership

We will more than double the size of our teaching/leading team by training at least 10 Nature Guides

We will support our 2025 cohort of trained guides into leadership of our field programmes

#### Thought leadership

We will increase community awareness of environmental justice issues:

- Tree Equity
- Rewilding
- Nature/Health Disparities

Create new channels to reach POC audiences

#### Capacity Building

We will raise funds to make current roles full time and recruit 3 new staff in Communications, Research and Fundraising.

We will develop strategy for increasing the capacity of POC-led environmental organisations

#### Thematic focus

We will develop our programming in these thematic areas;

- Woodlands
- Chalk Grasslands
- Research
- Communications

# THEMATIC DELIVERY



# NATURAL HISTORY





# NATURAL HISTORY

We share knowledge about the natural world, in a relational way, observing and discussing things seen, heard or felt as we move through or sit in a setting. Bringing back an oral tradition rooted in relationships with people and with nature.

From the ecology of habitats and symbiotic relationships between species found in them, wildlife identification, behaviour and life cycles, traditional uses and folklore, we work wherever we find nature but most courses take place in woodlands, heathland, wetland and grassland.

We have a specialism in the Chalk grasslands of southern England, a rare wildlife rich lowland ecosystem.





# WOODLAND LIVING SKILLS

Learning traditional and ancestral crafts for living in harmony with nature, helps our community recall and remember the ancestors and how they viewed and related with the natural world.

We teach a range of practical crafts and skills utilising natural materials that we find around us in woodlands, from getting the fire started to cooking wild foraged edibles and attending to hygiene and first aid.

The knowledge we share helps people to develop a deep sense of confidence and connection in being able to thrive in nature for extended periods of time through knowledge of the properties of plants and the behaviour of animals.

**using the skills of our ancestors to nurture a deeper relationship with nature and give a sense of belonging to communities past and present**

The skills we teach include;

- natural navigation
- tracking
- fire by friction
- medicinal uses of wild plants
- foraging
- wild cooking
- backcountry hygiene
- campcraft
- shelter
- tool use and knife skills - carving
- traditional crafts





# ECOTHERAPY

Spending time in nature is deeply restorative of itself, combined with being in a community of like minded nature loving people of colour and held by Nature Guides who are trained in reflective practice, coming together with nature is a very powerful means of exploring our sense of self, belonging and unity.

Most of the experiences we offer hold space for therapeutic reflection; having conversation about how it feels to be in nature, the role nature has played in our lives and whether nature was a part of our childhood and family culture.

Understanding our relationship with nature can create a deeper appreciation of and sense of connection to our ancestors.

It can also give rise to deep feelings; of loss, anger, hurt and trauma on realising a disconnect and the process through which generations have become disenfranchised.

We hold people as they explore the rupture and make repair.

We also give time and attention to the joy felt in finding belonging and connection with nature and with community; in having a secure base.

Our work is underpinned by the philosophy of Nature Allied Psychotherapy.

All of our Senior Nature Guides are qualified Nature Allied Psychotherapists.



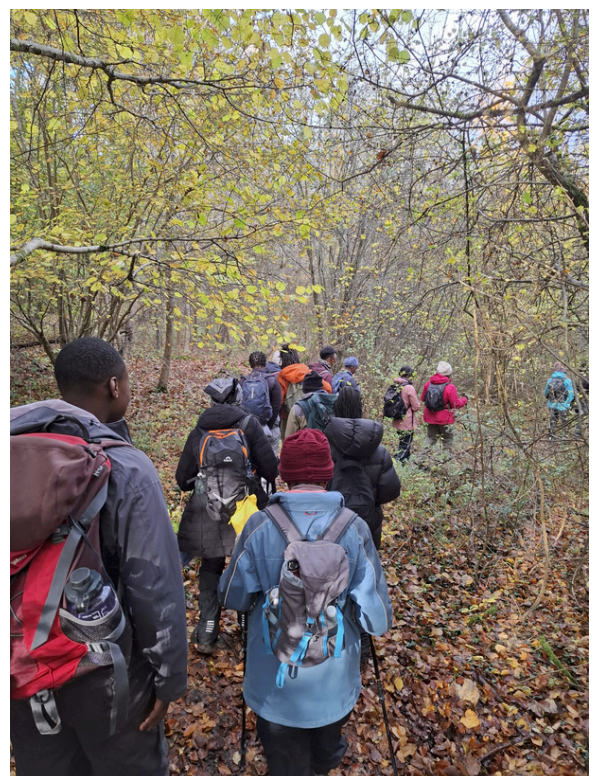
# HIKING

We run a programme of regular hikes, with a guided hike on the 1st Sunday of the month, led by our Nature Guides throughout the year.

Our Nature Guides plot and recce routes of varying challenge throughout the UK countryside.

Our hikes are very popular and often book out through word of mouth. For regulars they offer community and for some, see it like church, meeting congregation and worshipping in nature.

We largely hike throughout the south region, with further funding we will run the programme nationally.



## Natalie Palmer, Nature Guide



“This year I have been working towards completing my hike leadership module as part of my training to be a nature guide. This has helped me to become much more confident in nature, and I get so much joy in sharing with others the places that I have explored.

I have been gaining a new appreciation of the nature around me: through the excitement of recognising trees or the tranquillity of a woodland space or in awe of the views. I am much more comfortable finding my place in nature and have developed a sense of belonging outside and enjoy supporting others to do the same and to embark on their own journey of discovery.”

A portrait of Oteri Otober, a woman with long, curly, reddish-brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue jacket. The background is a park with green grass, trees, and a clear blue sky. The text "Oteri Otober" and "Non-Executive Director" is overlaid on the left side of the image in a light green font.

**Oteri Otober**  
**Non-Executive Director**

“Through Wild in the City's work, we are creating safe spaces where the Global Majority feel at home in nature. Funding is essential for us to sustain and build a community where this vision is fully realised on a national scale. Unfortunately, the consistent underfunding of Black-led organisations is a barrier, and without it, our urgent and necessary ambition to decolonise the environmental field cannot be achieved.”

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024-2025



# FIELD LEADERSHIP





## FIELD LEADERSHIP

Three trainees joined our Nature Guide programme in 2025, and have completed modules in hike leadership, Woodland Living Skills and Ecotherapy.

The cohort are confident in creating a basecamp and making a home in the woods without facilities, crafting cooking systems, utensils and attending to backcountry hygiene using materials found in the woodland.

### **modelling good attachments with people and with nature for our community**

In Q1 2025 we secured the funds to train 15 Nature Guides a year over three years, from 2026.



# NATURE GUIDE TRAINING

We're very proud of our Nature Guide course, the only Black-led programme in the UK, training people of colour as leaders in nature over a year long indepth training.

The course covers learning in;

- Hike leadership
- Woodland Living skills (Bushcraft)
- Natural History & Conservation
- Ecotherapy

Training is comprehensive and challenging, not everyone makes it through. Trainees are supported to be adept at making a home in

nature throughout the seasons and being able to reflect on and nurture relationship with self, nature and others.

Nature Guides are not only expected to develop a high level of technical knowledge but also to be able to lead and hold safe boundaries emotionally, modelling good attachments with people and with nature for our community.

Post training, the Nature Guides volunteer for a year, leading or assisting in the delivery of our programmes.



The programme helps us to diversify the environmental sector, both increasing;

- a) the visibility of people of colour as leaders in nature and
- b) the participation of people of colour in nature based activity; being inspired by and feeling welcomed by practitioners of colour.

The programme helped us to achieve our 2024 strategy aims to;

- Build a team of people of colour leading experiences in nature
- Develop volunteers confidence in the outdoors and as leaders
- Change the landscape of provision and delivery within the environmental field by increasing the number of POC leaders



# CONSERVATION - AWARENESS RAISING





# CHALK STREAMS

In February 2025, an oil spill devastated a rare chalk stream in south London, exposing a shocking lack of planning requirements that allowed pollution to flow unchecked, potentially miles along drainage pipes before being addressed. This situation sparked outrage within the Wild in the City community, and it was disheartening to witness the failure of governance in protecting such fragile ecosystems.

Chalk streams are a globally rare ecosystem, with only about 200 in existence around the world. 85% of these chalk streams are located in southern England. Given their uniqueness and the biodiversity they support, it is vital that we

protect these fragile habitats.

Wild in the City called for stronger measures to safeguard these important waterways and challenged the government's lack of commitment to the 2023 Chalk Stream Recovery Pack and failure to propose an alternative.



While filming the pollution at the river for our own communications, Beth encountered a BBC London film crew who, despite her role as Chief Executive of a nature organisation, chose not to interview her in that capacity. When she gave answers about policy and legislation, seeking to hold the government to account for their lack of protection for chalk streams, the presenter's dismissive body language, through eye rolls and rocking on his feet, spoke volumes in letting her know he wasn't interested in her experience or professionalism. He wanted to cast her as a 'lay' person and not as an informed professional.

The broadcast news item referred to her as a local resident, despite it taking her an hour to travel to the site; omitting her professional identity (the only interviewee in the news item not to be credited with organisational affiliation).



It was a clear example of how environmental leaders of colour are often marginalised.

This moment underscores the dual stories we often find ourselves telling in the environmental field — one of nature and conservation, and another of how people of colour are received and treated in that space. As an organisation, we are committed to shedding light on the dynamics of race and representation in environmental work.

In Autumn 2025 we begin a collaboration with the South East Rivers Trust, funded by the Heritage Lottery Foundation, to restore chalk stream habitats and raise awareness of these unique river systems amongst communities of colour. We will add chalk streams to the Natural History module studied by our Nature Guides.



“It is vital and reaffirming knowing of and witnessing the work of Wild in the City. The Raven Network represents people of colour who work in the nature and conservation sector, the least diverse sector after farming. The fact that people of colour are less likely to pursue a career working in nature protection and environmental conservation is directly linked to the fact that the countryside remains an exclusive space for white people; to care for nature you must first come to know it and see yourself in green spaces.

Wild in the City directly addresses this deeply complex systemic issue by going to the heart of the problem and delivering a meaningful solution that addresses the issue of belonging in nature, perhaps one of the most overlooked and undervalued ways of healing the trauma inflicted by those that seek to divide us. Time in nature, where you feel safe enough to connect with it on a deep level is so very rare for people of colour in the UK. From our point of view, this is a vital missing piece, and I know that for some people that engage with their work will end up becoming the guardians for nature that we need”

**Nadia Shaikh**  
**The Raven Network**

Safety of researchers of colour

# THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Beth Collier, Director



Cumberland  
Lodge



## Urban Forests for All: An approach to designing and advancing fairer urban forests



# RESEARCH AND INFLUENCING

We took part in the YHA/All the Elements ‘Resilient Communities’ series of panel discussions on Nature Connection and Nature Recovery, alongside Peaks of Colour, Roots of Belonging and Sustainably Muslim.

We spoke at the National Trust, Woodland Trust, Community Forest Trust’s Urban Forest Accelerator webinar, ‘Urban Forests for All: An approach to designing and advancing fairer urban forests.’ We discussed therapeutic approaches to community engagement, tree equity and the importance of including community within project creation and not just as recipients of planting.

We continued our research collaboration with the Woodland Trust and University of Exeter, working on a research paper which creates an evidence base for the relationship between tree canopy cover and ethnicity in the UK. The paper will be submitted to a journal for publication in 2026.



# MOVEMENT MOMENTUM

We have led work within the sector to build momentum for a movement to challenge the lack of access to funds for poc-led organisations, and the impact of this on our ability to demonstrate and scale our leadership.

Our approach is to foster support and collaboration working towards a series of actions bringing together funders, environmental CEO's and POC-led organisations to engage in honest conversation about the lack of progress in diversifying the sector.

We have had wide ranging conversations, to date these have included: Black Ocean Citizens, JNCC, Rewilding Britain, Woodland Trust, Motion4theOcean, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, the Raven Network, The Aurura Trust, and independent researchers and practitioners.

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE





# TREE EQUITY

In 2024 we supported the Woodland Trust in launching the UK Tree Equity Score; a map which displays several socio-economic data sets allowing users to see what level of tree canopy coverage exists in their neighbourhood.

The map reveals how neighbourhoods with the fewest people identifying as being from minority ethnic groups have roughly double the tree canopy per person than neighbourhoods with the most, and experience 50% less toxic pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) air pollution and are five degrees Celsius cooler.

Wild in the City contributed to the TES methodology, we found that there was very

little research data on the relationship between ethnicity and tree cover in the UK.

This research gap led to an extension of our collaboration with the Woodland Trust and the European Centre for Environment and Human Health, at the University of Exeter.

Our collaboration undertook primary research which cross referenced google tree data and consensus data to establish, nationally, the relationship between tree cover and different demographic groups.

The paper will be submitted to a peer reviewed journal, we look forward to its publication in 2026.



# A LOST DECADE

## Does the sector really want to diversify?

An annual report is traditionally the place to extol achievements, however, context is important to understanding the journey – it feels expedient to include a rallying call to the sector to consider its slow progress in engaging a diversity of audiences, voices and participants.

In this year's thought piece we reflect on what has been lost in the last decade, through the reluctance to appropriately resource claims to want to diversify the sector.

### **Under funding; the ultimate gatekeep**

POC-led groups have been enormously successful in engaging and inspiring

communities of colour to enjoy more time in nature, yet are often doing so with minimal funding and without being perceived or included as part of the wider environmental sector.

In a period when the sector has asked 'where are the Black participants and leaders', it has taken us over 10 years to achieve what we would describe as 'good' funding. This is despite being in continual demand for collaboration and consultancy by leading NGO's, government and research institutions.

We are ending 2025 with the best funding we have ever received, with £415,000 already secured for the next three years.

This joyful news also gives us cause to reflect on a decade, where expertise, track record, and overwhelming need were not enough to attract funds to be able to fulfill our potential to participate, grow and serve as an organisation able to support diversification; nurturing Black participation and leadership within our organisation and the sector.

We're not just speaking for ourselves, but tens of POC-led organisations who struggle to gain traction within the environmental sector; to be seen as credible peers with value beyond extraction or requests to 'bus in' marginalised groups to programmes failing to engage diverse communities.

Just like people of colour in general, we are perceived as outside of the environmental sphere, with elements of both active and passive exclusion keeping the gate. The under funding of POC-led organisations in the environmental field is a key feature of a system which creates obstacles to us demonstrating leadership within the sector.

Now in our 13th year, our first 8 years were largely self funded, or operated with less than £15,000 due to our lack of success in securing or holding onto funds. This sits beside our experience of 'stolen' opportunities, racism and poor ethics from would be collaborators we tried to partner with, who competed or subverted, for example diverting funds awarded to us to themselves, or taking over bids we had written to submit in their own name.

Without resources, we lacked the equality of arms to challenge, having a choice between contesting or being able to deliver programmes, but not having the funds or staffing capacity to do both.

Many millions have been allocated to larger

organisations towards diversification. As a strategy this has not led to significant change 'on the ground'.

A trend emerged of funders awarding organisations without track record of delivery to diverse audiences and without community engagement capabilities who then leant on POC-led organisations to provide engagement services without remuneration, whilst declining to fund POC-led organisations with strong track records of delivery and deep community engagement. This approach has undermined the ability of POC-led organisations, to contribute to the field and its diversification, and to be visible leaders and inspirers for our communities to follow.

We are well aware that many organisations within the environmental sector are currently struggling for funding, having to cutback programmes and staffing. However this recent economic reality for the sector, has been our economic reality for over 10 years, including throughout periods when much of the sector experienced inflows. There has been a persistent under funding of POC-led organisations that is separate to the current reduction in access to funds throughout the sector.

## **What has been lost as a result of under funding?**

### **Institution building**

What strikes us most is that we don't believe that the sector has considered there to be a missing voice. The absence of a resourced POC-led organisation, has been seen as natural. There is a tendency to see us as hobbyists, a temporary project, and therefore when we are not funded as an organisation - this doesn't stand out as amiss. It meets expectations, being a racism of low expectations.

## **“We are not expected and so are not seen as missing”**

The sector doesn't see us as professional entities with the potential for national scale, voice and leadership (rather, there is a sector shadow which fears this).

Our ambition has always been to be a national organisation, with aims to have 20+ staff with dedicated teams in comms, fundraising, research and field delivery, with specialist focus on the needs of communities of colour, supported by an infrastructure for scaling.

We are well behind our founding timeline. Some of our peer organisations have sadly closed due to under funding, we too nearly succumbed.

There is an existential threat and perverse irony that participating in the sector diminishes our resources - because our participation doesn't attract funds, despite our knowledge and methods being valued. Participation depletes us, with neither funders or would-be collaborators (rarely) willing to create a budget towards our costs, let alone investing in us as a means to diversifying. The model employed by the sector is one of extraction rather than of capacity building.

## **“The racism of low expectations”**

### *Ghost stakeholders*

POC led organisations have been rendered 'Ghost' stakeholders, occasionally seen but not acknowledged; not considered real peers.

Those who want, but can't get, traction need to be included in the audit of the sector's stakeholders, otherwise the issue of invisibility becomes cyclical.

It also means that the huge amount of work that we do is unseen. The mainstream is oblivious to the levels of hard work and struggle, in not achieving traction and viable presence. Viable presence alludes to the sustainability issues in being a constituent within the sector and the vulnerability of being under resourced and overstretched. A theme we discussed in our previous 2023-2024 annual report in *The Cost of Decolonising*.

## **Leadership**

The typically white, middle class sector has focused on its assumptions about how we can serve *them*, rather than being curious and allowing us to provide leadership on how to bring a diverse range of communities into the tent.

The sector's inclusion schemes have focused on people of colour as the perpetual beginner, initiatives are aimed at entry level, young people, internships and apprenticeships. The sector has not made efforts to engage and nurture senior practitioners of colour. Notwithstanding the success of our underfunded Nature Guide leadership programme; over the last 10 years, we could have nurtured senior leaders, not just in the field but policy, research and governance, effecting decision making representing diverse needs and interests. In this time, we could have nurtured entry level starts into senior management - we haven't seen this occur in the sector, (but will gladly be corrected).

The denial of us as knowledgeable and accomplished also serves to 'keep us in our place.' A Black colleague shared that there had been discussion of recruiting people of colour onto the Board in her organisation and that this was being seen as a risk, as it was presumed Black people would be ill equipped for governance.

## Communicating stories

When it comes to communicating issues surrounding the engagement of people of colour in nature, the conversation hasn't moved on or explored nuance - we're still being asked to talk about the same foundational topics that we were 10 years ago - as if it is new insight. Our organisation is still being asked to give interviews and then see a story which doesn't represent much of what we said or stand for, realising that our pictures were wanted to brown-up a feature that had already been written.

We have experienced competition from larger NGOs who want to control the narrative and its delivery - who attempt to tell stories about people of colour by 'leap frogging', using their larger budgets, extracting stories from us to present as their own whilst often presenting us in a diminishing manner.

Not enough has been invested in bringing more people into the tent by engaging communities where they listen, watch, read and gather. The sector is stuck in a silo of channels and publications in which mainstream conversations take place, which largely speak to the white middle class.

The environmental sector doesn't talk with communities of colour, we are left out of the conversation, hence we are marginalised. We are not invested in or cultivated as an audience.

The sector has done little to speak in the rooms that we're already in, and little to develop new channels to reach diverse audiences with content that fosters belonging.

Had suitable investment come to POC-led organisations 10 years ago, the cycle of content, inspired communities, greater participation, development of leaders, knowledge sharing, building of organisations, would have been rooted and producing sustainable results.

## How to make up for lost time and have a lasting impact?

A reductive approach has led to a competitive or dismissive attitude towards POC-led organisations, rather than the sector seeking a win win collaborative approach in which the overall aim of diversification is the prize.

To shift the malaise around getting on with including a greater range of communities within the 'conversation,' we need to shift mind-sets to allow equitable starting points for belonging and contributing to the sector and for diverse leaders to have the resources to share and implement strategic thinking. Why hasn't the sector asked or funded POC-organisations to answer: what do we need to do to diversify the sector?

*Shifting mind-sets to allow equitable starting points;*

- NGOs; POC-led organisation's success isn't your loss, it's diversification
- Funders; support what works
- Invest in senior leaders of colour
- Support the capacity building of POC led organisations



**Adam Cormack,  
Woodland Trust, Head of Campaigning**

“Wild In The City bring insight, expertise and the lived experience and perspective of people of colour to the conservation sector. This is invaluable for helping charities and groups like the Woodland Trust to make our projects more inclusive.

We have collaborated with Wild In The City on our tree equity project for several years. Their contribution has improved both the project and our understanding of environmental justice here in the UK.”



**Jodie Schram**  
**Chief Operating Officer**

“Our priority is to build the systems, resources and infrastructure that will allow us to grow sustainably and expand inclusive access to nature. Our focus is firmly on strengthening Wild in the City as a national leader in nature connection and environmental belonging.

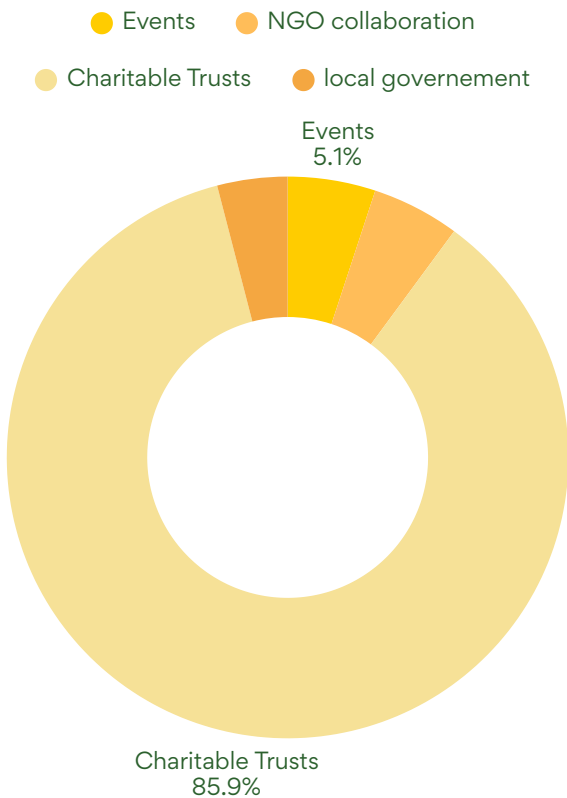
Wild in the City’s growth will help more people enjoy and care for the natural world.”

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

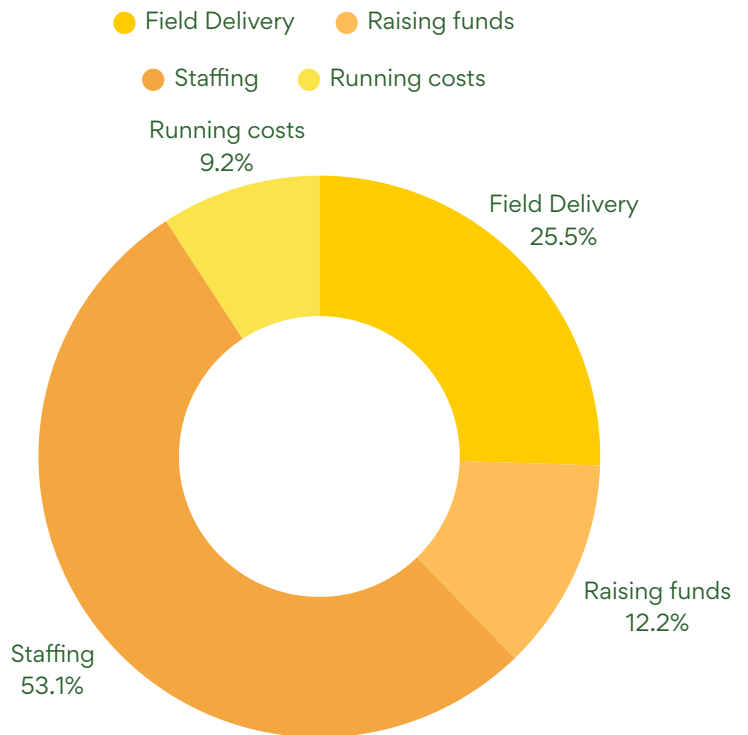
Our total income for the year ending April 2025 was £106,742, which was made up of income from Charitable Trusts, Local Government, NGO collaboration and events. Our expenditure was £114,283. After expenditure, we recorded a deficit of £7,512.

Due to challenges in fundraising in the 2024 financial year, we saw our staffing reduce significantly; however, we were pleased to secure grant and charitable trust funding in Q1 of the 2025/2026 financial year from Esme Fairbairn, National Heritage Lottery Fund and Reaching Communities.

## How we're funded



## Where the money goes



Year ending April 2025



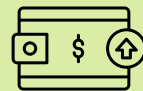
Income

**£106,742**



Expenditure

**£114,283**



Surplus

**£(7,512)**

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## 2024-2025

Wild in the City CIC

### Income Statement

For the Year Ended 30 April 2025

	2024/2025 £	2023/2024 £
<b>INCOME</b>	106,742	166,927
Cost of sales	47,227	43,865
<b>GROSS SURPLUS</b>	59,515	123,062
Administrative expenses	67,056	118,185
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS</b>	(7541)	4,877
Interest payable and similar expenses	29	-
<b>SURPLUS BEFORE TAXATION</b>	(7,512)	4,877
Tax on surplus		
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>(7,512)</b>	<b>4,877</b>

## STAFF NUMBERS

	2025		2024	
	2nd half	1st half	2nd half	1st half
Full time	0	0	0	1
Part time	2	1	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>



## STAFFING LEVELS

Our team reduced from 6 in January 2024 to 1 by the end of that year. In 2025 we have raised the funds to build back to a 5 person staff team with more hours than previously funded when the team was of 6, and the highest level of funds we've ever had.

In January 2024 we had a staff team of 6 working a total of 486.5 hours a month. In 2025 we secured funding to be able to build a team of 5 with 661 hours of staffing a month.

Our funding will allow us to recruit a further 4 positions; Chief Operating Officer, Business Development Consultant, Nature Guide Coordinator, Programme Administrator



# FUNDING

We were successful in being awarded funding from Reaching Communities and through collaboration with South East Rivers Trust, the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

We have been successful in securing;

- £249k over 3 years from Reaching Communities allowing us to fund organisational leadership and oversight of the Nature Guide programme.
- £166k (20 month Development Phase) from the National Heritage Lottery Fund,
- £379k (3.5 years Delivery Phase) from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, in collaboration with the South East Rivers Trust. The project will restore Chalk Stream habitats in the south of London region and introduce these habitats to communities not currently engaged.





# RISK MANAGEMENT

The Senior Leadership Team and the Board are aware of our responsibilities in managing risk and have systems and processes in place to identify, track and monitor potential risk factors. Risk factors are reported to and reviewed within the quarterly Board meeting.

Wild in the City maintains a regularly updated Risk Register covering;

- Finance
- Governance
- Delivery
- Administration

Risk factors are scaled Low, Medium and High and listed with a mitigation plan and assigned owner.

Where risk rises above our risk appetite we take action to mitigate and reduce it. However some external risk factors, for example funding levels, have been difficult to mitigate and have presented an existential challenge.

We have responded by seeking professional support but also to raise awareness of a disparity of access to sustainable funding for POC-led nature/outdoors organisations.

# GOVERNANCE

## Non Executive Board



**Oteri Otorbor**  
Group Marketing Manager,  
IATE



**Cassie Rennie**  
Supplier Inclusion and  
Sustainability Specialist, IEMA



**Janine Douglas-Hall**  
Former Global Head of Delivery  
and Client Success, Boxbar Tech



**Mazvita Horton**  
Head of Chief Executive Office,  
Canal and River's Trust

## Senior Leadership Team



**Beth Collier**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Jodie Schram**  
Chief Operating Officer



# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT

Wild in the City was established in 2013 and constituted as an asset locked, non profit, Community Interest Company in 2016. It is registered in England and Wales.

## Board of Non-Executive Directors

Our Board meets every quarter, it is currently composed of four Non Executive Directors, in addition to the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer.

We are currently seeking 2 further Non Executive Directors with senior experience in law, finance and fundraising and a strong understanding of the issues affecting people of colours' engagement with nature.

## Statement of Non-Executive Director's Responsibilities

Non-Executive Directors share legal responsibility for the good governance of the organisation. The Board as a whole is collectively responsible for the success of Wild in the City. The role does not involve the day to day running of the organisation.

- In *discharging your legal duty* as a Non-Executive Director you will work to ensure that Wild in the City CIC is run efficiently, with reference to legal requirements and the strategy set by the board.
- In *supporting our strategic objectives* you will help review and set strategic goals,



helping us to grow, create stability and assess risks.

- In supporting our performance you will scrutinise the performance of management in meeting agreed goals and objectives.
- In evaluating and monitoring risk you will help assess the integrity of financial information, financial controls and whether systems of risk management are robust and defensible.
- In supporting our progress you will fully inform the Board of all matters relating to the conduct of the business or affairs of Wild in the City arising during the course of your appointment, in a timely manner.
- In monitoring our values and standards you will help ensure to that our obligations to others are met

- In offering your expertise you will offer perspectives, challenge thinking and seek opportunities to ensure the organisation benefits from the best advice and guidance.

## Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team oversee the operation and programming of Wild in the City. It includes the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer.



## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

### Registered name

Wild in the City CIC

### Legal form

Wild in the City is a Community Interest Company registered in England and Wales

### Company registration number

10098767

### THE BOARD

Oteri Otorbor - Non Executive Director

Cassandra Rennie - Non Executive Director

Janine Douglas-Hall - Non Executive Director (October 2025)

Mazvita Horton - Non Executive Director (Decemebr 2025)

### SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Beth Collier - Chief Executive Officer

Jodie Schram - Chief Operating Officer



# FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

We're grateful for the support and collaboration from our funders and partners

Esme Fairbairn  
The Aurora Trust  
Reaching Communities  
The National Heritage Lottery Fund  
1% for the Planet  
Baobab Foundation  
South East Rivers Trust  
The Woodland Trust  
University of Exeter  
University of Leicester, Centre for Hate  
Crime  
ACCESS - Environmental Social Science  
Owadally and King

Wilderlands  
TGG  
Natural History Consortium  
The Aurora Trust  
Rewilding Britain  
Jacqueline Jackson  
Raven Network

# join your community

In between hikes and hanging out in real nature in real life, join us on our whatsapp community group for people of colour who love time in nature. Scan the QR to join

Sign up to our mailing list to receive our newsletter and event details at [wildinthecity.org.uk/contact-us/](http://wildinthecity.org.uk/contact-us/)



# support our work

Thank you for your interest in helping us strengthen, grow and inspire.

## If you're a Trust, Foundation or Philanthropist

We'd love to do more of what we know works very well, we have ambition to scale and build a sustainable 20+ staff team. We'd love to hear from you if our goals align.

## If you're a Company or Corporate Sponsor

We're grateful for financial support and support in kind that helps us move forward and achieve our goals. Please get in touch to let us know what you would like to achieve and whether our values align. If you are signed up to 1% for the Planet you can donate to us via their platform.

## If you'd like to collaborate

We'd love to collaborate with organisations, communities, academics, entrepreneurs, artists and land owners whose work and mission resonates with our values and vision.

**Find out more: [wildinthecity.org.uk](http://wildinthecity.org.uk)**

Please get in touch at [info@wildinthecity.org.uk](mailto:info@wildinthecity.org.uk) if you can help us connect more people with nature.





# PHOTO CREDITS

All Beth Collier, except; Scabious: Canva, Janine Douglas-Hall: Louise Champion, Grey sky hike: Natalie Palmer, Oteri Otorbor: Oteri Otorbor, Nadia Shaikh: Nadia Shaikh, Male Researcher: Canva, Urban Forests: National Trust, Environmental Justice: Canva, Tree Equity: Canva, A Lost Decade: Jenks in the Cut, Adam Cormack: Adam Cormack, Jodie Schram: Tim Rutherford.

