

Questions raised for 2025 AGM

Question:	Response:
The phrase 'wilder hickling' seems slightly contradictory in the context of creating a boardwalk in reed marsh and damaging the habitat. Equally significantly increasing the footfall at the reserve will have a deleterious impact on transport movements locally and impact on the wildlife. What action will be taken to reduce these impacts?	Reference the boardwalk: Hill common is a commercially cut sedgebed so it is subject to annual cutting and a degree of disturbance - this traditional practice maintains the plant assemblages that exist. The proximity of housing, the boathouses and the road mean that no schedule 1 birds nest in this area. The practice of constructing boardwalk is to create paths that cause no damage to a marsh - the path is held up off the substrate by piling so when it is removed in the future, there is no compaction and plant growth persists. Boardwalk is used on many SSSIs throughout the Broads and is a proven method of providing an access route without damaging the environment.
May I suggest a name board with breed of cattle at Sweetbriar. I think they are white park cattle. Also seen belted Galloway and Dexters (?). Not sure how far reserve stretches	More interpretation and signage for Sweet Briar Marshes is underway which will include information on the cattle. This is expected to be installed onsite in Spring 2026.
Are there plans to expand 'working with local schools' to secondary schools (11-16)	Our new youth engagement programme is specifically targeted at 11-25 year olds, so we are very keen to expand our offer and increase engagement with secondary schools. We are hoping to pilot our current primary school Wilder Schools programme with secondary schools and are currently in conversations with a couple of schools to explore this further. We will need to build capacity in the Wilder Learning team in order to do this, so we are also exploring opportunities to generate income through the Children and Nature fund and other grant funders.
I volunteer for NWT and am deeply impressed by the young, dedicated and hardworking staff I meet. I note that some are on 'short term' contracts, which, to me. Seems a loss of dedication as well as difficulties for the person. Is there a move away from this?	<p>Thank you for taking the time to share your feedback. We are proud of the commitment and dedication of our teams and it is really encouraging to hear your thoughts. As a trust we are keen to provide job security for our employees and work hard to reduce the number of short term contracts we use. I'm not sure if there is a specific team/s in the Trust you are referring to but there are a couple of circumstances that lead to the decision to use fixed term contracts and I hope describing these will answer your question:</p> <p>The first is the nature of the funding we have available for some projects. Where it is for a fixed term, this influences the type of contract we can offer. However, there are lots of examples where employees join the Trust on a fixed term contract and then, where a project is successful and moves into our core work we are able to offer permanent employment.</p> <p>The second is the seasonal nature of some aspects of our work, especially at Visitors Centres. We do have a core team of seasonal workers who return to us year after year and in many cases this fits their personal circumstances. However, we do understand that these contracts can be challenging and we are fair and consistent in our approach with these essential workers.</p>

<p>What proportion of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust's members support the Trust's stand on the opposition to the Norwich Western Link Road?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appox 5,000 people lodged objections to the road during the planning process. Approx 1,100 used our e-action. This data is now in our CRM and was cross reference against membership, and it looks like nearly 434 are NWT members. Some of our members could ahve gone directly to the planning portal rather than doing our e-action. At the time we had approx 21,000 memberships. So proportion-wise, that's only 2% of membership that took the action - but that doesn't mean others didn't agree with our stance, they just didn't take the e-action.</li> <li>We didn't receive a particularly high number of membership resignations or complaints regarding our campaign:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should have lodged all membership resignations that cited the Western Link campaign - Lucy Denman will have this information</li> <li>We should have lodged all complaints about our Western Link campaign using our usual complaints process</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Are there plans to provide charging points for cars at major reserves?</p>	<p>Thanks to a grant made available to NWT through the Broads Authority we have recently been able to install electric charging points at Hickling Staith. These are open for use by all not only visitors to the reserve. We are actively exploring the possibility of installing further charging points at other sites if funding is available and there is appropriate space.</p>
<p>How can the NWT justify buying a toilet block in Hickling Staith car park from the Parish Council for a reported £15k, whilst at the same time closing the VC and toilet at NWT Weeting Heath reserve, and therefore denying visiting members (especially women) any toilet facilities? and why are camper vans allowed to stay at Hickling Staith car park for free?</p>	<p>NWT are the long standing owners of the toilet block at Hickling which until recently was under lease to North Norfolk District Council. NWT has recently taken the toilets back in hand as they are part of the overall development plan for the staith to improve accessibility to the site for all. This will (subject to funding) include installing improved facilities for disabled people in the toilet block. The presence of camper vans parking in the carpark adjacent to the Pleasure Boat Pub is being reviewed in conjunction with the pub as part of the Wilder Hickling project. As plans for the development of the car park firm up a decision will be taken on whether to prohibit camper vans, allow some managed parking and/or whether to charge. The decision to close the visitor centre at Weeting Heath was a difficult one for NWT but it was driven by the relatively low number of visitors to the site and the benefit of being able to redeploy the time required of conservation staff to run the visitor centre in to supporting other conservation work. The hides remain open and free to all during the stone curlew breeding season.</p>