



a million  
voices for  
nature

# NATURAL FOUNDATIONS

Conservation and local  
employment in the UK



**“RESERVES HAVE A CRUCIAL ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION, ACTING TO PRESERVE SOME OF THE MOST THREATENED SPECIES AND HABITATS ACROSS THE UK.**

**THEY ALSO AFFORD THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EVERY YEAR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENJOY THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND, AS IS DEMONSTRATED BY THIS REPORT, PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT AND DIVERSE SOURCES OF GREEN, SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO THE SURROUNDING AREAS.”**

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# 01 Foreword by Martin Harper

The past two years have been fascinating times in the world of nature conservation. Thanks to the seminal *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)* and *National Ecosystems Assessment (NEA)* reports we have seen a step change in our understanding of the importance of nature to humans, both through economies and wellbeing.

Encouragingly, governments across the UK are beginning to take note. In England, we've had the first new Natural Environment White Paper for 20 years, which has the messages from these studies at its heart. In Wales, work is also progressing towards a new Natural Environment Framework, which seeks to ensure the value of ecosystems is better recognised.

Other upcoming processes, such as the reviews of national Biodiversity Strategies in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and recent or forthcoming legislation around the marine environment also offer opportunities to reflect this evolution in our understanding.

Over the years, RSPB research has been helping to demonstrate how protecting nature benefits society. It supports and generates economic activity; it provides the resources to sustain our health and wellbeing; it creates opportunities and settings to learn; and it contributes to more sustainable local communities.

This report summarises one dimension of these benefits – the direct impact conservation activities have on local employment and economic activity. The RSPB nature reserve network has over 200 sites and covers over 140,000 hectares, forming the backbone of the organisation's conservation work. Reserves have a crucial ecological function, acting to preserve some of the most threatened species and habitats across the UK.



They also afford thousands of people every year the opportunity to enjoy the natural environment and, as is demonstrated by this report, provide significant and diverse sources of green, sustainable employment opportunities to the surrounding areas. We believe this research adds to the existing welter of evidence on the need to have the natural environment at the heart of any green economic strategy.

Our growing understanding of the vast and varied benefits of the natural world comes at a time of fiscal austerity, when we are already faced with a conservation finance shortfall in the UK of over £275 million a year. It also comes at a time when we are acutely aware of our failure to achieve our global ambitions to halt biodiversity loss. The main lesson of the twin economic and environmental crisis we face must be that we need a new approach to economic development and prosperity. Such an approach needs to be resilient to shocks, respect environmental limits and have the potential to deliver sustainable prosperity over the long-term. We cannot do that without greening our economy and we can't green our economy without conserving the natural world. Happily, as this report demonstrates, conservation is a contributor, not a barrier, to economic prosperity.

**Martin Harper**  
Director of Conservation

# 02 Key findings

## **Nature and the environment make a substantial contribution to the UK economy.**

- ▶ Recent studies have shown that the natural environment supports almost 750,000 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs and over £27.5 billion of economic output across the UK.

## **RSPB reserves across the UK attracted £66 million into the surrounding communities in 2009, supporting 1,872 FTE local jobs. This figure shows an 87% increase since 2002.**

- ▶ These benefits are more often than not located in more remote, rural or coastal areas, where economic opportunities tend to be fewer and less diverse.

## **The greatest economic impacts delivered by conservation come from tourism spending, with over 1,000 jobs supported locally by the RSPB reserve network from 2 million visits. Employment supported by tourism to RSPB reserves has trebled since 2002.**

- ▶ Tourism impacts can be particularly beneficial in areas with limited economic prospects, as the industry is characterised by a diverse range of employment opportunities and low start-up costs for businesses.
- ▶ The increase in RSPB visitor numbers and spend by visitors is mirrored by the generally increasing trend in nature-based leisure activity in the UK.

## **The reintroduction of charismatic species also brings substantial benefits to local economies.**

- ▶ Self-sustaining populations of the once nationally extinct white-tailed eagle now support over 150 FTE jobs on the Isles of Mull and Skye through tourism. In Dumfries and Galloway, 20 local FTE jobs were supported in 2009 by tourism to see reintroduced red kites at the Galloway Kite Trail.
- ▶ For each species, the economic impacts have been found to be increasing over time.

# **CONSERVATION WORK HAS SIGNIFICANT AND INCREASING ECONOMIC IMPACTS WITHIN LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN THE UK.**

The evidence in this report highlights some positive examples of projects and nature reserves that have achieved significant conservation benefits while also contributing to wider rural development. To preserve the UK's biodiversity, there are major challenges that we still face. However, addressing these challenges will also create jobs and support sustainable economic activity. Conservation should therefore be a fundamental element of any local green economic strategy.

# 03

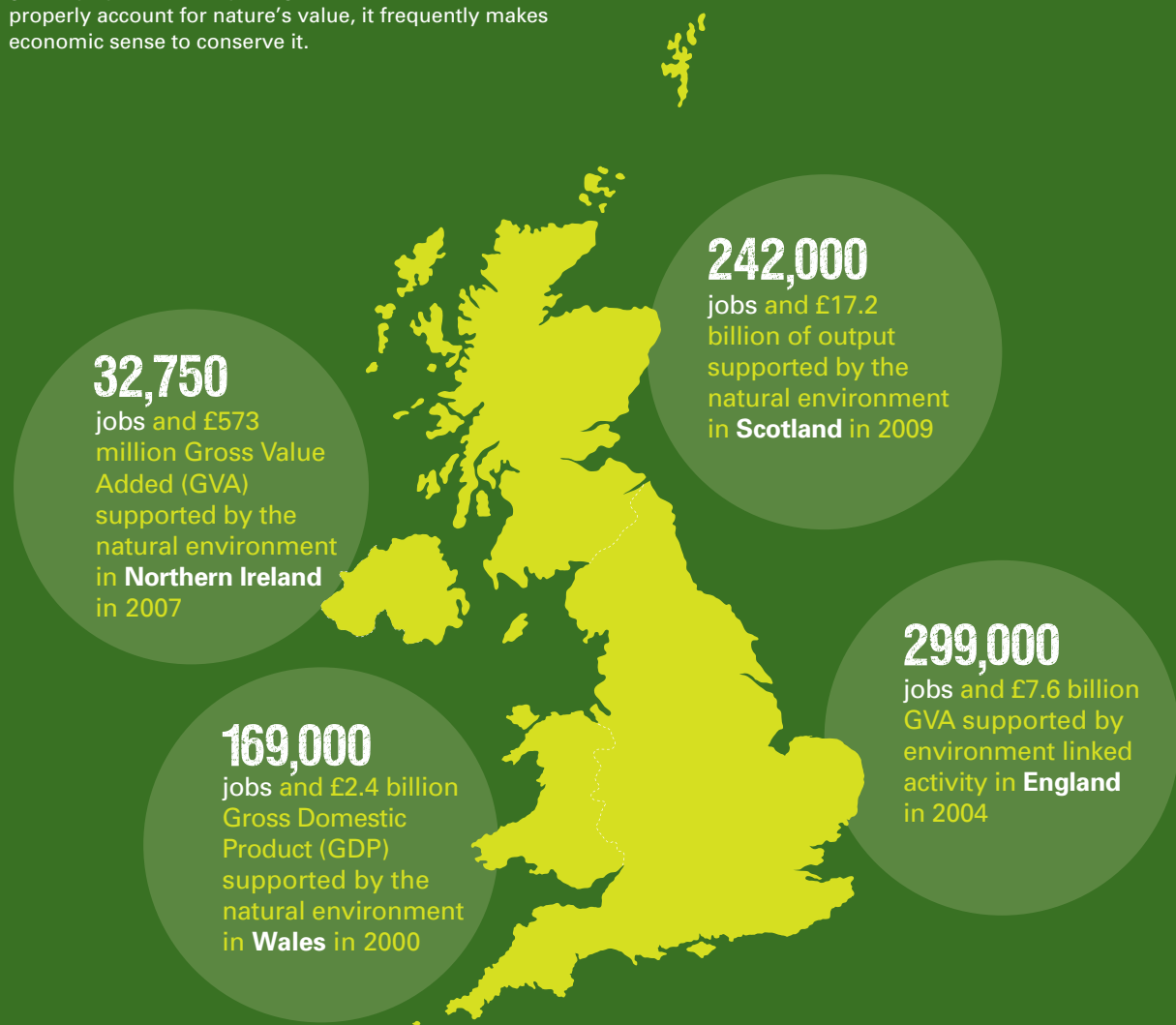
## Nature, people and the economy

**Nature delivers a vast array of life-preserving and life-enhancing services that underpin our existence. From the regulation of our climate and waterways, to the provision of unique recreational opportunities and wildlife spectacles, the natural environment offers benefits to people and communities across the globe. Although many of these benefits impact directly on people's sense of wellbeing and hence are difficult to capture in purely economic terms, nature also makes substantial, measurable contributions to the economy. It is with these contributions in mind that any truly green economic strategy must have conservation placed at its heart.**

Recent research has led to a step change in our understanding of the many ways in which the environment supports people's wellbeing and how species loss and ecosystem degradation undermine it. Seminal studies, such as the NEA in the UK<sup>i</sup> and TEEB globally<sup>ii</sup>, provide compelling evidence that, when we properly account for nature's value, it frequently makes economic sense to conserve it.

Other studies across the UK have also highlighted the ways in which the economy is dependent upon nature by demonstrating how GDP and job creation are directly linked to natural resources and services<sup>iii</sup>, as shown below. It is clear that in addition to delivering a range of valuable social, cultural and recreational benefits, preserving the natural environment also impacts significantly upon economic output and creates jobs.

With this growing body of evidence around the importance of biodiversity in underpinning our economy, the multifaceted arguments for preserving our environment are starting to emerge. If we are to achieve genuinely sustainable economic growth, it will no longer be tenable to over-exploit and under-value our limited stocks and flows of natural resources and services.



# 04 Conservation and UK jobs

**Conservation is big business. As well as providing a diverse range of direct employment opportunities, the preservation of our species and habitats also stimulates activity within a variety of other industries, such as agriculture, construction and tourism. The impacts of nature-based tourism in particular illustrate the fact that the natural environment is an increasingly important asset within local and national economies across the UK.**

In 2001, it was estimated that conservation work in the UK directly supported 18,000 FTE jobs<sup>iv</sup>. Nature reserves stimulate further activity through contracted development work, for example, in the construction of visitor facilities on-site and maintenance of the grounds. Conservation also has positive links with agriculture, as ecological objectives are often complemented by grazing on reserves, supporting activity in the farming industry.

The most notable way that conservation impacts upon employment and incomes is through tourism related to nature. The tourism industry is characterised by significant levels of spending, high business start-up potential and diverse employment opportunities, often thriving most within remote, rural or coastal communities where alternative economic opportunities can be limited.

Species, habitats, landscapes and green spaces form a network of diverse visitor attractions, which are of great importance to the lives of many people in the UK. In 2009/10, the English adult population participated in an estimated 2.86 billion visits to the natural environment, with visitors spending an estimated £20.4 billion on these trips<sup>v</sup>. In Scotland it is currently estimated that nature-based tourism supports spending of £1.4 billion per year, and 39,000 FTE jobs<sup>vi</sup>.

The contribution of nature tourism to the economy is significant and its importance is growing year by year<sup>vii</sup>. These trends have been mirrored by visitor numbers to RSPB reserves, which have been increasing at rapid rates over the past decade, above and beyond the rate of expansion of the reserves network. Over 1,000 local FTE jobs were supported by visits to RSPB reserves in 2009, three times the number that were supported in 2002.



...Domestic UK trips taken to the natural environment increased by 10% between 2005 and 2009, despite general tourism trips declining by 9.2% in this period.



## 38% GROWTH

Visits to RSPB reserves grew a staggering 38%, from around 1.5 million to almost 2 million, between 2005 and 2009.

# 05

## Conservation at a time of austerity

**In the UK, the availability of public funds for nature conservation is shrinking, just as the need to conserve biodiversity becomes more acute. There is a huge funding gap for our national conservation objectives and major national biodiversity targets were missed in 2010. The challenge of funding nature conservation coincides with our growing understanding of the vast and varied benefits of the natural world, as supported by this report. In a time of economic uncertainty, perspective must be maintained regarding the natural environment's potential for enhancing people's wellbeing and contributing to sustainable economic growth.**

The UK economy is currently recovering from one of the worst recessions seen in over a century. We have entered a period of prolonged fiscal austerity, in which the UK Government is aiming to reduce the national deficit, introducing significant real reductions in public spending.

In the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review, the two departments that received the largest cuts to funding were Communities and Local Government (CLG), and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). These cuts came at a time when there was already a conservation funding shortfall in the UK of over £275 million a year<sup>viii</sup>, and at the start of a new drive towards decentralised, more local means of governance.

This challenging political and economic context has emphasised the crucial relationship between local authorities and the natural environment. Greater powers devolved to local decision-makers come with a greater responsibility to ensure the quality of the natural environment and the associated benefits afforded to people within local communities.

The UK Government is committed to a transition to a Green Economy, recognising that it is the only truly sustainable pathway and is central to any prospects of long-term prosperity. The surge to stimulate green growth combines with existing government agendas aimed at promoting rural growth, and halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK, to make a powerful case for local investment in conservation. A responsible attitude towards our ecosystems and wildlife is intimately linked with our ability to achieve local, sustainable economic development.

**HAND  
IN HAND...**



...Local councils are faced with the challenge of stimulating economic activity and preventing further environmental degradation in a time of scarce resources. It is now, therefore, more important than ever to understand how nature conservation and local economic growth can go hand in hand.

**LOCAL  
ECONOMIC  
GROWTH**

**NATURE  
CONSERVATION**





# 06 RSPB reserves and local economies

**Within the context of concerns around unemployment, a funding gap for conservation and an increasing focus on localism, the RSPB has performed a number of studies examining the economic impacts of the organisation's conservation work within local communities across the UK<sup>ix</sup>. This report summarises the findings in these studies to illustrate the many and varied benefits that conservation work provides to both people and communities.**

On 1 April 2009, the RSPB managed 206 reserves across the UK, covering 142,044 hectares. By their very nature and the position they hold in the countryside and around urban fringes, reserves play a hugely important role in providing people with first-hand encounters with nature. However, they are also highly multifunctional. Reserves are economically diverse tracts of land that provide numerous forms of benefit, including supporting employment and income in the surrounding communities.

There are five main types of economic impacts that nature reserves have within local communities. These can be placed within two broad categories (see below).

In a recent study, these economic benefits were assessed at 10 case study reserves and the results were used to inform estimates of the total impacts had by the RSPB reserve network in local communities across the UK. This report summarises the findings from this study, looking individually at each case study, before summarising the impacts of the reserve network, and comparing this with the findings of a similar study conducted in 2002. Finally, further case studies are summarised around the tourism impacts of charismatic species that have been reintroduced in Scotland, to illustrate the benefits that species conservation can deliver, alongside the establishment of nature reserves.

## Impacts of RSPB and farming activities on and around reserves:

- 01** Reserves provide **direct employment** for staff involved in site management and associated activities.
- 02** **Spending by employees and volunteers** supports local economic activity.
- 03** **Direct expenditures by reserves** on goods and services provide income and employment for local businesses.
- 04** **Grazing lets** support income and employment for local farmers.



## Impacts of external economic activity attracted to the area by reserves:

- 05** **Visitors to reserves** spend money in the local economy.

# ARNE



HEATHLAND AT ARNE

**11.8  
FTE JOBS**

supported by  
RSPB and farming  
activities on and  
around the reserve

**£1.1  
MILLION**

tourist spend  
attracted to the  
local area by the  
reserve, supporting  
25.5 FTE jobs

**37.3  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the  
reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**Arne reserve is located four miles east of Wareham, Dorset. Nestled near the base of the Purbeck Hills, Arne is a peninsula that juts out into Poole Harbour. The reserve boasts vast expanses of open heathland and old oak woodland. It is a tranquil oasis for wildlife and provides the perfect heathland habitat for rare birds and other wildlife, such as Dartford warblers, nightjars, avocets, sundews and as many as 22 species of dragonfly. Ospreys are also regularly seen during their migration.**

In April 2009 a new eco-friendly information centre was constructed with seasonal nest cameras, a wood burner and information about the reserve. The reserve also plans to bring additional habitats under active management in the near future, including the freshwater and tidal reedbeds for the benefit of bitterns.

## THE LOCAL AREA

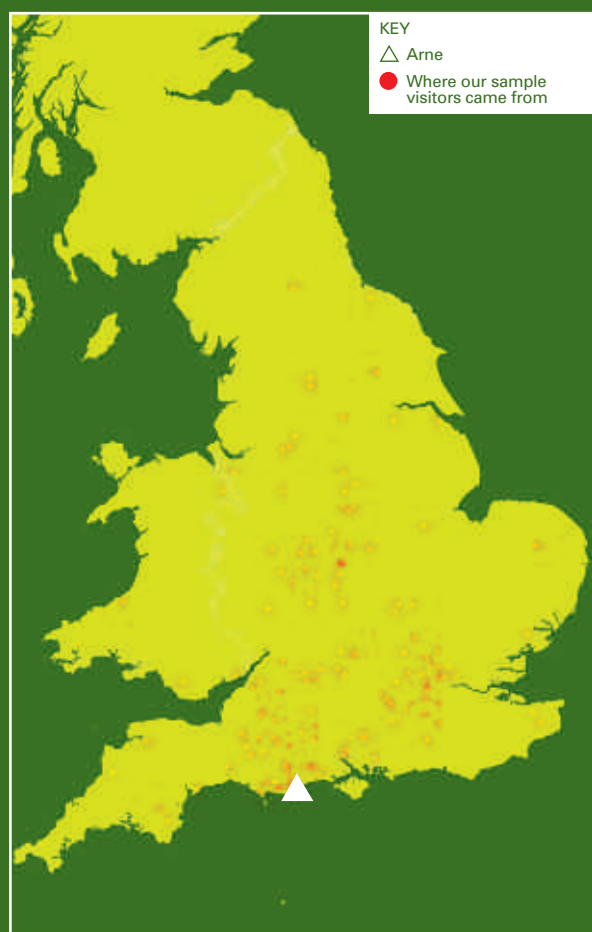
Arne is located in the Purbeck District of Dorset; a small rural area of 156 square miles, with 17,100 people in employment in 2008. The estimated economic output per resident is just above the county average, and tourism contributes approximately £95.2 million to the local economy. This implies that the region is relatively well-off, benefiting significantly from the tourism industry<sup>x</sup>.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 7.5 direct jobs and volunteers completed 1,134 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £110,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted almost 400 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Arne also received 77,410 visitors, of whom 74% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £4.4 million, of which £1.1 million was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Arne – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	7.5
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.9
3 Direct reserve expenditures	1.2
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	2.2
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>11.8</b>
5 Visitor spending	25.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37.3</b>



## CONCLUSION

Arne reserve supported over 37 FTE jobs in the local economy in 2009. This impact was predominantly due to local spending by the huge number of visitors that are attracted to the area by the site. The site is a valuable source of employment within the Purbeck district.

It also contributes to the natural heritage of this coastal area in ways that are not reflected solely by the measurable economic impacts, delivering cultural and recreational benefits to the tens of thousands of visitors, volunteers and local residents who engage with the site. The spectacular scenery, beautiful views and abundance of wildlife that the heaths, woodland and harbour have to offer also make Arne a valuable asset to the local community.

# BEMPTON CLIFFS



GANNET

**11.2  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£1.8  
MILLION**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 40 FTE jobs

**51.2  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**The RSPB Bempton Cliffs nature reserve is one of the best places in the UK to witness the sights, sounds...and smells of almost a quarter of a million breeding seabirds. The reserve, which was first purchased by the RSPB in 1969, supports the largest mainland gannetry in the UK, more than 37,000 pairs of kittiwakes, one of the largest colonies in the UK, plus thousands of guillemots, razorbills and puffins. It also protects over five kilometres of sea cliffs.**

On-site there is a small purpose-built visitor centre, as well as five specially-created cliff top viewpoints. A tour operator also offers sightseeing cruises around the sea cliffs themselves, and in 2008 the reserve leased out a contract with an ethical foods retailer in response to the growing popularity of tourist trips to the site.

While the land-based breeding colony at Bempton Cliffs is protected, the marine areas that the breeding seabirds depend upon for feeding and other essential activities, such as resting, are not. The evidence in this study further emphasises the importance of designating these areas as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

## THE LOCAL AREA

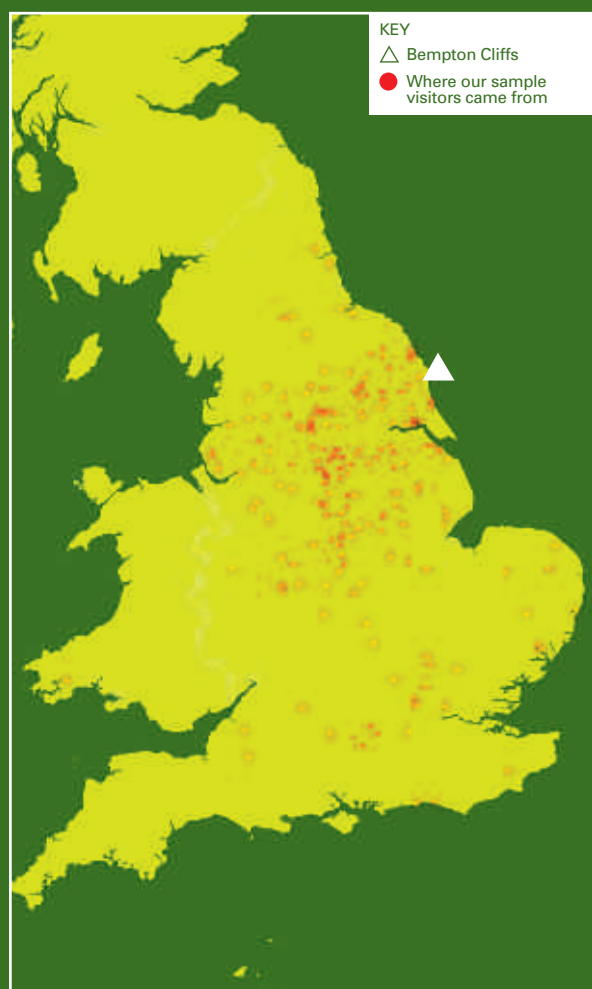
Bempton Cliffs reserve is located in the East Riding of Yorkshire. In 2004, the total value of tourism in the East Riding was estimated at £320.9 million, supporting 6,300 FTE jobs. Though the East Riding economy is diverse, it is heavily dependent on small businesses, a limited number of major employers (mainly in manufacturing) and the public sector. Projections made under the East Riding Economic Development Strategy 2007–11 suggest that the business base will remain diverse, but the growth of key sectors, including food and drink, environmental industries and cultural industries/tourism, will be important in strengthening the area's economic identity<sup>xi</sup>.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 7.7 direct jobs and volunteers completed 533 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £155,000 on maintenance and developments, and received 66,400 visitors, of whom 83% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £5.8 million, of which £1.8 million was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve.

### Bempton Cliffs – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	7.7
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.9
3 Direct reserve expenditures	2.6
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	0
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>11.2</b>
5 Visitor spending	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51.2</b>



## CONCLUSION

This unique and iconic coastal reserve is responsible for supporting over 51 jobs in the local community. Forty of these jobs are supported by visitor spending, illustrating the importance of tourism related to the reserve. Of this, an estimated 21.5 FTE jobs were supported around Bempton Cliffs in 2009 solely by tourism spend attributable to seabirds.

These results show the importance of seabirds and other sealife in stimulating local employment, a factor that should be taken into account by decision-makers when determining where new MPAs are designated to ensure that they deliver both for wildlife and for coastal communities.

# FRAMPTON MARSH



VISITOR CENTRE AT FRAMPTON MARSH

**9.6  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£280,000**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 6.5 FTE jobs

**16.1  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**Exciting things are happening at RSPB Frampton Marsh....the reserve has undergone a major makeover with the addition of a large reedbed, shallow freshwater 'scrapes' with islands for nesting birds and large areas of wet grassland grazing marsh. Being on one of the most important wetlands in Europe, The Wash, these new habitats have been rapidly colonised by a wide range of ducks, avocets and lapwings. Water voles and many species of dragonflies and butterflies have also become familiar sights in and around the areas of wildflowers. In winter, flocks of wild swans and geese often number in the thousands. The variety of wildlife makes Frampton an ideal place to visit throughout the year.**

The reserve boasts a new visitor centre with panoramic views of the reedbed, three kilometres of new paths to explore and three hides, two of which have 360 degree views, making you feel as if you're right in the middle of all the action. There is also a catering area where you can get a cup of tea and a snack, and the reserve provides free access at all times, with no charge for parking.

## THE LOCAL AREA

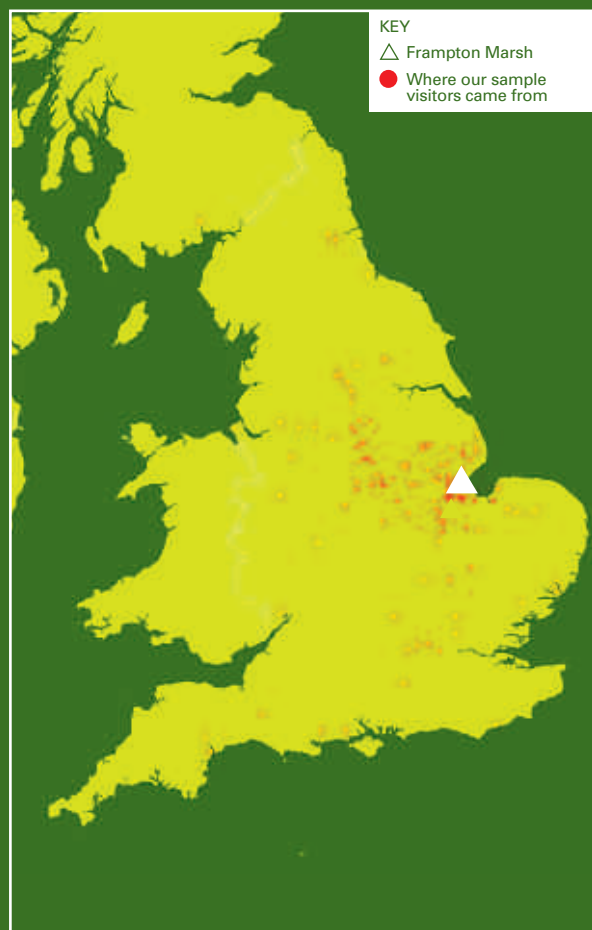
Frampton Marsh is situated on the coast of The Wash in Lincolnshire, four miles from the town of Boston. Economic productivity within Lincolnshire remains lower than the East Midlands regional average. The county has an economically active population and employment growth is expected to continue above the regional average. However, Lincolnshire has a higher proportion of people working in low wage, low skilled employment, such as machinery operations, than anywhere else in the region, and there is a net migration of people aged 18–24 leaving the county for higher education and higher skilled jobs and not returning<sup>xii</sup>.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 4.5 direct jobs and volunteers completed 117 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £220,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted over 410 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Frampton Marsh also received 32,054 visitors, of whom 87% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £780,000, of which £280,000 was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Frampton Marsh – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	4.5
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.5
3 Direct reserve expenditures	2.3
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	2.3
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>9.6</b>
5 Visitor spending	6.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16.1</b>



## CONCLUSION

Frampton Marsh reserve supported over 16 FTE jobs in the local area in 2009. The largest proportion of jobs were supported by spend of visitors to the reserve, a contribution that has increased significantly in recent years. It is expected that the increase in tourists to the reserve has been at least in part due to the development of the visitor facilities on site, illustrating how developments at reserves make both current, and ongoing, contributions to local economic activity.

# LAKENHEATH FEN



REEDBEDS AT LAKENHEATH FEN

**7.6  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£370,000**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 8.5 FTE jobs

**16.1  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

Lakenheath Fen reserve is made up of a mixture of wetland and woodland habitats, located just south of the Little Ouse in Suffolk. It is best known for its breeding golden orioles. Many years ago it was mostly made up of carrot fields, yet since 1995 the RSPB has been working to restore approximately 200 hectares of the reserve to washland, wet reedbed, ungrazed fen and wet grassland. This has encouraged the arrival of many birds including cranes, bitterns, bearded tits, marsh harriers, lapwings and redshanks, as well as other wetland wildlife.

With its wetlands restored, Lakenheath Fen will join an integrated network of other nature reserves including Wicken Fen, Chippenham Fen, Woodwalton Fen and the washlands of the rivers Great Ouse and Nene. Many of these, too, are undergoing similar restoration. The network will also aid in the replacement of coastal marshes before sea level rises change such habitats to a saline ecosystem. The reserve was opened to the public in 2004, with its visitor centre opening in 2007.

## THE LOCAL AREA

Lakenheath Fen is located in Suffolk, a largely rural area with a population of 714,000 in 2009. Around 42% of the Suffolk population live in rural areas, and approximately 86% of the county's parishes have a population smaller than 1,000. There were 290,600 employees working in the county in 2007, of which approximately 25,000 worked in Forest Heath, the district within which Lakenheath Fen is located<sup>xiii</sup>.

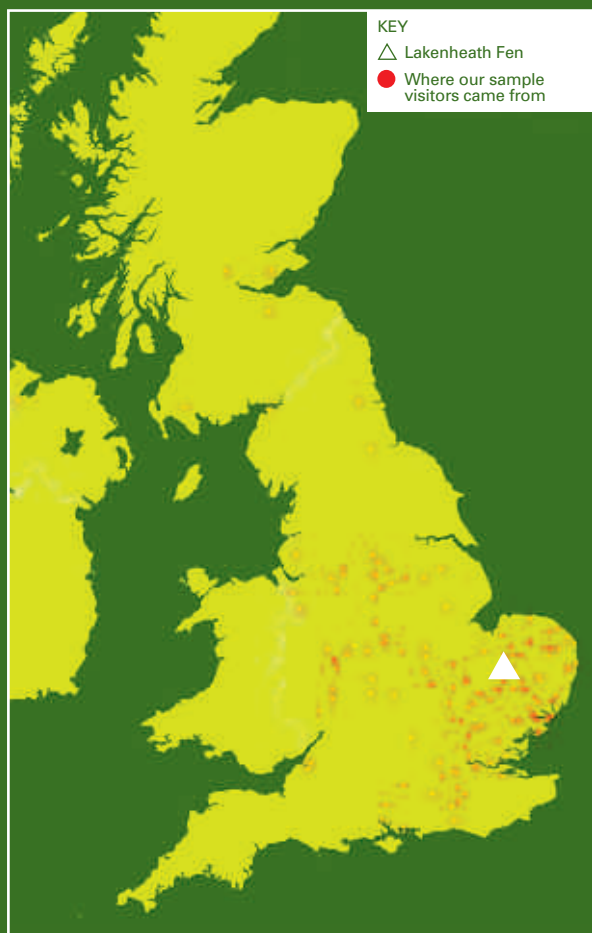


## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 4.8 direct jobs and volunteers completed 340 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £170,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted around 60 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Lakenheath Fen also received 30,999 visitors, of whom 94% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £810,000, of which £370,000 was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Lakenheath Fen – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	4.8
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.5
3 Direct reserve expenditures	2
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	0.3
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>7.6</b>
5 Visitor spending	8.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16.1</b>



## CONCLUSION

Lakenheath Fen is a valuable source of income for the local economy, attracting tourism spend of £370,000 every year. The impacts of the reserve have been significantly bolstered by the £710,000 investment into a visitor centre, with visits increasing 72% between 2007 and 2009, and this direct injection of funds has provided business to locally sourced contractors. This is an important example of how investment on site at RSPB reserves can have both immediate and ongoing impacts within the local economy.

In total the reserve supported over 16 FTE jobs locally, as well as providing numerous benefits to those who visit.

# MINSMERE



STARLINGS IN ROOSTING FLOCK

**36.9  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£2.9  
MILLION**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 66 FTE jobs

**102.9  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

Set within the stunning landscape of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Minsmere is the RSPB's ark on the Suffolk coast: a place where rare species have recovered, common species thrive and people and wildlife come face-to-face in a wild environment. The reedbeds host scarce and elusive species such as bitterns, marsh harriers, bearded tits and otters. Spring and autumn see many migrant birds passing through Minsmere's varied habitats, while on the coastal lagoon, known as the Scrape, colonies of avocets, gulls and terns nest.

Nightingales and warblers sing in spring. In summer spectacular numbers of butterflies, dragonflies and flowers can be seen, while at dusk nightjars can be heard on the surrounding heaths. The autumn red deer rut is a popular attraction and winter brings huge flocks of ducks to the marshes, with starlings often roosting in the reedbeds. Minsmere's visitor facilities include an RSPB shop, tearoom, toilets, eight birdwatching hides and three miles of nature trails. A major upgrade of facilities has been planned for Easter 2012, following which there will be a new classroom, outdoor family learning area and exciting new interpretation.

## THE LOCAL AREA

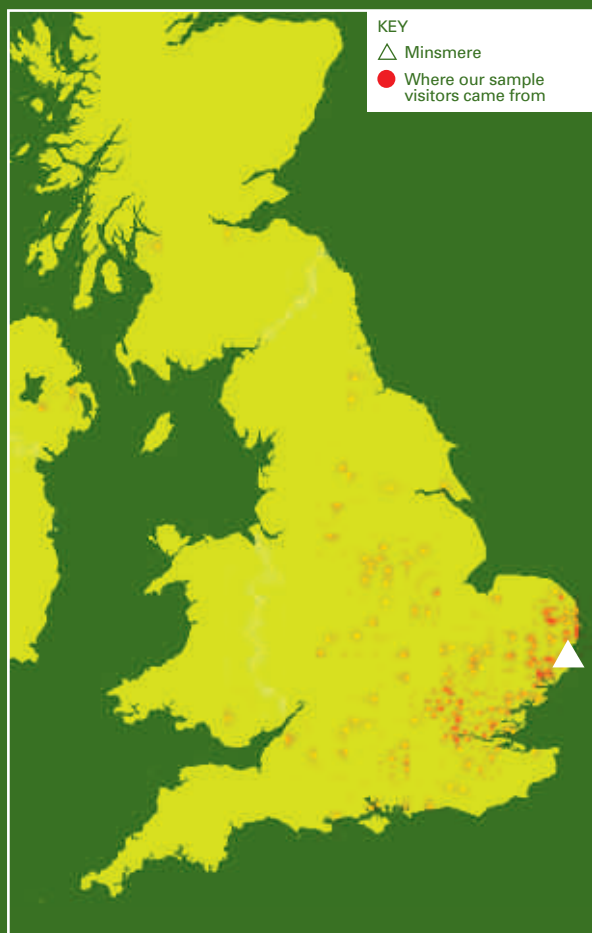
Minsmere is also located in the largely rural county of Suffolk, within the Suffolk coastal district. This area had 43,590 people in employment in 2007. During the recession, the number of claimants of unemployment benefits in Suffolk increased by 6,864 in the 12 months to May 2009. Suffolk's total number of claimants thus stood at 14,209, representing 3.4% of the county's working age population<sup>xiv</sup>.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 23.4 direct jobs and volunteers completed 1,584 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £620,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted 170 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Minsmere also received 80,271 visitors, of whom 85% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £8.1 million, of which £2.9 million was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Minsmere – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	23.4
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	2.6
3 Direct reserve expenditures	9.9
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	1
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>36.9</b>
5 Visitor spending	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102.9</b>



## CONCLUSION

Minsmere supported over 100 FTE jobs in the local area in 2009, illustrating the site's importance to the local economy, as well as to visitors, volunteers and, of course, UK wildlife.

The major contribution that the reserve makes to the local economy is through tourism. It is estimated that the 80,000 annual visitors to the reserve spend a staggering £8 million, of which £2.9 million occurs solely because of the reserve in the local area. This spend supports 66 FTE jobs in tourism related businesses, giving an idea of how important an established and popular nature reserve can be in terms of promoting local economic growth.

# MULL OF GALLOWAY



LIGHTHOUSE AT MULL OF GALLOWAY

**1.1  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£550,000**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 12.4 FTE jobs

**13.5  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**Witness life on the edge at Scotland's most southerly point. Perched above 280-foot cliffs, Mull of Galloway nature reserve offers breathtaking views whichever way you look – to Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man, and even the Lake District on a clear day – while all around is the frenzied activity of thousands of seabirds. Guillemots, razorbills and kittiwakes fill the air with their cries, and offshore, gannets may be seen heading to their breeding sites on the Scare Rocks, some eight miles distant.**

The reserve really comes to life in the spring when seabirds arrive to squabble over nest sites, and the first of the heathland flowers burst into colour. The violet-blue stars of the spring squill are the first of many dazzling colours to be seen at this time. But there's something to see year round, whether it's the birdlife or the seals and other animals out to sea. The reserve is open at all times, and the visitor centre, with its live camera feeds from the cliffs, is open from Easter until the end of October. Visitor facilities include toilets, a viewing platform (by the now disused foghorn) overlooking seabird colonies, and a circular trail. There is also a non-RSPB café and shop, and a lighthouse museum nearby.

## THE LOCAL AREA

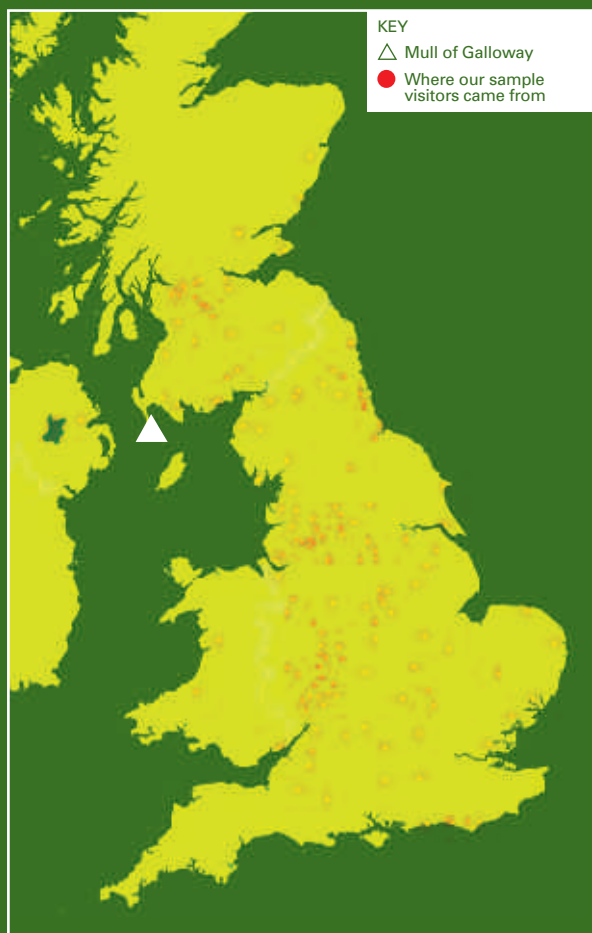
Mull of Galloway is located in Dumfries and Galloway, a primarily rural economy inclusive of forestry, tourism and food industries. It is home to 148,000 people and covers an area of almost 2,400 square miles. Since the outbreak of the Foot and Mouth Disease in 2001/2, much has been done to try and diversify the local economy in order to make it more resilient to such external shocks. One such project was the creation of the Making Tracks scheme in August 2002, which received funding from the Scottish Executive. The scheme aimed to encourage groups of farmers and land-based businesses to work with mainstream tourism businesses to develop sustainable nature-based tourism facilities and services.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 0.9 direct jobs and volunteers completed 185 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £3,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted 12 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Mull of Galloway also received 20,609 visitors, of whom 71% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £2.8 million, of which £550,000 was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Mull of Galloway – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	0.9
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.1
3 Direct reserve expenditures	0
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	0.1
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1.1</b>
5 Visitor spending	12.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13.5</b>



## CONCLUSION

Mull of Galloway is an excellent example of how nature reserves in remote rural areas can bring substantial economic benefits to the local community, supporting over 13 FTE jobs. Visitor spending accounted for almost all of the employment supported by the reserve, with 12.4 jobs supported in 2009, of which 3.3 were due specifically to seabirds. The results of the surveys at the site suggest that the 20,000 people who visited in 2009 spent a staggering £2.8 million in the local area, £550,000 of which was specifically down to the existence of the reserve. The vast majority of tourists, due to the remote nature of the reserve, were holiday makers, meaning that local accommodation providers in particular have received significant amounts of business from their proximity to the site.

# RATHLIN ISLAND



PUFFIN

**3.9  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£230,000**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 5.3 FTE jobs

**9.2  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**At just seven square miles in size and with just over 100 inhabitants, Rathlin Island has an untamed and rare beauty. Visitor numbers to the reserve have increased vastly since it opened in 1978, and have almost trebled from 5,000 to 14,500 in the last 10 years.**

At the height of the breeding season, Rathlin Island is home to Northern Ireland's largest seabird colony. A visitor to the West Lighthouse viewpoint can expect a truly unique experience, surrounded by an amphitheatre of incredible noise and birdlife. At the new RSPB Seabird Centre, visitors get close-up views of a seabird colony where thousands of fulmars, puffins, razorbills, guillemots, kittiwakes, gannets and shags congregate to breed from May to July. The reserve is the island's main employer, with two full-time and three seasonal staff. According to the reserves manager, if the reserve did not exist then those employed would not be able to find work anywhere else on the island.

## THE LOCAL AREA

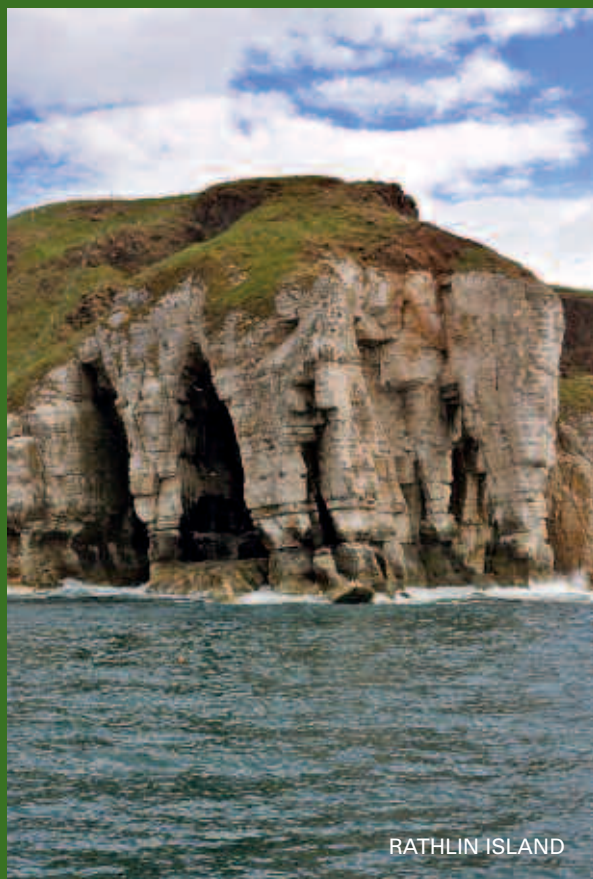
Rathlin Island is part of the Moyle District in Northern Ireland. Tourism is the main industry, with the natural environment, coastline and the glens identified as particularly important features. This district is well suited to the industry and is characterised by high levels of business creation and strong levels of interest in entrepreneurship. However, certain weaknesses include a lack of further education colleges, lack of business space, poor tourism infrastructure, lack of broadband infrastructure, lack of infrastructure projects, low income/low value jobs and poor rural performance<sup>xv</sup>.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 2.8 direct jobs and volunteers completed 600 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £27,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted over 73 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Rathlin Island also received 14,479 visitors, of whom 14% of all respondents said that they were mainly interested in birds and 56% said that whilst they were interested in birds, their main interest was in wildlife and nature as a whole. These visitors spent a total of £920,000, of which £230,000 was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Rathlin Island – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	2.8
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.4
3 Direct reserve expenditures	0.3
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	0.4
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>3.9</b>
5 Visitor spending	5.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9.2</b>



RATHLIN ISLAND

## CONCLUSION

Rathlin Island reserve plays an integral role in the local community, in terms of the social, cultural and economic benefits it offers local people. As well as providing an iconic setting to view some of the UK's best seabird colonies, the reserve offers a diverse range of employment and volunteering opportunities. In 2009, the reserve brought £230,000 of visitor spend to the island, supporting 5.3 FTE jobs in tourism related businesses, 3.3 of which were specifically due to the presence of seabirds. These findings support those of an RSPB report released in 2010 which examined in more detail the economic impacts had by the reserve, estimating that around 9.273 local FTE jobs were supported annually by the reserve over 2008 and 2009.

This highlights the need to protect the waters used by these seabirds for feeding and other activities as Marine Protected Areas to ensure these benefits to the local economy are retained.

The Bonamargy and Rathlin Ward had 785 employees in 2009, meaning that the reserve supported about 1.2% of employment in the Ward, and equivalent to 9% of the population on the Island itself.

# SALTHOLME



VISITOR CENTRE AT SALTHOLME

**35.4  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£150,000**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 3.4 FTE jobs

**38.8  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**Saltholme wildlife reserve and discovery park is an open expanse of wetlands set in the dynamic industrialised landscape of the North Tees Marshes in North East England. The site provides a place of tranquillity within a busy urban area, offering a chance to encounter nature first-hand in all seasons. Ten thousand wetland birds spend their winter at Saltholme and their massed flocks wheeling overhead are an amazing spectacle. In summer the largest inland numbers of breeding common terns live in a clamouring colony that “doesn’t sleep at night”. In spring, brown hares box out on the wet meadows and in autumn wading birds, migrating from their Arctic breeding grounds, pipe overhead.**

There is a modern visitor centre with shop and café and a discovery zone where visitors can enjoy hands-on encounters with wetland wildlife. There is also a wildlife garden and adventure play area that help make Saltholme an inclusive nature experience where everyone from families to the most enthusiastic wildlife experts are welcome.

## THE LOCAL AREA

Saltholme is located in the Tees Valley of the North East of England. The area has a low economic productivity per person, and also has employment rates well below the national average, at around 65% in 2009<sup>xvi</sup>. However, tourism in the Tees Valley, which supported 5.8% of employment in the region in 2007, increased by over 30% between 2003 and 2008. Saltholme nature reserve was listed among the investments that have supported this trend. In 2008, revenue from tourism supported 10,500 jobs in Tees Valley and 83,500 jobs in the North East (FTEs)<sup>xvii</sup>.

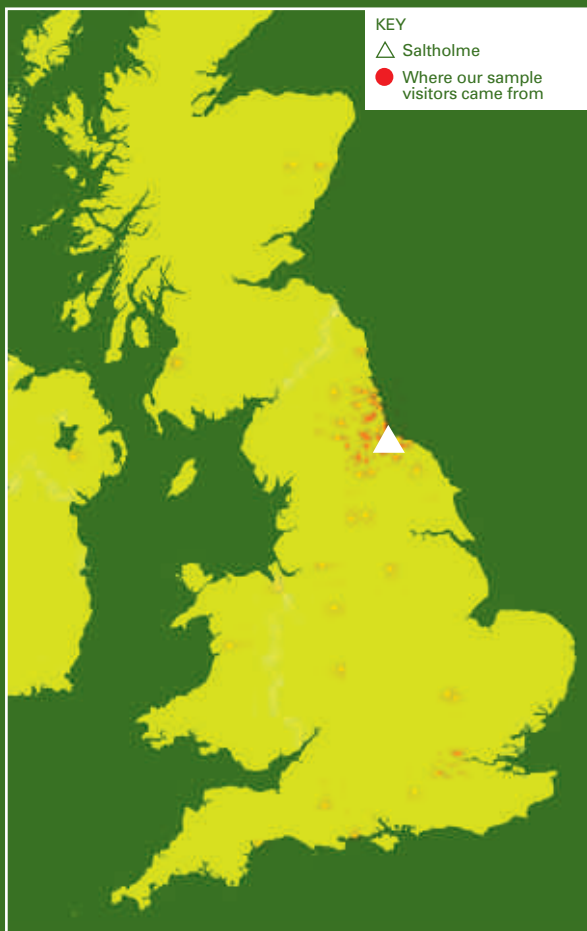


## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 17.6 direct jobs and volunteers completed 1,986 working days at the site. The reserve was opened in 2009, following a £7 million investment into the local area, and also hosted 195 hectares of worked agricultural lets. Saltholme received 85,775 visitors, of whom 76% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £580,000, of which £150,000 was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Saltholme reserve – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	17.6
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	2.1
3 Direct reserve expenditures	14
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	1.7
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>35.4</b>
5 Visitor spending	3.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38.8</b>



## CONCLUSION

Saltholme reserve is a fantastic example of a multi-million pound investment that delivers benefits to both people and the environment. The local community are engaged via a number of means, such as volunteering, social inclusion groups and after school clubs. Within only a few years of being established, Saltholme has almost as many visitors as some of the most popular reserves in the country. As well as the many and varied social benefits offered by this site, its activities and the tourists it attracts supported almost 39 jobs in local communities in 2009. This illustrates the ways in which this social and environmental investment also bears tangible economic fruit for the local economy.

# SOUTH STACK CLIFFS



SOUTH STACK CLIFFS

**4.6  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£570,000**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 12.9 FTE jobs

**17.5  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

South Stack Cliffs RSPB reserve is a popular tourist destination located three miles away from Holyhead, Anglesey. In the spring and early summer, more than 7,000 seabirds breed on South Stack's cliffs and visitors can admire them using binoculars and telescopes, or catch all the action on live TV images in Ellin's Tower. In addition to the seabirds, the area supports 11 breeding pairs of choughs and up to 40 wintering birds. The reserve's heathland is part of the largest area of maritime heath in North Wales and besides choughs, this important habitat supports the endemic plant spatulate fleawort and the uncommon silver-studded blue butterfly, as well as adders, common lizards and a range of other flora and fauna.

Since April 2010, the RSPB has introduced a café and visitor centre at the site, and visitors can also visit the nearby South Stack Lighthouse.

## THE LOCAL AREA

Anglesey's economy is currently under-performing compared to regional, national and UK averages. Average economic productivity per person is around 15% lower than in North Wales, around 20% lower than in Wales and around 45% lower than in the UK<sup>xviii</sup>.

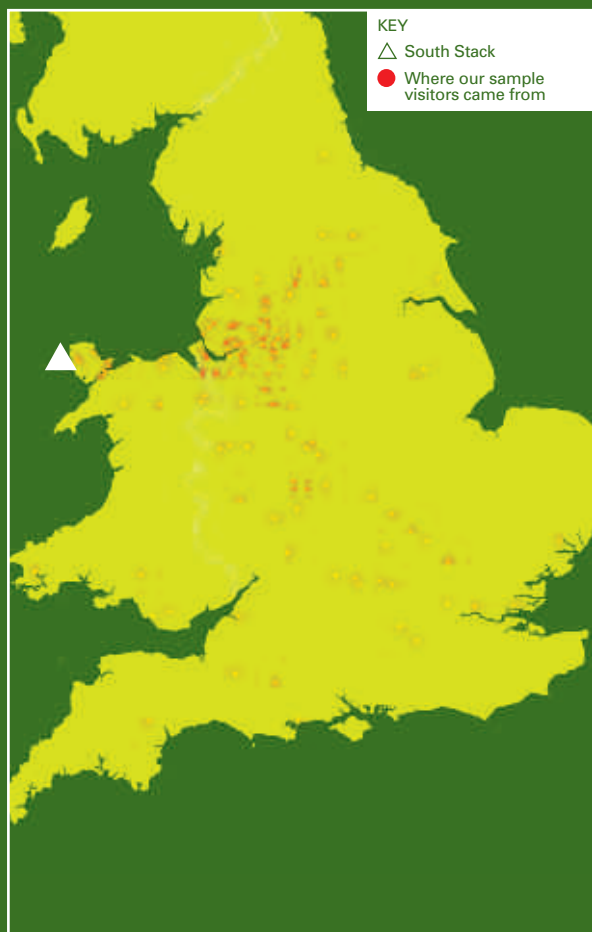
Since 2007, Anglesey has benefited from the Convergence Programme, a European initiative aimed at promoting economic development. This shows that employment supported by the South Stack Cliffs reserve, and tourism brought to the area, is likely to be extremely important to the community.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 3.6 direct jobs, a figure which has since increased to 12 FTE jobs in 2010 following investment at the site, and volunteers completed 307 working days at the site. The reserve spent almost £40,000 on maintenance and developments, and hosted 38 hectares of worked agricultural lets. South Stack Cliffs also received 32,165 visitors, of whom 74% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £2.2 million, of which £570,000 was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### South Stack – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	3.6
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	0.4
3 Direct reserve expenditures	0.4
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	0.2
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>4.6</b>
5 Visitor spending	12.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17.5</b>



## CONCLUSION

As a receiver of European funding for economic development, the Anglesey area is characterised by low levels of economic prosperity and employment opportunities. In this context the jobs supported by South Stack Cliffs in the area play an important role in the local community. The jobs are largely supported by tourism to the reserve, which led to the equivalent of 12.9 full-time jobs in related businesses in the area in 2009, of which 6.4 jobs were specifically related to seabird tourism.

# TITCHWELL MARSH



AVOCET

**28  
FTE JOBS**

supported by RSPB and farming activities on and around the reserve

**£4.6  
MILLION**

tourist spend attracted to the local area by the reserve, supporting 104 FTE jobs

**132  
LOCAL FTE JOBS**

supported by the reserve in total

## THE RESERVE

**Titchwell Marsh, part of the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, boasts populations of marsh harriers, bearded tits, avocets, bitterns, gulls and terns. In autumn and winter, visitors can see up to 20 species of wading birds as well as ducks and geese. In 2005, Titchwell's three-year project to rehabilitate the reedbed for bitterns proved successful when the first pair in 18 years bred on the reserve.**

On-site facilities at Titchwell recently reached new levels with the launch of the innovative Parrinder hide. The structure was one of eight buildings in the East of England to win an award from the Royal Institute of British Architects. The reserve is always open and the shop, servery, feeding station and visitor centre are open throughout the year (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day).

## THE LOCAL AREA

Titchwell Marsh reserve is located near King's Lynn, in Norfolk. Norfolk is a largely rural area located in the north of the Eastern England region, with approximately 90 miles of coastal area. There were 323,000 employees working in Norfolk in 2008, of which 50,300 were located in King's Lynn and West Norfolk. Projected future growth for the county is for a decrease in employment of 1.3% between 2008 and 2013, but for an overall increase of 3.6% by 2018<sup>xix</sup>.

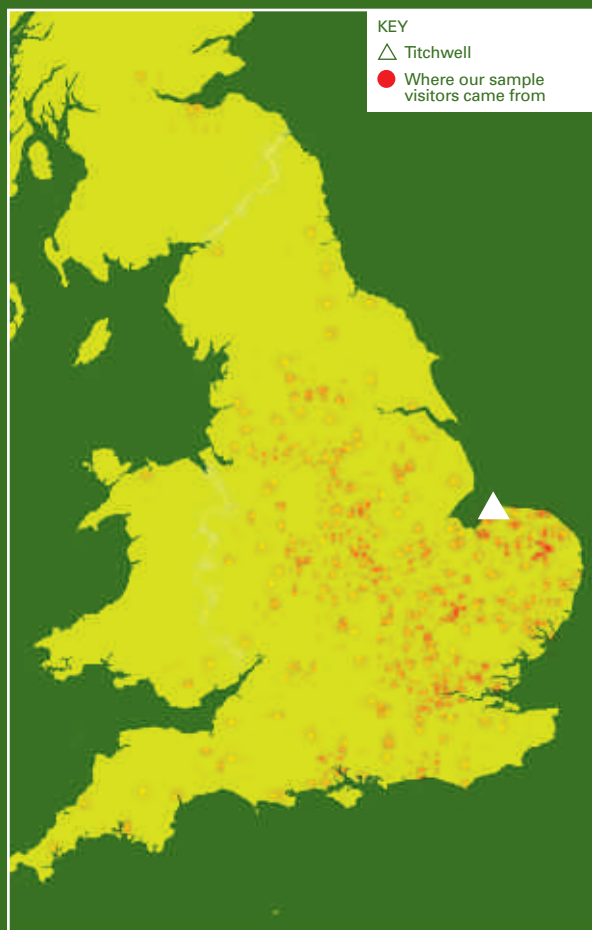
The tourism industry is of great significance to the region. The East of England Development Agency estimated that 13.3% of all Norfolk's jobs were supported by the tourism sector in 2008. Data derived using the Cambridge Economic Impact Model indicates that Norfolk destinations attracted around 29.5 million trips, which were estimated to be worth around £2.5 billion to the Norfolk economy and support 47,000 tourism related jobs<sup>xx</sup>.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In 2009, the reserve supported 15.4 direct jobs and volunteers completed 1,004 working days at the site. The reserve spent over £630,000 on maintenance and developments. Titchwell also received 74,222 visitors, of whom 92% said that the reserve was one or the main reason for them visiting the area. These visitors spent a total of £10.4 million, of which £4.6 million was local, additional spend, attributable directly to the reserve. The table below shows the FTE jobs that were supported by the five types of economic impacts:

### Titchwell Marsh – estimated total employment impact in 2009

ECONOMIC IMPACTS	FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
1 Direct employment	15.4
2 Spending by employees/volunteers	1.6
3 Direct reserve expenditures	11
4 Grazing lets/agricultural tenants	0
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>
5 Visitor spending	104
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>



## CONCLUSION

Titchwell is another flagship RSPB reserve which, predominantly through the tourism it attracts to the area, has a huge impact on the surrounding communities. Over 100 FTE jobs were supported locally by visitor spending alone in 2009. In addition, development on the reserve, including the maintenance and enhancement of visitor facilities and infrastructure, injected a significant amount of money into the local area and supported 11 FTE jobs.

As part of the North Norfolk Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Titchwell Marsh is representative of the engagement people have been having with nature in recent years. It is important to note the contribution that tourism and recreation related to the natural environment continues to make to people's wellbeing and to the local economy even through the worst recession seen in decades.

# 07 RSPB reserve network total

The individual case studies were used along with aggregate RSPB data to estimate the total impacts of the RSPB reserve network in local economies across the UK. This type of study was first performed in 2002<sup>xxi</sup>, and the table below presents the findings from both studies, to see how the impacts have changed over time.

As shown in this table, the total number of jobs supported by RSPB reserves in local economies in 2009 is estimated at 1,872, with £66 million of spending in the local areas around reserves. These figures have risen by 87% and 235% respectively in the past seven years.

The increase in economic impacts from reserves over the past seven years has been due to a number of factors. However, **two main explanations** stand out.

**Firstly, the size of the network has increased by roughly 17% since 2002, both in terms of land managed and the number of reserves.** This has driven increases in the direct jobs supported by RSPB activities and land management, rising from 678 to 867, and also the funds introduced by these activities, which have risen from £8 million to over £21 million.

**Secondly, visitor numbers have almost doubled, rising from 1.05 million in 2002 to just under 2 million in 2009, with total, local, additional spend increasing by almost four times to over £44 million.** As a result of this, the economic impacts of RSPB visitors in local areas has trebled since 2002, with the associated tourism now supporting over 1,000 FTE jobs across the UK.

**These findings illustrate the significant and increasing importance of the RSPB's conservation work, and particularly the impacts of nature tourism, in contributing to the economies of local communities.**

FTE jobs and spend supported by the RSPB reserve network in 2002 and 2009

TYPE OF ECONOMIC IMPACT	LOCAL FTE JOBS SUPPORTED		LOCAL EXPENDITURE (£M)	
	2002	2009	2002	2009
1 Direct employment	308	553	4.1	11.1
2 Employee spend	35	61	1.2	2.7
3 Reserve spend	101	110	2.7	7.9
4 Grazing lets	234	143	–	–
<b>RSPB AND FARMING ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21.7</b>
5 Visitor spend	335	1,005	11.7	44.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,872</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>65.9</b>

**RSPB RESERVES BROUGHT  
£66 MILLION  
TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES  
IN 2009, SUPPORTING  
1,872 FTE JOBS**

RSPB LAKE VYRNWY NATURE RESERVE



# 08

## Charismatic species

### A. WHITE-TAILED EAGLES

The white-tailed eagle is the fourth largest eagle in the world and the adult's pale head, large yellow beak and trademark white tail make it one of the UK's most spectacular species. This magnificent bird was reintroduced to Scotland in 1975 after being driven to extinction in around 1918 and has since established a self-sustaining population of 52 pairs. The eagles have become the focus of much wildlife-related media and tourism, and are steadily becoming an iconic aspect of Scotland's natural heritage.

#### THE ISLE OF MULL

There is currently a population of 14 pairs of white-tailed eagles on the Isle of Mull, located in the Inner Hebrides just off the west coast. The eagles played a part in attracting almost a quarter of the 600,000 visitors to Mull and in 2010 were responsible for between £5 million and £8 million of tourist spend on the Island. This money supported at least 110 FTE jobs in 2010. These benefits have more than trebled since 2005, when the study was first performed, showing how wildlife is going from strength to strength as a provider for the local community.

These 28 birds were responsible for around 4% of the jobs associated with wildlife tourism in the whole of Scotland, constituting a major economic benefit to the economy of Mull.

#### THE ISLE OF SKYE

The Isle of Skye, located just north of Mull in the Inner Hebrides, is also host to a self-sustaining population of white-tailed eagles. Surveys were performed in 2008, following the same methods as used for the study on Mull, to establish visitors' spending habits and motivations for visiting. The results provided yet another example of the huge benefits the presence of white-tailed eagles has for local businesses. Of the 400,000 visitors to Skye, around 15% noted the eagles as one of the reasons they came, with the birds attracting between £1.9 million and £3 million of spend by visitors. This spend supported a minimum of 42 FTE jobs in 2008.

### B. RED KITES

#### THE GALLOWAY KITE TRAIL

The Galloway Kite Trail, a community-based wildlife viewing initiative in Dumfries and Galloway, is another fantastic example of the economic benefits of charismatic species. The site was launched in October 2003 during the successful reintroduction of red kites to the Loch Ken area, and has since flourished as both a habitat for the kites, and a visitor attraction. Since 2004 the site has brought £2.63 million of tourist spend into the region, and in 2009 supported 20 FTE jobs in the local community. Again, these trends are increasing over time, with the economic impacts of the site more than doubling from 2004 to 2009. The natural environment and wildlife featured heavily in visitors' motivation in all of these studies, emphasising the importance of green tourism within the Scottish economy.

These examples build on the existing evidence that conservation work, whether a species reintroduction project or the development of a nature reserve, can have huge benefits to local economies.

THE ISLE OF MULL



THE ISLE OF SKYE





## 2008

The white-tailed eagles were responsible for between £1.9 million and £3 million of tourist spend on the Isle of Skye, supporting 42 FTE jobs.

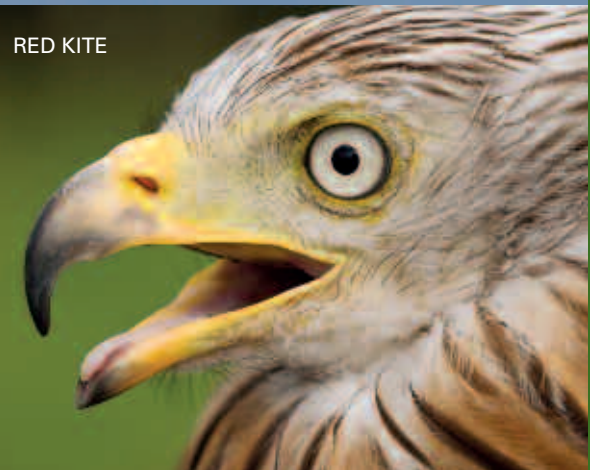
WHITE-TAILED EAGLE



## 2009

The Galloway Kite Trail brought £700,000 of tourist spend to Dumfries and Galloway, supporting 20 FTE jobs.

RED KITE



## 2010

The white-tailed eagles were responsible for between £5 million and £8 million of tourist spend on the Isle of Mull, supporting 110 FTE jobs.



GALLOWAY  
RED KITE TRAIL



## RESERVE CASE STUDIES

Large reserves in rural or coastal areas with established visitor facilities, such as **Arne**, **Minsmere** and **Titchwell Marsh**, bring substantial economic benefits to local communities, with Titchwell supporting over 100 FTE jobs through its contribution to local tourism alone.

At more remote locations, such as **Rathlin Island** and **Mull of Galloway**, the impacts are smaller, but are perhaps of even more importance within the local economies where alternative employment opportunities are likely to be scarce.

Coastal reserves, such as **Bempton Cliffs** and **South Stack Cliffs** have demonstrated the benefits that preserving marine, as well as terrestrial, life can bring to people in the UK. The sites attracted substantial numbers of visitors and tourism spend, a large proportion of which was specifically due to seabirds.

**Frampton Marsh** and **Lakenheath Fen** provide particular examples of the local economic returns from investing in conservation and nature reserves, both in the short-term and continuing into the future through boosted visitor numbers. Investment of £1 million into visitor facilities at these reserves in 2007 and 2008 is likely to have contributed to the combined increase of around 150% in visitor numbers between 2008 and 2009.

**Saltholme** provides a fantastic study of an urban reserve that provides cheap and easy access to the natural environment, and the benefits from engaging with nature, whilst also supporting significant levels of local employment.

RESERVES	LOCAL FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
Arne	37
Bempton Cliffs	51
Frampton Marsh	16
Lakenheath Fen	16
Minsmere	103
Mull of Galloway	14
Rathlin Island	9
Saltholme	39
South Stack Cliffs	18
Titchwell Marsh	132

## RESERVE NETWORK TOTAL

In total, the RSPB reserve network supported 1,872 jobs in local economies in 2009, an increase of 87% since 2002. The rise in visitor numbers and associated local tourism spend was of particular importance, reflecting the growing trend in nature tourism exhibited across the UK in recent years. The impacts generated by reserves emphasise the crucial links between conservation work and economic activity in this sector, and the potential to make nature work for local economic growth.

TOTAL	LOCAL FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
RSPB Reserve Network	1,872

## SPECIES

Species conservation work, to address declines in populations driven by human activities, forms an integral aspect of the RSPB's work. In the past there have been some conflicts around the reintroduction of raptor species such as the white-tailed eagle and the red kite in terms of the impacts they may have upon local people, businesses and communities. The case studies in this report have shown that the reintroductions of popular and **charismatic species** can have huge benefits to people and economies through associated local tourism. Such economic impacts should be taken into consideration, alongside ecological, social and cultural outcomes, when assessing programmes aimed at enhancing biodiversity in the UK.

SPECIES	LOCAL FTE JOBS SUPPORTED
White-tailed eagles on the Isle of Skye in 2008	42
Galloway Kite Trail in Dumfries and Galloway in 2009	20
White-tailed eagles on the Isle of Mull in 2010	110

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The RSPB speaks out for birds and wildlife, tackling the problems that threaten our environment. Nature is amazing – help us keep it that way.

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