



Wildlife Skills – Training for a Career in Nature Conservation

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Evaluation Report November 2017

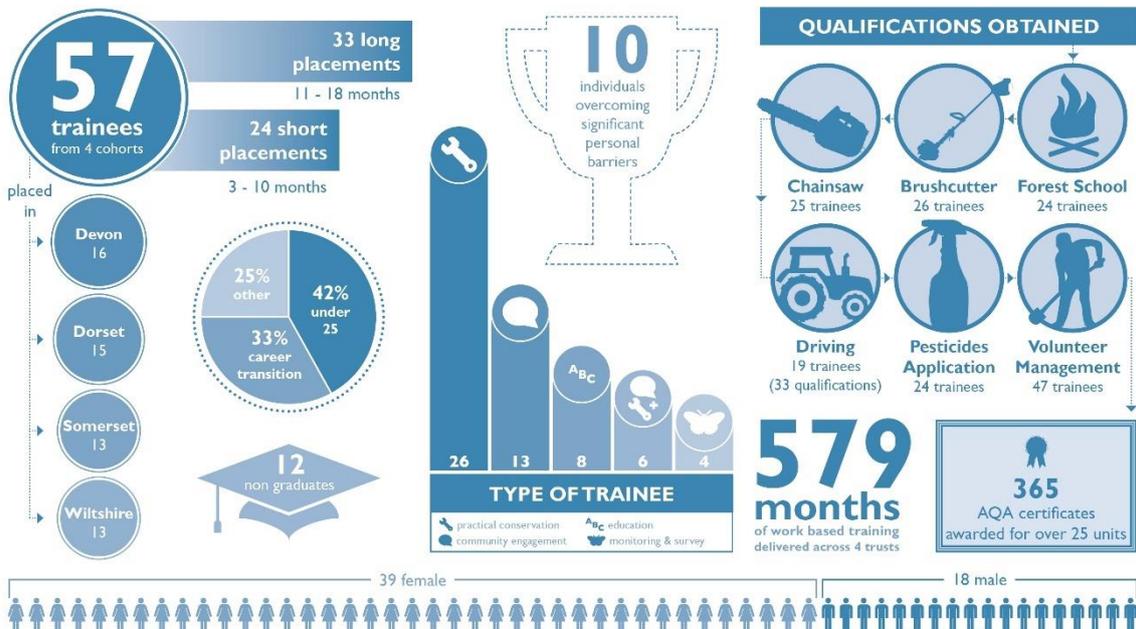
Executive summary

The Wildlife Skills Training for a Career in Nature Conservation programme (2014 to 2017) funded through Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Skills for the Future delivered 57 training placements in a range of conservation skills for people from diverse backgrounds across 4 Wildlife Trusts in the South West of England. Forty-seven (82%) highly trained individuals are now employed in the sector, with the other 10 in further training, or expected to gain employment within the next few months.

South West Wildlife Trusts Wildlife Skills Programme 2014 - 2017



End of project evaluation: Training delivered cohorts 1 - 4



to select from a range of local placements, and from the combined experience and skills of the four Trusts.

Hence in 2014, the four Trusts working collectively under the South West Wildlife Trusts (SWWT) umbrella were awarded £829,000 from HLF out of a total project cost of £1,075,200 towards a three-year project, Wildlife Skills – Training for a Career in Nature Conservation, to deliver trainee placements.

The approved purposes were:

- 1) To deliver 46, 12-18 month long, trainee placements focussing on three key areas;
 - a. monitoring and surveying
 - b. volunteer and community engagement
 - c. practical conservation
- 2) Placements will be delivered across four Wildlife Trusts; Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire and Somerset
- 3) To diversify the conservation workforce by providing opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly young people and those in transitional phases of their lives and careers.

The programme was designed to utilise and extend the training model developed by the previous Dorset scheme. Training was to be delivered through certificated, non-certificated and hands-on training/experience under the supervision of professionals within each Trust. Participants would develop outstanding skills sets that would enable them to fill identified skills gaps, add significantly to the quality and diversity of the natural heritage workforce and contribute towards safeguarding our natural heritage and increasing the number and range of communities engaging with it.

Within the original training plan, it was stated that evaluating the overall success of the project would be based on three key indicators; numbers of trainees completing the programme, employment of trainees within SWWT, and subsequent employment of trainees in the sector. The final evaluation strategy for the programme also aimed to address the four expected Skills for the Future outcomes by answering the following 4 key evaluation questions;

- Was our training programme effective in getting new people skilled to the correct level to become employable in the conservation sector?
- What impact, if any, did we have in reinforcing the workforce in the South West, especially within our own Trusts?
- Did our selection methods enable us to recruit trainees from diverse backgrounds, in particular young people and people in career transition?
- Were there any wider benefits from the scheme for Trust staff or the organisation?

The evaluation methodology used is described in more depth in section 5 of this report.

2) Programme delivery

Key achievements of the Wildlife Skills training programme are summarised in the infographics found in Appendices 1 and 2.

Recruitment

Most Cohort 1 to 3 placements were advertised concurrently across all four Trusts in spring of 2014, 2015 and 2016. If an additional placement became available due to a previous trainee gaining employment, and for Cohort 4 placements which varied considerably in length, individual placements were advertised on a more ad hoc basis.

The placements were promoted via social media, outreach to community partners and via industry recognised sites such as Countryside Jobs Service (CJS). During the application stage, Trusts were sometimes swamped with large numbers of applicants from graduates in ecology or geography etc. Whilst some of these graduates also had significant barriers to overcome to gain a foothold in the conservation industry it did make it difficult to identify who *needed* the opportunity the most, the basis of the recruitment policy. Most of these applications came via the CJS advertising route, whilst more diverse candidates found out about the scheme via social media or targeted local recruitment. Applicants were encouraged to apply in any format they would like eg a video, or a PowerPoint presentation, and these were very well received by Trust staff. However, only very few applicants chose this method and the default position was to fill in formal application forms. Although all opportunities were signposted from a single website, each Trust required a different form and so candidates who were interested in placements across the region, had to fill in up to 4 forms, which could easily put people off applying. This also meant that diversity information was not consistently held for all applicants. Around 600 candidates applied to the programme, with more applicants in general for practical roles, than for engagement and education roles.

Staff from each Trust then sifted the applications; some Trusts anonymise applications and some don't. There were a few examples where conservation staff rejected applicants who demonstrated great need for training to favour those with more skills, often graduates, at this stage, and Project Leads had to step in to remind conservation staff of the aims of the Wildlife Skills programme and re-instate these applicants. These experiences have led to a number of recommendations for recruitment in other schemes which can be found in section 4.

Selection

Project Leads and mentors from each Trust shortlisted 6 to 20 candidates to attend selection days in each county. These followed the format developed by the previous Dorset SFF programme, whereby candidates spent time informally working together on activities combined with a very short (15 to 20 minute) more formal interview over the course of around 5 hours. Activities varied between Trusts, but always included a practical task eg bird box making, a planning task, eg planning for an educational visit, and some element of engaging with the public to be considered in at least one of these or an additional separate task. Candidates relaxed during these days, and staff were able to see how they worked in a team, interacted with others and look at their potential for developing practical and wildlife identification skills. The short interviews were kept as informal as possible, and included questions designed to test aptitude and enthusiasm rather than existing specialist knowledge or skills.



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All candidates attending selection day were offered individual feedback regardless of the outcome, and signposted to other opportunities where appropriate. In total, around over 200 candidates attended selection days, with many (including unsuccessful candidates) remarking on how enjoyable the process had been and how much they had learnt by attending. On 3 occasions, close contenders from previous selection days were recalled to fill short notice Cohort 4 positions.

Training plan overview

Initially, it was intended that there would be three types of placements offered; 4 Monitoring and Survey (MS) placements to last 18 months each; 20 Volunteer & Community Engagement (CE) lasting 12 months each, and 22 Practical Conservation (PC) lasting 12 months each. These 46 were to be delivered in 3 Cohorts each starting on 1st July each year, with 12 placements planned for DeWT, and DoWT and 11 in each of SWT and WWT.

As the programme progressed, it was apparent that the experience of Devon CE trainees was much more focussed on education outreach than in the other Trusts, and so these placements were classed as, and subsequently advertised as Education & Engagement (EE) placements to give candidates a clearer idea of the type of training on offer. Almost all of these EE trainees decided to train in the highest level of Forest School accreditation on offer, Level 3, as they had already identified that they wished to seriously pursue this in their subsequent careers.

Six other placements were also classed as 'crossover' placements, as the trainees within them chose to widen their skillsets to include elements from both the CE and PC training programmes, reflecting their personal interests. The flexibility to allow such bespoke experience within the training programme was a definite advantage to participants, but on occasion did cause minor difficulties, for example when a trainee signed up to PC traineeship, wanted to do much more survey work than was available, and so expectations of trainees had to be managed closely.

Learning from the previous Dorset scheme, trainees were encouraged to apply for jobs as soon as they felt ready, and supported by project staff in their applications. This meant that several trainees left their placements early, which left considerable savings in bursary payments and other expenses. This underspend was able to fund an additional 4th Cohort of 11 trainees between 1st January 2017 and an extended project deadline of 31st October 2017.

Hence, 57 placements were delivered; 26 Practical Conservation (PC), 13 Volunteer & Community Engagement (CE), 8 Education & Engagement (EE), 4 Monitoring & Survey (MS), & 6 crossover PC and CE. 15 of these were delivered in each of DeWT & DoWT, 13 in SWT and 14 in WWT.

579 months of work based training were delivered (instead of the planned 576) with each county delivering between 24% and 26% of the total. 33 long placements (11 to 18 months) and 24 short placements (3-10 months) were delivered.



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Delivery of Centralised Training

Centralised training was delivered by a combination of host Trust staff and professional trainers at a series of 4 residential training camps per year, complemented by additional central training days and an on-line e-learning system. The residential sessions lasted 5 days each, and were held every quarter from July 2014 to April 2017, with an additional camp held in August 2017 for Cohort 4 trainees. Training content for these weeks was based on a typical trainee staying in placement for one year and attending 4 camps. Because of varying placement lengths this wasn't always possible, but adjustments were made so that training content was applicable to all.

The 4 camps per year were rotated around the four Trusts, giving trainees a chance to have different wildlife or community experiences, eg Brownsea Island's red squirrels or Wiltshire's Help for Heroes programme, see different types of habitat eg Devon culm grassland or learn new local skills eg Somerset's dry-stone walling. Trainees very quickly became very proud of their own Trust, and wanted to share it with the others, but because of the partnership, they also developed a sense of belonging and loyalty to the four South West Trusts, and formed links between Trusts, that have proved beneficial beyond the length of their placements (see later section on benefits to the wider sector). Residential training was reported by 17 out of 23 respondents in the trainee survey as being particularly enjoyable or inspirational.

Centralised training focussed on developing core competencies of trainees including:

- Health & Safety – 43 trainees received CIEH L2 Health & Safety training, and all Cohort 2 to 4 trainees completed an e-learning package with Safety Media of 12 modules of Health and Safety and Personal Development training
- First Aid – 45 trainees received First Aid Training (all others were already certificated)
- Volunteer management training – 47 trainees received formal volunteer management training via Lantra (Cohort 1) or AQA accreditation (Cohort 2 onwards).
- Project management
- Presentation skills and Communicating through the Media (including social media)
- Effective CV and job application writing, and interview techniques
- Personal effectiveness and difficult conversations training – added during the programme due to feedback from trainees and mentors regarding levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Time management – added to the programme after feedback from mentors suggested that this was an area that many trainees were struggling with.

The concept of the AQA unit award scheme was introduced to trainees at the first residential camp they attended. AQA units are nationally recognised accreditations that have been designed for people to develop their skills. AQAs were delivered through either practical work based training and experience (via Local Work Based Training) or via direct taught training sometimes with 'homework' assignments (Centralised Training). Some units require a checklist completed by the tutor without the need for learner to write anything, whilst others require learners to complete short worksheets to demonstrate learning outcomes. The processes are designed to be as accessible as possible, for example, a learner could provide oral answers and a scribe write them down, if they had a learning difficulty. Wildlife Skills found the AQA unit award scheme administration team to be extremely helpful and efficient with submission of units to receiving certification in the post taking only a couple of days.



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In order to enable the Wildlife Skills to autonomously manage a scheme, SWWT first registered as an official centre for delivery of the AQA unit award, and Mentors, Project Leads and the Project Co-ordinator were trained by AQA. During the programme, 365 individual certificates of accreditation were awarded in 28 different units including practical units such as Hedgelaying or Coppicing, and leadership skills such as Leading a Guided Walk or Leading an Educational Activity on the Shore. A full list of units taken can be found in Appendix 8. Of particular merit, was the development of a suite of 4 new Volunteer Management units which were developed in response to Cohort 1 trainees' experience of the LANTRA volunteer management qualification. All trainees and project staff involved with the LANTRA course rated it at too high a level for trainees just entering the sector, with a bewildering assessment format, and 4 trainees identified the LANTRA course as something they haven't used or a waste of time in the evaluation survey. The Volunteer Management AQAs were designed to complement on-the-job experience of working with volunteers and cover many of same broad area of volunteer management deemed essential by NVCO and Investors in Volunteers.

This efficiency and choice of how many and which units a learner takes on, gives this accreditation scheme an incredible flexibility, which was very useful, for example if a trainee gained employment early, they could finish off some key units and leave others, whereas for some qualifications they may have left without any accreditation for learning if they couldn't complete the whole programme.

Because of staff changes, several staff, particularly in Somerset, who had originally been trained by AQA left the Trust during the length of the programme. However, because of the design of the AQA programme, it did not prove difficult to brief other staff on procedures needed.

Delivery of Tailored Training

Tailored Training provided specific skills training according to placement type and individual need. For PC trainees, the key industry qualifications or 'tickets' CS30/31 chainsaw, brushcutter and pesticide application (PA1 & PA6 or PA6AW) were scheduled into the original training plan, and all PC trainees were brought up to this standard (some already held one or two of these). Some other trainees also undertook Chainsaw or Brushcutter training when it was appropriate for their own personal career aspirations, so that overall;

- 25 trainees received Chainsaw training
- 26 received Brushcutter training
- 24 received Pesticides training

As the programme progressed, feedback from trainees and mentors suggested that lack of specialized driving skills could also present a barrier to trainees' getting that first chance of a paid role in the sector, and also due to changes in H&S recommendations was in some cases deemed mandatory by Trusts before trainees could fully realize on the ground training opportunities eg 4x4 driving or stock management using All Terrain Vehicles Hence, 19 trainees received some sort of specialized driving training, including tractor, trailer, All Terrain Vehicle (ATV), 4x4 with 33 qualifications achieved. Several trainees reported that they did not want to use pesticides in their careers citing environmental research, and survey feedback has suggested that this was one of the least used of the skills learnt, and hence could be dropped from future schemes.



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Most CE & EE trainees undertook Forest School training. Originally it was planned that trainees would receive Level 2 assistant training, but it became apparent with Cohort 1 that some trainees were clearly interested in becoming Forest School Leaders needing Level 3 training, so with subsequent Cohorts, a choice in training level was discussed and approved by mentors and project leads. The training provider for Cohort 1 produced mixed feedback, and so Cohorts 2 to 4 were trained instead by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust for Level 2 or 3 with excellent feedback, or by other regional trainers in Devon and Somerset for Level 3 to reduce travel and accommodation costs. In summary:

- 14 trainees were trained to Level 2 standard
- 7 trainees were trained to Level 3 standard

M&S trainees received formal training in GIS, Phase 1 habitat survey and the National Vegetation Classification.

Other certificated training undertaken by trainees specific to their individual career aspirations including Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS), Prince 2 Project Management, distance learning Ecology units (Universities of Exeter & Aberystwyth) and many different species identification course, of particular merit being those delivered by the Species Recovery Trust.

Tailored training was identified by trainees as instrumental in increasing their knowledge and skills during the programme. One trainee stated in their exit interview, *“Not having a science background, I was keen to improve my ecological understanding and have benefitted from Phase 1 habitat surveying and lichen, wildflower and fungi courses, It is great that the traineeship offers the flexibility to tailor the year to our individual needs and I definitely feel my ID skills have improved considerably”*.

Delivery of Local Work Based Training

Each trainee was allocated a mentor, who in many cases also acted as a line manager and teacher. The relationship between mentor and trainee was key to the success of the placement, and for each cohort, a training session exploring the basis of this relationship was held at the first residential week, so that boundaries and expectations could be clarified. On the whole, these relationships went extremely well, with both parties benefitting from the experience, and this is explored further in the section ‘difference made to mentors’.

Working alongside mentors and other Trust staff on a daily basis provided trainees with a unique training experience that is virtually impossible to replicate even through long-term volunteering. It was this part of the training where trainees were *‘gently pushed out of their comfort zone’*, and *‘had the ‘opportunity to try things without pressure’* where personal qualities were most developed resulting in increased confidence and communication skills. Trainees were encouraged to gradually take on more responsibility as they became more skilled and experienced, with the aim that by the end of the placements they were operating at the same standard as an assistant warden, community engagement or outreach officer, or an assistant surveyor. Local work based training formed the majority of the training plan, so that trainees gained enough on-the-ground experience, consolidating their formal training so they became truly competent. The focus varied for each type of trainee, but in general;



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- Practical Conservation Skills – focus on traditional heritage skills such as coppicing, hedgelaying or dry-stone walling, improving tool skills, implementing nature reserve management plans, working with livestock, leading volunteer groups
- Engagement Skills – focus on inclusive event planning and delivery, presentation skills, leading volunteer, education and community groups
- Monitoring & Survey – focus on field botanical identification skills, mapping and geographic information systems

Creating the Wildlife Skills culture across Trusts

During their first residential training week, trainees were invited to join a closed Facebook group open only to trainees from their Cohort, mentors and project staff overseen by the Project Co-ordinator, which was used to share training experiences, inform trainees of last minute changes to schedules or of training opportunities, and latterly to let trainees know about job vacancies and to keep up to date with employment destinations of trainees. Using social media in this way enabled trainees to keep in touch with each other between residential training weeks, and to keep the relationships professional (as trainees did not have to ‘friend’ other trainees directly).

The personal bonds formed between trainees both within their county Trusts and across the programme has been repeatedly cited as one of the additional benefits of the programme. Not only have individuals gained ‘*friends for life*’, but these relationships are proving to be a significant factor in reinforcing the workforce in the South West.

The annual celebration events also helped engender a sense of belonging to the Wildlife Skills family, and the celebration in 2017 at Montacute where all previous trainees were invited back was a highlight of the programme.

Project staff and mentors continued to support former trainees regarding career development and decision making, job applications and interview preparation after the trainees’ placements had finished, and because of the close relationships formed, this is an open-ended offer between individuals. 20 out of 23 (87%) trainee respondents in the evaluation survey rated this support 4 or 5 (Scale 1-5 with 1 being extremely unhelpful to 5 extremely helpful).

Project partnership and management

The management structure of the programme worked well with a Project Oversight role and Project Manager and Dorset Project Lead roles fulfilled by DoWT staff, who also line managed and hosted the Project Co-ordinator. Three further Project Leads in DeWT, SWT and WWT completed the project team and Steering Group – all staff with considerable community, volunteering and training experience. The Steering Group met once or twice per year, with the Project Co-ordinator facilitating communications by email between these meetings. In addition, 24 mentors were involved with the programme, and financial support staff assisted with programme reporting to HLF.

Trainees were supported by individual mentors (or, in a few cases, 2 mentors) in the first instance, and then by Project Leads and Project Co-ordinator. Mentors received some training in year 1 of the programme, but because of staff changes, some new mentors joined the scheme without specific training. It is recommended that mentors in future schemes receive more up-front training and this is discussed further in the ‘difference made to mentors’ section of this report. Mentors, and in some



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cases Project Leads, carried out 3 monthly reviews with trainees, and exit interviews. The Project Co-ordinator carried out a 1:1 review with each of the mentors at the end of years 1 and 2. The Co-ordinator also held feedback workshops with trainees during residential. All of this direct feedback was exceptionally useful in further defining delivery of the training plan in year 2 and 3.

The partnership between Trusts flourished during this programme, due to excellent personal relationships between staff, and because the partnership did not aim to make the Trusts uniform. Instead, as long as HR procedures, H&S practises, and delivery of the training plan were conducted in accordance with training agreements and to a standard that the Project Oversight was happy with, differences in operations were respected. In three instances, H&S and HR matters had to be considered by the Project Oversight and Manager, even though they related to trainees in other Trusts, because the incidents were noteworthy, but in each case local Trusts appreciated advice given. In future schemes, it would be recommended that Project Oversight is involved in any HR or H&S matter that is beyond day to day management.

The role of the Project Co-ordinator was repeatedly recognised by trainees, mentors and project staff as keeping the programme on track, as they were able to focus full time on facilitating the smooth delivery of the training plan and supporting trainees. It is recommended that similar future programmes include plans for a dedicated member of staff to cover this role.

Publicity and communications

The Project Co-ordinator and many trainees used twitter to promote the training programme. The Project Co-ordinator ran the @wildlife_skills account with around 800 followers, and the Wiltshire trainees used @WWT_trainees. 34 of the 57 trainees used twitter. Several trainees wrote blogs whilst in placement, whilst Somerset and Dorset trainees maintained pages on their trust websites.

The difference made to trainees

There are so many personal stories from the programme about how trainees' lives have been changed. Below are some statements from trainees, taken from blogs, exit surveys and the evaluation surveys. Further responses are listed in Appendix 4, the full transcript of the 23 trainee evaluation surveys received, and case studies of 4 former trainees can be found at the end of this document. The backgrounds of Wildlife Skills trainees and barriers to employment in the sector are described fully in section 3.

“Without this traineeship I wouldn't be working in conservation, I owe my career to this scheme. I had gotten to the point where I had decided this was my last try of getting into the sector and that I would redirect if it didn't work out, luckily I didn't have to do that” - PC trainee, now working for WT

“Before I had my traineeship, all I had to write in the ‘Relevant Qualifications’ box on job application forms was my degree and a first aid course. When a Person Specification asked for a long list of ‘tickets’ it decreased my chances of success before I even started. Now the list is rather more substantial! Have finally got my dream job and it's all thanks to that amazing year in Somerset” – PC trainee, now working for RSPB

“Thanks also to the Heritage Lottery Fund, without whom my traineeship would not have been possible. Their funding brings so many projects to life within wildlife conservation; in my case, their



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funding empowered me to leave a profession that my heart was no longer in and begin dedicating my working life to my love for the natural world” – CE trainee, now working for local authority as community ranger

Twenty out of 23 respondents (87%) in the trainee evaluation survey gave a rating of 8 or more when asked ‘how much has the traineeship helped you get where you are (Scale 1-10 with 1 being not at all to 10 completely due to it). One respondent gave a rate of 1 to this question, but this person has gone into a research role in the sector following an EE placement, but told us that additional skills learnt in her placement, eg presentation and communication skills have been extremely useful.

By paying considerable attention to CV writing skills, application form completion and interview techniques combined with confidence building during day to day training and through specific personal effectiveness training, helped trainees to become ‘job-ready’ and fully able to present themselves well to prospective employers. This meant that success rates in getting interviews and securing job roles were high. One trainee in her exit interview told us that before her traineeship she had submitted over 80 application forms for this type of role (*community engagement*) over the course of 18 months, but since January 2015, she submitted 8 applications and secured 4 interviews. She secured employment with RSPB with her first interview. Feedback from a NT interviewer told us that the two former trainees he interviewed out of six candidates were way ahead of the rest of the field.

The employment destinations of all trainees post placement has been tracked by the Project Co-ordinator, but evaluation has focussed on the 46 Cohort 1 to 3 trainees, who all completed their placements by June 2017. A summary of what these 46 trainees are doing as of November 2017 is illustrated in the infographic in Appendix 3. 100% found employment in the sector within 1 year of completing their placement. Three have subsequently returned to further training (in education and in ecology & wildlife management), and 14 have been employed by the 4 host Trusts at some point. Thirty are currently employed by a wide range of organisations in the South West. The following table further shows where the 43 individuals not in further training are working.

Type of employer	How many trainees	Example roles
Wildlife Trust	11	Assistant Warden, Well-being Project Officer, Farm Adviser, Education Assistant
RSPB	4	Education or Warden roles
National Trust	3	GIS or Warden roles
Other NGO	3	Princes Trust Community worker, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation practical warden, ORCA
Statutory organisation	10	Natural England or Local Authority advisers, rangers or project staff
Ecological contractor	5	Practical roles on nature reserves
Ecological consultancy	3	Survey & planning roles
Self-employment	2	Including practical contractor work and consultancy
Other	1	Private estate maintenance
Research	1	Marine Institute, Plymouth



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In summary, approximately a quarter of Cohort 1 to 3 trainees now work for a Wildlife Trust (26%), a quarter work for other Non-Governmental organisations (23%), a quarter for Statutory Organisations (23%) with the rest working as ecological contractors or consultants (19%) or in other industry roles (9%).

Of the 11 Cohort 4 trainees, many of whom only completed their placements in October 2017, three have gone onto further training with Plymouth City Council, Field Studies Council and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, four have secured employment in the sector in the South West and four are currently seeking employment in the sector.

Hence, overall out of 57 trainees at the end of November 2017, forty-seven (82%) are employed in the sector, six (11%) have moved into further training in the sector and 4 (7%) are volunteering and in casual employment, seeking paid roles in the sector.

The difference made to mentors

Feedback from mentors was extremely useful in dynamically shaping the training plan throughout the delivery period. Mentors reported that they had personally benefitted from the programme through having the opportunity to line manage people from different backgrounds, and reflect on their own communication, work planning and leaderships skills. One person reported in the mentor evaluation survey (Appendix 5),

“Mentoring allowed me to recognise actually how much experience I have under my belt which gave me confidence in my own ability. It also allowed me to pull on other line managing/mentoring experiences I had had and reflect on what has worked in the past and what hasn’t worked quite so well and use/try different strategies for different situations (in terms of communicating, team working, ‘buy in’ from the trainees, difficult conversations etc). It also just generally helped me to grow as a person and allowed me to pass on the knowledge and experience that I do have”.

The main challenges mentors identified in the programme can be summarise into 3 categories:

1. *Time* – concerns that mentors did not have enough time to allocate to the trainees, whilst juggling the demands of the rest of their workload. This was overcome by improving work planning, delegating responsibility for trainees to other staff on certain days, allocating set times for 1:1 meetings.
2. *Communication* – sometimes mentors found themselves shying away from challenging conversations with trainees, or found it difficult to keep boundaries and expectations clear. This was overcome in many cases by asking for assistance from the Project Leads and Project Co-ordinator, but did prove time consuming and caused concern to the mentors, who all wanted successful outcomes for their trainees.
3. *Coaching skills* - in a few cases mentors struggled with extremely shy or underconfident trainees, and felt out of their comfort zone regarding some mental health concerns. Again, other project staff helped in these situations to coach mentors to find solutions.

It is recommended that in future schemes set more a more formal framework for reporting so that any issues can be flagged up at the earliest point possible and expectations and targets clarified. Mentors would also like to see further training in difficult conversations, mental health first aid and



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coaching skills, as well as continued emphasis on H&S surrounding driving, lone working and machinery use.

Mentors reported that the trainees brought new skills, idea and innovation with them. One reported, *“I think they’ve freshened up the Trust – it’s always good to have new ideas, people and enthusiasm”*, and others indicated that work standards have been improved with comments such as *“I think it has pushed staff to develop and keep up to date in their field when being constantly questioned”* and *“I think it makes you do things the best way rather than the quickest way”*.

It is worth noting that mentors appreciated the additional team capacity that having a trainee brought, especially in the latter months of their placement. This did mean that extra work was delivered which would not have been otherwise possible.

The difference made to wider staff and the organisation

Responses from the staff evaluation survey (Appendix 6) showed that there was recognition across the four Trusts of the benefits of hosting a training programme; trainees were consistently referred with phrases such as,

“injecting dynamism, enthusiasm and new ideas”; *“brought new perspectives, skills and enthusiasm”*; *“challenged the way he organisation did things by constantly asking questions”* and were cited as bringing positive energy to the workplace, reducing stress and inspirational, for example, *“especially at a time when a small minority of staff member had been particularly challenging and negative”*.

The opportunity for mentors and other staff to demonstrate or develop management skills through line managing and mentoring trainees was recognised as a bonus for the Trusts, as this level of experience cannot always be provided due to resource limitations.

Staff saw the fact that the trainees had been recruited from diverse backgrounds as an advantage bringing new abilities and life experiences. The Project Co-ordinator noted a shift in attitude to more inclusive recruitment attitudes amongst staff, and changes in recruitment practice in the Trusts occurred as a result, for example WWT adopted the selection day process rather than formal interview for several staff appointments. Other shifts in practice have been noted, one staff member commenting, *“the trainees’ presence meant that we had to clarify our procedures and practises so that they were clear for everyone – a process which helped us greatly. Even when there were challenges, these have been regarded as learning opportunities for the organisation”*.

The new skillset that trainees were most recognised for bringing to the organisation was their ability to use social media, such as twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and their willingness to help develop communications and marketing materials.

The trainees’ enthusiasm for the project has resulted in them becoming unofficial ambassadors for the four Trusts (not only the one they trained in), which has benefitted the Trusts by enhancing profile and reputation as a high-quality training provider. One member of staff reported, *“It is very satisfying to find an ex-trainee sitting across the table at a multi-partner meeting, representing their current employer”*.



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Fourteen trainees have been employed by one of the four Trusts since completing their placements, and a member of WWT reported that, *“WWT has gained some very competent and professional members of staff, which it may not otherwise have found”*. Closer relationships between the four Trusts have brought wider benefits and shared experiences, which are continuing beyond the length of the project. For example, recently a former trainee now employed by SWT made arrangements to shadow a former fellow trainee now employed at WWT so that she could learn first-hand about an engagement programme working with a particular sector of the community.

The difference made to the conservation sector

Forty-seven highly trained individuals are already employed in the conservation sector, with the other 10 in further training, or expected to gain employment within the next few months. They are filling specific gaps in the workforce identified at the beginning of this project, and through other studies. Wildlife Skills has made a huge contribution to the reinforcement of the natural heritage workforce in the South West, with 34 trainees from Cohorts 1 to 4 employed in the region. Many former trainees have already found themselves in leadership roles, for example working as Project Officer for a Community Wellbeing programme, or in one case a Cohort 1 trainee becoming mentor to a Cohort 4 trainee. It is anticipated that in a few years' time, these former trainees will be in senior roles in the industry and the Trusts have every intention of continuing to follow this group of Wildlife Skills alumni.

Although the sample size was small, responses to the evaluation survey of the employers of ex-Wildlife Skills trainees suggest that skills, knowledge and personal qualities developed during their traineeships were at a good or very good level for the roles they were employed to do (Appendix 7). One described their employee as *“trained to an exceptionally high standard”* and another reported that in comparison to a volunteer only route to employment, trainees *“have a lot more in terms of formal training and have been used to working 5 days per week”*. Skills for the Future trainees from this and previous schemes in Dorset WT and BBOWT now have a very good reputation in the industry, with one employer stating, *“we rate them highly on past experience”*. Several prospective employers have contacted project staff during Wildlife Skills to ask if any trainees are available to apply for roles.



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3) Programme Review

The Training programme

Within the original training plan, it was stated that evaluating the overall success of the project would be based on the following key indicators:

Indicator	Target	Actual
Number of trainees completing the training programme	46 individuals	57 individuals
Employment of successful trainees within SWWT	8 individuals	14 individuals (including 10 in > 6 months contracts)
Employment of successful trainees in sector within 6 months of completion	50% of participants	<p>Cohorts 1 to 3: 100% of 46 trainees within 1 year (3 individuals then subsequently returning to further training)</p> <p>Cohort 4 trainees, 4 out of 11 already in employment < 6 months after completion (36%), 3 in further training, and 4 volunteering & looking for work</p> <p>Hence, overall position at 30/11/17 = 47 out of 57 (82%) trainees are employed in the sector, six (11%) in further training & 4 (7%) seeking employment in the sector.</p>

However, these headline statistics do not tell the whole story of the programme. The training programme is considered successful in getting people skilled to the correct level to become employable in the sector, with 47 out of 57 in employment at end of November 2017. Key factors in the success of the training programme were;

- Emphasis on 'on-the-job' training
- Focus on development of transferable, personal development and employability skills as much as on conservation skills
- Encouraging trainees to seek employment as soon as they were ready
- Creating individual training plans with each trainee in addition to more formal centralised training
- High level of commitment from mentors to the programme
- Nurturing of the Wildlife Skills culture within Cohorts and across the four Trusts
- Excellent partnership across the four Trusts resulting in good and consistent management of the programme.

Inclusive selection methods did allow Wildlife Skills to recruit people from diverse backgrounds including younger people and those in career transition by emphasising the importance of aptitude not skills throughout the selection process. Forty-five of the 57 trainees came from these groups. (see later section 'Increase the diversity of the heritage workforce').



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If the programme had not been funded, it can be anticipated that many of the 57 trainees would still be looking at slower, costlier, less effective methods of entering the conservation workforce or it may reasonably be assumed that many may never have been able to access the sector. The workforce in the South West was directly bolstered by 34 former trainees, with 14 individuals employed at some point by the 4 host Trusts.

Trust staff have been fully supportive of the programme with many wider benefits reported such as opportunity for personal development, increase in morale and innovation, and a deepening of the partnership ties between the four Trusts.

Assessment against original HLF aims

- *Increase the range and quality of work-based training to develop skills in the heritage sector.*
An exemplar model has been established for training people in conservation skills in three main skillset areas; practical conservation, community engagement and monitoring & survey. This model places emphasis on an extended period of local work-based training, complemented by formal centralised and bespoke training experiences as well as use of the flexible AQA unit award scheme. This means that the programme can be tailored to an individuals' needs and cater for people from all backgrounds, irrespective of previous experience in the sector, and could be used by Trusts or other organisations.

- *Meet identified skills shortages in the heritage sector.*
The skills learnt in the training programme were directly relevant to roles needed to ensure the conservation of UK natural heritage. Forty-seven (82%) of the 57 trainees have already found employment in the sector, with 34 of these employed in the South West. Former trainees secure interviews easily, and employers contact trust staff to see if any newly trained candidates are available to apply for new roles, as practical skills especially are in demand.

- *Increase the capacity of the sector to deliver training and share good practice.*
The training model originally developed by Dorset Wildlife Trust has been successfully replicated and refined by three other Trusts in the South West within this programme, and expanded to cover monitoring and survey skills. This has revitalised an ethos of mentoring and passing on heritage skills to trainees, volunteers and other staff in the organisations.

The use of AQA accreditation to support training delivered in-house has been promoted in the sector, with advice to other heritage sectors given by Project Staff. Other elements have been adopted into every day work practices, for example selection day processes have been adopted by WWT as part of their standard recruitment process, after witnessing how much more accurate they were in assessing candidate suitability than interview alone.

Training experiences and messages have been widely communicated via social media such as twitter, with, for example, one of the WWT trainees, Keeley Hampton featuring in the HLF Changing Lives series.

Because the training programme has proved to be a success both for the individual and for the organisation, and there is an established format to follow, both WWT and DoWT have been able to



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confidently and successfully seek funding from major donors to offer 4 further 1-year training placements in 2017/18.

- *Increase the diversity of the heritage workforce.*

To diversify the conservation workforce, this programme focussed on providing opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly young people and those in transitional phases of their lives and careers.

Information regarding people's backgrounds was gathered at the recruitment stage, during placements, and at the end of the placement, as it was found that as trust developed more information was disclosed to project staff.

Of the 57 individuals who benefitted from training placements, 18 were male, and 39 female. There is little or no perception within the South West Wildlife Trusts that women are unable to carry out physical conservation work such as chainsawing, with role models working in all Trusts (3 acting as PC mentors), but this attitude may still occur in some areas of the industry. Fifteen out of 26 PC trainees were women (38% of women in the Programme compared with 61% of men), whilst in comparison 28% of female trainees and only 11% of male trainees chose CE placements, indicating that there may well still be work to do surrounding gender stereotypes in the industry and letting potential candidates know that they would be welcomed onto ANY type of placement.

Wildlife Skills trainees came from very varied backgrounds. Some had worked in completely different industries for example as a funeral director, a broadcast engineer, photographer/film-maker, or truck mechanic, but wanted to change career direction and contribute to looking after our natural heritage. They have brought useful transferable skills with them into the conservation sector, including technical, communication, project management and leadership skills, but needed help in acquiring industry specific heritage skills. In Wildlife Skills, this group made up 33% of participants (19 individuals).

Many other trainees were previously under-employed young people under 25, including graduates trying to gain the experience to get into the sector, for example working in factories, in junior administrative roles, catering assistants or in retail, often part-time whilst they volunteered in their free time. These trainees often cited economic barriers to finding employment in the sector as they could not afford the expensive industry qualifications, or to enter full-time volunteering to gain work experience. This group often lacked general experience of the work place and benefitted from workload and time management and Health & Safety experience, as well as conservation skills. In Wildlife Skills, this group made up a further 42% of participants (24 individuals).

18% of trainees (10 individuals) are regarded as having overcome significant personal barriers to entering the sector including disability and socio-economic situations. One of the great satisfactions of the programme has been seeing individuals blossom and overcome personal challenges, for example when an extremely shy trainee faced their fear of public speaking, or in the case of one trainee with a disability, which had set them back a few years, seeing them gain paid employment in the sector for the first time, and witnessing them now mentoring other young people.



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Twenty-one per cent of Wildlife Skills were non-graduates, however it was hard to distinguish between graduates and non-graduates when observing 'on the job' performance, again reinforcing the partnership questioning the necessity for a degree to work in the sector.

The South West is one of the least ethnically diverse areas in the UK (only Wales is less diverse), and a recent Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts survey reported that only 1% of SWWT employees and trustees described themselves as from mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds or from any other ethnic group, showing that there is a considerable way to go before the WT workforce truly represents the communities they work with. The trend towards white graduate applicants for traineeships may have been exacerbated using industry standards methods of advertising opportunities in addition to using wider networks.

It was evident that trainees brought an injection of energy and innovation to the Trusts, and because of the diversity of background, they also brought new skills, approaches, and community awareness which has helped sell the benefits of recruiting from diverse backgrounds within the Trusts.

Cost benefit analysis

In 2014, the SWWT partnership was awarded £829,200 (out of total of £1,075,200). This was intended to fund 46 placements in total, of either 12 or 18 months duration, for a total of 576 months of work based training, at a unit cost of £1,867 per training month, or £22,400 per 12-month long placement.

Because the partnership actively encourages trainees to move to employment as soon as they were ready, underspends, flexibility in length of placements, and an extension to the project to October 2017 actually allowed 57 placements to be delivered and 579 months delivered at a cost of £22,283 per 12-month training placement or £1,857 per training month.

Bursary had remained at £800 pcm since previous Dorset scheme started in 2010. During recruitment this was raised as a concern by a handful of candidates, who withdrew from the process (even after being called to interview). Obviously, we cannot tell how many candidates were put off before this stage, but future plans for SFF placements to be paid at minimum wage levels should remove this barrier.

Volunteer support

The project attracted considerable volunteer support, contributing £60,000 in kind, mainly focussed on specialist species identification training, Forest School portfolio practice and allowing trainees to develop leadership skills with practical volunteer groups.

4) Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions from the programme;

- By changing and widening recruitment methods more people from different backgrounds have been able to access a career in conservation.
- A selection process based on aptitude rather than existing skills or qualifications was extremely successful in identifying individuals with the potential to succeed in the industry, regardless of their academic backgrounds.
- A training plan consisting of three elements, an extended period of local work-based training, formal centralised training and an individual training plan, complemented by personal development and confidence building training has provided trainees with a high-quality training experience.
- The AQA unit award scheme has been particularly flexible in enabling the programme to accredit learning, for example with regards to Volunteer Management.
- Industry standard qualifications and 'tickets' are still one of the key barriers to people getting selected for interview, and so by providing funding for Chainsaw, Brushcutter and Forest School training, this has been overcome in many cases. However, there has been a shift in preference to driving rather than pesticides qualifications being sought by trainees.
- The exemplar training plan developed by the partnership could be easily adopted by other statutory, business or non-governmental training providers.

Recommendations from the programme to consider when running similar schemes;

- The recruitment process should be as inclusive as possible, for example by
 - considering as many alternative methods of reaching every sector of the community, and possibly avoiding using industry standard routes
 - utilising best practice HR methods as standard eg offering guaranteed interview schemes, using inclusive language and minimising unconscious bias
 - simplifying the application processes
 - utilising selection days rather than formal interviews
- Offer a structured programme to trainees, preferably as part of a cohort of learners, combined with individual training plans and work based training.
- Offer flexibility in schemes to suit people at different stages or from different backgrounds, eg length of placements or level of training on offer
- Continue to offer opportunities to develop employability, personal development and transferable skills alongside industry standards such as Forest School or Chainsaw.
- The relationship between mentor and trainee is vital in ensuring positive outcomes. With this in mind, mentors should be carefully selected, training invested in them and support offered throughout the programme.
- Formal framework for placement reporting so that any issues can be flagged up at the earliest point possible and expectations and targets clarified.
- Additional mentor training should include session on difficult conversations, mental health first aid and coaching skills, as well as continued emphasis on H&S surrounding driving, lone working and machinery use.
- Bursary payments should be increased in line with minimum wage requirements.
- Any data about trainees, or unsuccessful candidates, retained by a programme needs to be collated in line with new General Data Protection Regulations.



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Legacies from Wildlife Skills include;

- A network of 57, skilled and experienced new workers in the sector, mainly employed in the South West who are already influencing the nature conservation sector, and act as ambassadors for Wildlife Trusts.
- A Training Plan and associated resources that can be adopted by other organisations in the sector.
- A change in recruitment culture in the four Trusts so that striving for workforce diversity is positively associated with an increase in breadth of skills and innovation, and HR good practice is understood and welcomed by many staff.
- A shift in culture in the four partner Trusts to consider the potential for training opportunities in all teams, and all projects, which has already resulted in 4 other training placements being funded.
- The experience and lessons learnt from this programme have been shared and utilised to widen the partnership to include Avon WT. This partnership was successful in obtaining HLF Skills for the Future funding for a further programme called Wild Paths which will start in 2018.



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5) Evaluation methodology

The three key indicators reported on in section 3 were considered throughout the programme to formally evaluate the overall success of the project. However, in order to be able to tell the full Wildlife Skills story and to refine delivery of the programme as it progressed, the following information was gathered and acted on;

- Review meetings between mentors/project leads and trainees
- Trainees diaries, blogs, online reports about their experiences
- Exit interviews between mentors/project leads and trainees
- Annual review of programme with mentors carried out by Project Co-ordinator
- Focus groups with trainees held on residential weeks.
- Cohort 1 - video interviews on leaving
- Cohort 2 - photographic representation of training journey
- Cohorts 3 - Questionnaires in months 1 & 7 and/or on leaving.
- Four Case Studies (one trainee from each county 1-year post leaving placement).
- Background data and employment history since completing placement recorded for each individual trainee.
- Photographic record of achievements

Partnership staff received Evaluation Training in January 2017, delivered by Heritage Insider, where a final evaluation needs assessment was carried out against the following factors:

Factor	Assessment Level Needed
Value	High
Risk	Low to moderate
Track record	Moderate
Internal priority	Low to moderate
External priority	Low to moderate

So overall, whilst the value of the programme was high both financially (£1m over 3 years) and in terms of on the ground assistance to teams, most factors would only require a low to moderate level of assessment, and track record scored only slightly higher than this because of the nature of the programme being rolled out across 4 Trusts whilst utilising the existing expertise of Dorset WT.

The final evaluation strategy was defined by the partnership to answer the following 4 key evaluation questions;

- Was our training programme effective in getting new people skilled to the correct level to become employable in the conservation sector?
- What impact, if any, did we have in reinforcing the workforce in the South West, especially within our own Trusts?
- Did our selection methods enable us to recruit trainees from diverse backgrounds, in particular young people and people in career transition?
- Were there any wider benefits from the scheme for Trust staff or the organisation?

In order to obtain additional information needed to answer these questions objectively, DoWT Conservation Services were asked to conduct online surveys, design final project infographics and



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write the final evaluation report. By using surveys conducted by a third party, complete anonymity could be assured for participants and therefore a more objective view of the programme ascertained.

Four online surveys were designed and circulated so that feedback could be gathered from

1. Trainees (the 46 individuals in Cohort 1 to 3) – 23 responses were received
2. Mentors and Project Leads (22 in total) – 12 responses were received
3. Wider partnership staff – 27 responses were received
4. Employers of former trainees, when permission had been granted by trainees – 6 Responses were received

Transcripts from the 4 surveys can be found in Appendices 4 to 7.

The full report will be sent to HLF and project partners, which may include some sensitive information eg background data, whilst an executive summary and the end of programme infographics will be made available online, and promoted via social media.

Further information

For further information regarding the Wildlife Skills -Training for a Career in Nature Conservation programme, please contact:

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Appendices

Appendix 1	Infographic for all 57 trainees
Appendix 2	Infographic for 46 Cohort 1 to 3 career destinations
Appendix 3	Details of 57 Wildlife Skills trainees and their employment history after placement.
Appendix 4	Final survey – trainees
Appendix 5	Final survey – mentors
Appendix 6	Final survey – wider staff
Appendix 7	Final survey – employers
Appendix 8	List of AQA units attained
Case Study 1	Luke Workman
Case Study 2	Ed Sanger
Case Study 3	Beth Aucott
Case Study 4	Keeley Hampton



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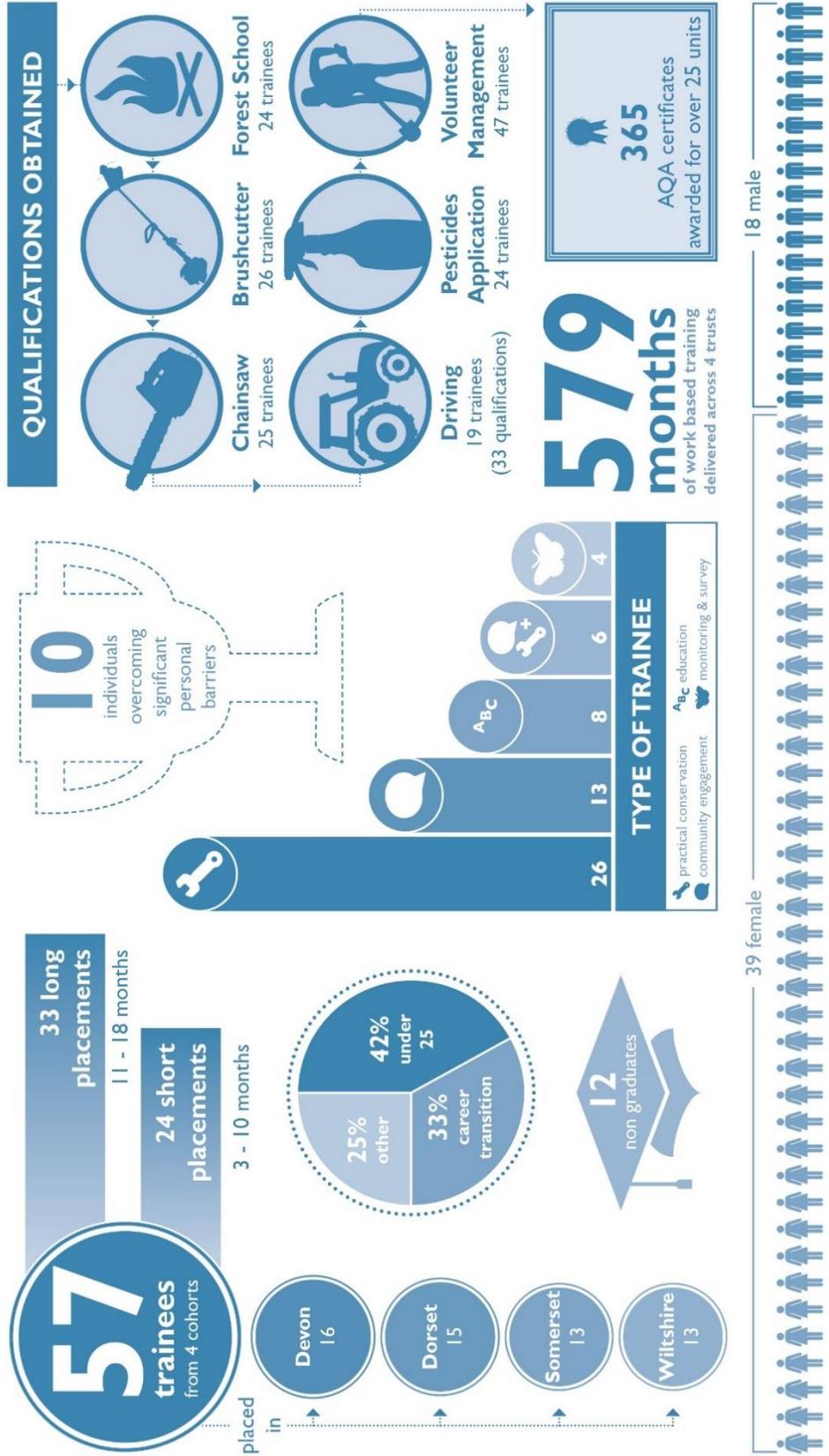


APPENDIX 1- Infographic for all 57 trainees

South West Wildlife Trusts Wildlife Skills Programme 2014 - 2017



End of project evaluation: Training delivered cohorts 1 - 4



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APPENDIX 3 - Details of 57 Wildlife Skills trainees and their employment history after placement

The following table contains details of Cohorts 1, 2, 3 and 4 trainees to end of November 2017. It includes details of their Twitter accounts and where they have been employed since completing their placements.

	County	Type of placement	Roles since leaving placement
1	Devon	Practical Conservation	Self-employed sculptor/conservation contractor
2	Devon	Practical Conservation	Green Mantle, Somerset - contract nature conservation work; Norfolk Wildlife Trust
3	Devon	Education & Engagement	Volunteering at Wembury Marine Centre; RSPB Loch Leven Nature Reserve Visitor Centre in Kinross and Perth, Visitor Experience Assistant, RSPB Education Officer, Plymouth
4	Devon	Education & Engagement	Assistant Instructor , Sayers Croft Field Centre, Surrey; Volunteer Ranger National Trust North Cornwall; going to Uni to study Wildlife Conservation & Media
5	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Estate worker at Wiltshire Wildlife Trust; Assistant Warden, Dorset WT
6	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Self-employed bat worker; Seasonal Ecologist Abbas Ecology, then made permanent
7	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Seasonal Survey Assistant, Lulworth Estate; Policy Assistant, Dorset Coast Forum; then Masters degree in Nature Management , University of Copenhagen
8	Dorset	Volunteer & Engagement	Seasonal Bug Ranger, Bristol Zoo; Marine Officer Natural England, temporary then made permanent
9	Somerset	Practical Conservation	Visitor Experience Officer, Somerset Wildlife Trust then Assistant Warden SWT; Routes to River Tone, SWT
10	Somerset	Practical Conservation	NT Studland - summer warden then NT - Assistant Ranger, Dunstable Downs, then BCN WT Ranger; RSPB Warden, Beds.
11	Somerset	Volunteer & Engagement	RSPB at Ribble Discovery Centre as Learning and Visitor Experience officer; Princes trust NW England
12	Somerset	Monitoring & Surveying	CEH Botanical Seasonal Surveyor, Wales; set up own ecological consultancy, Somerset
13	Wiltshire	Practical Conservation	Estate worker at Swindon Borough Council
14	Wiltshire	Practical Conservation	Estate worker at Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



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15	Wiltshire	Volunteer & Engagement	Grants Officer at Help for Heroes, Tedworth House
16	Wiltshire	Monitoring & Surveying	Ecologist at Ecological Consultancy, Wiltshire
17	Devon	Practical Conservation	Education assistant at Brockholes, Lancashire Wildlife Trust; Contractor for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation; Contractor processionary moth project, BBOWT seasonal engagement role; Earth Trust/BBOWT
18	Devon	Practical Conservation	Ranger, Hampshire County Council
19	Devon	Education & Engagement	Learning and Participation Officer at Seaton Jurassic, Devon then Teacher training PGCE (Primary); then Primary School teacher London.
20	Devon	Education & Engagement	Project Support Officer at Plymouth University Marine Institute
21	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Seasonal assistant warden at Moor's Valley Country Park; Assistant Ranger, Hampshire County Council
22	Dorset	Volunteer & Engagement	Seasonal Brownsea Island engagement officer, Dorset Wildlife Trust; Water quality field assistant, Wessex Water
23	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Seasonal reserves assistant, Dorset Wildlife Trust; Glendale Contractors, Wiltshire
24	Dorset	Volunteer & Engagement	Learning and Participation Officer at Seaton Jurassic, Devon; Dorset Coast Policy Assistant, Dorset
25	Somerset	Practical Conservation	Blackdown Environmental Contractor then Seasonal Field Officer for the Surrey/ Hampshire Weald, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, then made permanent
26	Somerset	Practical Conservation	Seasonal conservation contractor, local company in Somerset
27	Somerset	Volunteer & Engagement	Festival of Nature in Bristol Event Administrator; Project Officer, Somerset WT; Natural Estates Officer, Avon WT
28	Somerset	Monitoring & Surveying	GIS Officer, National Trust, Swindon
29	Wiltshire	Practical Conservation	Estates teamworker, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust; City of London Information Ranger
30	Wiltshire	Volunteer & Engagement	Engagement and administrative officer Wiltshire Wildlife Trust; Wellbeing Programme Officer, WWT
31	Wiltshire	Monitoring & Surveying	Records Officer Wiltshire Records Centre; Consultancy near Bath
32	Wiltshire	Practical Conservation	Assistant warden RSPB Oransay, Inner Hebrides



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33	Devon	Volunteer & Engagement	Education Assistant, People's Lottery funded post with Devon WT
34	Devon	Practical Conservation	Self-employed contractor, Devon; NIA Advisory Officer (Culm) Devon WT
35	Devon	Practical Conservation	Working Wetlands Farm Advisor, Devon WT
36	Devon	Volunteer & Engagement	Outdoor Learning Assistant, Torbay Coast and Countryside. Summer seasonal position,
37	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Trainee Ecologist, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
38	Dorset	Practical Conservation	Employed on family farm, Dorset; Assistant warden National Trust, Branscombe, Devon
39	Dorset	Volunteer & Engagement	Membership & Visitor Welcome Assistant, National Trust, Dorset; Stepping into Nature project assistant, Dorset AONB
40	Dorset	Volunteer & Engagement	ORCA Seasonal Engagement Officer; Community Ranger, Poole Borough Council
41	Somerset	Volunteer & Engagement	Education RSPB
42	Somerset	Practical Conservation	Conservation Contractor, Somerset
43	Somerset	Practical Conservation	Assistant warden, National Trust, Somerset
44	Wiltshire	Practical Conservation	Glendale contractors, Wiltshire
45	Wiltshire	Practical Conservation	Grounds, Gardens and Conservation Person at Monkton Combe School, Bath
46	Wiltshire	Volunteer & Engagement	Community Ranger, Lepe Country Park, Hampshire
47	Devon	Education & Engagement	Plymouth City Council at Poole Farm. Animal Care Apprentice
48	Dorset	Community & Engagement	Placement ended October 2017 – volunteering and looking for work
49	Dorset	Community & Engagement	Volunteer Development Co-ordinator, Dorset Volunteer Centre
50	Somerset	Community & Engagement	Travelling and volunteering abroad until Spring 2018 then looking for seasonal role
51	Wiltshire	Community & Engagement	Animal Handling Instructor, Sparsholt College
52	Devon	Practical Conservation	Placement ended October 2017 – volunteering and looking for work
53	Devon	Practical Conservation	Placement ended October 2017 – volunteering and looking for work
54	Dorset	Community & Engagement	Seasonal warden Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
55	Somerset	Community & Engagement	Education Assistant, Field Studies Council, Pembrokeshire; FSC trainee tutor scheme
56	Wiltshire	Community & Engagement	Sessional Forest Schools Assistant, Wilts WT & Hazel Hills
57	Devon	Education & Engagement	Further training with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust



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APPENDIX 8 - List of AQA units attained

1. Volunteer management 1: volunteer and organisation 73437
2. Volunteer management 2: recruitment and selection 74107
3. Volunteer management 3: working with the volunteer 74459
4. Volunteer management 4: challenges and reward 74478
5. Communicating through the media 73717
6. Introduction to planning & wildlife law 75275
7. Leading a work group 78826
8. Leading a guided walk 77874
9. Coppicing woodland shrubs and trees LE5884
10. Hedgelaying LE4536
11. Constructing a stock proof fence 78822
12. Constructing a post and rail fence 78824
13. Wildlife gardening LE4543
14. Dry stone walling LE4539
15. Creating wildlife ponds 76176
16. Working with young people & children 77876
17. Leading and educational activity on the shore 71807
18. Planning & delivering a lesson on wildlife 77875
19. Identifying common woodland trees and their timber quality 78821
20. Introduction to woodland management for nature conservation LE4480
21. Introduction to moth identification 105142
22. Heathland conservation 75319
23. Fundraising for your chosen charity or cause 75467
24. Emotional and mental wellbeing 70283
25. Recognition, use and care of handtools used in conservation LE5718
26. Identifying and removing invasive plant species 75360
27. Introduction to butterfly identification 75338
28. Introduction to grassland species identification 75339



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