

## Wildlife Supporters Celebrate Three Decades of Volunteering

Wildlife supporters from across the county came together at Fyne Court on Thursday, September 24 to celebrate more than three decades of volunteering with Somerset Wildlife Trust.

This week sees Somerset Wildlife Trust hand back the running of the estate to the National Trust, which has leased the historic grounds and buildings to the Wildlife Trust since 1974.

The party was held to thank volunteers who have organised events and plant sales, provided refreshments and worked in the shop at Fyne Court, in Broomfield, between Taunton and Bridgwater. Almost £2,000 was recently raised at the Fyne Court book fair, organised annually by volunteers.

Simon Nash, CEO of Somerset Wildlife Trust, said: "Somerset Wildlife Trust volunteers have been at the heart of Fyne Court for many years and we owe a great deal to their hard work, dedication and total commitment.

"We are confident that the wildlife and habitat that volunteers and staff have nurtured will be in safe hands and we look forward to working in partnership with the Quantock Hills AONB and National Trust teams."

Somerset Wildlife Trust's education work will continue at Fyne Court, developing new opportunities for young people, in partnership with the National Trust and the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) team, which is also based at Fyne Court.

Andy Mayled, the National Trust's General Manager for the Somerset Countryside, said: "Fyne Court is such a special place, we're really excited to be able to work with both the Wildlife Trust and the AONB to help keep it as a wonderful place for people to enjoy.

"This is just another stage in Fyne Court's long history and our initial plans are to listen to our visitors and make sure we continue to protect those elements which really matter to them.

"I would like to thank the Wildlife Trust for their custodianship of Fyne Court over the past 35 years, and look forward to working with them in the future."