

RED RIVER LOCAL NATURE RESERVE Quarter 4 Report January to end March 2026.

General background aims and objectives.

The aim is to work in partnership with the Friends of Red River community group to deliver an annual work programme, agreed with Heanor and Loscoe Town Council representatives, on the Red River Local Nature Reserve at Loscoe.

The intention is to improve the site for the benefit of the local community by ensuring public access, and to manage, maintain and develop the site to improve habitats and encourage biodiversity of species. The Local Nature Reserve is home to a variety of both local and visiting wildlife. Regular wildlife recording visits are made to record the changing wildlife throughout the seasons.

Additional funding will be sought to deliver a selection of environmental events, activities, and guided walks to ensure ongoing public interest and involvement.

Summary of Volunteer Practical Tasks, Events and Wildlife Recording Visits

From January to end March 2026 Marion Farrell (Groundwork Five Counties) and the Friends of Red River have carried out 2 conservation tasks. These have been very well attended with 15 individuals taking part 12 volunteer days carried out. Wildlife records have also been collected. Groundwork staff have continued work on an updated Management Plan for the site.

Conservation Task Day Details and Events

Marion Farrell (Groundwork Five Counties) has provided guidance and support for the volunteer on all task days and events:-

January's task day was cancelled due to snow and ice.

A task day was held on Saturday 14 February 2026. A lovely sunny but cool day. 12 volunteers attended (including 2 new people) with Marion. The main task was to prepare the area where the new hedgerow was to be put alongside the farm field on the southern boundary. This included cutting back over hanging trees and digging out bramble. We cleared approximately 50 metres ready for planting next month. Other tasks included picking litter from off the whole site which amounted to a very heavy full bag. Two volunteers took on the wildlife recording – great to have their expertise. It was a very worthwhile session. Wonderful to have a good turnout and new people too.



A task day was held on Saturday 14 March 2026 to which 11 volunteers attended with Marion. This included 2 more new people who had seen the volunteering through social media. The main task was to ensure that the hedgerow trees that the Friends of Red River had been successful in applying for funding from the Woodland Trust were planted. These had been delivered a few days before (plugs not bare rooted). A great mixture of native hedgerow trees including dogwood, hawthorn, rowan, crab apple, elder,

field rose, field maple, hazel and holly. These are ideal to provide a rich source of nectar in the spring and fruit/nuts in the winter. They were planted in a double staggered row to provide a good thick hedge. In addition, two of the group repaired the steps down to the platform. Plus there was a bag of litter collected. Again a great session in good weather – lots achieved.



Meetings

The Friends of Red River held Committee Meetings on Tuesdays 6 January and 10 March 2026 at 7pm at The Gate Inn.

Publicity

Publicity posters have been updated and are put up in local notice boards. Websites have been updated. Dates of our published task programme are on various websites and volunteers are being actively engaged in conservation tasks, and wildlife recording. All events have been promoted by Groundwork's social media and has linked to Heanor & Loscoe Town Council social media.

Funding

As previously reported Heanor & Loscoe Town Council have confirmed funding for deepening the pond will be carried over into the next financial year. Friends of Red River has been successful in getting funding from The Woodland Trust for native hedgerow trees and these were delivered in March.

Statistics

Summary Statistics - Quarter 4	
No. of individual volunteers on practical tasks and events	15
No. of individual volunteers on wildlife recording	4
No. of Practical volunteer days, committee meeting, grant application contributed by adult volunteers (66hrs divide by 6hrs) = 11 days	11 days
No. of volunteer days contributed by volunteers on wildlife recording (6 hours divide by 6 hours) = 1 day	1 day
No of activities/practical days delivered by Groundwork Staff	2
No of wildlife recording visits delivered by Groundwork Staff	2

Wildlife Recording

Groundwork staff look and listen out for wildlife on most of the task days on the reserve, but often we are too involved with supervising the volunteers to systematically record everything seen or heard. We are helped on these recording sessions by our regular volunteers. We are fortunate to have their knowledge, enthusiasm and expertise. These recording visits help to build up a picture of what is likely to be seen during the year giving a good indication of the wildlife to be found on the reserve in the different seasons. These types of records become more valuable over time and help to influence the habitat management on the reserve. We continue to prepare an updated Management Plan for the site. This has involved collating as many wildlife records as possible from previous years and has taken considerable time so far.

Monthly Records - The month by month summary is shown below:-

No records of wildlife were recorded in January 2026 due to ill health of the volunteers.

February 2026

Wildlife records were taken before, during and after the task on 14 February. It was a glorious sunny day. Great to record 17 bird species - lovely to see 5 Siskins feeding on the silver birch seeds. Also good to record Nuthatch, Goldcrest and Song Thrush. Please see table below for more details.

Snow drops and Primrose were flowering and catkins on the hazel. There were still plenty of berries including Hawthorn, Ivy and Rowan. Grey Squirrel was recorded.

March 2026

A sunny day again on 14 March 2026. It was good to record 15 species of birds including Chiffchaff singing away – a sound of spring! Bumblebees were flying. Also great to see Moorhen which has been missing from the site for several months. Grey Squirrels were recorded. Both Dogs Mercury and Daffodils were in flower.

Birds - The bird species seen or heard during quarter 4 are shown in the table on the next page. The table shows a list of all the species seen in the previous 3 years. The number of bird species recorded in quarter 4 = 20.

Bird Species 2026 at Red River LNR	February	March
Bullfinch		Y
Chaffinch		
Goldfinch		
Greenfinch		
Buzzard	Y	
Sparrow Hawk		
Kestrel		
Dunnock		
Robin	Y	Y
Wren	Y	Y

Grey Wagtail		
Pied Wagtail		
Great Tit	Y	Y
Blue Tit	Y	Y
Coal Tit		
Long Tailed Tit	Y	Y
Mallard	Y	Y
Moorhen		Y
Pheasant		
Chiffchaff		Y
Blackcap		
Willow Warbler		
Crow	Y	Y
Magpie	Y	Y
Jackdaw	Y	
Jay		
Starling		
House Sparrow		
Nuthatch	Y	Y
Goldcrest	Y	Y
Lesser B. B. Gull		
B. H. Gull	Y	
Wood Pigeon	Y	Y
Stock Dove		
Feral Pigeon		
Collared Dove		
G. S. Woodpecker		
Green Woodpecker		
Mistle Thrush		
Song Thrush	Y	Y
Blackbird	Y	
Swallow		
Swift		
Field Fare		
Redwing		
Tree Creeper		
Skylark		
Raven		
Rook		
Lapwing		
Tawny Owl		
Herring Gull		
Heron		
Siskin	Y	
Ring Necked Parakeet		
Monthly Totals	17	15
Quarterly Total = 20		