

About us...

East Sussex Wildlife Rescue & Ambulance Service was established as a voluntary organisation in 1996. During the following decade, the volunteers primarily focused on rescuing and transporting injured wildlife to veterinary and wildlife centres, while also operating a few rehabilitation facilities in home and garden settings.

In 2005, East Sussex WRAS became a registered Charitable Company and initiated the development of its first Casualty Centre at a veterinary practice near Hailsham. By 2008, WRAS relocated to its current site at The Shaw Barn on the A22 in Whitesmith, situated between Hailsham, Uckfield, and Lewes.

The hospital is registered as a Veterinary Premises with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and is regularly inspected by the Veterinary Medicines Directive. Over the years, the hospital has expanded and now can accommodate more than 400 casualties at any given time.

In June 2012 founder Trevor Weeks was awarded an MBE for services to animal welfare.

Operating every day of the year, including overnight emergency services for dangerous cases like foxes and badgers that the public cannot handle, WRAS is committed to its mission. The charity employs the equivalent of nine full-time staff members, with two working at WRAS's charity shop in Eastbourne, while the rest manage daily operations at the Casualty Centre, from rescue coordination to rehabilitation and facility management.

With over 200 volunteers contributing in various capacities—such as reception work, fundraising, feeding, cleaning, orphan rearing, rescue response, or assisting at the charity shop—WRAS now addresses over 6,000 casualties annually, with over 1,000 typically managed in June alone.

Mission:

WRAS provides a frontline rescue service to assist individuals who encounter sick, injured, orphaned, or trapped wildlife. The organisation offers professional, ethical veterinary treatment to alleviate the suffering of these casualties while providing suitable rehabilitation facilities and facilitating their return to the wild whenever possible.

Goals:

- To safeguard wildlife through education, advice, and raising awareness of the everyday challenges impacting their survival, fostering sustainable community relationships between wildlife and humans.
- To ensure our veterinary ambulance service can respond effectively to public calls regarding injured wildlife, facilitating swift rescues to enhance the welfare and chances of survival for casualties.
- To provide professional and ethical veterinary care to wildlife, reducing their suffering and aiding recovery.

Vision:

- To develop our own Veterinary Hospital equipped for special admissions, intensive care units, isolation units, and recovery wards.
- To furnish the hospital with modern technology, medical devices, and surgical equipment to broaden the medical care available for wildlife.
- To create educational programs that engage the public in understanding the essential components and principles of wildlife care.

RESCUE • REHABILITATE • RELEASE

www.wildlifeambulance.org

RECEPTION CENTRE CALL 01825 873 003

24 HOUR EMERGENCY RESCUE CALL 0300 10 26 999

CASUALTY CENTRE Unit 2, The Shaw Barn, Whitesmith, East Sussex, BN8 6JD



REGISTERED CHARITY: Number 1108880 – Since 2005

REGISTERED COMPANY: Number 5107163

Community Voluntary Group member since 1996

REGISTERED ADDRESS:

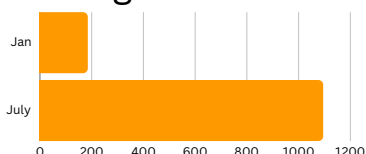
8 Stour Close, Stone Cross, Pevensey, East Sussex BN24 5QU

Statistics

Average cost per casualty: **£97**

WRAS does not charge for its service.

Casualties:
491% increase
during the summer



Almost 5 times more casualties during during June.

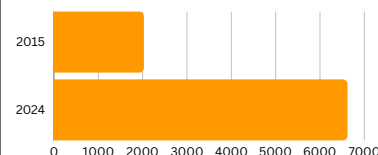
January 2024: 184 casualties
June 2024: 1,095 casualties

Total Number
of Casualties
for 2024:

6,622

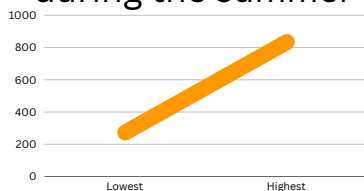
10.6% increase
on 2023

10 Year Increase
226% increase
Jan 2015 - Dec 2024



2015: 2,029 casualties
2024: 6,622 casualties

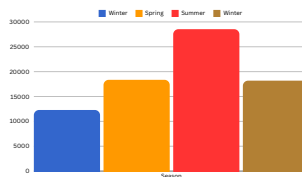
Hours worked:
205% increase
during the summer



Total number of hours worked by staff and volunteer per week in rescue and rehabilitation.

Quietest Time: 273 hours per week
Busiest Time: 834 hours per week

Mileage of
WRAS ambulances
77,371 per year



Winter: 12,289 miles
Spring: 18,354 miles
Summer: 28,539 miles
Autumn: 18,188 miles
During 2024.

Casualties with
an at risk
conservation
status:

53.26%

Approximate number of calls received annually: **20,000**

WRAS does not have a call centre. Staff based at the hospital cover these calls.

Approximate maximum capacity: **450**

The maximum capacity can vary depending on the size and species of the individuals being cared for at any given time, as well as whether those in care are compatible for grouping together.

Number of people working for WRAS

9

Equivalent Full Time Staff

200+

Volunteers

Timelines:

WRAS History - [Click Here](#) Trevor Weeks History - [Click Here](#).

Top 12 known causes of wildlife casualties:

- 1: Attacked by a cat
- 2: Road Casualty
- 3: Attacked by "other" predators
- 4: Trapped in Building / Basement
- 5: Collision with Building / Window
- 6: Disturbed Nest / home
- 7: Attacked by a dog
- 8: Entangled in line /netting
- 9: Trapped in pipe /drain / hole
- 10: Caught in fence / gate / feeder
- 11: Pollution / Oiled
- 12: Fishing Line / hook

Many casualties are admitting and the cause of injury is unknown.

Commonly Rescued Species:

- 1: Pigeons & Doves
- 2: Hedgehogs
- 3: Gulls & Turns
- 4: Crows
- 5: Sparrows
- 6: Thrushes
- 7: Ducks, Geese and Swans
- 8: Foxes
- 9: Starlings
- 10: Tits
- 11: Old World Flycatchers and Chats
- 12: Rodents

Old World Flycatchers and Chats include the Robin, Nightingale, Wheatear, flycatchers, starts and chats.

Benefiting the Community

We are not just an animal charity! We are a vital community service helping people who find sick, injured, orphaned or trapped wildlife.



Transportation Assistance

Providing essential transport for those without access to support.



Public Safety

Ensuring the safety of people in the presence of dangerous animals or in risky situations.



Support for Vulnerable Individuals

Assisting people with phobias, disabilities, or special needs.



Calming presence in a crisis

Offering relief during high-stress and anxious situations.



Free Veterinary Care

Giving the community access to professional veterinary services at no cost, for wildlife casualties.



Conservation and Biodiversity

Contributing to local conservation efforts and enhancing biodiversity.



Volunteer / Student Opportunities

Providing meaningful roles for community members to learn and give back.

Trevor Weeks - Biography

1980s:

- Trevor's wildlife rescue passion began in 1985 at age 13 with Eastbourne Conservation Volunteers.
- He was introduced to Meta Mann who ran a bird hospital from her home in Seaford.
- Patrolled Sussex beaches during winter to find oiled seabirds for treatment.
- Started helping with toad patrols at Littleington during the spring migration.

1990s:

- In 1991, Trevor rescued over 40 ducks covered in heating oil, raising his public profile.
- Started working at a market research company, balancing job with wildlife rescues.
- Appointed "Pond Warden" at Hailsham Common Pond by Hailsham Town Council between 1991 - 1993.
- Trevor's mother Janet (aged 47) passed away after battling cancer, leading Trevor to focus his energy into his wildlife and conservation work as a coping strategy.
- Founding member of Environment Hailsham.
- Halted a development site after discovering a pond containing Great Crested Newts had been destroyed.
- Started driving and purchased his first car which he converted his car into a wildlife ambulance.
- Established East Sussex Wildlife Rescue, to help reduce his veterinary bills and expenses.
- Led the National Terrapin Project (1995-1997).
- Attended the Sea Empress Oil Spill in Wales with Redbrook Wildlife Rescue working alongside British Divers Marine Life Rescue and Greenpeace - 1996.

2000s:

- After a back injury in 2001, lost his computer programming job. Trevor focused on rescue work.
- Became Marine Mammal Medic in 2002, undertaking his first live stranded dolphin at Newhaven weeks later along with his first seal pup rescue.
- Successfully organised a peaceful demonstration against a badger cull in Saltdean 2002.
- Assisted the Shepperton based Swan Sanctuary, after a flock of over 200 swans were repeatedly fly through over head cable with casualties happening on a daily basis - 2003.
- Trevor is hospitalised for 2 days after a nasty fox bite injury becomes infected - 2003.
- A dolphin trapped in a marina in Cumbria is the successful result of a two week stay by Trevor in Cumbria working for British Divers Marine Life Rescue and alongside Whale & Dolphin Society - 2003.
- First deer rescue - occurred near Haywards Heath involving a Roe Deer caught in a iron gate - 2003.
- Trevor qualifies as an Advance Marine Mammal Medic with BDMLR - 2005.
- Faced health issues by 2007 due to long hours and stress.
- Employed by International Animal Rescue then as the National Co-ordinator for British Divers Marine Life Rescue, co-ordinating and responding to cetacean and seal rescues across the UK.
- Trevor was flown to Nova Scotia to help train Canadian officials and rescue groups in cetacean and seal rescues.
- Due to heavy snow Trevor sleeps over at WRAS centre as volunteers struggle to get in.

2010s:

- Sponsored by International Animal Rescue Trevor started working full-time for East Sussex Wildlife Rescue.
- Trevor is hospitalised and almost loses his life, after being bitten by an entangled Adder whilst trying to rescue the reptile in Lewes - 2010.
- Trevor was assaulted after his ambulance was flagged down near Uckfield - 2012.
- Received MBE in 2012 for animal welfare contributions and a BBC Community Heroes Award.
- An adult seal moulting on Seaford Beach is named after Trevor as he works nights to keep the seal safe - 2013.
- Trevor is trained as a "Lay Vaccinator" to aid with badger vaccination in East Sussex-2013.
- Trevor is rescued from a stream near Upper Dicker by emergency services after a fall during a rescue - 2016.
- Suffered serious burnout in 2018, working up to 150 hours a week, leading to insomnia, a breakdown and diagnosis of complex PTSD.

2020s:

- Meta Mann passes away aged 84.
- With the huge increase in casualties Trevor finds his administrative workload greatly increase.
- Trevor experiences one of the most stressful rescues of his career of two fallow bucks with their antlers entangled in rope at High Hurstwood - 2023

Trevor's Memorable Rescues

Photographs of Trevor, WRAS and many of the casualties and rescues can be download from:

Photos of Trevor: <https://shorturl.at/i2pvN>
General WRAS Photos: <https://shorturl.at/dpzUo>



Sea Empress Oil Spill Wales 1996.

At the age of 24, Trevor took a two-week leave from work to respond to the Sea Empress Oil Spill at Milford Haven in Wales in March 1996. He joined Gary Tredwell, who operated Redbrook Wildlife Rescue, along with members from British Divers Marine Life Rescue and Greenpeace.

They set up a temporary treatment centre at the Dale Fort Field Centre, where Trevor dedicated two weeks to medicating, treating, and cleaning hundreds of oil-covered seabirds, before the Swan Sanctuary staff and volunteers took over.

"I was invited to participate because of my experience on the beaches of Sussex. It was one of the most horrific events I've ever witnessed. At times, you couldn't stay on the beach for more than 20 minutes due to the fumes. There were countless dead birds. However, we achieved a good success rate, and I am thankful that such events are rare," Trevor reflected.



Sussex Police close a road for a badger rescue in Lewes. 2003

In the summer of 2003, Trevor received a call about a badger trapped in the shower room of a house on Southover High Street, Lewes. He needed to rescue the badger, which was attempting to crawl underneath the shower tray. The badger, suffering from territorial bite wounds on its rear, spent several weeks in care.

Given that the street comprised terrace housing, it was difficult to determine the direction the badger may have come from. Since badgers are territorial animals, Sussex Police were requested to close the road in the early hours of the morning. This precaution allowed rescuers to safely release the badger, giving it the opportunity to choose its own direction without risking an accident.

"After assessing the area, it became evident that the badger could have originated from one of three locations. If we had released it in the wrong spot, it could have faced further attacks," explained Trevor.



Dolphin Rescue, Maryport Marina, Cumbria. 2006.

In January 2006, while serving as the National Coordinator for British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR), Trevor dedicated two weeks to assisting a bottlenose dolphin that had become trapped in a marina in Cumbria. Collaborating with local BDMLR medics and the Whale & Dolphin Conservation Society, he monitored the dolphin's movements around the clock to assess whether it was indeed trapped and to keep track of its health. Ultimately, he played a key role in coordinating a rescue operation that involved draining the harbour and physically capturing the dolphin. A large crane was then used to lift the dolphin out of the harbour and onto a rescue boat for its release in the Solway Firth. *"There was immense pressure from the public, and it was a nerve-wracking time, as we wanted to ensure nothing went wrong. Some people opposed the dolphin's removal, and we even received death threats,"* Trevor shared.



Pink Swan Rescue, Pevensey Levels. 2014

In December 2014 Trevor received a call about a pink swan on a partially flooded field near Wartling. On arrival it was clear the pink colouration was blood coming from an injured on the underside of the beak.

The swan did not want to be caught and gave rescuers the run around, involving Trevor having to swim across a drainage dyke.

The swan was eventually caught, and the cut below the beak taped to prevent further blood loss.

"When most birds noticed something discolouring their feathers they will attempt to remove it by preening, unfortunately for this swan it resulting in the blood just spreading across the birds body perpetuating the problem. The bird received surgery at the Swan Sanctuary and was returned to Wartling about 10 days later" said Trevor.

Archive Video Clips



Rescuers Trevor Weeks and Alec Anscombe rescued a stag entangled in a rope swing at Heathfield. September 2005

Download from: <https://youtu.be/zF-HAWzQLo>



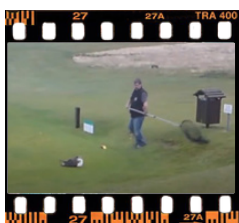
Trevor treating an oiled guillemot at Seaford after a beach patrol January 2008.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/75CJnjqMQhY>



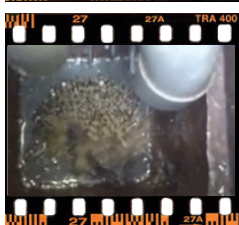
Releasing a badger back to the wild. Broyle Lane, Ringmer. Dusk, 12th July 2009.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/75CJnjqMQhY>



Injured Juvenile Gannet Rescue at Seaford Head Golf Course. 10th October 2009.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/hINWLjV8NOs>



Trevor rescues a hedgehog stuck down a drain in Eastbourne. 30th September 2009

Download from: <https://youtu.be/l256gJcvt80>



Trevor is called to an unusual rescue of a swan caught on a fence at Hydneye Pond, Hampden Park. 25th April 2010

Download from: <https://youtu.be/BaloOWfd52g>



Grand opening of WRAS's current Casualty Centre on 4th September 2010 by Cbeebies star Sarah Jane Honeywell.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/HMT6mWvDOJ8>



WRAS is called to a Kestrel inside a Double Decker bus in Burgess Hill. Trevor Weeks is able to catch and bring the bird in for 24 hours observation. 25th June 2011.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/E1jeFOREsdY>



A fox is caught in chainlink fencing at Ardingly requiring rescue and treatment for a ligature wound. 9th May 2012

Download from: <https://youtu.be/h1tGvvnQCPw>

Archive Video Clips



A difficult rescue of a deer caught on a barbed wire fence at Hellingly on 25th January 2015.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/xqPZqWExUyc>



Challenging rescue of a roe deer trapped behind a fence at the top of a sandstone ridge in Uckfield. 21st May 2015

Download from: <https://youtu.be/FOAyvz-1iAg>



The release of a pair of crashed swan - rescued at Lottbridge Drove, Eastbourne and released at Princes Park in Eastbourne. 5th January 2016

Download from: <https://youtu.be/3rrDkdjZbLA>



Trevor rushes to the aid of a fox hit by a train near Bishopstone Railway Station and work with Network to recover the injured fox. 3rd April 2016

Download from: <https://youtu.be/jznOzRcTOAI>



A trapped badger required rescue by Trevor in Magdalen Road, Hastings. 9th September 2019.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/D0snw-poc14>



Trevor attends a fox trapped in a basement lightwell in Brighton. 16th July 2021.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/1VuZJGG5sg8>



One of the most anxious rescues ever of two stags entangled in rope at High Hurstwood. Involving 2 ambulances and 6 specialist rescuers. 20th October 2023.

Download from: <https://youtu.be/B6D9yI51XXM>



On his day off Trevor rushes to a fox at Beckley near Rye after it becomes entangled in a football goal. 29th July 2024.

Download from: https://youtu.be/UXn_rvkH1Bs