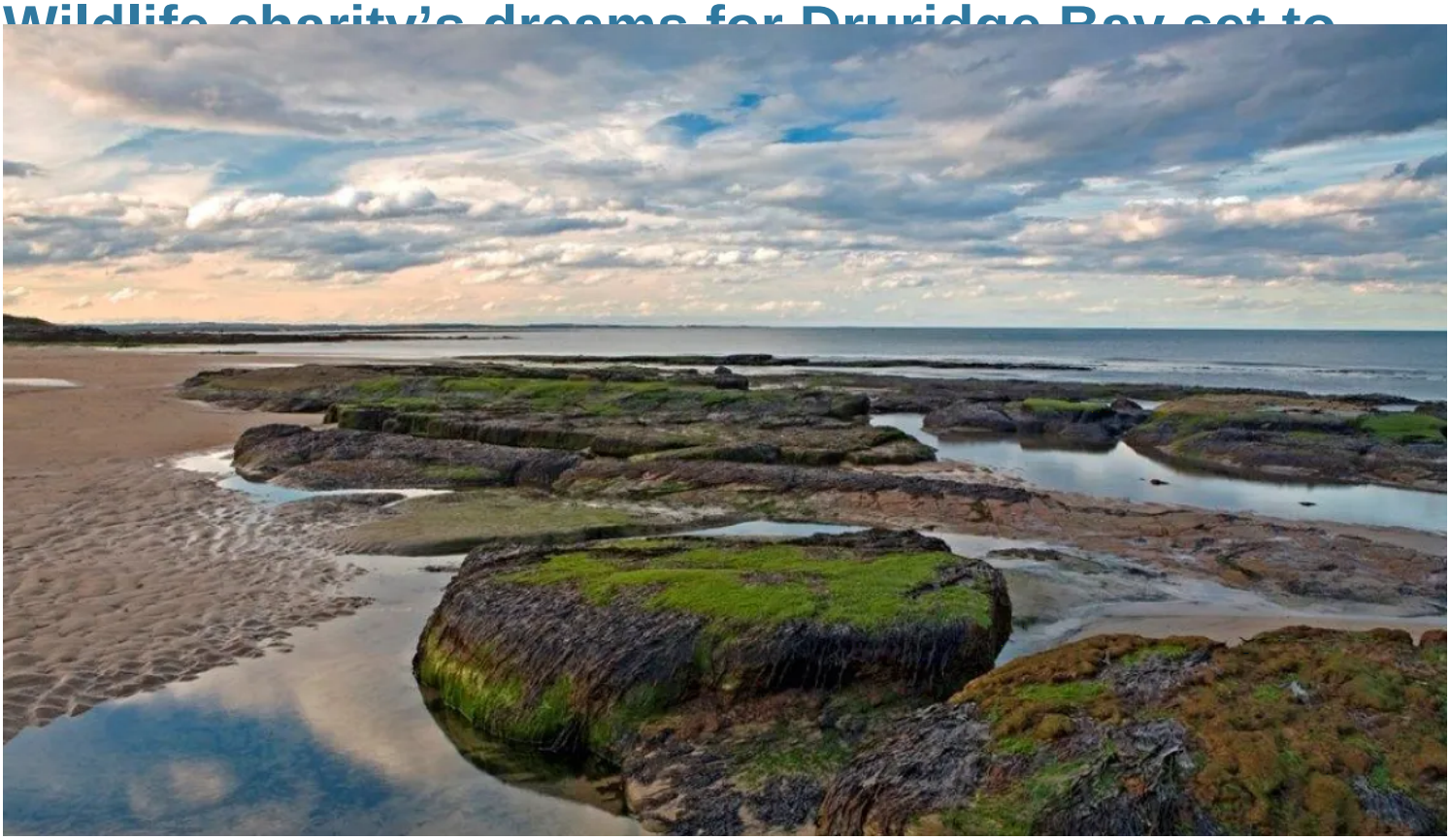
Wildlife charity's dreams for Druridge Bay set to



Rocky shore on Druridge Bay John Williamson

The Druridge Bay coastline, which stretches the seven miles from Amble in the north to Lynemouth Bay in the south, is treasured for its beautiful beaches and rolling sand dunes, yet, behind the sweep of beach lies a wonderful legacy of Northumberland's industrial past. Some sections of the hinterland have already been restored as wetland nature reserves while other landscapes have changed little since Anglo Saxon times. The whole area is renowned for its birdlife and is home to other species such as otters, red squirrels and great crested newts.

A large part of the Dynamic Druridge project will be the building of a new and innovative Wildlife Discovery Centre at the trust's Hauxley reserve on Druridge Bay. Built from the landscape and within the landscape, the centre will be an eco-build with the potential to be the greenest building in the north-east, using locally grown and traditional building materials; it will enable the wildlife charity to host an exciting programme of recreational, educational and volunteering activities designed to re-connect people with nature and the wider landscape.

Designed by North Shields based architects Brightblue Studio, the new building will be a unique coastal wildlife-watching hub for the North East and will replace the building destroyed in an arson attack in 2010. It is scheduled to open in summer 2016.

In addition to the new centre, the project will restore, recreate and reconnect habitats across the trust's five nature reserves along the Bay - Hauxley, Cressell Pond and Foreshore, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Linton Lane as well as engaging local communities, groups and visitors in activities and events designed to reconnect them with the natural world.

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said: "We're delighted to support the trust's plans to build a robust and sustainable future for the Druridge Bay area, thanks to money raised by National Lottery players. The new visitor centre and fantastic opportunities to get involved will go a long way in equipping the local community with the skills and passion they need in their roles as custodians of our wonderful natural heritage."

Meanwhile a delighted Mike Pratt, Northumberland Wildlife Trust Chief Executive, said: "This wonderful funding will see a large part of our ambitious plan to improve everyone's experience of wildlife and nature on Druridge Bay finally being realised. As well as the Wildlife Discovery Centre and other improvements at Hauxley, habitats and access will be enhanced at all our coastal reserves along the bay.

"We all hope this funding marks the first of several steps toward realising a vision of making Druridge Bay one of the best places in the North of England to see wildlife. It will help us bring together local communities, visitors and, of course, the wildlife of the Bay."

You can follow the build's progress at the Hauxley Nature Reserve Facebook page.

Notes to editors

About Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is the largest environmental charity in the region working to safeguard native wildlife. One of 47 wildlife trusts across the UK, Northumberland Wildlife Trust has campaigned for nature conservation for over 40 years. It aims to inform, educate and involve people of all ages and backgrounds in protecting their environment in favour of wildlife and conservation.

Supported by over 13,000 individual and 100 corporate members in the region, Northumberland Wildlife Trust manages and protects critical species and habitats at over 60 nature reserves throughout Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland.

Further information

For further information, images and interviews please contact Fiona Dryden, Communications Officer at Northumberland Wildlife Trust on: 0191 284 6884 or via email at: fiona.dryden@northwt.org.uk.