

Civil Air Support Plays Pivotal Role in Historic Reintroduction of White-Tailed Eagles to Southern England

Monday 8 September, 2025

Civil Air Support, the UK's leading volunteer aviation charity, is proud to announce its continued involvement in one of the most significant wildlife conservation efforts in recent history: the reintroduction of White-Tailed Eagles to southern England.

In July 2023 Forestry England and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation announced that their project to return this species had hit a key milestone with the first of the released birds successfully breeding. Following this, Civil Air Support revealed its role in transporting young White-Tailed Eagles from Scotland to the South Coast. This mission supports the re-establishment of breeding colonies of these majestic birds, marking the first time in 240 years that they have nested in England.

This year, Civil Air Support has successfully transported another eight chicks to carefully chosen locations along the South Coast, in collaboration with Forestry England and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation. These young birds will grow into juveniles before being released into the wild, with the aim of achieving full maturity and breeding potential expected in three to four years.

Encouragingly, the birds first relocated by Civil Air Support in 2020 have already begun to thrive, with six healthy chicks hatching across Hampshire, Sussex, and Dorset – a promising sign for the future of the breed.

"It's not every day you get to help reintroduce a species that's been missing for centuries," said Graham Mountford, Civil Air Support Operations Manager. *"Flying these birds safely to their new home was a privilege and knowing they've now bred successfully makes it all the more rewarding."*

Helen Mountford, zoologist and Civil Air Support crew member, added: *"Transporting these birds isn't just about logistics – it's about giving them the best possible start. Every flight is a step toward restoring balance to our ecosystems."*

White-Tailed Eagles with wingspans reaching up to 2.5 metres were once widespread across England. Human persecution led to their extinction, with the last recorded breeding pair in southern England in 1780. The current reintroduction programme is conducted under licence from Natural England, with chicks collected from wild nests in Scotland under licence from NatureScot. Civil Air Support ensures their safe transport to England, where they are released on the South Coast, each fitted with satellite tags to monitor their progress.

Steve Egerton-Read, White-Tailed Eagle Project Officer for Forestry England, commented: *"Returning lost species like the White-Tailed Eagle is a key part of Forestry England's approach to restoring biodiversity and helping nature to recover. We hope that in years to come these iconic birds will become a much more common sight, inspiring future generations and deepening their connection with nature."*

Ornithologist Tim Mackrill of the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation emphasised the crucial role played by the aviation charity: *"We are extremely grateful for the valuable support the project receives from Civil Air Support. The welfare of the birds is of paramount importance and being able to transport them to the Isle of Wight so quickly and efficiently is extremely helpful in this regard."*

Civil Air Support is honoured to contribute to this historic conservation initiative, helping to restore one of Britain's most iconic species to its rightful place in our skies.

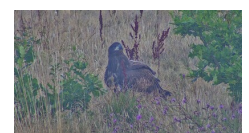
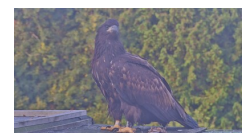
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About Civil Air Support (CAS) <https://www.civilairsupport.com/>

Charity registered in England and Wales (1113079) and Scotland (SCO42026)

Civil Air Support is the largest charitable air support organisation in Europe with around 200 members, together with a fleet of privately-owned aircraft. All Civil Air Support members are volunteers, and all flights are private. The primary mission of Civil Air Support is to provide voluntary air support to safeguard communities and the environment. Civil Air Support will only operate when the alternative is no air

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About Forestry England <https://www.forestryengland.uk/>

Forestry England cares for more land and trees than any other organisation in England. Shaping landscapes for people, wildlife and timber, the organisation has built over 1,800 miles of walking, running and cycling trails, and they supply England's largest amount of sustainably sourced timber, and conserve thousands of plant and animal species. Forestry England care for some of the country's most important habitats and are recovering vital ecosystems and returning missing species to England's landscapes.

About Natural England <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Established by an Act of Parliament in 2006, Natural England's purpose is to help conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. Natural England is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

About Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation <https://www.roydennis.org/>

The Foundation was first established in Scotland in 1995 as the Highland Foundation for Wildlife. It is a non-membership charitable trust dedicated to wildlife conservation and research, with a special emphasis on species recovery projects and the restoration of natural ecosystems

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