

WALES ENVIRONMENT LINK

England & Wales · Charity number 1022675

Details

Other names	WALES WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK, LINK, WALES LINK, WEL
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	1993-06-16
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION, SUSTAINABLE USE AND QUIET AND RESPONSIBLE ENJOYMENT OF THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF WALES.

Activities: Our mission is for the WEL network to be the primary NGO sector influencer of environmental policy, legislation and practice in Wales, respected for our members expertise and advice and at the centre of government decision making.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** WALES
- Throughout Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£261,900	£198,325	-	-
2024-03-31	£170,704	£155,232	-	-
2023-03-31	£221,051	£167,438	-	-
2022-03-31	£172,735	£246,897	-	-
2021-03-31	£249,498	£201,314	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ROGER THOMAS	Chair	2016-07-05
Arpana Chunilal		2025-07-01
BEVERLEY PENNEY		
Jeevan Kaur		2025-07-01
Jennifer Mary Anderson		2019-02-07
Owen Glyn Derbyshire		2025-05-21
RACHEL CAROLINE SHARP		2013-08-06

Accounts



Trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Registered Charity Number: 1022675

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025

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for the year ended 31 March 2025**

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Legal and Administrative information

Charity number 1022675

Charity Offices Tramshed Tech
Pendyris Street
Cardiff
CF22 6BH

Trustees

Roger Thomas	Chair
Jen Anderson	Treasurer
Beverley Penney	Open Spaces Society (Hon. Secretary)
Rachel Sharp	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Natalie Buttriss	Woodland Trust (until stepped down on 3 rd October 2024)

President Post vacant

Director Karen Whitfield

Independent Examiner Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Langdon House
Langdon Road
Swansea Waterfront
SA1 8QY

Bankers Co-operative Bank
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

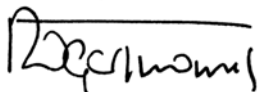
Chair's Foreword

The last twelve months have been tumultuous, with global conflict and political change creating uncertainty over commitments worldwide to addressing the serious environmental issues that are of huge concern to our network's members. Closer to home, the legacy of covid, Brexit's adverse impact and loss of funding to the sector have made this a period of unprecedented challenge.

We have, nevertheless, secured sufficient financial backing to take us through in our current form until at least 2027, whilst also identifying and chasing new opportunities for support. Our new membership subscription model is delivering greater stability for core WEL functions, and we thank our members for their support with this.

Our small team has settled into the new operating structure on which we reported last year, collectively delivering significantly more than the sum of their parts. Together with staff drawn from our members, our working groups have continued to contribute effectively to the identification and resolution of issues affecting our ecosystems, and a recent review of our mission and strategic objectives with our key partners and stakeholders showed that WEL's work is valued and recognised beyond its membership.

As we prepare for the election of the 7th Senedd, with an increase in the number of Senedd members, I am confident that our network will be resilient in its quest to achieve the best outcomes for the natural environment of Wales.



Roger Thomas
Chair

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Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and Wales Environment Link's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Organisational Information

Charity name

Wales Environment Link is also known as WEL. Our main social media output is via [Bluesky](#), and we also use [LinkedIn](#) and [Toot Wales/Twt Cymru](#) (the Wales server of Mastodon). In January 2025, we stopped posting on X (formerly known as Twitter) for ethical reasons, as misinformation continued to rise on the platform following the removal of fact checking.

Trustees

The Trustees, who are members of the Management Committee, have served throughout the year, unless otherwise stated.

Constitution of the Charity, Trustee selection and governance

Wales Environment Link's constitution was adopted on 1st November 1990 and amended on 8th May 1991, 5th May 1993, 18th June 1997, 10th September 1997, 3rd July 2002, 7th July 2004, 21st November 2012, 10th July 2013, 16th May 2017, 4th July 2018 and 14th November 2024.

Appointment to the Management Committee is governed by the Trust Deed of the charity, and appointments made either at the Annual General Meeting or, in the case of a vacancy, by agreement of a majority of the member organisations at a Council Meeting.

Council meets twice a year, principally to consider policy matters of relevance to the members. Decisions are made on the basis of consensus; however, where a formal vote is required, decisions are taken by a majority vote of the Full members of the Council.

The Management Committee manages the affairs of the charity and makes such decisions as may be required to ensure the continuing operation of the charity and to address any substantial matters arising in furtherance of the

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charitable objectives of the charity.

Management Committee delegates the day-to-day responsibility for the organisation and line management of staff to the Director of Wales Environment Link.

Related bodies

There are four Link networks in the UK:

- Wales Environment Link (WEL)
- Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL, in England)
- Scottish Environment LINK (SEL)
- Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

Each Link is a coalition organisation, set up to complement and add value to the actions of individual member organisations. The Links work together on UK or European-level policy, forming 'Environment Links UK' (ELUK) statements and documents.

Charitable objects

WEL is established, for the benefit of the public, to promote and enhance the conservation, protection, sustainable management, and quiet and responsible enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Wales.

Vision

A thriving Welsh environment for future generations¹

¹ For the purposes of interpretation, “environment” means terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments. It includes urban and rural environments and areas of importance for natural heritage, landscape and public access.

Mission Statement

Our mission is for the WEL network to be the primary NGO sector influencer of environmental policy, legislation and practice in Wales, respected for our members' expertise and advice and at the centre of government decision making.

Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

Provide a cohesive voice for our members by enabling them to work effectively with governments and statutory sectors as a respected and influential independent advisory network.

KPIs:

1. WEL is the first point of contact for Government and statutory bodies when looking for representation from the environmental NGO sector.
2. WEL recommendations are taken up in Committee reports, and Government policy and legislation.
3. WEL provides timely, well-informed positions and recommendations that influence policy and legislative change.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

Support and nurture the environmental NGO sector by facilitating the development of partnerships, knowledge and expertise, increasing the sustainability of the sector, building mutual trust and enhancing capacity within the membership.

KPIs:

1. WEL members are provided with effective training on relevant topics to assist them with their collaborative work and influencing. Courses are sought after and members find them useful.
2. WEL is a valued partner to the other UK Links (collectively known as Environment Links UK / ELUK) and a key participant in other environmental and relevant third sector coalitions, such as Greener UK, Stop Climate Chaos Cymru, the SD Alliance and the Third Sector Partnership Council.
3. WEL has the capacity and tools to support at least one joint campaign per year on our members' collective key priorities, in a way that adds value to our members' individual campaigning and strengthens the ability to be heard.

Objective 3: Supporting our members

Develop WEL's role as a key support mechanism for its members, clearly demonstrating the achievements and importance of the network to members, funders and partners

KPIs:

1. WEL is recognised as a champion for its members
2. WEL continues to attract new members, and funding from both the Welsh Government, and trusts and foundations.
3. WEL members value the network's role in keeping them informed about policy and legislative developments, opportunities for partnership working, support mechanisms and funding opportunities.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

Develop WEL's public profile in order to better promote its members' agreed collective priorities, messages and recommendations.

KPIs:

1. WEL's social media platforms continue to increase their followers and are valued by our members for promoting their work and raising awareness of environmental issues.
2. WEL's website is a useful resource for those looking for information about WEL, its members, and network positions on policy issues.
3. Politicians, government officials and staff from statutory bodies know the WEL network, who its members are, what it represents and what it can offer.

Objective 5: A viable network

Maintain a sustainable, efficient and effective network which is financially stable and overseen by sound governance procedures.

KPIs:

1. WEL members value the network as an important source of timely information, and are able to engage in joint work with the network in a variety of ways (e.g. through email, Basecamp, social media, video/tele-conferencing and face to face meetings and events).
2. WEL continues to operate with a healthy funding reserve, diverse income streams and has confidence in its financial practices, organisational policies and risk management.

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3. WEL has a high staff retention rate with staff members feeling valued and happy with their working conditions.
4. WEL attracts and retains skilled Trustees, who feel valued by the network.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees of Wales Environment Link continue to pay due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in relation to our activities, thus complying with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

All of the objectives of the charity were devised to contribute to the overall purpose of safeguarding and improving the environment, countryside, heritage, habitats, wildlife and biodiversity of Wales. The act of safeguarding and improving these precious resources is intrinsically for the good of the people of Wales, visitors to Wales and also to global citizens. The Welsh environment and the natural and cultural resources it provides play a significant part in supporting peoples' health and well-being in a multitude of ways, from contributing to good mental and physical health, to reducing the impacts of climate change and helping people to adapt to its effects. WEL advocates for a prosperous, low carbon society which supports the sorts of jobs Wales needs for a just transition.

WEL provides a coordinating service for the environmental and heritage voluntary sector in Wales, increasing the sector's efficiency so that scarce resources are used to greatest effect. The WEL website provides information about WEL's members and its work, including links to all member organisations' websites with their wide range of information available for the public relating to wildlife and countryside issues, including: recreation, health, sustainable development, education and biodiversity. WEL also promotes the work of its members using social media. WEL staff provide support to all member organisations and thus their members, helping to ensure their own objectives are also met, with wide-reaching public benefit.

Review of developments, activities and achievements over the past year

WEL staff supported 7 working groups this year. The groups were, Advocacy, Biodiversity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Land Use, National Park, Marine and Species Champions. Group key activities for the year are reported under the KPIs below. WEL members also coordinated two sub-groups: the Woodlands and Hedges Sub-Group and the Water Sub-Group.

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All WEL and Environment Links UK consultation responses, position statements and briefings are available on the WEL website: www.waleslink.org.

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

WEL remains the first point of contact for environmental NGOs when Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), or other public or private bodies seek representation from a wide range of environmental NGOs in policy discussions and decision-making processes. In 2024 - 2025, WEL members represented the network on 20 stakeholder groups that were convened by the Welsh Government, NRW, third sector or private sector bodies. A full list of all stakeholder groups is included in Annex 1.

WEL regularly provides written and oral evidence to Senedd Committees on a range of environmental subjects. This year, WEL has provided written and oral evidence to inquiries on [halting and reversing the loss of nature](#), the [Welsh Government budget](#) for 2025/26, (informing the Finance Committee's expectations) and on [Sustainable Investment Principles](#).

We continue to provide secretariat for the Senedd's Cross Party Group on Biodiversity, giving a united front for the eNGO sector and making vital links with Senedd work on biodiversity. WEL members help decide themes, based on Senedd topical issues, upcoming legislation and Welsh Government developments. We also involve non-WEL members for events (such as the Royal Welsh Show or Senedd drop-in events) to increase our reach and collaboration.

Advocacy Working Group

The Advocacy Group arranged an online Cross Party Group meeting in April 2024, aligned with the last few weeks of consultation on the Environmental Governance Bill White Paper. WEL members, alongside Green Alliance colleagues, gave an overview of the proposals and gave a 'compare and contrast' with England's, particularly the Office of Environmental Protection, with Q&A with MSs.

WEL arranged media training with an independent consultant in June, helping members who wanted to take up more commentary opportunities to prepare for media engagements.

Throughout the year, WEL staff consulted experts from each of the Working Groups to design the 'Nature Rich / Nature Poor' Graphics. These were finalised

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in March 2025, ready for using in the WEL Manifesto, and to help guide future conversations with MSs on what a ‘nature positive Wales’ could look like. The graphics give an illustrative guide to the diverse policy issues our papers focus on.

After a First Minister contest resulted in only one candidate, we did not contact candidates in the same way as the previous year’s contest, but instead [wrote a letter to Eluned Morgan](#), setting out environmental priorities.

We continued to coordinate WEL input into Natur Cymru’s regular policy section, and guest blogs to explain topics in an accessible way in more detail on our website, such as on the [North East Wales National Park proposal](#) and changes to the [Sustainable Farming Scheme](#).

Over-arching across Working Groups, we also fed into both consultations on the [Welsh Government budget](#) for 2025/26, (informing the Finance Committee’s expectations) and on [Sustainable Investment Principles](#).

Land Use Working Group

Due to the nature of the internal design of the Sustainable Farming Scheme during this reporting period, much of WEL’s input went direct to Welsh Government and was not made public. However, WEL members’ views were valued and promoted at the SFS Ministerial Roundtable, Officials Group and Carbon Panel, via WEL reps. We also submitted papers on the Code for Habitats (to guide farmers on the rule in the Universal Layer to manage 10% of their land for habitat); gave our views on the Carbon Panel’s report and assessments of the likely effectiveness of the carbon sequestration actions outlined in it; and a new trees and hedgerows target. WEL members also provided ad hoc responses to many other specific requests for information from Welsh Government during the year. WEL provided public comment on changes to tree planting targets, via a [press release](#) and [public blog](#), and a couple of our members took up press opportunities to express these views.

In early 2025, we put together our views in a letter on our expectations of the Scheme and the Minister’s office invited us to have monthly meetings with him over the summer, starting in March 2025, which helped significantly in communicating our views directly.

In this year, the Land Use Group created two subgroups on Woodland and Water, to give more space for expert discussion whilst our meetings were

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dominated by information sharing and input into the Sustainable Farming Scheme, with the Water Sub-group able then to give particular attention to agricultural pollution, feeding in evidence to the [Independent Review of the regulations](#) by Dr Susannah Bolton. WEL's evidence on this was very well received by Dr Bolton and by Welsh Government officials and we felt that this positively influenced the recommendations that resulted from the review. The Woodland Subgroup put together a paper on [Woodland Opportunities for Natural Colonization and Regeneration](#), to help civil servants redesign their tree planting grants and processes.

Biodiversity Working Group

In May 2024 WEL's Biodiversity Working Group responded to the Welsh Government's [White Paper on Environmental Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets](#).

During the autumn/winter of 2024, the group prioritised work on the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill. This was an intense programme of work which included submissions regarding several Welsh Government amendments to the draft White Paper. WEL was procured to assist in gathering evidence for Welsh Government from WEL members on possible options for the framework to develop biodiversity targets, prioritising the GBF targets for use in Wales, and on action and outcome targets.

During this time, WEL, RSPB Cymru, and WWF Cymru were also making monthly submissions to the Environmental Principles and Governance Stakeholder Group, which was providing insight as to the drafting of Part 1 and 2 of the Environment Bill. WEL made two written submissions to the stakeholder group.

Over the course of January, February, and March of 2025, WEL had several meetings with the Welsh Government to discuss the framing of Part 3 of the Bill. These sessions were valuable in informing our thinking, enabling WEL to provide useful suggestions to strengthen the legislation.

In March, WEL was commissioned by the Welsh Government to provide evidence regarding the 6 priority biodiversity target areas. This work followed on from our submissions in the winter of 2024, where we prioritised the GBF biodiversity targets and discussed action and outcome targets. Over the following two months, WEL developed nine policy papers discussing five target areas, providing perspectives regarding the draft form and language of the target, which indicators could measure progress towards the target, and which

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actions or short-term goals could contribute towards achieving the target. These were completed in May 2025.

In March, members of the Biodiversity and Marine Working Groups also began meeting with colleagues from ELUK to discuss the development of a UK wide report reflecting on progress towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework target to protect 30% of land and sea across the UK by 2030 (known as 30by30). This work was to be published during the next financial year.

In addition to our work on the Bill, in August 2024, WEL's Biodiversity Working Group also provided evidence to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee's inquiry into [Halting and Reversing the Loss of Nature](#).

The group also commissioned economist Matt Rayment to update the costs in WEL's [Pathways to 2030 report](#) in September 2024, keeping in line with inflation and new land management estimates.

In October 2024, WEL drafted an [open letter on COP 16](#) in October 2024, calling on the Welsh Government to "make peace with nature" and deliver on its Global Biodiversity Framework targets. Finally, in March 2025 WEL joined its sister Links in writing to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Climate Change and Rural Affairs calling for an end to commercial peat sales [ELUK Letter on peatland restoration](#) (sent in March, posted on website 1st April).

Marine Working Group

The Marine Group did not meet during most of 2024 – February 2025, due to limited capacity amongst members of the group. However, following the appointment of new staff by WEL members, the group met again for the first time in February 2025, and the group is considering its work programme. During the period when the group didn't meet, marine members were invited to join meetings of the Biodiversity Working Group and to input to the work on the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill.

National Park Task & Finish Group

This group continued, primarily on an information sharing basis, liaising between WEL members and the Natural Resources Wales team that is leading on the national park. In December 2024 we submitted a [network response](#) to the NRW consultation on the National Park's proposed boundary area, focusing on

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opportunities for nature. Individual members gave direct input to the NRW team putting together the Benefits to Nature report.

Species Champions Project

With the project and staff at capacity, it has been difficult to initiate any new Species Champion work this year. We did recruit a new Kingfisher Champion, Sarah Murphy MS, and switched two existing Champions to different at-risk species with time specific needs. Hannah Blythyn was switched from Arctic Tern to Little Tern, and Joyce Watson from Bottlenose Dolphin to Beaver, recruiting Wildlife Trust's Welsh Beaver Project staff to assist in this, which has led to some great advocacy efforts.

Members have been liaising with the Natur am Byth project, with several Champions taken out to see those projects in partnership with NRW, and we sent out a new [newsletter](#) in autumn 2024. We decided to do more on species-related policy issues, as well as reporting back on visits, so included articles on Bat Conservation Trust's General Election manifesto asks for bats, risks to salmon and reintroduction of a plant species (again, as part of Natur am Byth).

MSs have continued to mention their species regularly in the Senedd, with the Minister himself repeatedly mentioning his 'conflict of interest' (in jest) in being the Salmon Champion, which ends up giving more focus to pollution's impact on river wildlife.

With our group's agreement, we have also engaged with NRW's idea to create a form of 'Nature Advocate', inspired by our project, as part of Natur am Byth, and WEL staff have continued to share information with the parallel projects in England and Scotland. We also ensured that all previous newsletters are now [available on our website](#).

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

WEL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, met 3 times between April 2024 and March 2025. WEL EDI meetings are a space for organisations to share information about Welsh projects and work practices.

In January 2025 WEL provided in-depth Chairing and inclusive facilitation training for our Working Group Chairs. This was designed for experienced Chairs to give them further tools for building consensus within their Working Groups and ensuring that WEL meetings are as inclusive as possible. Chairs enjoyed the

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day and found the content useful in building their chairing skills.

WEL continues to be a valued Environment Links UK (ELUK) partner with regular contact between the ELUK Directors, sharing information and expertise on Link governance and ideas for joint working and funding. WEL continues to work with ELUK on joint reports on [wildlife crime](#) and [access to justice](#) in the UK, as well as liaising on equality, diversity and inclusion.

WEL is also part of the Climate Cymru coalition and maintains links with Green Alliance, specifically working with them during this financial year to influence the development of the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill.

Objective 3: Supporting our members

WEL's Director has continued to participate in the Enabling the Environment Sector stakeholder group, which also includes several WEL members and NRW staff (Chair and secretariat), Welsh Government officials and funders. This group has been considering its future format to better focus on bringing more funding opportunities to Wales.

WEL members regularly tell us how much they appreciate the weekly Newsdirect monitoring service, which provides a wealth of information on Government and Senedd developments, and upcoming Government consultations and Senedd inquiries. WEL's egroups continue to be very active and members also use Basecamp to share information directly with other members. We have also continued to provide advice on member events and advocacy with Welsh Government and the Senedd, particularly assisting members that have less advocacy capacity.

2024-25 was the third year of a four-year grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the second year of a two-year grant from The Waterloo Foundation which came to close at the end of October 2024, both hugely welcome. We also received funding via our two-year resilience grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which has allowed us to work on our financial resilience, internal governance and progress our Diversity Action Plan. We were grateful for the funding from WWF Cymru for developing the Pathways to 2030 Report and working on our nature rich/nature poor graphics for future use in WEL policy and the WEL Manifesto. We continued with the Welsh Government procurement of WEL's services to engage the sector on work relating to the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill and

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Biodiversity Deep Dive. Our role was to provide evidence and expert advice on these issues from the sector. We also continued to receive funding from WCVA for our participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council, representing the environmental third sector.

RSPB Cymru donated funds to the network towards design services for WEL's work on the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill.

Whilst WEL has improved its financial position during 2024-25 and we are in a stable position for the coming financial year, funding remains difficult to find across the sector and WEL is ineligible for many of the funding pots that are available in Wales. It is therefore essential that WEL grows and diversifies its funding. This year we were mid-way through the graduated approach we are taking towards increasing our income from WEL membership fees - working towards full implementation of our new, fairer subscription system for members. We are looking ahead to financial year 2026-27 when we will need to have secured further, substantial long-term funding sources if we are to be able to continue to support our members effectively.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

WEL continues to facilitate healthy relationships with journalists, providing opportunities for WEL members to comment on important areas of work, such as the Sustainable Farming Scheme, using WEL-agreed top lines supplemented with more detail from member organisations.

We secured some [good ITV Wales coverage](#) on our update of the [Pathways to 2030 report](#) in September, which was the crux of a nature-specific broadcast.

WEL staff also facilitated a new 'Environment Connect' initiative with the Seren Dwt charity, utilising the connections in the network, which was highlighted in a story about Brynau Farm on [Nation Cymru](#). We have also provided training for members and staff on media interviews, so we can have a reliable body of experts ready and confident to give comment on issues as they arise.

WEL has delivered several public facing pieces of work regarding the Environment Bill, including a Cross-Party Group session on the 28th of March 2025 which was [streamed on YouTube](#).

Objective 5: A viable network

Council meetings were held in May and November 2024. Our May meeting was held online and included a discussion on a proposed change to WEL member eligibility for local organisations. We had a new member presentation from Tir Natur as well as presentation on the Wales Anti-Racist Action Plan: Environment Sector from Welsh Government and a presentation on 'Supporting Great Ideas' from The Community Fund.

In November we held a hybrid meeting which included a discussion session on the Future Generations Report 2025 led by Helen Nelson of the Future Generations Office. We then had a facilitated workshop (led by Co-Production Wales) to look at WEL's next Strategic Plan.

Most members are now very used to online or hybrid meetings. Working group attendance from across Wales has continued to be good because of travel-free ways to engage with WEL's work. Our Basecamp service is valued as a way of sharing information and initiating informal discussions directly between members. Our egroup service is used for staff to distribute information, with discussion mainly taking place on Basecamp. This year we have started to see an increase in the desire for face-to-face meetings where people have a greater opportunity to build relationships, though challenges remain in relation to travel, particularly where member organisations' staff members cover four countries and may not necessarily live in Wales. WEL will continue to find ways to support staff to build relationships across the network.

WEL reserves are healthy at present and our operation has been aided by an increase in our staff capacity back up to 3.3 FTE with the recruitment of a new Policy Officer during the year.

Trustees look at projected finances at every meeting to identify and manage any risks to the organisation. WEL also maintains a Risk Register which is considered and updated regularly at Management Committee meetings.

Our three long-term members of staff have been in post for several years, demonstrating the network's appeal in providing interesting work and good working conditions despite financial pressures. Our flexible working policies, rewarding length of service with additional annual leave days, and encouraging input and ideas from all our staff, continue to make WEL a desirable place to work. Staff stay in regular contact through phone and videoconferencing, and staff also have the option to use our membership of a co-working space in

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Cardiff, which provides a pleasant shared modern space for meetings and opportunity to work alongside colleagues at key times. We understand the importance of keeping this use of office space and homeworking under review to balance the advantages of flexible working with the need to provide support and contact to staff.

Management Committee meetings were held on September 4th and November 11th 2024 and on February 11th 2025.

It is important that WEL further improves diversity on our Management Committee. Work has been taking place during the year on a revised recruitment procedure and we aim to have more diversity amongst our Trustees as a result of recruitment in the coming financial year.

The members of WEL in the network at the end of March 2025 are as follows:

Full Members (28)

Afonydd Cymru
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Trust
Bat Conservation Trust
British Mountaineering Council
British Ecological Society
Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation Wales
Campaign for National Parks
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)
Coed Lleol / Small Woods
Coed Cadw / Woodland Trust
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
Freshwater Habitats Trust
Keep Wales Tidy
Llais y Goedwig
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust / Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol
Open Spaces Society
Plantlife
Ramblers Cymru
Rewilding Britain
RSPB Cymru
Soil Association

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Tir Natur
WildFish
Wildlife Trusts Wales
WWF Cymru

Associate Members* (3)

Elan Valley Trust
Snowdonia Society / Cymdeithas Eryri
YHA

* Please note Associate membership is a historic category and is no longer open to new members

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Staffing

We have a small team of four members of staff in WEL. Karen Whitfield is the Director, Susan Evans is Business Manager, Liz Smith is Advocacy and Policy Lead and Tessa Marshall was recruited in August 2024 to the position of Policy Officer.

WEL involvement in the Third Sector Partnership Scheme

The Government of Wales Act placed a statutory duty on the newly devolved government to publish a Scheme setting out how it will promote the interests of the third sector.

The Third Sector Scheme is a statement of the Welsh Government's intent in their relationship with the Third Sector. It identifies three areas of interest – stronger communities, better policy and better public services – as well as formal arrangements for engagement. It was adopted and published in September 2000. The Senedd has a statutory duty to set out the scheme to demonstrate how it would promote the interests of the voluntary sector.

The Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) is chaired by is chaired by the Minister responsible for the Third Sector Scheme, and is made up of representatives of third sector networks working across 25 areas of third sector activity along with the CEO of WCVA. Each of the 25 categories is represented by a third sector network, which is nominated or elected to their role by the organisations within the specific area of interest. Wales Environment Link is nominated to represent the environment sector.

The main purpose of the Third Sector Partnership Council is to make sure that the principles set out in the Third Sector Scheme are put into practice. It also provides an opportunity for the sector to raise issues of interest or concern. It generally does not discuss issues that relate to only one area of interest (these can be taken up through biannual ministerial meetings) and as a national body it is concerned with issues affecting all of Wales.

As well as being represented on the TSPC, WEL has representatives on the Ministerial meeting groups organised by the WCVA, which run under the auspices of the Scheme. WEL acts as the voice of the environment at these meetings.

**Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025**

Support in kind for Wales Environment Link

All members of WEL make a significant and direct contribution of time, skills and resources to the activities of the network: that collaboration is critical to the development of a collective voice. Members' time is critical to the functioning of the network. Staff from different organisations working together and sharing information greatly benefits the environment sector as a whole. The Trustees wish to acknowledge this contribution and thank the members for their continued support. Staff and volunteers of member organisations gave 5,709 hours of their time to aid the activities of the network during 2024 – 2025, as disclosed in note 9 to the accounts. The time and benefits in kind provided by members during 2024 – 2025 in furtherance of WEL's work has been valued at £285,880.

Financial review of the year

The statement of financial activities shows that the total funds carried forward from 2024/25 to 2025/26 are £ 339,846. The Trustees consider this to be an appropriate amount to carry forward at this stage, given the uncertainty around future grant funding, looking ahead to year 2026/27 onwards, as well as the desirability of setting our staff complement norm at 4 FTE.

We are heading into the second year of our new subscription fee system, designed to improve WEL's income from this vital and relatively stable source. The new system is fairer for members overall, given that subscription costs are now more closely aligned with each members' individual annual income figure than previously. The full level of increase is coming into play over a transition period of 3 to 4 financial years.

WEL will be in a reasonable financial position for the next financial year. However, we need to continue to seek income from new sources to safeguard the future functioning of the organisation.

Funders of Wales Environment Link

The Trustees of WEL would like to thank all of our funders for their support.

We received the third payment of our current four-year funding agreement with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. We greatly appreciate the security and peace of mind that comes with having a longer grant commitment period.

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We completed our two-year Waterloo Foundation grant period with funding very helpfully given towards WEL's work on post-Brexit environmental governance, agriculture, marine and biodiversity work.

We are grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for 2-year grant funds towards our work on 'Developing a resilient and sustainable network'.

We appreciated grant funding received from WWF Cymru during the year which was used to develop the Pathways to 2030 Report and working on graphics for future use in WEL policy and the WEL Manifesto

RSPB kindly gave a donation towards having design work done for the network's work on Nature Targets and the Environmental Governance Bill.

WCVA continued to provide funding through the Partnership Capacity Building Fund to assist WEL's participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council.

As always, a vital part of WEL's core funding came from the WEL members themselves, in the form of their subscription fees.

Procurement

WEL appreciated the opportunity to provide a procured service for Welsh Government this financial year, we were contracted to ensure effective engagement of the environment sector in the development of the Biodiversity Targets Bill.

Reserves and risk policy

WEL Trustees reviewed the organisation's reserves policy during autumn 2024 in the context of the 2023 restructuring of the staff team, the continuing challenges of our funding context, and our budget projection to spring 2029.

The revised subscriptions structure adopted in late 2023 set the organisation on a path to our goal of raising 40% of annual income through subscriptions, as the single most reliable source of support for a membership network. WEL will continue to invest staff time in fundraising from a range of external sources for the balance of funding required to deliver network aims, and the post of Business Manager created in the restructure is key to this aspect of our work.

The figure which Trustees consider to be appropriate and reasonable for the

**Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025**

organisation to hold in reserve is between 12 to 18 months' worth of running costs which equates to approximately £234,000 - £350,000 based on our current level of staffing.

The Trustees' position on necessary reserves takes account of the uncertainty of future Welsh Government funding for the sector, the climate of restricted public spending combined with increased competition for charitable sources and the paucity of multi-year trust funding specifically targeting Welsh organisations. It also draws on WEL's previous experience of losing multi-year support at short notice, consequently having to reduce its small staff and running costs by more than 50% and thus facing a major reduction in its ability to support the network of members and their work. This is a risk which Trustees have agreed should not be taken, given WEL's significant contribution in Wales. Closure of WEL at that time was avoided only through reliance on a good reserve.

Trustees and Members recognise that a core staff of 4FTE will be important to serve the needs of WEL and that WEL may need to invest some reserves towards that goal in the coming years. We continue to maintain a 5-year forecast budget (including current year) and to monitor the 6-month reserve figure (see below) to manage challenges and track WEL's actual funding need.

With the above factors in mind, Trustees aim to retain reserves at a level which ensures a modest degree of sustainability in a challenging and changing financial context.

Guidelines for monitoring critical levels of reserves describe how much capital is required to enable the charity to continue operating under extraordinary circumstances for 6 months, 3 months and 1 month. As employee commitments (including redundancy rights) change, the operating reserves statements are amended.

Going into financial year April 2025 – 2026, the critical reserve requirements are as follows. To operate for:

- 6 months: WEL would need to have £117,000 held in reserve.
- 3 months and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £90,000 held in reserve.
- 1 month and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £51,000 held in reserve.

**Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025**

These figures are used by the Trustees to assess any potential risk arising to the charity over time. If funds were to fall below the 6 months operations figure, the Trustees would assess whether there would be a need to take additional steps to curtail expenditure and obtain income, or whether it could be reasonably assumed that anticipated income would address any potential short-term cash flow issues.

The total funds carried forward at 31 March 2025 are £339,846. The Trustees consider this to be an appropriate figure to carry forward in the current circumstances, particularly considering the uncertainty hanging over future grant funding opportunities.

Future developments and risk assessment

A WEL Risk Register is maintained, monitored and updated regularly during the year.

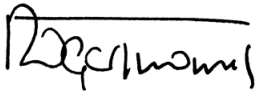
Funding availability and capacity remains a very serious concern throughout the sector, with sources of core funding becoming even more increasingly rare. Unrestricted funding for the sector is vital, both to allow us to retain members, and for us to maintain long-term capacity and key policy staff at a level appropriate to demand. WEL will continue with plans to increase its membership base, identify any new sources of funding, and raise a greater percentage of its income from membership subscriptions.

Trustees continue to acknowledge the difficulties some of our members are experiencing in terms of financing their own organisations whilst working within the network. In addition to funding concerns, capacity within the sector is being stretched to the maximum. This should concern the Welsh Government and Senedd Members, as a robust environmental third sector is essential to provide good evidence and effective scrutiny for the development of environmental policy and legislation.

Despite operating with a minimal staffing level of just 3.3 FTE, WEL has much to celebrate again this year due to the dedication and hard work of our staff, Trustees and members. We look forward to facing the challenges of the coming year together within our active, productive and trusted network.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025

Approved by order of the board of Trustees on 7th November 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Thomas', is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Roger Thomas (Chair)

**Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025**

Annex 1

WEL members were represented on the following stakeholder groups as at 31st March 2025:

- Biodiversity Deep Dive Landscape Group
- Budget Improvement and Impact Advisory Group (BIIAG)
- Drought Liaison Group
- Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Independent Environmental Advisory Panel
- Enabling the Environment Sector Group
- National Access Forum for Wales
- Nature Recovery Action Plan Implementation Group
- NRW/WEL Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forum
- Third Sector Partnership Council
- Wales Coast and Seas Partnership
- Wales Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group
- Wales Land Management Forum
- Wales Water Management Forum
- Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme Stakeholder Policy Group
- Ministerial Roundtable on the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS)
- SFS Carbon Panel
- Well-being of Future Generations Stakeholder Forum
- WCVA Cabinet Secretary meetings:
 - Climate Change
 - Economy
 - Finance and Local Government

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF CYSWLLT AMGYLCHEDD CYMRU/WALES ENVIRONMENT LINK

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru/ Wales Environment Link (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

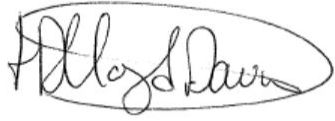
Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Henry Lloyd Davies

Bevan Buckland LLP
Ground Floor Cardigan House
Castle Court
Swansea Enterprise Park
Swansea
SA7 9LA

Date: 7th November 2025

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
	Notes				
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	700	3,900	4,600	995
Charitable activities	4				
Charitable activities		126,721	124,641	251,362	164,940
Investment income	3	<u>5,938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,938</u>	<u>4,769</u>
Total		<u>133,359</u>	<u>128,541</u>	<u>261,900</u>	<u>170,704</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		3,708	-	3,708	2,901
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable activities		<u>64,526</u>	<u>130,091</u>	<u>194,617</u>	<u>152,331</u>
Total		<u>68,234</u>	<u>130,091</u>	<u>198,325</u>	<u>155,232</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		65,125	(1,550)	63,575	15,472
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		274,721	1,550	276,271	260,799
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>339,846</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>339,846</u>	<u>276,271</u>

BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2025

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
	Notes				
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	10	2,098	-	2,098	3,148
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	4,894	48,195	53,089	4,842
Cash at bank		<u>350,174</u>	<u>(48,195)</u>	<u>301,979</u>	<u>278,514</u>
		355,068	-	355,068	283,356
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(17,320)	-	(17,320)	(10,233)
		_____	_____	_____	_____
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>337,748</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>337,748</u>	<u>273,123</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		339,846	-	339,846	276,271
		_____	_____	_____	_____
NET ASSETS		<u>339,846</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>339,846</u>	<u>276,271</u>
FUNDS	13				
Unrestricted funds				339,846	274,721
Restricted funds				<u>-</u>	<u>1,550</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>339,846</u>	<u>276,271</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 7th November and were signed on its behalf by:



J M Anderson (Treasurer) - Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemption in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgments about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results in the future may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

Estimation Uncertainty

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Management consider there to be no estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Income

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Subscription income is recognised when paid. When a payment is made for an extended period it is credited evenly over the period to the SOFA.

Donations and similar incoming resources represent monies received by the charity from charitable donations and gifts. These are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities upon receipt.

Grant income is accounted for on an accruals basis and is shown in the financial statements when the Charity earns the unconditional right to the funds. Grants received for a specific purpose are treated as restricted funds. Revenue grants are credited directly to the Statement of Financial Activities and Capital grants are released over the life of the asset in line with the depreciation policy.

Interest Receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The cost of generating funds comprises those costs associated with attracting grant income. Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities, both costs directly attributable and indirect support costs. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity.

All costs allocated between expenditure categories are on a basis designed to reflect their

resource usage. For some costs this means direct allocation to activities, other costs are apportioned, e.g. by staff time spent on the activity, or another equitable usage measure.

Joint delivery costs are recognised in the period which they are awarded to the extent that they have been expended in accordance with the funding terms and conditions.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 25% on cost
Computer equipment	- 25% on cost

Tangible fixed assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Indication of impairment is reviewed annually and an impairment review is undertaken where there is an indication of impairment.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined benefit pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. There is no past service deficit liability at the year end.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments held within a deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any discounts due.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2025	2024
	£	£
Donations	<u>4,600</u>	<u>995</u>

	2025	2024
	£	£
RSPB	600	195
Wildlife Trusts Wales	100	-
SEL contribution to EDI film	-	250
NIEL contribution to EDI film	-	250
WCL contribution to EDI film	-	250
Shared voice interview	-	50
WWF Cymru	<u>3,900</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	<u>4,600</u>	<u>995</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2025	2024
	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	<u>5,938</u>	<u>4,769</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		2025	2024
	Activity	£	£
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	Charitable activities	3,934	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	Charitable activities	66,037	51,487
Contract Delivery Income	Charitable activities	67,519	-
Grants	Charitable activities	<u>113,872</u>	<u>109,952</u>
		<u>251,362</u>	<u>164,940</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	55,000	55,000
Waterloo Foundation	-	40,000
Welsh Government grant, administered by National Lottery Heritage Fund	58,872	14,952
	<u>113,872</u>	<u>109,952</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs	Totals
	£	£	£
Charitable activities	<u>175,225</u>	<u>19,392</u>	<u>194,617</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

7. STAFF COSTS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	140,613	109,999
Social security costs	9,648	6,380
Other pension costs	<u>11,100</u>	<u>8,725</u>
	<u><u>161,361</u></u>	<u><u>125,104</u></u>

The trustees consider the board and senior management team to comprise the charity's key management personnel.

The total remuneration paid to key management personnel during the year was £65,438, which includes: Salary, Employer pension contributions and Employer National Insurance contributions

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2025	2024
Charitable activities	<u><u>4</u></u>	<u><u>3</u></u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	995	-	995
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	164,940	-	164,940
Investment income	<u>4,769</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,769</u>
Total	<u>170,704</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>170,704</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	2,901	-	2,901
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	<u>149,528</u>	<u>2,803</u>	<u>152,331</u>
Total	<u>152,429</u>	<u>2,803</u>	<u>155,232</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	18,275	(2,803)	15,472
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	256,446	4,353	260,799
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>274,721</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>276,271</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

9. BENEFITS IN KIND

The value of services donated by members in the pursuit of co-operative activities during the year and not included in the Statement of Financial Activities is as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Time and Travel contributed to working groups and meetings	272,505	213,550
Time and Travel contributed to the management of the charity	13,375	22,175
	<u>285,880</u>	<u>235,275</u>

The value of members' staff and volunteer time contributed to the network in 2024-2025 has been calculated using National Lottery Heritage Fund volunteer rate guideline figures.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings Totals £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	<u>10,305</u>	<u>7,037</u>	<u>17,342</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2024	10,305	3,889	14,194
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>1,050</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>10,305</u>	<u>4,939</u>	<u>15,244</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2025	<u>-</u>	<u>2,098</u>	<u>2,098</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>3,148</u>	<u>3,148</u>

11. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	48,195	-
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>4,894</u>	<u>4,842</u>
	53,089	4,842

12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025 £	2024 £
Social security and other taxes	4,024	-
Accruals and deferred income	<u>13,296</u>	<u>10,233</u>
	<u>17,320</u>	<u>10,233</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	274,721	65,125	339,846
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	950	(950)	-
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>600</u>	<u>(600)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>1,550</u>	<u>(1,550)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>276,271</u></u>	<u><u>63,575</u></u>	<u><u>339,846</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	133,359	(68,234)	65,125
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	58,872	(58,872)	-
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	3,900	(4,850)	(950)
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	-	(600)	(600)
Welsh Government procurement contract	<u>65,769</u>	<u>(65,769)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>128,541</u>	<u>(130,091)</u>	<u>(1,550)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>261,900</u>	<u>(198,325)</u>	<u>63,575</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	256,446	18,275	274,721
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	3,753	(2,803)	950
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>600</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>4,353</u>	<u>(2,803)</u>	<u>1,550</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>260,799</u>	<u>15,472</u>	<u>276,271</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	170,704	(152,429)	18,275
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	-	(2,803)	(2,803)
	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>170,704</u>	<u>(155,232)</u>	<u>15,472</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	256,446	83,400	339,846
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	3,753	(3,753)	-
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>600</u>	<u>(600)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>4,353</u>	<u>(4,353)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>260,799</u>	<u>79,047</u>	<u>339,846</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	304,063	(220,663)	83,400
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	58,872	(58,872)	-
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	3,900	(7,653)	(3,753)
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	-	(600)	(600)
Welsh Government procurement contract	<u>65,769</u>	<u>(65,769)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>128,541</u>	<u>(132,894)</u>	<u>(4,353)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>432,604</u>	<u>(353,557)</u>	<u>79,047</u>

Purpose of Restricted Funds

National Lottery Heritage Fund - grant towards work on 'Developing a resilient and sustainable network'.

Welsh Government procurement contract - to ensure effective engagement of environment sector in development of Biodiversity Targets Bill

WWF Cymru - donation towards development of Pathways to 2030 Report.

WWF Cymru - donation towards work on graphics for future use in WEL policy and WEL Manifesto.

14. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025 other than those disclosed in note 6, 7 and 9 of the financial statements.

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	2025 £	2024 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	4,600	995
Investment income		
Bank Interest Receivable	5,938	4,769
Charitable activities		
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	3,934	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	66,037	51,487
Contract Delivery Income	67,519	-
Grants	<u>113,872</u>	<u>109,952</u>
	<u>251,362</u>	<u>164,940</u>
Total incoming resources	261,900	170,704
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Wages	3,276	2,563
Social security	<u>432</u>	<u>338</u>
	3,708	2,901
Charitable activities		
Wages	126,396	96,495
Social security	9,216	6,042
Pensions	11,100	8,725
Sundries	250	70
Working Groups	15,387	15,214
Staff travel and subsistence	590	486
Membership costs	250	32
IT Costs	4,755	3,607
Translation and Publications	574	-

Meetings and AGM	698	566
Links Liaison	69	158
NLHF Project	4,890	1,518
Computer equipment	<u>1,050</u>	<u>1,050</u>
	175,225	133,963
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	10,941	10,941
Office Costs	20	7
Rent	3,000	3,000
Staff training and recruitment	<u>1,753</u>	<u>673</u>
	15,714	14,621
Management		
Governance costs		
Insurance	569	391
Accountancy	<u>3,109</u>	<u>3,356</u>
	<u>3,678</u>	<u>3,747</u>
Total resources expended	<u>198,325</u>	<u>155,232</u>
Net income	<u><u>63,575</u></u>	<u><u>15,472</u></u>

Accounts



Trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024

Registered Charity Number: 1022675

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

**Contents of the financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

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Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Legal and Administrative information

Charity number	1022675
Charity Offices	Tramshed Tech Pendyris Street Cardiff CF22 6BH
Trustees	
Roger Thomas	Chair
Jen Anderson	Treasurer
Beverley Penney	Open Spaces Society (Hon. Secretary)
Rachel Sharp	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Natalie Buttriss	Woodland Trust
Ffion Mitchell	Marine Conservation Society (until November 2023)
President	Post vacant
Co-Directors	Karen Whitfield Susan Evans (until December 2023)
Independent Examiner	Henry Lloyd Davies Bevan Buckland LLP Langdon House Langdon Road Swansea Waterfront SA1 8QY
Bankers	Co-operative Bank P.O. Box 101 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

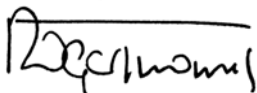
Chair's Foreword

Over the last year the Trustees of WEL, in conjunction with our small team of staff, have undertaken a review of the organisational structure that recognises the opportunities we have despite the challenges facing us. A new structure, giving greater clarity for individual roles, was successfully implemented towards the end of the financial year and, whilst these are early days, is showing great promise. Susan Evans, who established and led WEL for many years has, because of her growing family responsibilities, stepped back to lead on business management. The Trustees place on record our immense thanks to Sue for her exemplary service and are pleased that she remains with our organisation.

It is encouraging that, whilst our financial hurdles remain, we have been able to move towards a more sustainable subscription model with the strong support of our members. Members have been able to accept an increase in costs at a time when budgets are extremely stretched, an exemplification of the value that is placed on being a part of the WEL family.

During the year we have also continued to reach out to others who could potentially benefit WEL and themselves through joining the network, and there is ongoing interest from potential new members.

The achievements of the network in this reporting year are detailed in the following pages. As ever, our staff have punched well above their weight in delivering an ambitious work programme. Thanks go to them, my fellow Trustees and all those who actively contribute to our Working Groups. Our environmental crisis is by every measure deepening – WEL's advice and influence on government policy is of the utmost importance.



Roger Thomas
Chair

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and Wales Environment Link's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Organisational Information

Charity name

Wales Environment Link is also known as WEL. Its X/Twitter handle is [@WalesLink](#), and also has a presence on [LinkedIn](#) and [Toot Wales/Twt Cymru](#) (the Wales server of Mastodon).

Trustees

The Trustees, who are members of the Management Committee, have served throughout the year, unless otherwise stated.

Constitution of the Charity, Trustee selection and governance

Wales Environment Link's constitution was adopted on 1st November 1990 and amended on 8th May 1991, 5th May 1993, 18th June 1997, 10th September 1997, 3rd July 2002, 7th July 2004, 21st November 2012, 10th July 2013, 16th May 2017 and 4th July 2018.

Appointment to the Management Committee is governed by the Trust Deed of the charity, and appointments made either at the Annual General Meeting or, in the case of a vacancy, by agreement of a majority of the member organisations at a Council Meeting.

Council meets twice a year, principally to consider policy matters of relevance to the members. Decisions are made on the basis of consensus; however, where a formal vote is required, decisions are taken by a majority vote of the Full members of the Council.

The Management Committee manages the affairs of the charity and makes such decisions as may be required to ensure the continuing operation of the charity and to address any substantial matters arising in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Management Committee delegates the day-to-day responsibility for the organisation and line management of staff to the Director of Wales Environment Link.

Related bodies

There are four Link networks in the UK:

- Wales Environment Link (WEL)
- Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL, in England)
- Scottish Environment LINK (SEL)
- Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

Each Link is a coalition organisation, set up to complement and add value to the actions of individual members. The Links work together on UK or European-level policy, forming 'Environment Links UK' (ELUK) statements and documents.

Charitable objects

WEL is established, for the benefit of the public, to promote and enhance the conservation, protection, sustainable management, and quiet and responsible enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Wales.

Vision

A thriving Welsh environment for future generations¹

¹ For the purposes of interpretation, “environment” means terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments. It includes urban and rural environments and areas of importance for natural heritage, landscape and public access.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Mission Statement

Our mission is for the WEL network to be the primary NGO sector influencer of environmental policy, legislation and practice in Wales, respected for our members' expertise and advice and at the centre of government decision making.

Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

Provide a cohesive voice for our members by enabling them to work effectively with governments and statutory sectors as a respected and influential independent advisory network.

KPIs:

1. WEL is the first point of contact for Government and statutory bodies when looking for representation from the environmental NGO sector.
2. WEL recommendations are taken up in Committee reports, and Government policy and legislation.
3. WEL provides timely, well-informed positions and recommendations that influence policy and legislative change.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

Support and nurture the environmental NGO sector by facilitating the development of partnerships, knowledge and expertise, increasing the sustainability of the sector, building mutual trust and enhancing capacity within the membership.

KPIs:

1. WEL members are provided with effective training on relevant topics to assist them with their collaborative work and influencing. Courses are sought after and members find them useful.
2. WEL is a valued partner to the other UK Links (collectively known as Environment Links UK / ELUK) and a key participant in other environmental and relevant third sector coalitions, such as Greener UK, Stop Climate Chaos Cymru, the SD Alliance and the Third Sector Partnership Council.
3. WEL has the capacity and tools to support at least one joint campaign per year on our members' collective key priorities, in a way that adds value to our members' individual campaigning and strengthens the ability to be heard.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Objective 3: Supporting our members

Develop WEL's role as a key support mechanism for its members, clearly demonstrating the achievements and importance of the network to members, funders and partners

KPIs:

1. WEL is recognised as a champion for its members
2. WEL continues to attract new members, and funding from both the Welsh Government, and trusts and foundations.
3. WEL members value the network's role in keeping them informed about policy and legislative developments, opportunities for partnership working, support mechanisms and funding opportunities.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

Develop WEL's public profile in order to better promote its members' agreed collective priorities, messages and recommendations.

KPIs:

1. WEL's social media platforms continue to increase their followers and are valued by our members for promoting their work and raising awareness of environmental issues.
2. WEL's website is a useful resource for those looking for information about WEL, its members, and network positions on policy issues.
3. Politicians, government officials and staff from statutory bodies know the WEL network, who its members are, what it represents and what it can offer.

Objective 5: A viable network

Maintain a sustainable, efficient and effective network which is financially stable and overseen by sound governance procedures.

KPIs:

1. WEL members value the network as an important source of timely information, and are able to engage in joint work with the network in a variety of ways (e.g. through email, Basecamp, social media, video/tele-conferencing and face to face meetings and events).
2. WEL continues to operate with a healthy funding reserve, diverse income streams and has confidence in its financial practices, organisational policies and

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

risk management.

3. WEL has a high staff retention rate with staff members feeling valued and happy with their working conditions.
4. WEL attracts and retains skilled Trustees, who feel valued by the network.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees of Wales Environment Link continue to pay due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in relation to our activities, thus complying with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

All of the objectives of the charity were devised to contribute to the overall purpose of safeguarding and improving the environment, countryside, heritage, habitats, wildlife and biodiversity of Wales. The act of safeguarding and improving these precious resources is intrinsically for the good of the people of Wales, visitors to Wales and also to global citizens. The Welsh environment and the natural and cultural resources it provides play a significant part in supporting peoples' health and well-being in a multitude of ways, from contributing to good mental and physical health, to reducing the impacts of climate change and helping people to adapt to its effects. WEL advocates for a prosperous, low carbon society which supports the sorts of jobs Wales needs for a just transition.

WEL provides a coordinating service for the environmental and heritage voluntary sector in Wales, increasing the sector's efficiency so that scarce resources are used to greatest effect. The WEL website provides information about WEL's members and its work, including links to all member organisations' websites with their wide range of information available for the public relating to wildlife and countryside issues, including: recreation, health, sustainable development, education and biodiversity. WEL also promotes the work of its members using social media. WEL staff provide support to all member organisations and thus their members, helping to ensure their own objectives are also met, with wide-reaching public benefit.

Review of developments, activities and achievements over the past year

WEL staff supported 6 working groups this year. The groups were, Advocacy, Biodiversity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Land Use, Marine and Species Champions. Group key activities for the year are reported under the KPIs below.

All WEL and Environment Links UK consultation responses, position statements and briefings are available on the WEL website: www.waleslink.org.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

WEL remains the first point of contact for environmental NGOs when Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), or other public or private bodies seek representation from a wide range of environmental NGOs in policy discussions and decision-making processes. In 2023 - 2024, WEL members represented the network on 21 stakeholder groups that were convened by the Welsh Government, NRW, third sector or private sector bodies. A full list of all stakeholder groups is included in Annex 1.

WEL regularly provides written and oral evidence to Senedd Committees on a range of environmental subjects. This year, WEL has provided written and oral evidence to inquiries on [biodiversity and the nature emergency](#) (working as both written evidence and a standalone brief for MSs), the [Welsh Government Budget for 2024/25](#), [regulation of gamebirds](#), [net benefit in Planning Policy Wales](#), [Environment \(Air Quality and Soundscapes\) Bill](#), [Farming Connect](#) and the [Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill](#).

We continue to provide secretariat for the Senedd's Cross Party Group on Biodiversity, giving a united front for the eNGO sector and making vital links with Senedd work on biodiversity. WEL members help decide themes, based on Senedd topical issues, upcoming legislation and Welsh Government developments. We also increasingly involve non-WEL members for events (such as the Royal Welsh Show or Senedd drop-in events) to increase our reach and collaboration.

Advocacy Working Group

We supported the Land Use Group's work on the Agriculture Act by organising a well-attended half-day drop-in session at the Senedd on 3rd May, to discuss proposed amendments for Stage 3 of the Bill process in a [summary briefing](#). A dozen members were there to talk to MSs to discuss our asks of: adding 'restore biodiversity' to the Bill wording, which resulted in better guidance in the Explanatory Memorandum; concerns around a lack of National Minimum Standards; and improvements on access opportunities (which we also detailed [in a blog](#), after identifying that not many policy makers understood existing access provisions and duties).

During the last few months of the Agriculture Bill process, WEL facilitating weekly comms catch ups for members to share information on both public facing press and

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

social media, and 1:1 conversations with MSs and Ministers. Throughout the year, we also continued to use our comms to [urge for action](#) on delayed agricultural pollution regulations.

In January 2024, Welsh Labour started their leadership contest for replacing the First Minister. We created a sub group that could move quickly in meetings with the two candidates, and coordinated input to their manifestos, outlining the [network's priorities](#) for the rest of the Senedd term. We also ensured this was promoted on [Nation Cymru](#), as we slowly scale up our communications.

In the summer, WEL held an all-day Advocacy Workshop at Tredegar House, with the location kindly facilitated by the National Trust. Members' advocacy leads came together to discuss priorities and concluded on WEL being best placed to develop an illustrated 'high level vision', that depicted our work on 2030 targets. WEL began to develop these over the following 6 months and beyond, with practical parameters leading to the design of graphics showing healthy and unhealthy farms, rivers and sea. These are ongoing at the time of reporting and will be used for the 2026 manifesto, and potentially other materials.

The Advocacy Group also led on a [high level response](#) to the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill, highlighting the increasing powers to Wales over the years, and supporting an increase in the number of Senedd Members.

Over-arching across Working Groups, we also fed into both consultations on the [Welsh Government budget](#) for 2024/25, (one informing the Finance Committee's expectations and the other on the actual budget contents).

Land Use Working Group

WEL's Land Use Group pushed hard last May to July as the Agriculture (Wales) Bill went through its [Stage 3](#) and passed. We had advocated including the restoration of nature in the wording of the Bill, but the wording remained "maintain and enhance" which we felt was weaker. However, we did persuade MSs of all parties to take forward a robust debate on this issue in Plenary, which resulted in the Welsh Government agreeing to update the Bill's Explanatory Memorandum to reference the Global Biodiversity Framework, 2030 targets and the intention to restore nature.

In July 2023 WEL supported a cross-sector event on a [Consensus for Food, Farming and Nature for Wales](#), which was well attended by farming groups, eNGOs and

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Welsh politicians and officials. This document was a Wales specific version of the English consensus document that was produced as means of bringing together environmental groups with progressive farming groups and landowners to build consensus on how farming should progress in a sustainable manner for people and the environment. We had speakers from the Wales Organic Forum, Soil Association, and for a discussion on good access practice, Ramblers and British Mountaineering Council.

The outline Sustainable Farming Scheme was published in December 2023 and WEL responded to this [consultation](#) in March 2024. The Scheme was not published in its entirety, due to budget constraints, and did not contain information about payment rates, causing concern for both the environmental sector and the farming sector. In June 2023 we [signed a joint letter to the Minister for Rural Affairs](#) to call for Glastir funding to be maintained until the Sustainable Farming Scheme was ready to launch. In October 2023 WEL [wrote to](#) the Minister with our key asks for the Sustainable Farming Scheme, including a call for payment rates to be higher than those announced for the interim Habitats Wales Scheme, which we felt would disadvantage nature friendly farmers.

WEL continued to engage with politicians on the ETRA and Climate Change Committees on river pollution and the implementation of the 2021 Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations. WEL was disappointed that the Welsh Government has introduced a notification system for farmers wishing to spread more than the statutory level of 170kg/n/h, rather than a properly funded licensing scheme, and we [wrote a briefing on this](#) and also met with the Minister for Rural Affairs to raise our concerns. WEL also responded to [NRW's consultation on regulatory fees and charges](#) in January 2024.

Biodiversity Working Group

In April 2023, the group partnered with Healthy Air Cymru for inputting to the Environment (Air Quality & Soundscapes) Bill (now Act). By working with them on the scope of the Bill, WEL was able to input [Stage 1 evidence](#), calling for measures to also focus on agricultural emissions, including targets on ammonia and shorter timescales for Ministers to introduce PM 2.5 (fine particular matter) targets. Our calls were echoed in six of the Climate Change Committee's [recommendations](#) to Welsh Government.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

In May, with the help of planning-focused members, we submitted a [response](#) to the Welsh Government inquiry on including 'net benefit for biodiversity' in the Planning Policy Wales. With RSPB leading, we also input to an NRW consultation on [regulating the release of gamebirds](#).

In June, we prepared two of our members in [giving evidence](#) on a Senedd committee inquiry on 'Biodiversity and the nature emergency', and a [briefing](#) on the ongoing need for a Nature Positive Bill. We continued to call for the Bill at every opportunity, including during the Legislative Statement and repeated [blogs](#) with updated context, as well as supporting [Climate Cymru](#) in their own efforts to rally public input. We've put more emphasis on ensuring our policy messages are explained in easy to read language, setting out the nature emergency evidence and our COP 15 commitments [in blog form](#).

During the year, we continued to discuss our Pathways to 2030 report with key stakeholders, such as Senedd staff, Natural Resources Wales and the Future Generations Office. It featured in [Senedd Research briefings](#) for MSs as well and was mentioned numerous times in Senedd committees and Plenary.

As part of the advocacy work on graphics, we had a series of meetings with policy leads and co-chairs, to best depict concepts like riparian edges along rivers, sustainable habitat management on farms, and sea with sustainably managed ecosystems.

Marine Working Group

The Marine Group continued to share information from individual members' work, and support with providing advocacy and liaison opportunities with key policy makers. This included a second Ministerial ['walk and talk' event](#) in August, with then Climate Change Minister Julie James. WEL arranged a half-day visit to Cwm Ivy in the Gower, resulting in closer relationship building between members, the Minister and her staff. We also facilitated a workshop with Natural Resources Wales in Shrewsbury, to discuss progress on designations, monitoring and local projects.

The group also kept a watching brief on marine litter issues, and we continued to liaise with colleagues across the UK, particularly Reloop, to put pressure on the UK Government to progress their Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) commitment, with glass included in the materials. We have signed multiple joint letters and provided advice on Wales advocacy, linking up other stakeholders with Ministers and interested MSs. We also used our platform to host [guest blogs](#), explaining how the Internal

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Market Act can act as a blocker to environmental policymaking, with the DRS as an example. We helped Reloop to organise a Senedd event in March 2023 to bring their expertise into Welsh discussions and make link with MSs directly.

We also supported our sister Link's response on banning wet wipes, highlighting it in a [blog](#) and [letter](#) to Welsh Ministers on the problems they cause and the need to implement in Wales too.

National Park Task & Finish Group

In December, we set up a Task and Finish Group to feed into the development of the new National Park in north-east Wales, steered by the Campaign for National Parks. In this time period, the group was mostly sharing information and preparing communications on ensuring it prioritises nature highly in their initial assessment of boundaries (i.e. paying attention to ecological boundaries like catchments).

Species Champions Project

WEL supported members to run events with their Species Champions. Following the success of a 2022 Senedd event that Wild Fish and Afonydd Cymru ran with their Fish Species Champions, Afonydd Cymru replicated this in July 2023 with a follow up event, focused on developing a Salmon Action Plan with NRW.

In September, we arranged an online engagement workshop and produced new Engagement Guidance for members, to help share best practice and process on liaising with Members of the Senedd. This includes advice on arranging site visits, working with Senedd staff, and how to arrange a policy focused event on the Senedd estate.

In October, we used the Species Champions as a mechanism to promote the latest State of Nature report, with another [drop-in for Senedd Members](#) and a photo opportunity with cuddly toys showing the at-risk species in need. This resulted in extra awareness and social media discussion on the State of Nature and coordinated messaging between members on headline statistics.

WEL members remained at capacity in relation to recruiting new Species Champions. However, we did bring in our first reintroduction species, and now have a White-Tailed Sea Eagle Champion, thanks to support from academics working on environmental assessments for a project with Wildlife Trusts Wales.

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

During 2023-24, we continued to make best use of MS engagement on our X/Twitter account, particularly during the [Agriculture Bill final stage](#). Most tweets around this time get between 450-900 impressions, with support from key Senedd Members and committees to boost it. Using it for doing last minute reminders for attendance at events has been very helpful, for both our own and members' events.

Our work building other platforms has resulted in over 200 following on LinkedIn and 49 on Mastodon, but with better engagement and boosting, despite the small number of followers.

WEL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, met 3 times between April 2023 and March 2024. This group works in tandem with Wildlife and Countryside's EDI Working Group, with members attending WCL meetings for information on subjects that are cross-cutting across all organisations. WEL EDI meetings are a space for organisations to share information about Welsh projects and work practices.

WEL continues to be a valued Environment Links UK (ELUK) partner with regular contact between the ELUK Directors, sharing information and expertise on Link governance and ideas for joint working and funding. WEL continues to work with ELUK on joint reports on wildlife crime and access to justice in the UK, as well as equality, diversity and inclusion.

WEL remains in contact with Stop Climate Chaos and is also part of the Climate Cymru coalition. WEL maintains links with Greener UK by participating in the work of the Devolution Group

Objective 3: Supporting our members

WEL's Director has continued to participate in the Enabling the Environment Sector stakeholder group, which also includes several WEL members and NRW staff (Chair and secretariat), Welsh Government officials and funders. This group continues to work on ideas to make the environmental NGO sector more resilient.

WEL members regularly tell us how much they appreciate the weekly Newsdirect monitoring service, which provides a wealth of information on Government and Senedd developments, and upcoming Government consultations and Senedd inquiries. WEL's egroups continue to be very active and members are also increasingly using Basecamp to share information directly with other members; we

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have had feedback from members regarding how useful this is. We have also continued to provide advice on member events and advocacy with Welsh Government and the Senedd, particularly assisting members that do not have much Wales-specific capacity.

2023-24 was the second year of a four-year grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the second year of a two-year grant from The Waterloo Foundation, both hugely welcome. We also received a two-year resilience grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which has allowed us to work on our financial resilience, internal governance and progress our Diversity Action Plan. We were grateful to receive an extension on funding from WWF Cymru for developing the Pathways to 2030 Report and working on a new set of nature rich/nature poor graphics for future use in WEL policy and the WEL Manifesto. In late February 2023, Welsh Government decided to procure WEL's services to engage the sector on work relating to the Environmental Governance and Nature Targets Bill, Biodiversity Deep Dive and Nature Recovery Action Plan, as well as input relating to marine planning and policy. Our role is to provide evidence and expert advice on these issues from the sector. We also continued to receive funding from WCVA for our participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council, representing the environmental third sector.

Whilst WEL has improved its financial position during 2023-24, funding remains difficult to find across the sector and WEL is ineligible for many of the funding pots that are available in Wales. It is essential that WEL grows and diversifies its funding if we are to be able to continue to support our members effectively: our members have recognised this in their November 2023 decision to increase income from membership subscriptions and adopt a fairer model.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

More frequent social media use and a focus on improving press engagement has resulted in more articles citing our work, fostering WEL's reputation as the go-to for comment on environmental issues. We have focused a lot on Nation Cymru as a growing Welsh-focused news source. Examples include:

- BBC (May 2023): ['Climate: Last chance to save nature, Wales campaigners say'](#) for Agriculture Bill lobbying
- Nation Cymru (May 2023): ['Senedd urged to include nature restoration in new Agriculture Bill'](#)
- Nation Cymru (October 2023): ['Welsh Government criticised for watering down land management payments to farmers'](#)

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

- Nation Cymru (Oct 2023): ['PM urged to review 'power grab' Internal Market Act to remove 'hurdles' from policymaking'](#)
- Nation Cymru (Nov 2023): ['Serious questions raised about Welsh Government support for farmers'](#) on payment rates for the Habitat Wales Scheme.

We have also been working on upskilling members and staff on media interviews, so we can have a reliable body of experts ready and confident to give comment on issues as they arise.

Objective 5: A viable network

Council meetings were held as hybrid meetings in both May and November 2023. In May we had a workshop session at Centre for Alternative Technology in Machynlleth to discuss WEL's services and subscription model and come up with ideas to make the network more sustainable and resilient. In November we had a new member presentation from Coed Lleol/Small Woods and members voted on the adoption of a new membership subscription model for WEL. In addition to this, members discussed the possibility of widening WEL membership eligibility criteria to welcome smaller more local organisations into the network and we had a WEL campaign update.

Most members are now very used to online or hybrid meetings. Working group attendance from across Wales has continued to be good because of travel-free ways to engage with WEL's work. Our Basecamp service is valued as a way of sharing information and initiating informal discussions directly between members. Our egroup service is used for staff to distribute information, with discussion mainly taking place on Basecamp. This year we have started to see a little more appetite for face-to-face meetings where people can build relationships, as many members' staff that started during the Covid pandemic have not met each other in person. WEL will continue to find ways to support staff to build relationships across the network.

WEL reserves are reasonably healthy at present. During this year we have secured some new funding commitments that have allowed us to begin preparations for recruiting a new Policy Officer in the next financial year, bringing our staff team back up to 3.3 FTE. Crucially, in November 2023 WEL members voted to change WEL's membership subscription model to one which is similar to our sister Links in Scotland and England. This model tracks member income more closely and is fairer to organisations according to their size and resources. It will also bring in more core

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

income for WEL, placing the organisation on a more sustainable footing for the future. We greatly appreciate the support that our members have given on this crucial part of our income.

Trustees have also undertaken a restructuring exercise in consultation with staff, to ensure that WEL staff can deliver our strategic aims whilst carrying out their roles without undue pressure or risk of burnout.

Trustees look at projected finances at every meeting to identify and manage any risks to the organisation. WEL also maintains a Risk Register which is considered and updated regularly at Management Committee meetings.

Our three long-term members of staff have been in post for several years, demonstrating the network's appeal in providing interesting work and good working conditions despite financial pressures. Our flexible working policies, rewarding length of service with additional annual leave days, and encouraging input and ideas from all our staff, continue to make WEL a desirable place to work. This was demonstrated by staff willingness to work positively as the restructuring process took its course. Staff stay in regular contact through phone and videoconferencing and staff also have the option to use our membership of a co-working space in Cardiff, which provides a pleasant shared modern space for meetings and working alongside colleagues at key times. We understand the importance of keeping this use of office space and homeworking under review to balance the advantages of flexible working with the need to provide support and contact to staff.

Management Committee meetings were held more regularly during 2023-24 as the staff restructuring process was undertaken, with 9 meetings taking place throughout the year.

Trustees and staff are very keen that WEL further improves diversity on our Management Committee. As of March 2024, we had two Trustee vacancies available, as well as co-optee places, and we aim to develop the diversity of our Management Committee through these routes.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

The members of WEL in the network at the end of March 2024 are as follows:

Full Members (25)

Afonydd Cymru
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Trust
Bat Conservation Trust
British Mountaineering Council
Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation Wales
Campaign for National Parks
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)
Coed Cadw / Woodland Trust
Freshwater Habitats Trust
John Muir Trust
Keep Wales Tidy
Llais y Goedwig
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust / Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol
Open Spaces Society
Plantlife
Ramblers Cymru
RSPB Cymru
Soil Association
Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)
WildFish
Wildlife Trusts Wales
WWF Cymru

Associate Members* (4)

Elan Valley Trust
Oxfam Cymru
Snowdonia Society / Cymdeithas Eryri
YHA

* Please note Associate membership is a historic category and is no longer open to new members

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Staffing

Karen Whitfield and Susan Evans were part-time Co-Directors of WEL until December 2023. In January 2024 Karen Whitfield became full time Director of WEL.

In January 2024 Susan Evans became Business Manager for WEL.

Liz Smith was promoted to the role of Advocacy and Policy Lead in January 2024.

WEL involvement in the Third Sector Partnership Scheme

The Government of Wales Act placed a statutory duty on the newly devolved government to publish a Scheme setting out how it will promote the interests of the third sector.

The Third Sector Scheme is a statement of the Welsh Government's intent in their relationship with the Third Sector. It identifies three areas of interest – stronger communities, better policy and better public services – as well as formal arrangements for engagement. It was adopted and published in September 2000. The National Assembly has a statutory duty to set out the scheme in order to demonstrate how it would promote the interests of the voluntary sector.

The Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) is chaired by Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice, and is made up of representatives of third sector networks working across 25 areas of third sector activity along with the CEO of WCVA. Each of the 25 categories is represented by a third sector network, which is nominated or elected to their role by the organisations within the specific area of interest. Wales Environment Link is nominated to represent the environment sector.

The main purpose of the Third Sector Partnership Council is to make sure that the principles set out in the Third Sector Scheme are put into practice. It also provides an opportunity for the sector to raise issues of interest or concern. It generally does not discuss issues that relate to only one area of interest (these can be taken up through biannual ministerial meetings) and as a national body it is concerned with issues affecting all of Wales.

As well as being represented on the TSPC, WEL has representatives on the Ministerial meeting groups organised by the WCVA, which run under the auspices of the Scheme. WEL acts as the voice of the environment at all these meetings.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Support in kind for Wales Environment Link

All members of WEL make a significant and direct contribution of time, skills and resources to the activities of the network: that collaboration is critical to the development of a collective voice. Members' time is critical to the functioning of the network. Staff from different organisations working together and sharing information greatly benefits the environment sector as a whole. The Trustees wish to acknowledge this contribution and thank the members for their continued support. Staff and volunteers of member organisations gave 4,706 hours of their time to aid the activities of the network during 2023 – 2024, as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts. The time and benefits in kind provided by members during 2023 – 2024 in furtherance of WEL's work has been valued at £235,725.

Financial review of the year

The statement of financial activities shows that the total funds carried forward from 2023/24 to 2024/25 are £276,271. The Trustees consider this to be a reasonable and welcome figure to carry forward given the continued uncertainty around future grant funding and the need to increase WEL's staffing capacity during the coming financial year.

At November Council 2023 members voted on a new subscription fee system which will improve WEL's income from this vital and relatively stable source. The new system will also be fairer for members overall, given that subscription costs will be more closely aligned with each members' individual annual income figure than previously. The full level of increase will come into play over a transition period of 3 to 4 financial years and will result in approximately 40% of our annual income coming from membership subscriptions in future.

WEL will be in a reasonably stable position for the next two financial years. However, we will need to continue to seek income from new sources to safeguard the future functioning of the organisation.

Funders of Wales Environment Link

The Trustees of WEL would like to thank the following for their support:

We received the second payment of our current four-year funding agreement with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

We received the final payment of our two-year Waterloo Foundation grant towards WEL's work on post-Brexit environmental governance, agriculture, marine and biodiversity work.

We were grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for agreeing to provide us with a 2-year grant towards our work on 'Developing a resilient and sustainable network'.

WCVA continued to provide funding through the Partnership Capacity Building Fund to assist WEL's participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council.

As always, a vital part of WEL's core funding came from the WEL members themselves, in the form of their subscription fees.

Reserves and risk policy (developed Autumn 2021)

The figure which Trustees consider to be appropriate and reasonable for the organisation to hold in reserve is between 12 to 18 months' worth of running costs which equates to approximately £200,000 - £300,000 based on our current, minimal level of staffing. We plan to recruit a new Policy Officer next financial year, which will mean our reserves level will increase in line with increased costs.

The Trustees' position on necessary reserves takes account of the scarcity of funders who choose to support organisations / networks whose purpose is to work on policy matters in Wales and the UK. It also draws on WEL's previous experience of losing multi-year support at short notice and consequently having to reduce costs (including staff) by more than 50% with the associated major reduction in operations which support the network of members and their work. It was only through reliance on a good reserve then that closure of WEL was avoided, a risk which Trustees have agreed should not be taken, given WEL's significant contribution in Wales.

Staffing capacity remained at 2.3 FTE at the end of this financial year and Trustees recognise that we will need to invest some of our reserves towards our goal of increasing staff capacity from next financial year. We continue to maintain a 5-year forecast budget and to monitor the 6-month reserve figure (see below) to manage challenges and track WEL's actual funding need.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

With the above factors in mind, Trustees aim to retain reserves at a level which ensures a modest degree of sustainability in a challenging and changing financial context.

Guidelines for monitoring critical levels of reserves describe how much capital is required to enable the charity to continue operating under extraordinary circumstances for 6 months, 3 months and 1 month. As employee commitments (including redundancy rights) change, the operating reserves statements are amended.

Going into financial year April 2024 – 2025, the reserve requirements are as follows. To operate for:

- 6 months: WEL would need to have £110,000 held in reserve.
- 3 months and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £80,500 held in reserve.
- 1 month and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £44,000 held in reserve.

These figures are used by the Trustees to assess any potential risk arising to the charity over time. If funds were to fall below the 6 months operations figure, the Trustees would assess whether there would be a need to take additional steps to curtail expenditure and obtain income, or whether it could be reasonably assumed that anticipated income would address any potential short-term cash flow issues.

Trustees plan to review this policy in Autumn 2024.

The total funds carried forward at 31 March 2024 are £276,271. The Trustees consider this to be a reasonable figure to carry forward in the current circumstances, particularly considering the uncertainty hanging over future grant funding opportunities and the fact that WEL needs to reinstate some of its lost staffing capacity next financial year.

Future developments and risk assessment

A WEL Risk Register is maintained, monitored and updated regularly during the year.

Funding availability and capacity remains a very serious concern throughout the sector, with sources of core funding becoming even more increasingly rare. Unrestricted funding for the sector is vital, both to allow us to retain members, and for us to rebuild and maintain long-term capacity and key policy staff at a level

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

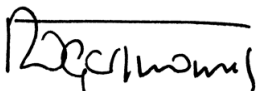
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

appropriate to increasing demand. WEL will continue with plans to increase its membership base, identify any new sources of funding, and raise a greater percentage of its income from membership subscriptions. In November 2023, the decision by WEL members to support the move to a new membership subscription model, which will bring in a greater proportion of funds from our membership whilst remaining fair to member organisations of different levels of income, was hugely appreciated. We are pleased to see how much our members value the services that WEL provides.

Trustees are aware of the difficulties some of our members are experiencing whilst continuing to work within the network. In addition to funding concerns, capacity within the sector is being stretched to the maximum.

Despite the continuing difficulties in current times and our staffing level having remained at 2.3 FTE during the period, WEL has achieved a great deal again this year. Once again we can celebrate the strength and mutual support of our trusted network and we have continued to attract the interest of new organisations to the network. The value placed on Wales Environment Link by members and partners remains clearly evident and as a result of the work underway towards making our organisation more sustainable and resilient, we look forward to strengthening our staff base and achieving more for the Environment in Wales during the coming financial year.

Approved by order of the board of Trustees on 7th November 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Roger Thomas (Chair)

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Annex 1

WEL members were represented on the following stakeholder groups as at 31st March 2024:

- Biodiversity Deep Dive OECMS Group
- Biodiversity Deep Dive Landscape Group
- Budget Improvement and Impact Advisory Group (BIAG)
- Drought Liaison Group
- Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Independent Environmental Advisory Panel
- Enabling the Environment Sector Group
- Greener UK Devolution Group
- Innovative Funding Sub-Group
- National Access Forum for Wales
- Nature Recovery Action Plan Implementation Group
- NRW/WEL Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forum
- Third Sector Partnership Council
- Wales Coast and Seas Partnership
- Wales Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group
- Wales Land Management Forum sub-group on agricultural pollution
- Wales Water Management Forum
- Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme Stakeholder Policy Group
- Well-being of Future Generations Stakeholder Forum
- WCVA Cabinet Secretary meetings:
 - Climate Change
 - Economy
 - Finance and Local Government

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Independent Examiner's Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Wales Environment Link / Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru (the Trust) for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

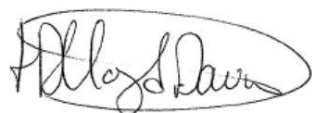
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Ground Floor, Cardigan House
Castle Court
Swansea Enterprise Park
Swansea
SA7 9LA

Date: 7th November 2024

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2024

				2024	2023
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	995	-	995	200
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities	4	164,940	-	164,940	219,353
Investment income	3	<u>4,769</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,769</u>	<u>1,498</u>
Total		<u>170,704</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>170,704</u>	<u>221,051</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		2,901	-	2,901	2,525
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities	5	<u>149,528</u>	<u>2,803</u>	<u>152,331</u>	<u>164,913</u>
Total		<u>152,429</u>	<u>2,803</u>	<u>155,232</u>	<u>167,438</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		18,275	(2,803)	15,472	53,613
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		256,446	4,353	260,799	207,186
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>274,721</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>276,271</u>	<u>260,799</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2024

			2024	2023
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible assets	9	3,418	-	3,418
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	10	4,842	-	4,842
Cash at bank		<u>276,964</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>278,514</u>
		281,806	1,550	283,356
CREDITORS				
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(10,233)	-	(10,233)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>271,573</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>273,123</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>274,721</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>276,271</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET ASSETS		<u><u>274,721</u></u>	<u><u>1,550</u></u>	<u><u>276,271</u></u>
FUNDS	12			
Unrestricted funds			274,721	256,446
Restricted funds			<u>1,550</u>	<u>4,353</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			<u><u>276,271</u></u>	<u><u>260,799</u></u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 7th November 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



J M Anderson (Treasurer) - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgments about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results in the future may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Estimation Uncertainty

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. Management considers there to be no estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Income

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Subscription income is recognised when paid. When a payment is made for an extended period, it is credited evenly over the period to the SOFA.

Donations and similar incoming resources represent monies received by the charity from charitable donations and gifts. These are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities upon receipt.

Grant income is accounted for on an accruals basis and is shown in the financial statements when the Charity earns the unconditional right to the funds. Grants received for a specific purpose are treated as restricted funds. Revenue grants are credited directly to the Statement of Financial Activities and Capital grants are released over the life of the asset in line with the depreciation policy.

Interest Receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The cost of generating funds comprises those costs associated with attracting grant income. Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities, both costs directly attributable and indirect support costs. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity.

All costs allocated between expenditure categories are on a basis designed to reflect their resource usage. For some costs this means direct allocation to activities, other costs are apportioned, e.g., by staff time spent on the activity, or another equitable usage measure.

Joint delivery costs are recognised in the period which they are awarded to the extent that they have been expended in accordance with the funding terms and conditions.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings - 25% on cost

Computer equipment - 25% on cost

Tangible fixed assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Indication of impairment is reviewed annually, and an impairment review is undertaken where there is an indication of impairment.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined benefit pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. There is no past service deficit liability at the year end.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments held within a deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any discounts due.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations	<u>995</u>	<u>200</u>

Included in Donations above are the following:

Amounts received towards salary costs for an intern employed through Cardiff University's Internship Scheme	-	200
RSPB share of Drop-in Event catering costs	195	-
WCL contribution to EDI film	250	-
SEL contribution to EDI film	250	-
NIEL contribution to EDI film	250	-
Shared voice interview	50	-
	<u>995</u>	<u>200</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	<u>4,769</u>	<u>1,498</u>

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		2024	2023
	Activity	£	£
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	Charitable activities	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	Charitable activities	51,487	53,852
Grants	Charitable activities	<u>109,952</u>	<u>162,000</u>
		<u>164,940</u>	<u>219,353</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	55,000	77,000
Waterloo Foundation	40,000	40,000
WWF Cymru	-	20,000
Welsh Government grant, administered by National Lottery Heritage Fund	14,952	-
Postcode Lottery	<u>-</u>	<u>25,000</u>
	<u>109,952</u>	<u>162,000</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs £	Totals £
Charitable activities	<u>133,963</u>	<u>18,368</u>	<u>152,331</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees' expenses

Trustees' expenses (2024: £149, 2023: £210) consists of travel and subsistence costs.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

7. 2023 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	200	-	200
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	204,353	15,000	219,353
Investment income	<u>1,498</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,498</u>
Total	<u>206,051</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>221,051</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	2,525	-	2,525
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	<u>154,266</u>	<u>10,647</u>	<u>164,913</u>
Total	<u>156,791</u>	<u>10,647</u>	<u>167,438</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	49,260	4,353	53,613
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	207,186	-	207,186
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>256,446</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>260,799</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

8. BENEFITS IN KIND

The value of services donated by members in the pursuit of co-operative activities during the year and not included in the Statement of Financial Activities is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Time and Travel contributed to working groups and meetings	213,550	232,038
Time and Travel contributed to the management of the charity	22,175	14,200
	<u>235,275</u>	<u>246,238</u>

The value of members' staff and volunteer time contributed to the network in 2023-2024 has been calculated using National Lottery Heritage Fund volunteer rate guideline figures.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2023	10,305	2,839	13,144
Additions	<u>-</u>	<u>4,198</u>	<u>4,198</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>10,305</u>	<u>7,037</u>	<u>17,342</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2023	10,305	2,839	13,144
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>1,050</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>10,305</u>	<u>3,889</u>	<u>14,194</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>3,148</u>	<u>3,148</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>4,842</u>	<u>3,714</u>

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	<u>10,233</u>	<u>6,710</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	256,446	18,275	274,721
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	3,753	(2,803)	950
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>600</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>4,353</u>	<u>(2,803)</u>	<u>1,550</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>260,799</u>	<u>15,472</u>	<u>276,271</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	170,704	(152,429)	18,275
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	-	(2,803)	(2,803)
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>170,704</u>	<u>(155,232)</u>	<u>15,472</u>

2023 comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	207,186	49,260	256,446
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	-	3,753	3,753
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	-	600	600
	<u>-</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>4,353</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>207,186</u>	<u>53,613</u>	<u>260,799</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

2023 comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement In funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	206,051	(156,791)	49,260
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	5,000	(1,247)	3,753
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	10,000	(9,400)	600
	<u>15,000</u>	<u>(10,647)</u>	<u>4,353</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>221,051</u>	<u>(167,438)</u>	<u>53,613</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	207,186	67,535	274,721
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	-	950	950
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	-	600	600
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>1,550</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>207,186</u>	<u>69,085</u>	<u>276,271</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	376,755	(309,220)	67,535
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	5,000	(4,050)	950
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>10,000</u>	<u>(9,400)</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>15,000</u>	<u>(13,450)</u>	<u>1,550</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>391,755</u>	<u>(322,670)</u>	<u>69,085</u>

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2024 other than those disclosed in note 5, 6 and 8 of the financial statements.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	995	200
Investment income		
Bank Interest Receivable	4,769	1,498
Charitable activities		
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	51,487	53,852
Grants	<u>109,952</u>	<u>162,000</u>
	<u>164,940</u>	<u>219,353</u>
Total incoming resources	170,704	221,051
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Wages	2,563	2,231
Social security	<u>338</u>	<u>294</u>
	2,901	2,525
Charitable activities		
Wages	96,495	102,161
Social security	6,042	15,019
Pensions	8,725	9,302
Sundries	70	-
Working Groups	15,214	15,680
Management Committee Expenses	486	210
Staff travel and subsistence	32	41

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2024

IT Costs	3,607	3,684
Meetings and AGM	566	-
External Liaison	-	32
Links Liaison	158	-
NLHF Project	1,518	-
Computer equipment depreciation	<u>1,050</u>	<u>-</u>
	133,963	146,129
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	10,941	10,941
Office Costs	7	63
Rent	3,000	3,137
Staff training and recruitment	<u>673</u>	<u>458</u>
	14,621	14,599
Governance costs		
Insurance	391	459
Accountancy	<u>3,356</u>	<u>3,726</u>
	<u>3,747</u>	<u>4,185</u>
Total resources expended	155,232	167,438
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>15,472</u>	<u>53,613</u>

Accounts



**Trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

Registered Charity Number: 1022675

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

**Contents of the financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

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Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Legal and Administrative information

Charity number 1022675

Charity Offices Tramshed Tech
Pendyris Street
Cardiff
CF22 6BH

Trustees

Roger Thomas	Chair
Jen Anderson	Treasurer
Beverley Penney	Open Spaces Society (Hon. Secretary)
Rachel Sharp	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Natalie Buttriss	Woodland Trust
Ffion Mitchell	Marine Conservation Society

President Post vacant

Co-Directors Karen Whitfield
Susan Evans

Independent Examiner Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Langdon House
Langdon Road
Swansea Waterfront
SA1 8QY

Bankers Co-operative Bank
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Chair's Foreword

A year ago I recorded that funding remained a challenge. Regrettably, and despite strenuous efforts by our staff and Trustees over the last 12 months, I must now flag funding as WEL's most urgent priority.

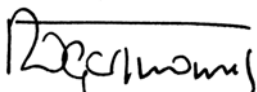
Notwithstanding helpful NRW-funded collaboration with The Funding Centre in reviewing our financial strategy, and action to reduce running costs to a lean minimum, we have not achieved significant progress towards our strategic aim of making WEL viable in financial terms.

We were obliged at the end of September to reduce our staff complement to only 2.3 full-time equivalents, a level of resource which is insufficient to deliver the breadth and depth of services upon which our members and Welsh Government rely.

This also places us at a disadvantage amongst the UK Environment Links, where we trail our sister organisations pro rata in internal resources, rendering our ability to play a full part in UK-wide environmental work impossible.

Over the year we have begun considering how to increase our income from membership subscriptions, sought to increase our membership, continued to make the case to the Welsh Government for their support and pursued the very limited grant-funding opportunities available to primarily policy-based organisations.

Our small complement of staff has once-again delivered far more than could be expected of them. As detailed further in this report, and in tandem with our members, we collectively continue the fight to stem the post-Brexit tide – primarily from Westminster – that seeks to dilute environmental legislation. It is a battle that we must not lose; we should all be grateful that such committed and knowledgeable people are devoted to safeguarding and improving our natural environment and, thereby, our future.



Roger Thomas
Chair

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and Wales Environment Link's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Organisational Information

Charity name

Wales Environment Link is also known as WEL. Its X/Twitter handles are @WalesLink and @WalesLinkMarine.

Trustees

The Trustees, who are members of the Management Committee, have served throughout the year, unless otherwise stated.

Constitution of the Charity, Trustee selection and governance

Wales Environment Link's constitution was adopted on 1st November 1990 and amended on 8th May 1991, 5th May 1993, 18th June 1997, 10th September 1997, 3rd July 2002, 7th July 2004, 21st November 2012, 10th July 2013, 16th May 2017 and 4th July 2018.

Appointment to the Management Committee is governed by the Trust Deed of the charity, and appointments made either at the Annual General Meeting or, in the case of a vacancy, by agreement of a majority of the member organisations at a Council Meeting.

Council meets twice a year, principally to consider policy matters of relevance to the members. Decisions are made on the basis of consensus; however where a formal vote is required decisions are taken by a majority vote of the Full members of the Council.

The Management Committee manages the affairs of the charity and makes such decisions as may be required to ensure the continuing operation of the charity and to address any substantial matters arising in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Management Committee delegates the day-to-day responsibility for the organisation and line management of staff to the Co-Directors of Wales Environment Link.

Related bodies

There are four Link networks in the UK:

- Wales Environment Link (WEL)
- Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL, in England)
- Scottish Environment LINK (SEL)
- Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

Each Link is a coalition organisation, set up to complement and add value to the actions of individual members. The Links work together on UK or European-level policy, forming 'Environment Links UK' (ELUK) statements and documents. We also work with Greener UK, a coalition working to campaign for strong environmental protection post-Brexit.

Charitable objects

WEL is established, for the benefit of the public, to promote and enhance the conservation, protection, sustainable management, and quiet and responsible enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Wales.

Vision

A thriving Welsh environment for future generations¹

¹ For the purposes of interpretation, “environment” means terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments. It includes urban and rural environments and areas of importance for natural heritage, landscape and public access.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Mission Statement

Our mission is for the WEL network to be the primary NGO sector influencer of environmental policy, legislation and practice in Wales, respected for our members' expertise and advice and at the centre of government decision making.

Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

Provide a cohesive voice for our members by enabling them to work effectively with governments and statutory sectors as a respected and influential independent advisory network.

KPIs:

1. WEL is the first point of contact for Government and statutory bodies when looking for representation from the environmental NGO sector.
2. WEL recommendations are taken up in Committee reports, and Government policy and legislation.
3. WEL provides timely, well-informed positions and recommendations that influence policy and legislative change.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

Support and nurture the environmental NGO sector by facilitating the development of partnerships, knowledge and expertise, increasing the sustainability of the sector, building mutual trust and enhancing capacity within the membership.

KPIs:

1. WEL members are provided with effective training on relevant topics to assist them with their collaborative work and influencing. Courses are sought after and members find them useful.
2. WEL is a valued partner to the other UK Links (collectively known as Environment Links UK / ELUK) and a key participant in other environmental and relevant third sector coalitions, such as Greener UK, Stop Climate Chaos Cymru, the SD Alliance and the Third Sector Partnership Council.
3. WEL has the capacity and tools to support at least one joint campaign per year on our members' collective key priorities, in a way that adds value to our members' individual campaigning and strengthens the ability to be heard.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Objective 3: Supporting our members

Develop WEL's role as a key support mechanism for its members, clearly demonstrating the achievements and importance of the network to members, funders and partners

KPIs:

1. WEL is recognised as a champion for its members
2. WEL continues to attract new members, and funding from both the Welsh Government, and trusts and foundations.
3. WEL members value the network's role in keeping them informed about policy and legislative developments, opportunities for partnership working, support mechanisms and funding opportunities.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

Develop WEL's public profile in order to better promote its members' agreed collective priorities, messages and recommendations.

KPIs:

1. WEL's social media platforms continue to increase their followers and are valued by our members for promoting their work and raising awareness of environmental issues.
2. WEL's website is a useful resource for those looking for information about WEL, its members, and network positions on policy issues.
3. Politicians, government officials and staff from statutory bodies know the WEL network, who its members are, what it represents and what it can offer.

Objective 5: A viable network

Maintain a sustainable, efficient and effective network which is financially stable and overseen by sound governance procedures.

KPIs:

1. WEL members value the network as an important source of timely information, and are able to engage in joint work with the network in a variety of ways (e.g. through email, Basecamp, social media, video/tele-conferencing and face to face meetings and events).
2. WEL continues to operate with a healthy funding reserve, diverse income streams and has confidence in its financial practices, organisational policies and

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

risk management.

3. WEL has a high staff retention rate with staff members feeling valued and happy with their working conditions.
4. WEL attracts and retains skilled Trustees, who feel valued by the network.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees of Wales Environment Link continue to pay due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in relation to our activities, thus complying with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

All of the objectives of the charity were devised to contribute to the overall purpose of safeguarding and improving the environment, countryside, heritage, habitats, wildlife and biodiversity of Wales. The act of safeguarding and improving these precious resources is intrinsically for the good of the people of Wales, visitors to Wales and also to global citizens. The Welsh environment and the natural and cultural resources it provides play a significant part in supporting peoples' health and well-being in a multitude of ways, from contributing to good mental and physical health, to reducing the impacts of climate change and helping people to adapt to its effects. WEL advocates for a prosperous, low carbon society which supports the sorts of jobs Wales needs for a just transition.

WEL provides a coordinating service for the environmental and heritage voluntary sector in Wales, increasing the sector's efficiency so that scarce resources are used to greatest effect. The WEL website provides information about WEL's members and its work, including links to all member organisations' websites with their wide range of information available for the public relating to wildlife and countryside issues, including: recreation, health, sustainable development, education and biodiversity. WEL also promotes the work of its members using Twitter/X. WEL staff provide support to all member organisations and thus their members, helping to ensure their own objectives are also met, with wide-reaching public benefit.

Review of developments, activities and achievements over the past year

WEL staff supported 7 working groups this year. The groups were, Advocacy, Biodiversity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Green Recovery, Land Use, Marine and Species Champions. Group key activities for the year are reported under the KPIs below. During the year it was agreed to complete the work of the Green Recovery Group, which had begun as a Task & Finish Group, as the group had completed the work it was originally set up to do. Whilst there was potential for

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

some areas of proactive work on green economy issues, staff reductions within WEL which reduced our staff team from 3.3FTE to a very lean 2.3FTE from October meant that there was no capacity to continue to support this area of work into the long term.

All WEL and Environment Links UK consultation responses, position statements and briefings are available on the WEL website: www.waleslink.org.

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

WEL remains the first point of contact for environmental NGOs when Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), or other public or private bodies seek representation from a wide range of environmental NGOs in policy discussions and decision-making processes. In 2022 - 2023, WEL members represented the network on 25 stakeholder groups that were convened by the Welsh Government, NRW, third sector or private sector bodies. A full list of all stakeholder groups is included in Annex 1.

WEL regularly provides written and oral evidence to Senedd Committees on a range of environmental subjects. This year, WEL has provided written and oral evidence to inquiries on the [Single Use Plastics Bill](#), the [Welsh Government Draft Budget](#), the [Retained EU Law Bill](#), biodiversity and the Agriculture (Wales) Bill.

We continue to provide secretariat for the Senedd's Cross Party Group on Biodiversity, giving a united front for the eNGO sector and making vital links with Senedd work on biodiversity. Capacity allowing, we will continue with at least two meetings a year, for which the WEL members help decide themes, based on Senedd topical issues, upcoming legislation and Welsh Government developments. We also increasingly involve non-WEL members for events (such as the Royal Welsh Show or Senedd drop-in events) to increase our reach and collaboration.

Land Use Working Group

WEL worked intensively on the Agriculture (Wales) Bill and ongoing development of Wales' Sustainable Farming Scheme. From September 2022 to the end of March 2023 WEL worked to influence amendments to the Agriculture (Wales) Bill, focusing on the need to strengthen the Bill's impact on restoring biodiversity, improving public access, introducing a strong regulatory baseline (National Minimum Standards) and ensuring a sunset clause for the Basic Payment Scheme, to ensure uptake of the Sustainable Farming Scheme. WEL produced a [briefing on National Minimum Standards](#) and also gave [evidence at Stage 1](#), with a number of our

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

recommendations being picked up in the Rural Affairs Committee and the Legislation Committee's reports. Our work on the Bill was supported by a media campaign including an e-action, WEL member interviews by the BBC and Welsh media, and an Institute of Welsh Affairs article by WEL's Co-Director, Karen Whitfield.

We made some progress at Stage 2 in getting opposition political parties to support some of WEL's suggested amendments, particularly in relation to delivering the Bill's Sustainable Land Management Objectives together, with no hierarchy, and on the inclusion of National Minimum Standards, which were not included within the Bill. Whilst these amendments did not pass, they ensured that we got some important clarifications on the record from the Minister which can be used in future interpretation on these matters. Work followed to influence Stage 3 of the Bill, which fell outside the scope of this Annual Report.

The Outline Sustainable Farming Scheme for Wales was published in July 2022. WEL held a well-attended event at the Royal Welsh Show in partnership with the Nature Friendly Farming Network and Chaired by the CEO of the Food and Farming Commission. This event was attended by farming stakeholders, Members of the Senedd and environmental NGOs. The event showcased good practice from Nature Friendly Farmers and included a panel discussion with the Minister for Rural Affairs, enabling questions from the audience about the Outline Sustainable Farming Scheme. WEL also wrote to the Minister with our headline [analysis of the Outline Sustainable Farming Scheme](#), and we promoted our recommendations on social media. We felt the Scheme was broadly moving in the right direction in terms of actions expected to protect nature, create habitat and prevent pollution. However, it needs strengthening in relation to the actions expected from farmers in the Universal layer of the Scheme.

WEL [wrote to the Minister for Rural Affairs](#) with follow up evidence regarding recommendations 1 and 8 of the ETRA Committee's report on Review of The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021, which we gave evidence on in 2021. We did not feel we had had the opportunity to address the points that these recommendations covered in our evidence to the Committee. We also responded to a Welsh Government [consultation](#) on the introduction of a licensing scheme under the new Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations. This could allow a higher level of nitrogen fertilizer spreading in certain cases under license where no adverse environmental impacts can be demonstrated. We believe that this is a potential opportunity to license polluting farming activities more widely, bringing the farming industry into line with other polluting industries such as

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

water companies and providing revenue for Natural Resources Wales to monitor and enforce against agricultural pollution incidents.

In September 2022, WEL published [Blueprint Wales for PR24: Environmental Outcomes for the Price Review](#), which set out the group's recommendations for Welsh Government, Ofwat and water companies when publishing water company business plans for 2024 – 2029. This document shared many of the same recommendations as those of the Blueprint Group in England but made specific recommendations for Wales where policy direction is diverging on some issues. This document was sent to officials, NRW staff who were working on the National Environment Plan (NEP) for water companies, Ofwat and water companies in Wales. The document was also presented to Welsh Water's Independent Environmental Advisory Panel. The Land Use Working Group has worked on building its understanding of the Price Review process and its relationships with water companies and Ofwat. The group has also responded to Ofwat's consultation on its [PR24 methodology](#) for improving water company performance.

Biodiversity Working Group

WEL members commissioned economist Matt Rayment to cost out the minimum investment that we need to see for nature in Wales in 10 key areas. The report, [Pathways to 2030: 10 key areas for investment in nature's recovery across Wales](#), was launched at the Cross-Party Group for Biodiversity in the Senedd on 28th March and is already generating debate amongst Welsh Government officials and politicians. The launch included Senedd Members from Labour, Plaid and Conservatives, and we gave examples of best practice on both land and sea. We highlighted the Celtic Rainforest (EU LIFE funded) as one of the best terrestrial nature restoration projects in recent years, and the Skomer Island MCZ and Sky Ocean Rescue Seagrass projects, with WWF, as marine ecosystem recovery in action.

WEL members have also presented the report to the Welsh Government's Nature Recovery Action Plan Implementation Group, shared with Natural Resources Wales, and helped guide WEL member input on budget discussions with officials. We hope that it will be taken into consideration as the Welsh Government updates its Nature Recovery Action plan and considers where to place investment over the next few years. The Pathways report helps feed into the Welsh Government's Deep Dive work on implementing their own biodiversity recommendations and COP 15 commitments. WEL has two representatives on Expert Groups, that will run from June – December 2023, on monitoring and OECMs / Nature Recovery Exemplar Areas.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Biodiversity Working Group continues to build the case for environmental governance legislation that will also introduce a duty to set statutory targets for nature's recovery. We worked with [Climate Cymru](#) on raising the profile of the issue, as they established an e-action for members of the public to tell the First Minister to 'act for nature' and introduce the Nature Positive Bill. The group also responded to the [consultation on the National Milestones](#), focusing on the biodiversity milestone.

Marine Working Group

WEL's Marine Working Group has continued to provide valued input to the Welsh Government's Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group, Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group and the Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group.

This past year, WEL-wide work on marine matters has reduced, as we await developments on a form of Marine Spatial Plan and statutory consultations on mapping new Marine Conservation Zones. However, we have established annual catch ups with the Minister for Climate Change via beach walks near her constituency. WEL members have found it helpful to have the direct relationship with the Minister evolve so that we can have honest discussions about delays.

The group also fed into the Biodiversity Deep Dive and fed into the Pathways to 2030 report marine sections. We continue to use the marine Species Champions to highlight marine matters, with several debates taking place in the Senedd from our prompting on blue carbon, spatial planning for renewables and the need urgently for a Seabird Strategy and overdue Marine Protected Areas / Marine Conservation Zones to be designated. We aspire to bring on board more policy capacity for this group in the future, to assist the group with their objectives and advocate for these much-awaited policies to be published and implemented.

Species Champions Project

Between April 2022 and March 2023, we have recruited several new Species Champions. The Great Crested Newt Champion brought Amphibian and Reptile Conservation back into the project, with Heledd Fychan MS. We've also recruited a Dormouse Champion, a Yellow Mayfly Champion and the Rural Affairs Minister as the Lesser Horseshoe Bat Champion, also bringing Bat Conservation Trust back into the project. The Seagrass Champion, Joel James, specifically requested seagrass, due to greater awareness being built from WWF and Sky Ocean Rescue investment.

The project does however remain under capacity resulting in WEL members now struggling to support new Senedd Members to be Champions. The Natur am Byth

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

project is now going ahead, so we will be exploring joint site visits, with multiple Champions, at those development areas, which will help with capacity.

In addition to the work of our policy groups, a cross-section of WEL members also fed into WEL's response to Welsh Government consultations on the [Just Transition to Net Zero Wales](#).

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

During 2022-23 WEL's main campaign focused on influencing the Agriculture (Wales) Bill. We commissioned additional comms support during this period, thanks to a grant from WWF Cymru. Having this additional capacity allowed us to increase our social media and wider media messaging and provide members of the network with additional media opportunities that WEL would not normally have capacity to create. Throughout the period our social media following has increased, key tweets across the campaign period garnered over 65,000 impressions. We have also had good media coverage for our collective issues, placing us on a more even footing with coverage from the farming unions than we usually get, and we increased our blog output. WEL's ambition, funding-dependent, is to sustain additional capacity, to allow us to build this presence.

WEL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, which started meeting in 2022, met 5 times between April 2022 and March 2023. This group has started working in tandem with Wildlife and Countryside's EDI Working Group, with members attending WCL meetings for information on subjects that are cross-cutting across all organisations. WEL EDI meetings are becoming a space for organisations to share information about Welsh projects and work practices.

WEL continues to be a valued Environment Links UK (ELUK) partner with regular contact between the ELUK Directors, sharing information and expertise on Link governance and ideas for joint working and funding. WEL continues to work with ELUK on joint reports on wildlife crime and access to justice in the UK, as well as equality, diversity and inclusion.

WEL remains in contact with Stop Climate Chaos and is also part of the Climate Cymru coalition. WEL maintains links with Greener UK by participating in the work of the Devolution Group.

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Objective 3: Supporting our members

WEL's Director has continued to participate in the Enabling the Environment Sector stakeholder group, which also includes several WEL members and NRW staff (Chair and secretariat), Welsh Government officials and funders. This group continues to work on ideas to make the environmental NGO sector more resilient.

WEL members regularly tell us how much they appreciate the weekly Newsdirect monitoring service, which provides a wealth of information on Government and Senedd developments, and upcoming Government consultations and Senedd inquiries. WEL's egroups continue to be very active and members are also increasingly using Basecamp to share information directly with other members; we have had feedback from members regarding how useful this is. We have also continued to provide advice on member events and advocacy with Welsh Government and the Senedd, particularly assisting members that do not have much Wales-specific capacity.

This year, we were joined by Canoe Wales, who were particularly attracted to the network by our work on water quality and access.

2022-23 was the first year of a four-year grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and a new two-year grant from The Waterloo Foundation, both hugely welcome. We also received a 12-month grant from the Postcode Lottery and were grateful to receive funding from WWF Cymru for core work, and specifically for campaigning on the Agriculture Bill and developing the Pathways to 2030 Report. We also continued to receive funding from WCVA for our participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council, representing the environmental third sector.

Funding remains difficult to find across the sector and WEL is ineligible for many of the funding pots that are available in Wales. It is essential that WEL grows and diversifies its funding, as well as significantly increasing its income from membership subscriptions, if we are to be able to continue to support our members effectively.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

WEL continues to use its website to promote blog articles from within and outside the WEL network, highlighting key areas of topical interest to our members and promoting their priorities. We also continue to act as the link with Natur Cymru magazine, sourcing members to provide regular short policy articles covering the terrestrial and marine environments, and which give a further platform for issues of

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

concern to members. We're very pleased to contribute to this publication.

WEL's Twitter / X presence continues to grow, with over 2,500 followers, and we are diversifying our social media by using LinkedIn more as a posting platform and developing profiles on Mastodon and 'Twt Cymru', a sub-server of Mastodon.

We are using our YouTube Channel less, now we organise more events in person again than online, but we'll continue to maintain its presence so that we have an option to stream events where appropriate, to reach a wider audience. In May 2022, we live-streamed the [CPG for Biodiversity on Sustainable Farming in Wales](#), where we outlined what we wanted to see from the new scheme and where the Rural Affairs Minister spoke and took questions. It has 165 views and had fantastic live engagement on the day.

WEL has continued to use its coordination services to help Welsh Government officials and NRW improve their access to our members, and to engage with them on specific policy and process issues throughout the year. NRW works with WEL to organise biennial joint forum meetings with WEL members, and interested WCVA members, to discuss biodiversity and ecosystem resilience issues, and to provide information about upcoming funding opportunities.

WEL's Species Champions continue to mention their role regularly in Plenary and committee sessions, raising the profile of the project and the plight of their species at the same time.

WEL is also a regular port of call for Committees wishing to gather evidence on a range of environmental issues and the network's value is recognised by Committee members, with members providing evidence on the Single-Use Plastics Bill, Agriculture Bill and on nature policies in 2022-23. WEL met with the Minister for Climate Change in August 2022 to discuss marine planning, the importance of spatial policies, blue carbon, the most nature-sensitive sites and the importance of the Celtic Deep area to biodiversity. The Minister said she found us extremely helpful and a follow-up meeting online was organised to discuss Marine Conservation Zones. She continues to engage with us productively and speaks highly of us in the Senedd. WEL is keen to sustain this level of input, but it is very difficult given the currently reduced level of staffing.

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Objective 5: A viable network

Council meetings were held online due to the on-going Covid pandemic in May and, for the first time, as a hybrid meeting in November 2022. In May we had a new member presentation from the Centre for Alternative Technology as well as a presentation on Blue Carbon accounting from Wildlife Trusts. In November we had a new member presentation from Canoe Wales and we held a workshop session to review progress halfway through WEL's 2020 -2025 Strategic Plan.

Most members are now very used to online or hybrid meetings. Working group attendance from across Wales has improved because of travel-free ways to engage with WEL's work. Our Basecamp service is now used extensively, as a way of sharing information and initiating informal discussions directly between members. Our egroup service has taken on a more formal usage as a result, with discussion increasingly taking place on Basecamp.

WEL reserves appear to be reasonably healthy at present, in part owing to our having secured some new funding commitments during the year. However, our financial situation is under continued pressure to the extent that we find ourselves unable to make real progress under this strategic objective. We were unable to extend one of the staff contracts, therefore losing a Policy Officer halfway through the financial year. Our staff team is now just 3 members of staff (2.33 FTE).

We are working to achieve more diverse income and appreciated that Natural Resources Wales paid for The Funding Centre to undertake work looking at our subscription fee system and other potential sources of income. This work identified the potential for WEL to apply for National Lottery Heritage Fund Resilience Funding, but acknowledged that there are very few long-term eligible grant pots for WEL. Other potential sources of income, such as charging for new services that could be available to non-members, were considered by Trustees to be a distraction from the services that our members want us to focus on. With WEL's sustainability under threat, an in-depth review of our income and sustainability will remain high priority in the next financial year.

Trustees look at projected finances at every meeting to identify and manage any risks to the organisation. WEL also maintains a Risk Register which is considered and updated regularly at Management Committee meetings.

Our three remaining members of staff have been in post for several years, demonstrating the network's appeal in providing interesting work and good working

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conditions despite financial pressures. Our flexible working policies, rewarding length of service with additional annual leave days, and encouraging input and ideas from all our staff, continue to make WEL a desirable place to work. Whilst the isolation of home working because of the Covid pandemic has not always been easy, staff have continued to stay in regular contact through phone and videoconferencing and staff also have the option to use our membership of a co-working space in Cardiff, which provides a pleasant shared modern space for meetings and working alongside colleagues at key times. We understand the importance of keeping this use of office space and homeworking under review to balance the advantages of flexible working with the need to provide support and contact to staff.

Management Committee meetings were held on 6th April, 30th September, 8th November 2022 and on 17th January and 21st March 2023.

Trustees and staff are very keen that WEL further improves diversity on our Management Committee. We currently have one Trustee vacancy available, as well as co-optee places, and we aim to develop the diversity of our Management Committee through these routes.

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The members of WEL in the network at the end of March 2023 are as follows:

Full Members (28)

Afonydd Cymru
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Trust
Bat Conservation Trust
British Mountaineering Council
Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation Wales
Campaign for National Parks
Canoe Wales
Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)
Coed Cadw / Woodland Trust
Freshwater Habitats Trust
John Muir Trust
Keep Wales Tidy
Llais y Goedwig
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust / Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol
Open Spaces Society
Plantlife
Pori Natur a Threftadaeth (PONT)
Ramblers Cymru
RSPB Cymru
Soil Association
Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)
WildFish (Formerly the Salmon & Trout Association)
Wildlife Trusts Wales
WWF Cymru

Associate Members* (3)

Elan Valley Trust
Snowdonia Society / Cymdeithas Eryri
YHA

* Please note Associate membership is a historic category and is no longer open to new members

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Staffing

Karen Whitfield and Susan Evans are both part-time Co-Directors of WEL. In her remaining hours, Karen also undertakes the Senior Policy Officer role for WEL.

Liz Smith continued as our full-time Advocacy & Policy Officer.

Llinos Price, Policy Officer, was with us until the end of September 2022.

WEL involvement in the Third Sector Partnership Scheme

24 years ago, the Government of Wales Act placed a statutory duty on the newly devolved government to publish a Scheme setting out how it will promote the interests of the third sector.

The Third Sector Scheme is a statement of the Welsh Government's intent in their relationship with the Third Sector. It identifies three areas of interest – stronger communities, better policy and better public services – as well as formal arrangements for engagement. It was adopted and published in September 2000. The National Assembly has a statutory duty to set out the scheme in order to demonstrate how it would promote the interests of the voluntary sector.

The Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) is chaired by Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice, and is made up of representatives of third sector networks working across 25 areas of third sector activity along with the CEO of WCVA. Each of the 25 categories is represented by a third sector network, which is nominated or elected to their role by the organisations within the specific area of interest. Wales Environment Link is nominated to represent the environment sector.

The main purpose of the Third Sector Partnership Council is to make sure that the principles set out in the Third Sector Scheme are put into practice. It also provides an opportunity for the sector to raise issues of interest or concern. It generally does not discuss issues that relate to only one area of interest (these can be taken up through biannual ministerial meetings) and as a national body it is concerned with issues affecting all of Wales.

As well as being represented on the TSPC, WEL has representatives on the Ministerial meeting groups organised by the WCVA, which run under the auspices of the Scheme. WEL acts as the voice of the environment at all these meetings.

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Support in kind for Wales Environment Link

All members of WEL make a significant and direct contribution of time, skills and resources to the activities of the network: that collaboration is critical to the development of a collective voice. Members' time is critical to the functioning of the network. Staff from different organisations working together and sharing information greatly benefits the environment sector as a whole. The Trustees wish to acknowledge this contribution and thank the members for their continued support. Staff and volunteers of member organisations gave 4,916 hours of their time to aid the activities of the network during 2022 – 2023, as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts. The time and benefits in kind provided by members during 2022 – 2023 in furtherance of WEL's work has been valued at £246,238.

Financial review of the year

The statement of financial activities shows that the total funds carried forward from 2022/23 to 2023/24 are £260,799. The Trustees consider this to be a reasonable figure to carry forward and an important one in the circumstances of continuing uncertainty around future grant funding and the pressing need to strengthen WEL's currently restricted staffing capacity.

This puts WEL in a reasonably stable position for the immediate future, going into financial year 2023-24. However, over the next 12 months we need to continue our urgent work on raising income from new sources, as well as increasing the percentage of income which comes from membership subscriptions in order to safeguard the future of the organisation. WEL urgently needs to increase staff capacity from the 3 staff (2.33 FTE) on which the network has heavily relied since September 2022 so that the staff team can continue to provide all the services our members and partners rely on.

Funders of Wales Environment Link

The Trustees of WEL would like to thank the following for their support:

We received the first payment of a welcome new four-year funding agreement with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. In addition to this grant, the foundation provided WEL with a 'Cost of Living uplift payment' which was immensely appreciated.

The Waterloo Foundation kindly agreed a new two-year grant towards WEL's work on post-Brexit environmental governance, agriculture, marine and biodiversity work.

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We were very pleased to receive a grant this year from the Peoples' Postcode Lottery to support WEL's biodiversity work.

WCVA continued to provide funding through the Partnership Capacity Building Fund to assist WEL's participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council.

Carrying on a long-standing arrangement, the Trustees are grateful to WWF Cymru for grant funding received again this financial year. We were also grateful to receive a further grant from WWF Cymru to allow us to produce our Pathways to 2030 report on costed actions for nature's recovery, and to commission the services of a freelance communicator to support our Agriculture Bill campaign.

As always, a vital part of WEL's core funding came from the WEL members themselves, in the form of their subscription fees.

Reserves and risk policy (developed Autumn 2021)

The figure which Trustees consider to be appropriate and reasonable for the organisation to hold in reserve is between 12 to 18 months' worth of running costs which equates to approximately £200,000 - £300,000 based on our current, very minimal level of staffing. We do aim to recruit further staff if new funds can be secured, which will mean our necessary reserves level would increase in line with increased costs.

The Trustees' position on necessary reserves takes account of the continuing absence of Welsh Government funding for the sector, the paucity of multi-year trust funding specifically targeting Welsh organisations and uncertainty over the level of future subscription fees, with our subscription system due for review and with the UK being amid a cost of living crisis. It draws too on WEL's previous experience of losing multi-year support at short notice and consequently having to reduce costs (including staff) by more than 50% with the associated major reduction in operations which support the network of members and their work. It was only through reliance on a good reserve then that closure of WEL was avoided, a risk which Trustees have agreed should not be taken, given WEL's significant contribution in Wales.

Staffing capacity having reduced in October to 2.3 FTE, Trustees recognise that we will need to invest some of our reserves towards our goal of sustaining a critical though modest team of 4 Full Time Equivalent staff (5 staff members) plus running costs associated with that slender model. We continue to maintain a 5-year forecast

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budget and to monitor the 6-month reserve figure (see below) to manage challenges and track WEL's actual funding need.

With the above factors in mind, Trustees aim to retain reserves at a level which ensures a modest degree of sustainability in a challenging and changing financial context.

Guidelines for monitoring critical levels of reserves describe how much capital is required to enable the charity to continue operating under extraordinary circumstances for 6 months, 3 months and 1 month. As employee commitments (including redundancy rights) change, the operating reserves statements are amended.

Going into financial year April 2023 – 2024, the reserve requirements are as follows. To operate for:

- 6 months: WEL would need to have £95,000 held in reserve.
- 3 months and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £68,000 held in reserve.
- 1 month and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £36,000 held in reserve.

These figures are used by the Trustees to assess any potential risk arising to the charity over time. If funds were to fall below the 6 months operations figure, the Trustees would assess whether there would be a need to take additional steps to curtail expenditure and obtain income, or whether it could be reasonably assumed that anticipated income would address any potential short-term cash flow issues. Trustees will review this policy in two years' time unless there are any significant changes in circumstances or expenditure which lead to a review in advance of Autumn 2023.

The total funds carried forward at 31 March 2023 are £260,799. The Trustees consider this to be a reasonable figure to carry forward in the current circumstances, particularly considering the uncertainty hanging over future grant funding levels and the fact that WEL needs to get itself into a position to be able to reinstate some of its lost staffing capacity.

Future developments and risk assessment

A WEL Risk Register is maintained, monitored and updated regularly during the year.

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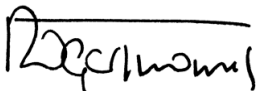
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Funding availability and capacity remains a very serious concern throughout the sector, with sources of core funding becoming even more increasingly rare. Unrestricted funding for the sector is vital, both to allow us to retain members, and for us to rebuild and maintain long-term capacity and key policy staff at a level appropriate to increasing demand. WEL will continue with plans to increase its membership base, identify any new sources of funding, and raise a greater percentage of its income from membership subscriptions.

Trustees are aware of the difficulties some of our members are experiencing whilst continuing to work within the network. In addition to funding concerns, capacity within the sector is being stretched to the maximum.

Despite the continuing difficulties in current times WEL has achieved much success even though our staffing level has been reduced to just 2.3 FTE. We celebrate the strength and mutual support of our established network and are extremely pleased to have retained all of our existing members and to have recruited another new member in Canoe Wales. The value placed on our network by members and partners remains clearly evident.

Approved by order of the board of Trustees on 7th November 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Roger Thomas (Chair)

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

Annex 1

WEL members were represented on the following stakeholder groups as at 31st March 2023:

- Budget Improvement and Impact Advisory Group (BIIAG)
- Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Independent Environmental Advisory Panel
- EERA Environmental Governance Legislation Task Group
- Enabling the Environment Sector Group
- Greener UK Devolution Group
- Innovative Funding Sub-Group
- National Access Forum for Wales
- Nature Recovery Action Plan Implementation Group
- NRW/WEL Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forum
- Section 6 guidance
- Planning and biodiversity
- Rural Development Plan PMC
- Third Sector Partnership Council
- UK Forestry Standard Review
- Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group
- Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group
- Wales Land Management Forum sub-group on agricultural pollution
- Wales Water Management Forum
- Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme Stakeholder Policy Group
- Well-being of Future Generations Stakeholder Forum
- WCVA Cabinet Secretary meetings:
 - Climate Change
 - Economy
 - Education and the Welsh Language
 - Finance and Local Government

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Independent Examiner's Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Wales Environment Link / Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru (the Trust) for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

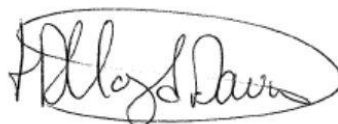
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Ground Floor
Cardigan House
Castle Court
Swansea Enterprise Park
Swansea
SA7 9LA



Date: 7th November 2023

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023

				2023	2022
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	Notes	funds	funds	funds	funds
		£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	200	-	200	1,645
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities	4	204,353	15,000	219,353	170,728
Investment income	3	<u>1,498</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,498</u>	<u>362</u>
Total		<u>206,051</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>221,051</u>	<u>172,735</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		2,525	-	2,525	3,729
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities	5	<u>154,266</u>	<u>10,647</u>	<u>164,913</u>	<u>243,168</u>
Total		<u>156,791</u>	<u>10,647</u>	<u>167,438</u>	<u>246,897</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		49,260	4,353	53,613	(74,162)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		207,186	-	207,186	281,348
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>256,446</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>260,799</u>	<u>207,186</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2023

				2023	2022
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	10	3,714	-	3,714	334
Cash at bank		<u>259,442</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>268,148</u>	<u>211,798</u>
		263,156	4,353	271,862	212,123
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(6,710)	-	(6,710)	(4,937)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>256,446</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>260,799</u>	<u>207,186</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		256,446	4,353	260,799	207,186
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET ASSETS		<u>256,446</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>260,799</u>	<u>207,186</u>
FUNDS	12				
Unrestricted funds				256,446	207,186
Restricted funds				<u>4,353</u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>260,799</u>	<u>207,186</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 7th November 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



J M Anderson (Treasurer) - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgments about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results in the future may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Estimation Uncertainty

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. Management considers there to be no estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Income

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Subscription income is recognised when paid. When a payment is made for an extended period, it is credited evenly over the period to the SOFA.

Donations and similar incoming resources represent monies received by the charity from charitable donations and gifts. These are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities upon receipt.

Grant income is accounted for on an accruals basis and is shown in the financial statements when the Charity earns the unconditional right to the funds. Grants received for a specific purpose are treated as restricted funds. Revenue grants are credited directly to the Statement of Financial Activities and Capital grants are released over the life of the asset in line with the depreciation policy.

Interest Receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The cost of generating funds comprises those costs associated with attracting grant income. Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities, both costs directly attributable and indirect support costs. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity.

All costs allocated between expenditure categories are on a basis designed to reflect their resource usage. For some costs this means direct allocation to activities, other costs are apportioned, e.g., by staff time spent on the activity, or another equitable usage measure.

Joint delivery costs are recognised in the period which they are awarded to the extent that they have been expended in accordance with the funding terms and conditions.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 25%	on cost
Computer equipment	- 25%	on cost

Tangible fixed assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Indication of impairment is reviewed annually, and an impairment review is undertaken where there is an indication of impairment.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined benefit pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. There is no past service deficit liability at the year end.

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments held within a deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any discounts due.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	200	1,000
Grants	<u>-</u>	<u>645</u>
	<u>200</u>	<u>1,645</u>

Included in Donations above are amounts received towards salary costs for an intern employed through Cardiff University's Internship Scheme; 2023: nil (2022: £1,000), and amounts received from Ramblers Cymru towards an additional Newsdirect Service; 2023: £200 (2022: £nil).

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:	2023	2022
	£	£
Other grants	<u>-</u>	<u>645</u>

During the year there was no Job Retention Scheme government support (2022: £645). There are no unfulfilled conditions attached to these grants received.

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2023	2022
	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	<u>1,498</u>	<u>362</u>

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		2023	2022
	Activity	£	£
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	Charitable activities	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	Charitable activities	53,852	51,608
Grants	Charitable activities	<u>162,000</u>	<u>115,619</u>
		<u>219,353</u>	<u>170,728</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	77,000	30,000
Woodland Trust	-	10,000
Waterloo Foundation	40,000	30,000
WWF Cymru	20,000	11,500
Welsh Government grant, administered by National Lottery Heritage Fund	-	34,119
Postcode Lottery	<u>25,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>162,000</u>	<u>115,619</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs £	Totals £
Charitable activities	<u>146,129</u>	<u>18,784</u>	<u>164,913</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

Trustees' expenses (2023: £210, 2022: £nil) consists of travel and subsistence costs.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	1,645	-	1,645
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	136,609	34,119	170,728
Investment income	<u>362</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>362</u>
Total	<u>138,616</u>	<u>34,119</u>	<u>172,735</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	3,729	-	3,729
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	<u>174,040</u>	<u>69,128</u>	<u>243,168</u>
Total	<u>177,769</u>	<u>69,128</u>	<u>246,897</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(39,153)	(35,009)	(74,162)
Transfers between funds	<u>930</u>	<u>(930)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	(38,223)	(35,939)	(74,162)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	245,409	35,939	281,348
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>207,186</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,186</u>

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

8. BENEFITS IN KIND

The value of services donated by members in the pursuit of co-operative activities during the year and not included in the Statement of Financial Activities is as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Time and Travel contributed to working groups and meetings	232,038	197,775
Time and Travel contributed to the management of the charity	14,200	12,775
	<u>246,238</u>	<u>210,550</u>

The value of members' staff and volunteer time contributed to the network in 2022-2023 has been calculated using National Lottery Heritage Fund volunteer rate guideline figures.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	<u>10,305</u>	<u>2,839</u>	<u>13,144</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	<u>10,305</u>	<u>2,839</u>	<u>13,144</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>3,714</u>	<u>334</u>

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	<u>6,710</u>	<u>4,937</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	207,186	49,260	256,446
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	-	3,753	3,753
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>-</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>4,353</u>	<u>4,353</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>207,186</u>	<u>53,613</u>	<u>260,799</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	206,051	(156,791)	49,260
Restricted funds			
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	5,000	(1,247)	3,753
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>10,000</u>	<u>(9,400)</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>15,000</u>	<u>(10,647)</u>	<u>4,353</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>221,051</u>	<u>(167,438)</u>	<u>53,613</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	244,471	(39,153)	1,868	207,186
Subscription income relating to next year	938	-	(938)	-
	<u>245,409</u>	<u>(39,153)</u>	<u>930</u>	<u>207,186</u>
Restricted funds				
National Lottery Heritage Fund	35,939	(35,009)	(930)	-
	<u>35,939</u>	<u>(35,009)</u>	<u>(930)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>281,348</u>	<u>(74,162)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,186</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement In funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	138,616	(177,769)	(39,153)
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	34,119	(69,128)	(35,009)
	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>172,735</u>	<u>(246,897)</u>	<u>(74,162)</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	244,471	10,107	1,868	256,446
Subscription income relating to next year	938	-	(938)	-
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	245,409	10,107	930	256,446
Restricted funds				
National Lottery Heritage Fund	35,939	(35,009)	(930)	-
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	-	3,753	-	3,753
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	-	600	-	600
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	<u>35,939</u>	<u>(30,656)</u>	<u>(930)</u>	<u>4,353</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>281,348</u>	<u>(20,549)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>260,799</u>

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	344,667	(334,560)	10,107
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	34,119	(69,128)	(35,009)
WWF Cymru Pathways to 2030	5,000	(1,247)	3,753
WWF Cymru Agriculture Bill Campaign	<u>10,000</u>	<u>(9,400)</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>49,119</u>	<u>(79,775)</u>	<u>(30,656)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>393,786</u>	<u>(414,335)</u>	<u>(20,549)</u>

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023 other than those disclosed in note 5, 6 and 8 of the financial statements.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	200	1,000
Grants	<u>-</u>	<u>645</u>
	200	1,645
Investment income		
Bank Interest Receivable	1,498	362
Charitable activities		
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	53,852	51,608
Grants	<u>162,000</u>	<u>115,619</u>
	<u>219,353</u>	<u>170,728</u>
Total incoming resources	221,051	172,735
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Wages	2,231	3,294
Social security	<u>294</u>	<u>435</u>
	2,525	3,729
Charitable activities		
Wages	102,161	128,346
Social security	15,019	13,414
Pensions	9,302	11,452
Working Groups	15,680	10,014
Management Committee Expenses	210	-
Staff travel and subsistence	41	-

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023

IT Costs	3,684	3,529
External Liaison	32	32
NLHF Project	<u>-</u>	<u>58,061</u>
	146,129	224,848
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	10,941	10,941
Office Costs	63	658
Rent	3,137	2,907
Staff training and recruitment	<u>458</u>	<u>110</u>
	14,599	14,616
Governance costs		
Insurance	459	291
Accountancy	<u>3,726</u>	<u>3,413</u>
	<u>4,185</u>	<u>3,704</u>
Total resources expended	167,438	246,897
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>53,613</u>	<u>(74,162)</u>

Accounts



**Trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2022**

Registered Charity Number: 1022675

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

**Contents of the financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2022**

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Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Legal and Administrative information

Charity number 1022675

Charity Offices Tramshed Tech
Pendyris Street
Cardiff
CF22 6BH

Trustees

Roger Thomas	Chair
Jen Anderson	Treasurer
Beverley Penney	Open Spaces Society (Hon. Secretary)
Rachel Sharp	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Natalie Buttriss	Woodland Trust (Co-opted 30.04.21)
Ffion Mitchell	Marine Conservation Society (from 16.11.21)

President Post vacant

Co-Directors Susan Evans
Karen Whitfield

Independent Examiner Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Langdon House
Langdon Road
Swansea Waterfront
SA1 8QY

Bankers Co-operative Bank
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Chair's Foreword

At a global level it is alarming that, yet again, no significant progress has been made internationally in addressing the twin existential threats of biodiversity loss and climate change. Although the world's leaders came together during November in Glasgow at COP26, the hoped-for breakthrough in emissions reductions at an appropriate scale eluded them. The much-delayed COP15 on biodiversity was split into two events, the first of which was held in October and led to the Kunming Declaration. This commits nations to putting biodiversity on the pathway to recovery by 2030. Neither of these COP outcomes catalyses action at the levels required.

Closer to home, the Senedd's declaration of a nature emergency and support for statutory nature targets was welcome. Our government's commitment to the 30x30 target – at least 30% of land and sea protected by 2030 – was a further important step. Now we need to see these policy decisions rapidly translated into action.

The Covid pandemic continued to affect the way WEL worked, with virtual meetings and home-based staff becoming by now very much the norm. The widespread use of digital communications, however, has enabled more members to engage and facilitated greater discussions with government and civil servants. Staff welfare, of even greater concern when access to the office is denied, has been closely monitored.

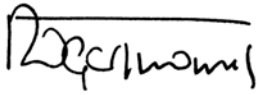
The Senedd election, held in May 2021, gave 16 and 17-year olds their first opportunity to vote. 19 new members were elected and it is pleasing to note how many are now taking on roles as species champions.

The achievements of WEL during the year are detailed in the following pages. These are a testament to our committed, knowledgeable and energetic staff, together with the members on whom we rely for their expertise. The very fact that the level of volunteer time inputted rose significantly compared with the prior year underlines how important the network views our collective contribution to environmental management in Wales.

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Funding, though, remains a challenge. The absence of any core support from Welsh Government, together with the low contribution to overheads that is a feature of most project funding, create a challenge to the network that detracts from our principle purpose.

Our staff and members nevertheless remain resolute in their vital mission - to get the central place of nature in our life support system fully acknowledged and protected.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Thomas', written over a horizontal line.

Roger Thomas
Chair

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and Wales Environment Link's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Organisational Information

Charity name

Wales Environment Link is also known as WEL. Its Twitter handles are @WalesLink and @WalesLinkMarine.

Trustees

The Trustees, who are also members of the Management Committee, have served throughout the year, unless otherwise stated.

Constitution of the Charity, Trustee selection and governance

Wales Environment Link's constitution was adopted on 1st November 1990 and amended on 8th May 1991, 5th May 1993, 18th June 1997, 10th September 1997, 3rd July 2002, 7th July 2004, 21st November 2012, 10th July 2013, 16th May 2017 and 4th July 2018.

Appointment to the Management Committee is governed by the Trust Deed of the charity, and appointments made either at the Annual General Meeting or, in the case of a vacancy, by agreement of a majority of the member organisations at a Council Meeting.

Council meets twice a year, principally to consider policy matters of relevance to the members. Decisions are made on the basis of consensus; however where a formal vote is required decisions are taken by a majority vote of the Full members of the Council.

The Management Committee manages the affairs of the charity and makes such decisions as may be required to ensure the continuing operation of the charity and to address any substantial matters arising in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Management Committee delegates the day-to-day responsibility for the organisation and line management of staff to the two Co-Directors of Wales Environment Link.

Related bodies

There are four Link networks in the UK:

- Wales Environment Link (WEL)
- Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL, in England)
- Scottish Environment LINK (SEL)
- Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

Each Link is a coalition organisation, set up to complement and add value to the actions of individual members. The Links work together on UK or European-level policy, forming 'Environment Links UK' (ELUK) statements and documents. We also work with Greener UK, a coalition working to campaign for strong environmental protection post-Brexit.

Charitable objects

WEL is established, for the benefit of the public, to promote and enhance the conservation, protection, sustainable management, and quiet and responsible enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Wales.

Vision

A thriving Welsh environment for future generations¹

¹ For the purposes of interpretation, “environment” means terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments. It includes urban and rural environments and areas of importance for natural heritage, landscape and public access.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Mission Statement

Our mission is for the WEL network to be the primary NGO sector influencer of environmental policy, legislation and practice in Wales, respected for our members' expertise and advice and at the centre of government decision making.

Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

Provide a cohesive voice for our members by enabling them to work effectively with governments and statutory sectors as a respected and influential independent advisory network.

KPIs:

1. WEL is the first point of contact for Government and statutory bodies when looking for representation from the environmental NGO sector.
2. WEL recommendations are taken up in Committee reports, and Government policy and legislation.
3. WEL provides timely, well-informed positions and recommendations that influence policy and legislative change.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

Support and nurture the environmental NGO sector by facilitating the development of partnerships, knowledge and expertise, increasing the sustainability of the sector, building mutual trust and enhancing capacity within the membership.

KPIs:

1. WEL members are provided with effective training on relevant topics to assist them with their collaborative work and influencing. Courses are sought after and members find them useful.
2. WEL is a valued partner to the other UK Links (collectively known as Environment Links UK / ELUK) and a key participant in other environmental and relevant third sector coalitions, such as Greener UK, Stop Climate Chaos Cymru, the SD Alliance and the Third Sector Partnership Council.
3. WEL has the capacity and tools to support at least one joint campaign per year on our members' collective key priorities, in a way that adds value to our members' individual campaigning and strengthens the ability to be heard.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Objective 3: Supporting our members

Develop WEL's role as a key support mechanism for its members, clearly demonstrating the achievements and importance of the network to members, funders and partners

KPIs:

1. WEL is recognised as a champion for its members
2. WEL continues to attract new members, and funding from both the Welsh Government, and trusts and foundations.
3. WEL members value the network's role in keeping them informed about policy and legislative developments, opportunities for partnership working, support mechanisms and funding opportunities.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

Develop WEL's public profile in order to better promote its members' agreed collective priorities, messages and recommendations.

KPIs:

1. WEL's social media platforms continue to increase their followers and are valued by our members for promoting their work and raising awareness of environmental issues.
2. WEL's website is a useful resource for those looking for information about WEL, its members, and network positions on policy issues.
3. Politicians, government officials and staff from statutory bodies know the WEL network, who its members are, what it represents and what it can offer.

Objective 5: A viable network

Maintain a sustainable, efficient and effective network which is financially stable and overseen by sound governance procedures.

KPIs:

1. WEL members value the network as an important source of timely information, and are able to engage in joint work with the network in a variety of ways (e.g. through email, Basecamp, social media, video/tele-conferencing and face to face meetings and events).
2. WEL continues to operate with a healthy funding reserve, diverse income streams and has confidence in its financial practices, organisational policies and

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

risk management.

3. WEL has a high staff retention rate with staff members feeling valued and happy with their working conditions.
4. WEL attracts and retains skilled Trustees, who feel valued by the network.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees of Wales Environment Link continue to pay due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in relation to our activities, thus complying with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

All of the aims of the charity were devised to contribute to the overall purpose of safeguarding and improving the environment, countryside, heritage, habitats, wildlife and biodiversity of Wales. The act of safeguarding and improving these precious resources is intrinsically for the good of the people of Wales, visitors to Wales and also to global citizens. The Welsh environment and the natural and cultural resources it provides plays a significant part in supporting peoples' health and well-being in a multitude of ways, from contributing to good mental and physical health, to reducing the impacts of climate change and helping people to adapt to its effects.

WEL provides a coordinating service for the environmental and heritage voluntary sector in Wales thus increasing efficiency so that scarce resources in the sector can be used to greatest effect. The WEL website provides information about WEL's members and its work, including links to all member organisations' websites with their wide range of information available for the public relating to wildlife and countryside issues, including: recreation, health, sustainable development, education and biodiversity. WEL also promotes the work of its members using Twitter. WEL staff provide support to all member organisations and thus their members, helping to ensure their own objectives are also met, with wide-reaching public benefit.

Review of developments, activities and achievements over the past year

WEL staff supported 8 working groups this year. The groups were, Advocacy, Biodiversity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Governance, Green Recovery, Land Use, Marine and Species Champions. Most of our groups have been very active and their key activities for the year are reported under the KPIs below. During the year,

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

the Governance Working Group merged with the Biodiversity Working Group so that governance issues could be brought together with the work on statutory nature targets, and to assist members with capacity to attend meetings.

In January 2022 we held the first meeting of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group. This group is a key development in WEL's work, following the outputs of our project on "Building capacity, collaboration and diversity in the environmental NGO sector". This project has been important in supporting WEL's progress to become a fairer, more diverse and inclusive organisation.

All WEL and Environment Links UK consultation responses, position statements and briefings are available on the WEL website: www.waleslink.org.

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

WEL remains the first point of contact for environmental NGOs when Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), or other public or private bodies seek representation from a wide range of environmental NGOs in policy discussions and decision-making processes. In 2021 - 2022, WEL members represented the network on 25 stakeholder groups that were convened by the Welsh Government, NRW, third sector or private sector bodies. A full list of all stakeholder groups is included in Annex 1.

Senedd Committees also regularly contact WEL to provide relevant expert representation to give written and oral evidence on a range of environmental subjects. This year, WEL has provided written and oral evidence to inquiries on agricultural pollution regulations, the draft budget, and priorities for the new Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure (CCEI) Committee.

We continue to provide secretariat for the Senedd's Cross Party Group on Biodiversity, giving a united front for the eNGO sector and making vital links with Senedd work on biodiversity. We will continue with 3 meetings a year, for which the WEL members help decide themes, based on Senedd topical issues, upcoming legislation (i.e. Agriculture Bill) and Welsh Government developments. We also increasingly involve non-WEL members for events, particularly the Nature Friendly Farming Network, to increase our reach and collaboration.

Land Use Working Group

WEL's Land Use Working Group began preparations for work on the Agriculture

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

(Wales) Bill this year. WEL representatives gave oral evidence to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs (ETRA) Committee on the Agriculture Bill on 25th November.

As part of our preparation for the Bill we have developed plans for briefings on key areas to support political advocacy and agreement on red lines for the Bill. The first to be completed was a briefing on [food security](#) as part of our advocacy on the Sustainable Farming Scheme, to counter narratives from the farming unions that are using the Ukraine war as justification for abandoning the sustainable farming model. All Members of the Senedd (MSs) received our food security briefing ahead of a Plenary debate on 23rd March on food security and it was used in the debate by Labour MSs. WEL also met with Welsh Government officials to discover more about their plans for National Minimum Standards for farming. This scoping meeting was to help us plan to influence the development of National Minimum Standards during the next financial year and officials asked us to brief them further on this following the meeting.

On 25th November, WEL members gave [evidence to the ETRA Committee](#) on their review of the Control of Agricultural Pollution regulations. Due to a Judicial Review of the regulations, brought by the NFU (which ruled in the Government's favour), Committee scrutiny of the regulations was delayed and, by March 2022, the Committee's report was not yet published.

Governance and Biodiversity Working Groups

WEL's Governance Group was merged with the Biodiversity Working Group during 2021-22 to make the most of member capacity. Before the groups merged, the Governance Working Group built awareness and support for the introduction of environmental governance legislation with opposition parties, which has enabled them to challenge the Welsh Government on its lack of progress. WEL's Governance Group contributed to the call for [priorities for the new Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure \(CCEI\) Committee](#), and recommended that they continue to prioritise the demand for strong environmental governance arrangements to be implemented as soon as possible.

WEL's Policy Officer wrote a [blog](#) for the WEL website in early 2022 to raise awareness of the ongoing governance gap, which has left Wales as the only UK country without an independent environmental governance watchdog. The blog informed lines of questioning to the Minister in Plenary on the 26th January. Also, in January, WEL members met with the Minister for Climate Change and yet again raised the slow progress on environmental governance legislation with her.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

The Biodiversity Working Group continues to build the case for environmental governance legislation that will also introduce a duty to set statutory targets for nature's recovery. The group has focused much of its energy in 2021-22 on achieving cross-party support for statutory targets for nature, including an event in June 2021 which briefed MSs ahead of COP 15. The successful campaigning by these groups is described in the next section.

Marine Working Group

WEL's Marine Working Group has continued to provide valued input to the Welsh Government's Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group and Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group. The group has also worked with Environment Links UK (ELUK) colleagues and the Future Fisheries Alliance on influencing the development of a sustainable UK Joint Fisheries Statement, a piece of work that has been repeatedly delayed by government officials due to Covid-19. Our group fed into the [Future Fisheries Alliance](#) consultation response on the Joint Fisheries Statement. On 3rd February WEL members responded to the Economy, Trade & Rural Affairs Committee inquiry on the Joint Fisheries Statement with oral evidence to Senedd Members. The summary of consultation responses on the Joint Fisheries Statement is imminent and the Statement is expected in November.

This year the group's main focus has been general advocacy for ocean recovery – including a joint event between WEL and the Marine Conservation Society, [live streamed to YouTube](#) – preparation for the designation of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and the level of protection we would like to see across Wales' waters. In October, the group wrote to the Ministers for Rural Affairs and Climate Change to raise concerns about the impact of bottom trawling within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). They highlighted the fact that Wales is behind the other UK countries in bringing in management measures for fishing gear within MPAs and called on the Welsh Government to make progress on this issue. The group also called on the Welsh Government to achieve Good Environmental Status of benthic habitats by 2024, to prioritise ecosystem resilience and to finish the ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas.

The group's MPA/MCZ work ties in with the work of our Biodiversity Working Group on statutory nature targets for Wales and the commitment by the UK and Welsh Government to manage 30% of land and sea in the UK for nature by 2030. Both the Marine and Biodiversity Working Groups have worked to raise awareness of the need for land and marine areas to be well-managed for nature, and the need to introduce statutory nature targets in Welsh domestic legislation.

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Species Champions Project

Following the May 2021 election, the Species Champions project was re-launched, and we were very pleased to see that most of our original Champions wished to continue championing their species, or to champion a different species. New members of the Senedd have been equally enthusiastic and at March 2022 we had over 30 MSs signed up to be Species Champions, with others indicating interest in becoming a Species Champion.

Our Species Champions continue to do a great job of raising the profile of biodiversity in the Senedd, providing support for nature targets and raising issues of particular concern for biodiversity loss. Site visits are a particularly helpful way for our champions to build relationships with our members and gain a greater understanding of a range of issues impacting biodiversity and the sorts of solutions that are required to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

The pandemic has reduced our member's capacity to support the Species Champions project. To assist our members with the project, our staff have provided some additional capacity on building relationships with champions to ensure more join up and coordination across the MSs and eNGOs. The MSs remain enthusiastic about the project and we have more demand than species we can provide support for immediately, but over the course of the next Senedd term, which ends in 2026, we aim to recruit all 60 MSs as Champions if capacity allows.

During summer 2021, a Species Champion intern from Cardiff University helped us increase our social media engagement and draft a briefing on old coal collieries and how they can be prioritised for nature, with some insects benefitting particularly from the sites.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

During 2021-22 WEL's main campaign focused on statutory targets for nature. Since the beginning of June 2021, much progress was made in building support for the idea of statutory nature targets for Wales. Our Nature Targets Advocacy Officer worked closely with colleagues in Northern Ireland Environment Link, Scottish Environment Link and Wildlife and Countryside Link to further the case for statutory nature targets across the UK and secure specific commitments in Wales.

On 15th June WEL organised an online event for Senedd members "[Why Wales needs nature targets](#)". The event was well attended by MSs, who listened to powerful presentations making the case for statutory nature targets to be adopted

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in Wales. These included a contribution from Sorcha Lewis from the Nature Friendly Farming Network and from Poppy Stowell-Evans, one of Wales Youth Climate Ambassadors. The event was hosted by Huw Irranca-Davies MS and at the same time WEL published the Housden Report “[Putting Wales on a Pathway to Nature Recovery](#)”, making a detailed case for nature targets in Wales.

On the same day as our event, a cross party Statement of Opinion was submitted in the Senedd, calling for nature targets. This was supported by 27 Members of the Senedd. The event was accompanied by a great deal of supportive discussion on Twitter, including the hashtag #SeneddNatur.

Just two weeks later, and following much positive advocacy by WEL, Plaid Cymru MS Delyth Jewell made use of an opposition debate to propose a [motion declaring a nature emergency](#). The motion noted the COP15 Conference, recognised the environmental governance gap created by leaving the EU and called on the Welsh Government to introduce a legally binding requirement to reverse biodiversity loss through nature targets. WEL produced and distributed a [briefing note on this](#) to MSs before the debate. The motion was approved with overwhelming support from MSs and also from the Climate Change Minister, Julie James. The debate was hugely positive, with almost all speakers from all parties supporting the proposition. WEL [live tweeted](#) some of these contributions during the debate on 30 June.

WEL continued working with Nature Targets Advocacy Officers across the UK, producing a report “[Achieving harmony with nature: how to ensure the UN Convention on Biological Diversity helps restore Nature across the 4 countries of the UK](#)” which we launched in the New Year.

In September, WEL’s Biodiversity Working Group had a useful meeting with Welsh Government Civil Servants on the subject of nature targets, which led to a further meeting with scientific experts on 14th December. On 12th October, Climate Change Minister Julie James announced to the Senedd that the Welsh Government would commit to supporting the 30x30 target to protect at least 30 per cent of land and sea by 2030. WEL [welcomed this as it happened on Twitter](#), also highlighting many of the supportive comments from other MSs, particularly Janet Finch Saunders (Conservative) and Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru).

WEL continues to be a valued ELUK partner with regular contact between the ELUK Directors, sharing information and expertise on Link governance and ideas for joint working and funding. WEL continues to work with ELUK on joint reports on wildlife crime and access to justice in the UK. ELUK ran a series of webinars in September

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2021, covering green economy, marine, nature targets and equality, diversity and inclusion. WEL led the equality, diversity and inclusion webinar which featured work from Link members around the UK, and also a presentation from UK Youth for Nature, to showcase good practice projects that have reached more diverse communities and removed barriers to accessing nature.

WEL remains in contact with Stop Climate Chaos and is also part of the Climate.Cymru coalition. WEL maintains links with Greener UK by participating in the work of the Devolution Group.

In February 2021, WEL was successful in bidding for a Welsh Government grant of £100,000, administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, for the network's new project, "Building capacity, collaboration and diversity in the environmental NGO sector". The project focused on identifying and removing barriers to engaging and recruiting a more diverse range of communities in environmental careers and campaigning. It also focused on improving organisational resilience, supporting collaborative working across different organisations, and the retention of specialist skills, such as entomology and botany, within Wales. The majority of the project was delivered between April and August 2021.

The project provided some useful [outputs](#), including an Innovative Funding Report looking at alternative sources of funding for the sector and a report on the barriers and solutions to greater collaborative working. We also facilitated members to work on some collaborative project ideas, which we look forward to progressing in future if we can attract further resources.

The project allowed WEL to progress in a key area of importance to us as an organisation, the creation of a Diversity Action Plan for WEL, which we will continue to develop and implement over the coming years. The project also delivered some useful elements of training to the network on equality, diversity and inclusion and on organisational governance themes aimed at increasing collaborative capacity.

Objective 3: Supporting our members

WEL has supported its members in raising ongoing issues with the design of funding from Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) during this period, as well as raising the lack of funding opportunities in Wales compared with other parts of the UK. WEL's Co-Director, Karen Whitfield, was invited onto the NRW Grants Advisory Board to feed back stakeholder experiences of NRW grants processes. Working with members to feed in issues has resulted in recognition of the need for

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recruitment and training of NRW grant staff, and improvements to the process are ongoing. However, there is still much work to do to improve funding design so that funding streams are fit for purpose to tackle the nature and climate emergencies.

A further development during this period was the development of a stakeholder group, which WEL's Co-Director and several WEL members are part of, and which includes NRW staff (Chair and secretariat), Welsh Government officials and funders. This Enabling the Environment Sector Group has potential to provide useful input into the design of future funding for the sector.

WEL members regularly tell us how much they appreciate the weekly Newsdirect monitoring service, which provides a wealth of information on Government and Senedd developments, and upcoming Government consultations and Senedd inquiries. WEL's egroups continue to be very active and members are also increasingly using Basecamp to share information directly with other members. We also provide regular advice on member events and advocacy with Welsh Government and the Senedd, particularly assisting members that do not have much Wales-specific capacity (i.e. UK-based staffers).

This year, we were joined by the Centre for Alternative Technology – an exciting new member of the network. We were also approached by Canoe Wales, who are planning to apply in the next financial year, and WEL continues to attract interest from potential new members.

During the financial year April 2021 to March 2022, two of WEL's three-year grants came to an end. We were fortunate to achieve a further four-year commitment from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation but unsuccessful in re-applying for a three-year grant from John Ellerman Foundation. The Waterloo Foundation continued to support WEL's post-Brexit work with an annual grant and we were also grateful to receive funding from WWF Cymru to extend our Nature Targets Advocacy Officer post for a further six months, in addition to our usual core WWF grant, and funding from WCVA for our participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council. We also received the final instalment of our grant from the Woodland Trust for our work on environmental governance.

Funding, however, is getting more difficult to find across the sector and WEL is ineligible for many of the funding pots that are available in Wales. It is essential that WEL grows and diversifies its funding if we are to be able to continue to support our members in the way that we have over the last few years.

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Objective 4: A strong public profile

WEL continues to use its website to promote blog articles from within and outside the WEL network, highlighting key areas of topical interest to our members and promoting their priorities. We also continue to act as the link with Natur Cymru magazine, sourcing members to provide regular short policy articles covering the terrestrial and marine environments, and which give a further platform for issues of concern to members. We're very pleased to contribute to this publication.

Our Twitter presence continues to slowly grow, with WEL now having over 2,000 followers. We steadily increase our following every time we run an event and it's been incredibly useful over the pandemic to ensure we can still promote our online events. We have 38 subscribers even though we only have 5 uploaded videos. The public can then engage over YouTube chat and Twitter, and it's been helpful to have more public awareness of our work than before.

Over the April 2021 to March 2022 period, we streamed the following events:

- [Senedd event on 'Why Wales Needs Nature Targets'](#): 15 June 2021 – 150 views
- [Senedd event on 'Sensational Seas' with MCS](#): 30 June 2021 – 181 views

WEL has continued to use its coordination services to help Welsh Government officials and NRW improve their access to our members, and to engage with them on specific policy and process issues throughout the year. NRW has continued to engage via WEL to contact members to input into the development of the Section 7 list of at-risk species and habitats and has also continued to use WEL to provide information about upcoming funding opportunities.

WEL's Species Champions project continues to be a positive tool in building WEL's reputation with Members of the Senedd and has been a really positive way of involving politicians in our work on biodiversity.

WEL is also a regular port of call for Committees wishing to gather evidence on a range of environmental issues and the network is recognised by Committee members. WEL continued to meet with the Minister for Climate Change during this period to discuss statutory targets for nature, environmental governance, marine policy, agricultural planning and net zero. We were pleased that the Minister engaged with us positively and suggested we arrange further in-depth meetings focusing on a single topic each time.

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Objective 5: A viable network

Council meetings were held online due to the on-going Covid pandemic in May and November 2021. In May we had a useful discussion on Diversity in Volunteering with a session led by Catriona Corfield, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion from the Woodland Trust and Lucy Luca from Eyst (Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales). In November we held our AGM and had a very helpful facilitated network discussion with Richard Tynen from The Funding Centre "Building Capacity, Collaboration and Diversity within the eNGO sector". The aim was to gauge members' opinions on how WEL could support them on these issues going forward, particularly in relation to capacity and collaborative projects.

Most members have found online meetings easy to engage with and there have been benefits in relation to inclusion of people living in different parts of Wales without them having to travel or feeling that they are the only person online. Meetings now feel more inclusive and are often better attended than before the pandemic, so we are continuing to offer a largely online meeting service for policy and advocacy meetings. Our Basecamp service is now used much more extensively too, as a way of sharing information and initiating informal discussions directly between members. Our egrouop service has taken on a more formal usage as a result, with discussion increasingly moving to Basecamp.

WEL reserves are still reasonably healthy at present, however our reserves have depleted since the previous financial year and our financial situation is under continued pressure without the support of Government funding. We have lost one WEL Officer at the end of this financial year whom we cannot afford to replace in the foreseeable future. We are working to achieve more diverse income and are due to undertake a review of our subscription fee system next financial year given we have not increased subscription fees significantly for several years. As we said last year, we would welcome an opportunity for Welsh Government to become a WEL funder again in the future, in recognition of the service we provide and to improve our sustainability. Trustees look at projected finances at every meeting in order to identify and manage any risks to the organisation. WEL also has a Risk Register which is considered and updated regularly at Management Committee meetings.

Three of our members of staff have been in post a number of years, demonstrating the network's appeal in providing interesting work and good working conditions. Our flexible working policies, rewarding length of service with additional annual leave days and encouraging input and ideas from all our staff have, we feel, made WEL a desirable place to work. Whilst the isolation of home working during the

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Covid pandemic has not always been easy, staff have continued to stay in regular contact through phone and videoconferencing and have started to make more use of our membership of a co-working space in Cardiff, which provides a pleasant shared modern space for staff. However, we understand the importance of keeping this use of office space and homeworking under review in order to balance the advantages of flexible working with the need to provide support and contact to staff.

Management Committee meetings were held on 30th April, 6th July, 7th October 2021 and on 11th February 2022

Following a Management Committee skills audit in March 2021, in preparation for recruitment this financial year, one of the areas highlighted where further skills would be useful was Fundraising and Communications, crucial for the long-term sustainability of WEL. Trustees were therefore pleased to co-opt Natalie Buttriss at the end of April 2021. Natalie is Director of Coed Cadw/Woodland Trust with a background in Marketing and Fundraising as well as Charity Management. Trustees and staff were also very mindful that we would like to improve diversity amongst our Management Committee and had been actively seeking advice to try and make this happen. We were therefore very pleased to welcome a new, young Trustee to the team in November 2021. Ffion Mitchell is Marine Conservation Society's Volunteer Community Engagement Manager for Wales. We have one more Trustee vacancy going into the next financial year, and we aim to further increase the diversity of our Management Committee through that appointment.

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The members of WEL in the network at the end of March 2022 are as follows:

Full Members (28)

Afonydd Cymru
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Trust
Bat Conservation Trust
British Mountaineering Council
Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation Wales
Campaign for National Parks
Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)
Coed Cadw / Woodland Trust
Council for British Archaeology Wales
Freshwater Habitats Trust
John Muir Trust
Keep Wales Tidy
Llais y Goedwig
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust / Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol
Open Spaces Society
Plantlife
Pori Natur a Threftadaeth (PONT)
RSPB Cymru
The Vincent Wildlife Trust
UK Environmental Law Association
Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)
WildFish (Formerly the Salmon & Trout Association)
Wildlife Trusts Wales
WWF Cymru

Associate Members* (4)

Elan Valley Trust
Oxfam Cymru
Snowdonia Society / Cymdeithas Eryri
YHA

* Please note Associate membership is a historic category and is no longer open to new members

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Staffing

Karen Whitfield and Susan Evans are both part-time Co-Directors of WEL. In her remaining hours, Karen also undertakes the Senior Policy Officer role for WEL.

Liz Smith and Llinos Price continued as our full-time Advocacy & Policy Officer and Policy Officer.

Rory Francis, our part-time Nature Targets Advocacy Officer was with us until the end of the financial year. He had been working closely with equivalent posts in the other Link organisations across the UK during his time in the temporary post.

WEL involvement in the Third Sector Partnership Scheme

23 years ago, the Government of Wales Act placed a statutory duty on the newly devolved government to publish a Scheme setting out how it will promote the interests of the third sector.

The Third Sector Scheme is a statement of the Welsh Government's intent in their relationship with the Third Sector. It identifies three areas of interest – stronger communities, better policy and better public services – as well as formal arrangements for engagement. It was adopted and published in September 2000. The National Assembly has a statutory duty to set out the scheme in order to demonstrate how it would promote the interests of the voluntary sector.

The Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) is chaired by Jane Hutt MS, now Minister for Social Justice, and is made up of representatives of third sector networks working across 25 areas of third sector activity along with the CEO of WCVA. Each of the 25 categories is represented by a third sector network, which is nominated or elected to their role by the organisations within the specific area of interest. Wales Environment Link is nominated to represent the environment sector.

The main purpose of the Third Sector Partnership Council is to make sure that the principles set out in the Third Sector Scheme are put into practice. It also provides an opportunity for the sector to raise issues of interest or concern. It generally does not discuss issues that relate to only one area of interest (these can be taken up through biannual ministerial meetings) and as a national body it is concerned with issues affecting all of Wales.

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As well as being represented on the TSPC, WEL has representatives on the Ministerial meeting groups organised by the WCVA, which run under the auspices of the Scheme. WEL acts as the voice of the environment at all these meetings.

Support in kind for Wales Environment Link

All members of WEL make a significant and direct contribution of time, skills and resources to the activities of the network. Members' time is critical to the functioning of the network. Staff from different organisations working together and sharing information greatly benefits the environment sector as a whole. The Trustees wish to acknowledge this contribution and thank the members for their continued support. Staff and volunteers of member organisations gave 4,211 hours of their time to aid the activities of the network during 2021 – 2022, as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts. The time and benefits in kind provided by members during 2021 – 2022 in furtherance of WEL's work has been valued at £210,550.

Financial review of the year

The statement of financial activities shows that the total funds carried forward from 2021/22 to 2022/23 are £207,186. We used a significant part of our reserves during the year to pay for essential expenditure and much of the amount carried forward is currently restricted, i.e. allocated to pay for committed expenditure in the following year. This puts WEL in a less stable position than during the last few years, through the Covid pandemic, and Trustees are mindful that WEL needs to secure significant new funding agreements in the coming year in order to avoid running our reserves down further. We will need to find new funding sources in order to maintain WEL's security and our capacity.

Funders of Wales Environment Link

The Trustees of WEL would like to thank the following for their support:

We received the final payment for a three-year funding agreement with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. In addition to this unrestricted grant, the foundation provided a grant for our Nature Targets Advocacy Officer which began in the previous financial year and ran until May 2021.

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We received the last instalment of a Welsh Government grant, administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, for a project on building capacity, collaboration and diversity in the eNGO sector.

The Waterloo Foundation kindly donated another grant towards WEL's work on post-Brexit and EU transition policy, which has been extremely welcome and useful.

WCVA continued to provide funding through the Partnership Capacity Building Fund in order to assist WEL's participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council.

Carrying on a long-standing arrangement, the Trustees are grateful to WWF Cymru for grant funding received again this financial year. We were also grateful to receive a further grant from WWF Cymru to allow us to extend our Nature Targets Advocacy Officer post, part-time, for a further six months.

We are also grateful to Woodland Trust for providing the last instalment of a grant towards supporting a WEL Policy Officer to work on environmental governance issues and Land Management Policy and Advocacy.

As always, a vital part of WEL's core funding came from the WEL members themselves, in the form of their subscription fees.

Reserves and risk policy

WEL Trustees reviewed the organisation's reserves policy at autumn 2021 in the context of our current budget projection, the necessary investment of additional staff time in the task of raising funds and the dent to the level of member subscription income, a critical stream, which has been uncertain in recent years due to recession and now the impacts of Covid-19.

The total funds held by WEL at end of financial year March 2021 stood at £281,348.

The figure which Trustees consider to be appropriate and reasonable for the organisation to hold in reserve going into a new 5 year budget planning cycle is between 12 to 18 months' worth of running costs which equates to £200,000 - £300,000. This takes account of the continuing absence of Welsh Government funding for the sector, the paucity of multi-year trust funding specifically targeting Welsh organisations, uncertainty over the level of subscription fees which member organisations will afford particularly post-Covid-19. It draws too on WEL's previous experience of losing multi-year support at short notice and consequently having to

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reduce costs (including staff) by more than 50% with the associated major reduction in operations which support the network of members and their work. It was only through reliance on a good reserve then that closure of WEL was avoided, a risk which Trustees have agreed should not be taken, given WEL's significant contribution in Wales.

Trustees recognise that we may need to invest some of our reserves (£175,206 in 2022-23) towards our goal of sustaining a critical though modest team of 4 Full Time Equivalent staff (5 staff members) plus running costs associated with that slender model for 12 months ahead. In the past year we have made every effort to minimise costs by reducing outlay on office rental commitments. We continue to maintain a 5-year forecast budget and to monitor the 6-month reserve figure (see below) to manage challenges and track WEL's actual funding need.

With the above factors in mind, Trustees aim to retain reserves at a level which ensures a modest degree of sustainability in a challenging and changing financial context.

Guidelines for monitoring critical levels of reserves describe how much capital is required to enable the charity to continue operating under extraordinary circumstances for 6 months, 3 months and 1 month. As employee commitments (including redundancy rights) change, the operating reserves statements are amended.

Going into financial year April 2022 – 2023, the reserve requirements are as follows. To operate for:

- 6 months: WEL would need to have £108,000 held in reserve.
- 3 months: WEL would need to have £73,000 held in reserve.
- 1 month and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £37,000 held in reserve.

These figures are used by the Trustees to assess any potential risk arising to the charity over time. If funds were to fall below the 6 months operations figure, the Trustees would assess whether there would be a need to take additional steps to curtail expenditure and obtain income, or whether it could be reasonably assumed that anticipated income would address any potential short-term cash flow issues. Trustees will review this policy in two years' time unless there are any significant changes in circumstances or expenditure which lead to a review in advance of Autumn 2023.

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

The total funds carried forward at 31 March 2022 are £207,186. As explained above, much of this amount is already allocated towards expenditure in the following year. The Trustees consider this to be a reasonable figure to carry forward in the current circumstances, particularly considering the uncertainty hanging over future grant funding levels and WEL's already very modestly-sized staff team.

Future developments and risk assessment

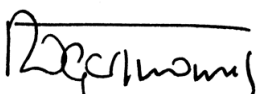
A WEL Risk Register is maintained, monitored and updated regularly during the year.

Funding availability and capacity remains a concern throughout the sector, with sources of core funding becoming even more increasingly rare. Unrestricted funding for the sector is vital, both to allow us to retain members, and for us to maintain long-term capacity and key policy staff at a level appropriate to increasing demand. WEL will continue with plans to increase its membership base and identify new sources of funding.

Trustees are aware of the difficulties some of our members are experiencing whilst continuing to work within the network. In addition to funding concerns, capacity within the sector is being stretched to the maximum while the Covid pandemic has continued to bring challenges, including a further decline in income being experienced by membership organisations across the sector.

Despite the continuing difficulties in current times WEL has survived another challenging year and has achieved a great deal through the strength and mutual support of our established network. Once again, despite the ongoing pandemic this financial year, we are extremely pleased to have retained all of our existing members and to have recruited another new member in the Centre for Alternative Technology. The value placed on our network and the benefit it brings to our members and partners has been clearly evident.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 8th November 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Roger Thomas (Chair)

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

Annex 1

WEL members were represented on the following stakeholder groups as at 31st March 2022:

- Agriculture Bill Regulatory Impact Assessment Stakeholder Group
- Budget Improvement and Impact Advisory Group (BIAG)
- Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Independent Environmental Advisory Panel
- EERA Environmental Governance Legislation Task Group
- Enabling the Environment Sector Group
- Innovative Funding Sub-Group
- National Access Forum for Wales
- Nature Recovery Action Plan Implementation Group
- NRW/WEL Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forum
- Section 6 guidance
- Planning and biodiversity
- Pollinators' Task Force
- Rural Development Plan PMC
- Third Sector Partnership Council
- Wales Fisheries Liaison Group
- Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group
- Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group
- Wales Land Management Forum sub-group on agricultural pollution
- Wales Water Management Forum
- Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme Stakeholder Policy Group
- Well-being of Future Generations Stakeholder Forum
- WCVA Cabinet Secretary meetings:
 - Climate Change
 - Economy
 - Education and the Welsh Language
 - Finance and Local Government

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Independent Examiner's Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2022

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Wales Environment Link / Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

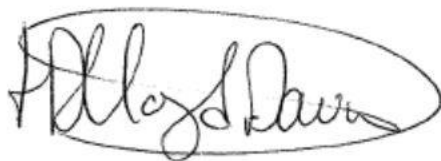
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Ground Floor
Cardigan House
Castle Court
Swansea Enterprise Park
Swansea
SA7 9LA



Date: 8th November 2022

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022 Total funds	2021 Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	1,645	-	1,645	6,832
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities		136,609	34,119	170,728	241,849
Investment income	3	<u>362</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>362</u>	<u>817</u>
Total		<u>138,616</u>	<u>34,119</u>	<u>172,735</u>	<u>249,498</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		3,729	-	3,729	3,566
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities	5	<u>174,040</u>	<u>69,128</u>	<u>243,168</u>	<u>197,748</u>
Total		<u>177,769</u>	<u>69,128</u>	<u>246,897</u>	<u>201,314</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(39,153)	(35,009)	(74,162)	48,184
Transfers between funds	12	<u>930</u>	<u>(930)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		(38,223)	(35,939)	(74,162)	48,184
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		245,409	35,939	281,348	233,164
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>207,186</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,186</u>	<u>281,348</u>

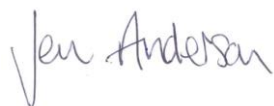
The notes form part of these financial statements

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022 Total funds	2021 Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	10	334	-	334	124
Cash at bank		<u>211,789</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>211,789</u>	<u>284,853</u>
		212,123	-	212,123	284,977
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(4,937)	-	(4,937)	(3,629)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>207,186</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,186</u>	<u>281,348</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		207,186	-	207,186	281,348
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET ASSETS		<u>207,186</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,186</u>	<u>281,348</u>
FUNDS	12				
Unrestricted funds				207,186	245,409
Restricted funds				<u>-</u>	<u>35,939</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>207,186</u>	<u>281,348</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 8th November 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:



J M Anderson (Treasurer) - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgments about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results in the future may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Estimation Uncertainty

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. Management consider there to be no estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Income

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Subscription income is recognised when paid. When a payment is made for an extended period it is credited evenly over the period to the SOFA.

Donations and similar incoming resources represent monies received by the charity from charitable donations and gifts. These are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities upon receipt.

Grant income is accounted for on an accruals basis and is shown in the financial statements when the Charity earns the unconditional right to the funds. Grants received for a specific purpose are treated as restricted funds. Revenue grants are credited directly to the Statement of Financial Activities and Capital grants are released over the life of the asset in line with the depreciation policy.

Interest Receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The cost of generating funds comprises those costs associated with attracting grant income. Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities, both costs directly attributable and indirect support costs. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity.

All costs allocated between expenditure categories are on a basis designed to reflect their resource usage. For some costs this means direct allocation to activities, other costs are apportioned, e.g. by staff time spent on the activity, or another equitable usage measure.

Joint delivery costs are recognised in the period which they are awarded to the extent that they have been expended in accordance with the funding terms and conditions.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 25%	on cost
Computer equipment	- 25%	on cost

Tangible fixed assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Indication of impairment is reviewed annually and an impairment review is undertaken where there is an indication of impairment.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined benefit pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. There is no past service deficit liability at the year end.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments held within a deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any discounts due.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Donations	1,000	5,272
Grants	<u>645</u>	<u>1,560</u>
	<u>1,645</u>	<u>6,832</u>

Included in Donations above are amounts received towards salary costs for an intern employed through Cardiff University's Internship Scheme; 2022: £1,000 (2021: £753).

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other grants	<u>645</u>	<u>1,560</u>

During the year the above Job Retention Scheme government support was received during the ongoing pandemic. There are no unfulfilled conditions attached to these grants received.

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2022	2021
	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	<u>362</u>	<u>817</u>

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2022	2021
Activity	£	£
Partnership Capacity		
Building Fund (PCBF) Charitable activities	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full		
and Associate Charitable activities	51,608	43,348
Grants Charitable activities	<u>115,619</u>	<u>195,000</u>
	170,728	241,849

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
John Ellerman Foundation	-	50,000
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	30,000	45,000
Woodland Trust	10,000	10,000
Waterloo Foundation	30,000	20,000
WWF Cymru	11,500	5,000
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant towards CBD Work	-	15,000
Welsh Government grant, administered by National Lottery Heritage Fund	34,119	50,000
	<u>115,619</u>	<u>195,000</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs £	Totals £
Charitable activities	<u>224,848</u>	<u>18,320</u>	<u>243,168</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	2,332	4,500	6,832
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	191,849	50,000	241,849
Investment income	<u>817</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>817</u>
Total	<u>194,998</u>	<u>54,500</u>	<u>249,498</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	3,566	-	3,566
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	<u>179,187</u>	<u>18,561</u>	<u>197,748</u>
Total	<u>182,753</u>	<u>18,561</u>	<u>201,314</u>
NET INCOME	12,245	35,939	48,184
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	233,164	-	233,164
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>245,409</u>	<u>35,939</u>	<u>281,348</u>

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

8. BENEFITS IN KIND

The value of services donated by members in the pursuit of co-operative activities during the year and not included in the Statement of Financial Activities is as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Time and Travel contributed to working groups and meetings	197,775	131,044
Time and Travel contributed to the management of the charity	12,775	10,350
	<u>210,550</u>	<u>141,394</u>

The value of members' staff and volunteer time contributed to the network in 2021-22 has been calculated using National Lottery Heritage Fund volunteer rate guideline figures.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	<u>10,305</u>	<u>2,839</u>	<u>13,144</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	<u>10,305</u>	<u>2,839</u>	<u>13,144</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Cyswilt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022	2021
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>334</u>	<u>124</u>

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	<u>4,937</u>	<u>3,629</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	244,471	(39,153)	1,868	207,186
Subscription income relating to next year	938	-	(938)	-
	<u>245,409</u>	<u>(39,153)</u>	<u>930</u>	<u>207,186</u>
Restricted funds				
National Lottery Heritage Fund	35,939	(35,009)	(930)	-
	<u>35,939</u>	<u>(35,009)</u>	<u>(930)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>281,348</u>	<u>(74,162)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,186</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	138,616	(177,769)	(39,153)
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	34,119	(69,128)	(35,009)
	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>172,735</u>	<u>(246,897)</u>	<u>(74,162)</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,226	12,245	244,471
Subscription income relating to next year	<u>938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>938</u>
	233,164	12,245	245,409
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	-	35,939	35,939
	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>233,164</u>	<u>48,184</u>	<u>281,348</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	194,979	(182,734)	12,245
Donation via Charities Aid Foundation	<u>19</u>	<u>(19)</u>	<u>-</u>
	194,998	(182,753)	12,245
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	50,000	(14,061)	35,939
Dwr Cymru contribution towards costs for WEL representative on Customer Challenge Group	<u>4,500</u>	<u>(4,500)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>54,500</u>	<u>(18,561)</u>	<u>35,939</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>249,498</u>	<u>(201,314)</u>	<u>48,184</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.20 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.3.22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	232,226	(26,908)	1,868	207,186
Subscription income relating to next year	<u>938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(938)</u>	<u>-</u>
	233,164	(26,908)	930	207,186
Restricted funds				
National Lottery Heritage Fund	<u>-</u>	<u>930</u>	<u>(930)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	233,164	(25,978)	-	207,186

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	333,595	(360,503)	(26,908)
Donation via Charities Aid Foundation	<u>19</u>	<u>(19)</u>	<u>-</u>
	333,614	(360,522)	(26,908)
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	84,119	(83,189)	930
Dwr Cymru contribution towards costs for WEL representative on Customer Challenge Group	<u>4,500</u>	<u>(4,500)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>88,619</u>	<u>(87,689)</u>	<u>930</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>422,233</u></u>	<u><u>(448,211)</u></u>	<u><u>(25,978)</u></u>

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2022 other than those disclosed in note 5, 6 and 8 of the financial statements.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	1,000	5,272
Grants	<u>645</u>	<u>1,560</u>
	1,645	6,832
Investment income		
Bank Interest Receivable	362	817
Charitable activities		
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	51,608	43,348
Grants	<u>115,619</u>	<u>195,000</u>
	<u>170,728</u>	<u>241,849</u>
Total incoming resources	172,735	249,498
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Wages	3,294	3,150
Social security	<u>435</u>	<u>416</u>
	3,729	3,566
Charitable activities		
Wages	128,346	121,864
Social security	13,414	13,122
Pensions	11,452	10,849
Working Groups	10,014	8,390

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2022

IT Costs	3,529	7,276
Translation and Publications	-	1,427
Meetings and AGM	-	150
External Liaison	32	4,500
NLHF Project	58,061	11,280
Computer equipment	<u>-</u>	<u>706</u>
	224,848	179,564
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	10,941	10,941
Office Costs	658	282
Rent	2,907	2,503
Staff training and recruitment	<u>110</u>	<u>696</u>
	14,616	14,422
Governance costs		
Insurance	291	551
Carried forward	291	551
Governance costs		
Brought forward	291	551
Accountancy	<u>3,413</u>	<u>3,211</u>
	<u>3,704</u>	<u>3,762</u>
Total resources expended	246,897	201,314
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(74,162)</u>	<u>48,184</u>

Accounts



**Trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2021**

Registered Charity Number: 1022675

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

**Contents of the financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2021**

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Independent Examiner's Report	24
Statement of Financial Activities	25
Balance Sheet	26
Notes to the Financial Statements	27 to 39
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	40 to 41

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

Legal and Administrative information

Charity number 1022675

Charity Offices Tramshed Tech
Pendyris Street
Cardiff
CF22 6BH

Trustees

Roger Thomas	Chair
Dr Stephen Marsh Smith OBE	Afonydd Cymru (Treasurer, until he sadly passed away in August 2020)
Jen Anderson	Treasurer from 25.09.20
Beverley Penney	Open Spaces Society (Hon. Secretary)
Rachel Sharp	Wildlife Trusts Wales
Colin Cheeseman	Plantlife Cymru

President Post vacant

Joint Directors Susan Evans
Karen Whitfield

Independent Examiner Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Langdon House
Langdon Road
Swansea Waterfront
SA1 8QY

Bankers Co-operative Bank
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

Chair's Foreword

Every aspect of our being has been transformed over the last 12 months by the Covid-19 pandemic, so it is a testament to the focus and tenacity of our staff and members that so much has been achieved in the face of monumental disruption to their working lives.

Through the use of digital media, virtual meetings have been enterprisingly managed for 6 Working Groups and an additional Task and Finish Group - the latter focusing on a green and just recovery from the pandemic - to thrive. The key consequences of Brexit, especially the need to ensure an effective and proportionate basis for environmental governance and the grasping of the opportunity for designing a land management support scheme that delivers for nature thereby securing all the benefits it can provide, have been paramount. But the acute problems of agricultural pollution in our rivers have also been a high priority, as has campaigning for the future protection that statutory nature targets could afford.

WEL's role as the go-to body for environmental advice and representation for Welsh Government and its statutory bodies has continued almost unabated. Our contribution to 27 stakeholder groups - from EU transition through Covid impacts to 5th Senedd Legacy Reports - underlines the importance of our umbrella body to public life in Wales.

Given that we were leading up to an election this year, members also worked together to produce a coherent and succinct manifesto for the environment, with hustings and candidate briefings to ensure that our voice was both clear and heard in the run-up to polling day. We have been encouraged by the continuing calls from young people for action in the face of the nature and climate crises. We hope that their calls will be heeded. They will live tomorrow with the consequences of the policies and actions that we decide today.

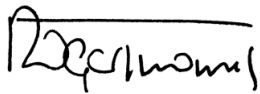
We are pleased to record that our membership grew during the last year, with two new organisations joining WEL. We are also very grateful for the flexibility shown by our non-governmental funders, who have given us considerable leeway in managing projects during these strange times.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

The continued absence of government core funding, through which WEL and its members were previously able to maintain the organisational support services that are crucial to delivery, is an existential challenge to smaller organisations, including WEL itself. Even larger members find that they often have to let experienced staff go at the end of a project, only to then have a major recruitment and training exercise when the next project funding comes in. With core funding it was usually possible to retain staff for the generally-short interim periods between projects, thereby ensuring the retention of skills and experience.

Sadly, during the year we lost two of our stalwarts. Dr Stephen Marsh Smith, at the time our Treasurer, passed away in August and long-time YHA representative Rowland Pittard died earlier in April. We miss them both.

Finally, I once again pay tribute to the commitment of my fellow Trustees, to those who contribute to our Working Groups and especially to our team of staff whose accomplishments transcend their small number.



Roger Thomas
Chair

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and Wales Environment Link's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Organisational Information

Charity name

Wales Environment Link is also known as WEL. Its Twitter handles are @WalesLink and @WalesLinkMarine.

Trustees

The Trustees, who are also members of the Management Committee, have served throughout the year, unless otherwise stated.

Constitution of the Charity, Trustee selection and governance

Wales Environment Link's constitution was adopted on 1st November 1990 and amended on 8th May 1991, 5th May 1993, 18th June 1997, 10th September 1997, 3rd July 2002, 7th July 2004, 21st November 2012, 10th July 2013, 16th May 2017 and 4th July 2018.

Appointment to the Management Committee is governed by the Trust Deed of the charity, and appointments made either at the Annual General Meeting or, in the case of a vacancy, by agreement of a majority of the member organisations at a Council Meeting.

Council meets twice a year, principally to consider policy matters of relevance to the members. Decisions are made on the basis of consensus; however where a formal vote is required decisions are taken by a majority vote of the Full members of the Council.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

The Management Committee manages the affairs of the charity and makes such decisions as may be required to ensure the continuing operation of the charity and to address any substantial matters arising in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity.

Management Committee delegates the day-to-day responsibility for the organisation and line management of staff to the two Joint Directors of Wales Environment Link.

Related bodies

There are four Link networks in the UK:

- Wales Environment Link (WEL)
- Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL, in England)
- Scottish Environment LINK (SEL)
- Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

Each Link is a coalition organisation, set up to complement and add value to the actions of individual members. The Links work together on UK or European-level policy, forming 'Environment Links UK' (ELUK) statements and documents. We also work with Greener UK, a coalition working to campaign for strong environmental protection post-Brexit.

Charitable objects

WEL is established, for the benefit of the public, to promote and enhance the conservation, protection, sustainable management, and quiet and responsible enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Wales.

Vision

A thriving Welsh environment for future generations¹

¹ For the purposes of interpretation, “environment” means terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments. It includes urban and rural environments and areas of importance for natural heritage, landscape and public access.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

Mission Statement

Our mission is for the WEL network to be the primary NGO sector influencer of environmental policy, legislation and practice in Wales, respected for our members' expertise and advice and at the centre of government decision making.

Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

Provide a cohesive voice for our members by enabling them to work effectively with governments and statutory sectors as a respected and influential independent advisory network.

KPIs:

1. WEL is the first point of contact for Government and statutory bodies when looking for representation from the environmental NGO sector.
2. WEL recommendations are taken up in Committee reports, and Government policy and legislation.
3. WEL provides timely, well-informed positions and recommendations that influence policy and legislative change.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

Support and nurture the environmental NGO sector by facilitating the development of partnerships, knowledge and expertise, increasing the sustainability of the sector, building mutual trust and enhancing capacity within the membership.

KPIs:

1. WEL members are provided with effective training on relevant topics to assist them with their collaborative work and influencing. Courses are sought after and members find them useful.
2. WEL is a valued partner to the other UK Links (collectively known as Environment Links UK / ELUK) and a key participant in other environmental and relevant third sector coalitions, such as Greener UK, Stop Climate Chaos Cymru, the SD Alliance and the Third Sector Partnership Council.
3. WEL has the capacity and tools to support at least one joint campaign per year on our members' collective key priorities, in a way that adds value to our members' individual campaigning and strengthens the ability to be heard.

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Objective 3: Supporting our members

Develop WEL's role as a key support mechanism for its members, clearly demonstrating the achievements and importance of the network to members, funders and partners

KPIs:

1. WEL is recognised as a champion for its members
2. WEL continues to attract new members, and funding from both the Welsh Government, and trusts and foundations.
3. WEL members value the network's role in keeping them informed about policy and legislative developments, opportunities for partnership working, support mechanisms and funding opportunities.

Objective 4: A strong public profile

Develop WEL's public profile in order to better promote its members' agreed collective priorities, messages and recommendations.

KPIs:

1. WEL's social media platforms continue to increase their followers and are valued by our members for promoting their work and raising awareness of environmental issues.
2. WEL's website is a useful resource for those looking for information about WEL, its members, and network positions on policy issues.
3. Politicians, government officials and staff from statutory bodies know the WEL network, who its members are, what it represents and what it can offer.

Objective 5: A viable network

Maintain a sustainable, efficient and effective network which is financially stable and overseen by sound governance procedures.

KPIs:

1. WEL members value the network as an important source of timely information, and are able to engage in joint work with the network in a variety of ways (e.g. through email, Basecamp, social media, video/tele-conferencing and face to face meetings and events).
2. WEL continues to operate with a healthy funding reserve, diverse income streams,

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and has confidence in its financial practices, organisational policies and risk management.

3. WEL has a high staff retention rate with staff members feeling valued and happy with their working conditions.

4. WEL attracts and retains skilled Trustees, who feel valued by the network.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees of Wales Environment Link continue to pay due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in relation to our activities, thus complying with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

All of the aims of the charity were devised to contribute to the overall purpose of safeguarding and improving the environment, countryside, heritage, habitats, wildlife and biodiversity of Wales. The act of safeguarding and improving these precious resources is intrinsically for the good of the people of Wales, visitors to Wales and also to global citizens. The Welsh environment and the natural and cultural resources it provides plays a significant part in peoples' health and well-being in a multitude of ways, from contributing to good mental and physical health, to reducing climate change and helping to adapt to its effects.

WEL provides a coordinating service for the environmental and heritage voluntary sector in Wales thus increasing efficiency and meaning that scarce resources in the sector can be used to greatest effect. The WEL website provides information about WEL's members and its work, including links to all member organisations' websites with their wide range of information available for the public relating to wildlife and countryside issues, including: recreation, health, sustainable development, education and biodiversity. WEL also promotes the work of its members using Twitter. WEL staff provide support to all member organisations and thus their members, helping to ensure their own objectives are also met, with wide public benefit.

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Review of developments, activities and achievements over the past year

WEL staff supported 6 working groups and 1 task and finish group this year. The groups were, Advocacy, Biodiversity, Governance, Green Recovery, Land Use, Marine and Species Champions. All of our groups have been very active and their key activities for the year are reported under the KPIs below. All WEL and Environment Links UK consultation responses, position statements and briefings are available on the WEL website.

Objective 1: A cohesive voice for the environment

WEL remains the first point of contact for environmental NGOs when Welsh Government or Natural Resources Wales wants to ensure representation from a wide range of environmental NGOs in policy discussions. In 2020 - 2021, WEL members represented the network on 27 stakeholder groups that were convened by the Welsh Government, NRW, third sector or private sector bodies. A full list of all stakeholder groups is included in Annex 1.

Senedd Committees also regularly contact WEL to provide relevant expert representation to give written and oral evidence on a range of environmental subjects. In 2020 - 21, an election year in the midst of a global pandemic, there weren't as many inquiries to respond to as in previous years. However, WEL still provided written and oral evidence to a number of important inquiries on environmental governance, the draft budget, the impacts of Covid-19 on WEL members and the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee's Legacy Report for the Fifth Senedd.

The Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee did not produce many reports in 2020-21, and focused mainly on mini-inquiries. WEL contributions and recommendations were reflected in the Legacy Report, which supported WEL views on future Committee priorities such as environmental governance arrangements, the introduction of statutory nature targets, Extended Producer Responsibility and Deposit Return Schemes, and green recovery progress.

WEL's Land Use Working Group has developed its position on a Sustainable Farming Scheme, developing recommendations that could be included as National Minimum Standards as part of a strong regulatory baseline for the future Agriculture (Wales) Bill. In March, WEL responded to the Agriculture (Wales) White Paper, laying out our position on National Minimum Standards, the Sustainable Farming Scheme, necessary

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monitoring and enforcement, advice and support. The general direction of Welsh Government on this policy, as of March 2021, is in line with what WEL members are asking for. The group has also been invited to send a WEL Rep to a new stakeholder group focusing on Scheme design.

The work of our Green Recovery Task & Finish Group prompted a number of engagements with external partners and Welsh Government officials in the arena of green jobs, skills and innovative funding. The group produced position statements on principles for a green and just recovery from Covid-19, green jobs, and a paper on innovative funding. Welsh Government officials have since set up an innovative funding stakeholder group including a number of WEL members, which has explored different topics such as carbon and nutrient trading and potential for new taxes to generate funding for the environment. WEL members have also contributed to co-design work on the development of a National Nature Service for Wales, a concept that we hope is taken forward and supported by the Welsh Government in future years

WEL's Marine Working Group has contributed to Welsh Government work on Strategic Resource Areas and is developing a new position on renewables, particularly in response to SRA policies seeking to maximise them in marine areas. Members have also been working with NRW on improving the Marine Area Statement. The group provided devolved input into a joint ELUK response on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Part 2 (Monitoring) DEFRA consultation, in November.

The Marine Working Group has been working with ELUK colleagues on an 'Ocean Recovery' agenda, after failing to achieve 'Good Environmental Status' of our seas by 2020. ELUK agreed the WCL Ocean Recovery manifesto would lead with work on DEFRA and our group has been working on interpreting devolved implications of UK-wide policy, especially for shared waters. Group reps continue to provide valued input to the Welsh Government's Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group, Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group and Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group.

WEL members continued to participate in the Welsh Government's Roundtable, which looks at all aspects of EU transition, until just before the Welsh election. The Governance Working Group also supports members on the Welsh Government's Task Group, established in July 2019 to consider and develop proposals for environmental governance arrangements and principles and report to the Minister. This group continues to operate and may in future be a vehicle for designing an environmental governance and statutory nature targets Bill.

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In January 2021 WEL asked the Environment Minister if the Welsh Government would be willing to move straight to a draft Bill stage instead of a White Paper after the election, and this idea was received positively. WEL submitted written evidence and gave oral evidence to the CCERA Committee on environmental governance to inform its Fifth Senedd Legacy Report, highlighting the ongoing gaps, a comparison with progress across the UK and making recommendations for the next Welsh Government and Welsh Parliament.

Objective 2: Building trust, expertise and capacity

WEL has focused on two main joint campaigns this year, both of which are still ongoing. The first was on tackling agricultural pollution, where WEL joined its voice to that of members, like Afonydd Cymru and CPRW, who had been campaigning on this issue for a few years. Land Use Working Group members increased pressure on Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to tackle agricultural pollution through a series of briefings and awareness raising with Ministers. The increase in intensive farming across Wales led WEL to call for a moratorium on intensive poultry units in Powys until a full review has been conducted and evidence produced that environmental protection controls are in place and fully effective. WEL achieved coverage from the Guardian and ENDS Report and the call for a moratorium also gained a large amount of public support on Twitter.

WEL discussed this issue with Planning and Environment Ministers in January 2021. Our work helped to increase pressure on Natural Resources Wales to improve monitoring, prompting a full review of SAC rivers in Wales which recognised the significant levels of phosphate pollution caused by agricultural and water company pollution. The group also briefed Members of the Senedd in encouraging their support in passing the Control of Agricultural Pollution (Wales) Regulations in early March 2021, which was covered by the BBC.

WEL's second campaign was aimed at increasing political support ahead of COP 15 for the introduction of statutory nature targets in Wales. WEL recruited a new Nature Targets Advocacy Officer, Rory Francis, to coordinate Wales' contribution to this UK-wide campaign, which we worked on in conjunction with the other three UK Environment Links. The group has produced a series of papers, briefings and blogs in support of this campaign, which can be found on the WEL website. Key papers include an Environment Links UK (ELUK) briefing on A Global Goal for Nature and People, and position statement on the UK's 30 by 30 commitment and Restoring Nature in Wales.

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WEL's Advocacy Working Group produced WEL's Manifesto ahead of the Welsh election. Short and long versions of the Manifesto were available from autumn 2020. In February 2021, WEL held a pre-election hustings focusing on WEL's key Manifesto asks. We were very pleased to see cross-party support for the idea of introducing statutory targets to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity in Wales and the group moved on to develop ideas for a cross-party resolution on this subject.

WEL continues as a valued ELUK partner with regular contact between the ELUK Directors, sharing information and expertise on Link governance and sharing ideas for joint working and funding, such as the Nature Targets campaign. WEL also continues to work with ELUK on joint reports on wildlife crime and Access to Justice in the UK. ELUK is planning a series of webinars for the next financial year, due to Covid restrictions preventing the Links from organising our usual bi-ennial conference.

WEL remains in contact with Stop Climate Chaos and also the SD Alliance, which is now run by WCVA. We also joined the new Climate.Cymru coalition ahead of COP 26. WEL's Policy Officer maintains links with Greener UK by participating in the work of the Devolution Group and Brexit Scenarios Group meetings for Wales. As mentioned above, WEL members have also been active participants in the co-design group for a National Nature Service, which linked over 100 organisations interested in green skills, jobs and environmental recovery.

In February 2021 WEL was successful in bidding for a Welsh Government grant, administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, of £100,000 for the network's new project, "Building capacity, collaboration and diversity in the environmental NGO sector", in Wales. The project focused on identifying and removing barriers to engaging and recruiting a more diverse range of communities in environmental careers and campaigning. It also focused on improving organisational resilience, supporting collaborative working across different organisations, and the retention of specialist skills, such as entomology and botany, within Wales. This came at a crucial time for the sector, enabling it to rebuild itself after a very difficult year with few funding opportunities available. The project will continue until July 2021.

Objective 3: Supporting our members

WEL has worked hard this year to raise the issues of Covid-19 impact on the sector, which has been compounded by existing difficulties with funding arrangements for eNGOs. WEL met with the Environment Minister in April 2020 to discuss the impact of lockdown on the sector, and produced a paper for the Environment Minister and First Minister, which was later adapted to provide evidence to the Climate Change,

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environment and Rural Affairs Committee. WEL also surveyed members to understand the impact of Covid restrictions on them during summer 2020, and encouraged input into an ELUK survey on this issue.

Specific issues with Welsh Government funding have also been raised, and recommendations suggested by WEL, resulting in a new stakeholder group being established with Welsh Government officials from Rural Payments Wales and WEL members who are in receipt of the grants in question. This group is ongoing and has resulted in a better understanding of the causes of some of the administrative issues that are affecting Welsh Government grants, and some proposals for easing the burdens where possible. Whilst the changes that this group can effect seem constrained by external audit requirements, we hope it will be able to continue and will provide opportunities to work with Government to develop better systems in future.

WEL members regularly tell us how much they appreciate the weekly Newsdirect monitoring service, which provides a wealth of information on Government and Senedd developments, and upcoming Government consultations and Senedd inquiries. WEL's egroups continue to be very active and members are also increasingly using Basecamp to share information directly with other members. During the Covid-19 lockdown in April 2020, WEL set up a Covid response section on Basecamp in order to share updates on Covid rules, restrictions and emergency funding to keep members informed of the evolving situation.

Despite the huge challenges surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, we were very pleased not to lose any of our members at this difficult time. In fact we were even more excited to welcome two new members during the year, the John Muir Trust and the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), as well as an application from the Centre of Alternative Technology to join the network during the following financial year.

When lockdown was imposed, we were in year two of two multi-year grants from the John Ellerman Foundation and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, but were grateful to also receive emergency funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation which allowed us to waive subscription fees for a small number of members who were most in need of support to stay with the network. This emergency funding also helped us to upgrade some of our technology to move all of our meetings and events online and continue to provide a consistent service to our members.

During this period WEL also attracted funding from the Waterloo Foundation, and

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additional funding from the Woodland Trust to ensure that we could continue to work on our Brexit related policy and advocacy work. We were also grateful to receive our regular grants from WWF Cymru and WCVA (the latter for our role on the Third Sector Partnership Council).

Objective 4: A strong public profile

In March 2021 WEL launched its new website, upgraded to a more visually appealing WordPress website, which now gives us the functionality to promote blog articles from within and outside the WEL network, highlighting key areas of topical interest to our members and promoting their priorities. Also, this year, WEL was invited to provide regular short policy articles covering the terrestrial and marine environments to the newly refreshed Natur Cymru magazine, which is a six monthly print magazine covering all matters relating to nature in Wales. We're very pleased to contribute to this publication.

Our Twitter presence continues to slowly grow, with WEL now having over 2,000 followers. With our events moving online, we have been using it more to promote and embed the live video streams within tweets, and encouraging our members to support with retweets from their own accounts. In the month of March 2021, due to our hustings activity, our tweets made 186k impressions on people's timelines. It also increased awareness of WEL and seemed to pique more interest in what we do, with our profile being visited 8,635 times in that month alone. The hustings had 301 views, with all viewers outside our membership having been directed from Twitter.

WEL has been able to use its coordination services to help Welsh Government officials and NRW improve their access to our members, and to engage with them on specific policy and process issues throughout the year. In September 2020 NRW asked WEL to help them contact members to input into the development of the Section 7 list of at-risk species and habitats, and has also used WEL to provide information about upcoming funding opportunities.

WEL's Species Champions project has been instrumental in building WEL's reputation with Members of the Senedd and has been a really positive way of involving politicians in our work on biodiversity. WEL is also a regular port of call for Committees wishing to gather evidence on a range of environmental issues and the network is recognised by Committee members. WEL continued to meet with the Environment Minister during this period to discuss topics including the impact of Covid-19 on the sector, environmental governance and agricultural pollution. We were pleased that

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over the term of the Fifth Senedd, the Minister provided more time to speak with our members.

Objective 5: A viable network

Council meetings were held online due to Covid in May and November 2020. In May we discussed the new WEL Strategic Plan, WEL's response to Covid-19 and a green exit strategy. In November we held our AGM and had a very helpful facilitated network discussion and action planning session on advancing and implementing equality and diversity in the sector.

Meetings moved online during this financial year conducted using a mix of Zoom and Teams. Most members have found online meetings easy to engage with and there have been benefits in relation to inclusion of people living in different parts of Wales without them having to travel or feeling that they are the only person online. Meetings now feel more inclusive and are often better attended than before the pandemic, so we plan to continue to offer a largely online meeting service. Our Basecamp service is now used much more extensively too, as a way of sharing information and initiating informal discussions directly between members. Our egrouop service has taken on a more formal usage as a result, with discussion increasingly moving to Basecamp.

WEL reserves are still healthy at present, but our financial situation is under increasing pressure given that we no longer receive Government funding. We are working to achieve more diverse income and have received new grant streams from a few Trusts recently, for which we are extremely grateful. We would welcome an opportunity for Welsh Government to become a WEL funder again in the future, in recognition of the service we provide and to improve our sustainability. Trustees look at projected finances at every meeting in order to identify and manage any risks to the organisation. A range of internal policies has been discussed and developed recently and our Staff Handbook has been updated. WEL has a Risk Register which is considered and updated regularly at Management Committee meetings.

Three of our members of staff have been in post a number of years, demonstrating the network's appeal in providing interesting work and good working conditions. Our increasing move towards flexible working policies, rewarding length of service with additional annual leave days and encouraging input and ideas from all our staff have, we feel, made WEL a desirable place to work. Whilst the isolation of home working has not always been easy, staff have managed to stay in regular contact through phone and videoconferencing and have membership of a co-working space in Cardiff

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which, as conditions return to normal, should provide a shared modern space which is pleasant for staff to work in. However, we understand the importance of keeping this under review in order to balance the advantages of flexible working with the need to provide support and contact to staff.

Management Committee meetings were held on 30th April, 14th July, 1st October, 19th November and 30th November 2020 and on 15th January and 9th March 2021.

WEL staff, Trustees and members were very sad indeed that our Treasurer, Dr Stephen Marsh Smith OBE, passed away in August 2020. Another Trustee, Colin Cheeseman, had to step down when he took on a new position and left the WEL network. As a result we needed to prepare to recruit new Trustees to help guide and support the network. We are mindful that we would like to improve diversity amongst our Management Committee and have actively been seeking advice to try and make this happen. Trustees undertook a skills audit in March 2021, in preparation for recruitment in the following financial year.

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The members of WEL in the network at the end of March 2021 are as follows:

Full Members (27)

Afonydd Cymru
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Trust
Bat Conservation Trust
British Mountaineering Council
Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation Wales
Campaign for National Parks
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)
Coed Cadw / Woodland Trust
Council for British Archaeology Wales
Freshwater Habitats Trust
John Muir Trust
Keep Wales Tidy
Llais y Goedwig
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust / Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol
Open Spaces Society
Plantlife
Pori Natur a Threftadaeth (PONT)
RSPB Cymru
Salmon & Trout Association
The Vincent Wildlife Trust
UK Environmental Law Association
Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)
Wildlife Trusts Wales
WWF Cymru

Associate Members* (4)

Elan Valley Trust
Oxfam Cymru
Snowdonia Society / Cymdeithas Eryri
YHA

* Please note Associate membership is a historic category and is no longer open to new members

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Staffing

Karen Whitfield and Susan Evans are both part-time Joint Directors of WEL. In her remaining hours, Karen also undertakes the Senior Policy Officer role for WEL.

Liz Smith and Llinos Price continued as full-time Policy Officers and we were pleased to be able to give confirmation to Llinos, who originally joined us on a two year contract, that our funding had become sufficient to allow us to provide her with a six month extension to her existing contract.

Rory Francis joined the team as our part-time Nature Targets Advocacy Officer in November 2020. He works closely with equivalent posts in the other Link organisations across the UK.

WEL involvement in the Third Sector Partnership Scheme

22 years ago the Government of Wales Act placed a statutory duty on the newly devolved government to publish a Scheme setting out how it will promote the interests of the third sector.

The Third Sector Scheme is a statement of the Welsh Government's intent in their relationship with the Third Sector. It identifies three areas of interest – stronger communities, better policy and better public services – as well as formal arrangements for engagement. It was adopted and published in September 2000. The National Assembly has a statutory duty to set out the scheme in order to demonstrate how it would promote the interests of the voluntary sector.

The Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) is chaired by Jane Hutt MS, now Minister for Social Justice, and is made up of representatives of third sector networks working across 25 areas of third sector activity along with the CEO of WCVA. Each of the 25 categories is represented by a third sector network, which is nominated or elected to their role by the organisations within the specific area of interest. Wales Environment Link is nominated to represent the environment sector.

The main purpose of the Third Sector Partnership Council is to make sure that the principles set out in the Third Sector Scheme are put into practice. It also provides an opportunity for the sector to raise issues of interest or concern. It generally does not discuss issues that relate to only one area of interest (these can be taken up through biannual ministerial meetings) and as a national body it is concerned with issues affecting all of Wales.

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As well as being represented on the TSPC, WEL has representatives on the Ministerial meeting groups organised by the WCVA, which run under the auspices of the Scheme. WEL acts as the voice of the environment at all these meetings.

Support in kind for Wales Environment Link

All members of WEL make a significant and direct contribution of time, skills and resources to the activities of the network. Members' time is critical to the functioning of the network. Staff from different organisations working together and sharing information greatly benefits the environment sector as a whole. The Trustees wish to acknowledge this contribution and thank the members for their continued support. Staff and volunteers of member organisations gave 3,495 hours of their time to aid the activities of the network during 2020 – 2021, as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts. The time and benefits in kind provided by members during 2020 – 2021 in furtherance of WEL's work has been valued at £131,044.

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Financial review of the year

The statement of financial activities shows that the total funds carried forward from 2020/21 to 2021/22 are £281,348. One third of this is already restricted, i.e. carried forward to pay for committed expenditure in the following year. Two thirds can be considered free reserves on which we can draw on as needed ahead. This puts WEL in a reasonably stable position for the coming year, however Trustees are mindful that current grant agreements are coming to an end and there is a need to secure significant new funding agreements in the coming year in order to maintain our security and our capacity.

Funders of Wales Environment Link

The Trustees of WEL would like to thank the following for their support:

The John Ellerman Foundation provided the final instalment of a three year funding agreement. This three year grant has been immensely helpful at a time when we really needed to secure a new stream of income.

We are in the middle of a three year funding agreement with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. In addition to this core grant, the foundation provided a grant to allow us to recruit our Nature Targets Advocacy Officer (alongside funding also allocated for equivalent posts in other Environment Links across the UK). We were also extremely grateful for the emergency funds offered by the Foundation to help our charity (and others) get through a difficult and uncertain time due to the Covid pandemic.

We received the first instalment of a Welsh Government grant, administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, for a project on building capacity, collaboration and diversity in the eNGO sector.

The Waterloo Foundation kindly donated another grant towards WEL's work on Brexit which has been extremely welcome and useful.

WCVA continued to provide funding through the Partnership Capacity Building Fund in order to assist WEL's participation in the Third Sector Partnership Council.

Carrying on a long-standing arrangement, the Trustees are grateful to WWF Cymru for grant funding received again this financial year.

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WWF UK continues to support all the UK Links in providing funds to further joint working activities.

We are also grateful to Woodland Trust for providing a grant towards supporting a WEL Policy Officer to work on environmental governance issues and Land Management Policy and Advocacy.

A vital part of WEL's core funding each year comes from the WEL members themselves, in the form of their subscription fees.

Reserves and risk policy

Reserve guidelines describe how much capital is required to enable the charity to continue operating under extraordinary circumstances for 6 months, 3 months and 1 month. As employee commitments (pension and redundancy rights), and assets change, the operating reserves statements are amended.

Going into financial year April 2021 - 2022, the reserve requirements are as follows. To operate for:

- 6 months: WEL would need to have £139,000 held in reserve.
- 3 months: WEL would need to have £81,000 held in reserve.
- 1 month and to close the charity: WEL would need to have £35,000 held in reserve.

These figures are used by the Trustees to assess any potential risk arising to the charity over time. If funds were to fall below the 6 months operations figure, the Trustees would assess whether there would be a need to take additional steps to curtail expenditure and obtain income, or whether it could be reasonably assumed that anticipated income would address any potential short-term cash flow issues.

The total funds carried forward at 31 March 2021 are £281,348. As explained above, one third of this amount is already allocated towards expenditure in the following year while £190,532 can be considered free reserves on which we can draw on as needed going forward. The Trustees consider this to be a reasonable and welcome figure considering the continued uncertainty hanging over future grant funding levels and the need to respond to increasing demand on WEL's very modestly-sized staff team.

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WEL does not receive any government funding at present and has previously experienced a fluctuation in funding which required the organisation to reduce operations quickly by over 50%. In light of that and following a helpful conversation with our accountants at the January meeting of Management Committee, it was agreed to revise the reserves policy for WEL, which will be signed off in later 2021.

Future developments and risk assessment

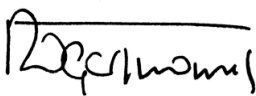
A WEL Risk Register is maintained, monitored and updated regularly during the year.

Funding availability and capacity remains a concern throughout the sector, with sources of core funding increasingly rare. Core funding for the sector is vital, both to allow us to retain members, and for us to retain long-term capacity and key policy staff at a level appropriate to increasing demand. WEL will continue with plans to increase its membership base and identify new sources of funding.

Trustees are aware of the difficulties some of our members are still facing whilst continuing to work within the network. In addition to funding concerns, working on issues related to Brexit has continued to stretch all our capacity to the maximum while the Covid pandemic has forced us all to face a number of changes and challenges, including a further decline in income across the sector.

Despite the difficulties of recent times future opportunities for development are being pursued. We have survived challenging times through mutual support, sharing resources and being adaptive and innovative. We managed to retain all of our existing members and have even grown in numbers! The strength of our network and the value placed on it has been clearly evident.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 10th November 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Roger Thomas (Chair)

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

Annex 1

WEL members were represented on the following stakeholder groups as at 31st March 2021:

- Biodiversity and Ecosystem Evidence and Research Needs
- Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Customer Challenge Group
- Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Independent Environmental Advisory Panel (observer status)
- Environment Act Implementation Group
- EERA Brexit Roundtable
- EERA Environmental Governance Legislation Task Group
- National Access Forum for Wales
- Nature Recovery Action Plan Implementation Group
- NRW Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forum
- Section 7 list criteria
- Section 6 guidance
- Restoration and resilience
- Planning and biodiversity
- Invasive Non-native Species
- Pollinators' Task Force
- Rural Development Plan PMC
- TB Eradication Programme Board
- Third Sector Partnership Council
- Town and Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group
- Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group
- Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group
- Wales Land Management Forum sub-group on agricultural pollution
- Wales Water Management Forum
- Wales Fisheries Liaison Group
- WCVA Cabinet Secretary meetings:
 - Economy and Infrastructure
 - Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs
 - Finance and Local Government

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Environment Link / Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Wales Environment Link / Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

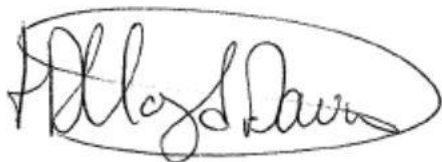
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Henry Lloyd Davies
Bevan Buckland LLP
Ground Floor
Cardigan House
Castle Court
Swansea Enterprise Park
Swansea
SA7 9LA

Date: 10th November 2021

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 11

		Unrestricted	Restricted	2021 Total	2020 Total
	Notes	funds £	funds £	funds £	funds £
Income and Endowments from					
Donations and legacies	2	2,332	4,500	6,832	1,879
Charitable activities	4				
Charitable activities		191,849	50,000	241,849	154,172
Investment income	3	<u>817</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>817</u>	<u>852</u>
Total		194,998	54,500	249,498	156,903
Expenditure on					
Raising funds		3,566	-	3,566	2,890
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable activities		179,187	18,561	197,748	158,127
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total		182,753	18,561	201,314	161,017
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net Income/(Expenditure)		12,245	35,939	48,184	(4,114)
Reconciliation of Funds					
Total funds brought forward		233,164	-	233,164	237,278
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Funds Carried Forward		<u>245,409</u>	<u>35,939</u>	<u>281,348</u>	<u>233,164</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Balance sheet 31 March 2021

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2021 Total funds	2020 Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	9	-	-	-	706
Current Assets					
Debtors	10	124	-	124	175
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>248,914</u>	<u>35,939</u>	<u>284,853</u>	<u>234,518</u>
		249,038	35,939	284,977	234,693
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(3,629)	-	(3,629)	(2,235)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net Current Assets		<u>245,409</u>	<u>35,939</u>	<u>281,348</u>	<u>232,458</u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		<u>245,409</u>	<u>35,939</u>	<u>281,348</u>	<u>233,164</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net assets		<u>245,409</u>	<u>35,939</u>	<u>281,348</u>	<u>233,164</u>
Funds	12				
Unrestricted funds				245,409	233,164
Restricted funds				<u>35,939</u>	<u> </u>
Total Funds				<u>281,348</u>	<u>233,164</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 10th November 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:



J M Anderson (Treasurer) - Trustee

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgments about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results in the future may differ from these estimates.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

Estimation Uncertainty

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. Management consider there to be no estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Income

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Subscription income is recognised when paid. When a payment is made for an extended period it is credited evenly over the period to the SOFA.

Donations and similar incoming resources represent monies received by the charity from charitable donations and gifts. These are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities upon receipt.

Grant income is accounted for on an accruals basis and is shown in the financial statements when the Charity earns the unconditional right to the funds. Grants received for a specific purpose are treated as restricted funds. Revenue grants are credited directly to the Statement of Financial Activities and Capital grants are released over the life of the asset in line with the depreciation policy.

Interest Receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The cost of generating funds comprises those costs associated with attracting grant income. Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities, both costs directly attributable and indirect support costs. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity.

All costs allocated between expenditure categories are on a basis designed to reflect their resource usage. For some costs this means direct allocation to activities, other costs are apportioned, e.g. by staff time spent on the activity, or another equitable usage measure.

Joint delivery costs are recognised in the period which they are awarded to the extent that they have been expended in accordance with the funding terms and conditions.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings - 25% on cost

Computer equipment - 25% on cost

Tangible fixed assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Indication of impairment is reviewed annually and an impairment review is undertaken where there is an indication of impairment.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Fund accounting

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined benefit pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. There is no past service deficit liability at the year end.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments held within a deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any discounts due.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Donations and Legacies

	2021	2020
	£	£
Donations	5,272	1,879
Grants	<u>1,560</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>6,832</u>	<u>1,879</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other grants	<u>1,560</u>	<u>-</u>

During the year the above Job Retention Scheme government support was received during the ongoing pandemic. There are no unfulfilled conditions attached to these grants received.

3. Investment Income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	<u>817</u>	<u>852</u>

4. Income from Charitable Activities

	Activity	2021	2020
		£	£
Partnership Capacity			
Building Fund (PCBF)	Charitable activities	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full			
and Associate	Charitable activities	43,348	40,521
Grants	Charitable activities	<u>195,000</u>	<u>110,150</u>
		<u>241,849</u>	<u>154,172</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:	2021	2020
	£	£
Portion of WWF grant to Environment Links UK	-	5,150
John Ellerman Foundation	50,000	50,000
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	45,000	30,000
Woodland Trust	10,000	10,000
Waterloo Foundation	20,000	15,000
WWF Cymru	5,000	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant towards CBD Work	15,000	-
Welsh Government grant, administered by National Lottery Heritage Fund	<u>50,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>195,000</u>	<u>110,150</u>

5. Charitable Activities Costs

	Direct Costs £	Support costs £	Totals £
Charitable activities	179,564	18,184	197,748
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

6. Trustees' Remuneration and Benefits

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Trustees' expenses

Trustees' expenses (2021: None , 2020: £493) consists of travel and subsistence costs.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

7. Comparatives for the Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Income and Endowments from			
Donations and legacies	1,879	-	1,879
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	154,172	-	154,172
Investment income	<u>852</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>852</u>
Total	156,903	-	156,903
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	2,890	-	2,890
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	158,127	-	158,127
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total	161,017	-	161,017
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(4,114)	-	(4,114)
Reconciliation of Funds			
Total funds brought forward	237,278	-	237,278
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Funds Carried Forward	<u>233,164</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>233,164</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

8. Benefits In Kind

The value of services donated by members in the pursuit of co-operative activities during the year and not included in the Statement of Financial Activities is as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Time and Travel contributed to working groups and meetings	131,044	102,888
Time and Travel contributed to the management of the charity	10,350	21,506
	<u>141,394</u>	<u>124,394</u>

The value of members' staff and volunteer time contributed to the network in 2020-2021 has been calculated using NRW guideline figures.

9. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Fixtures and fittings Totals £	Computer equipment £	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	<u>10,305</u>	<u>2,839</u>	<u>13,144</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2020	10,305	2,133	12,438
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>706</u>	<u>706</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>10,305</u>	<u>2,839</u>	<u>13,144</u>
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>-</u>	<u>706</u>	<u>706</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

10. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>124</u>	<u>175</u>

11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	<u>3,629</u>	<u>2,235</u>

12. Movement in Funds

	At 1.4.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,226	12,245	244,471
Subscription income relating to next year	<u>938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>938</u>
	233,164	12,245	245,409
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	-	35,939	35,939
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Funds	<u>233,164</u>	<u>48,184</u>	<u>281,348</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	194,979	(182,734)	12,245
Donation via Charities Aid Foundation	<u>19</u>	<u>(19)</u>	<u>-</u>
	194,998	(182,753)	12,245
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	50,000	(14,061)	35,939
Dwr Cymru contribution towards costs for WEL representative on Customer Challenge Group	<u>4,500</u>	<u>(4,500)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>54,500</u>	<u>(18,561)</u>	<u>35,939</u>
Total Funds	<u>249,498</u>	<u>(201,314)</u>	<u>48,184</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.20 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	236,340	(4,114)	232,226
Subscription income relating to next year	<u>938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>938</u>
	<u>237,278</u>	<u>(4,114)</u>	<u>233,164</u>
Total Funds	<u>237,278</u>	<u>(4,114)</u>	<u>233,164</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	156,903	(161,017)	(4,114)
	_____	_____	_____
Total Funds	<u>156,903</u>	<u>(161,017)</u>	<u>(4,114)</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	236,340	8,131	244,471
Subscription income relating to next year	<u>938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>938</u>
	237,278	8,131	245,409
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	-	35,939	35,939
	_____	_____	_____
Total Funds	<u>237,278</u>	<u>44,070</u>	<u>281,348</u>

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

12. Movement in Funds - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	351,882	(343,751)	8,131
Donation via Charities Aid Foundation	<u>19</u>	<u>(19)</u>	<u>-</u>
	351,901	(343,770)	8,131
Restricted funds			
National Lottery Heritage Fund	50,000	(14,061)	35,939
Dwr Cymru contribution towards costs for WEL representative on Customer Challenge Group	<u>4,500</u>	<u>(4,500)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>54,500</u>	<u>(18,561)</u>	<u>35,939</u>
Total Funds	<u>406,401</u>	<u>(362,331)</u>	<u>44,070</u>

13. Related Party Disclosures

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2021 other than those disclosed in note 5, 6 and 8 of the financial statements.

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Income and Endowments		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	5,272	1,879
Grants	<u>1,560</u>	<u>-</u>
	6,832	1,879
Investment income		
Bank Interest Receivable	817	852
Charitable activities		
Partnership Capacity Building Fund (PCBF)	3,501	3,501
Subscriptions - Full and Associate	43,348	40,521
Grants	<u>195,000</u>	<u>110,150</u>
	<u>241,849</u>	<u>154,172</u>
Total incoming resources	249,498	156,903
Expenditure		
Raising donations and legacies		
Wages	3,150	2,553
Social security	<u>416</u>	<u>337</u>
	3,566	2,890
Charitable activities		
Wages	121,864	95,929
Social security	13,122	9,966
Pensions	10,849	8,893
Working Groups	8,390	13,668
Management Committee Expenses	-	494
Staff travel and subsistence	-	524

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru / Wales Environment Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

IT Costs	7,276	5,794
Translation and Publications	1,427	1,713
Meetings and AGM	150	773
External Liaison	4,500	152
Links Liaison	-	89
NLHF Project	11,280	-
Computer equipment	<u>706</u>	<u>711</u>
	179,564	138,706
Support costs		
	2021	2020
	£	£
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	10,941	10,941
Office costs	282	198
Rent	2,503	2,750
Staff training and recruitment	<u>696</u>	<u>2,298</u>
	14,422	16,187
Governance costs		
Insurance	551	351
Accountancy	<u>3,211</u>	<u>2,883</u>
	<u>3,762</u>	<u>3,234</u>
Total resources expended	<u>201,314</u>	<u>161,017</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	<u><u>48,184</u></u>	<u><u>(4,114)</u></u>