

Wildlife and
Countryside



Wildlife and Countryside Link

(A company limited by guarantee)

Company number: 03889519

Annual Report 2022

The Trustees submit their report together with the financial statements of Wildlife and Countryside Link for the year ended 31 December 2022.

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A Message from Link's Chair

The world has agreed a new Global Biodiversity Framework. Its mission is to halt and reverse the decline of biodiversity by 2030. But here in the UK and around the world, the decline of nature continues apace.

Alongside this urgent biodiversity agenda, the challenge of creating a healthy natural environment for everyone has never been more at the fore. The UN has recognised the right to a healthy and sustainable environment, but in the UK, we find that one in three people do not have access to nature near home.

At the same time, the challenge of improving animal welfare continues to be squeezed to the political margins. Enforcement of key animal welfare laws remains weak, and implementation of some positive promises has stalled.

All three of these vital components of Link's strategy have been shaken in 2022 by political upheaval and international shocks, from the fallout from Covid-19 to the war in Ukraine.

Yet, in the face of these challenges, our coalition is growing larger and stronger and, together, we have been able to achieve significant changes in law and policy. We are so grateful to our long-standing members for the wonderful work we have done together in 2022. We are also delighted to have welcomed new members into the Wildlife & Countryside Link movement.

There have been some tremendous moments of strength and unity. Link's report on 30x30 was launched in a packed Portcullis House room, with influential political contributions from Ministers and Shadow Ministers. It showed the major gap between promise and delivery, and has clearly focused DEFRA's attention on a credible delivery plan. We continued our work to make the case for additional public investment to meet the 2030 nature targets, and were pleased that the Government responded with the announcement of a new Species Survival Fund, aiming to halt the decline of species abundance.

We were pleased also to see the objective of our Nature for Everyone campaign—to ensure that everyone has equitable access to a healthy environment—was included as a new Government pledge in the first statutory Environmental Improvement Plan.

Link has enjoyed a formative role in the Better Planning Coalition. Together, we were able to secure a rethink of threats to nature in the Planning White Paper. Link amendments on access to nature, environmental outcome reports, the Glover reforms to AONBs and National Parks, and the Nature Recovery Network are now being considered in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, building on the tremendous partnership that came together in the Nature For Everyone campaign.

In the year ahead, we turn our attention to delivery. The legislative frameworks are in place for much of the welfare, wellbeing and wildlife agenda, but there remain huge gaps in funding, enforcement and implementation.

We also turn our attention to the end of the Parliament and a forthcoming General Election. This time, we cannot afford to accept fluffy promises to do more for animals and ecosystems. To meet the great 2030 challenges, the next Parliament will need to include massive changes in funding, regulation and enforcement. We will be working with all parties to open their eyes to the opportunity that a greener economy, with high standards of animal welfare would bring.

The deadlines really are that close. Link was at the forefront of securing a framework for legally-binding nature targets, which are now almost in place at last. By the end of the next Parliament, the first of these targets—to halt nature's decline by 2030—will need to be met. So, we know we cannot afford to be timid in the days ahead. We will aim to play our part in convening and leading the environment movement to win major new commitments for nature, people's environment, and animal welfare in the year ahead.

We look forward to working with you in 2023.

Martin Spray CBE DSc, Chair, Wildlife and Countryside Link

Reference and Administrative Details

Link Trustees

Martin Spray, Chair	(appointed December 2018)
Dominic Dyer	(appointed December 2018)
Marcus Gilleard	(appointed March 2015)
Sandy Luk	(appointed December 2018)
Simon Marsh	(appointed December 2018)
Nadia Shaikh	(appointed December 2021)
Sarah McMonagle	(appointed December 2021)
Allison Ogden-Newton	(appointed December 2021)
Jason Reeves	(appointed December 2021)

Company Registered Number

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Charity Registered Number

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Trustees' Report

Objectives and Activities

The charitable objects of Wildlife and Countryside Link are to promote the conservation and protection of wildlife and countryside for the benefit of the public.¹

Link is the largest environment and wildlife coalition in England. We bring together 70 organisations to develop and advocate proposals for improvements in law and policy for the benefit of wildlife and our environment. Our members campaign to conserve, enhance and access our landscapes, habitats, rivers and seas and protect our animals and plants. Together we have the support of over eight million people in the UK and directly protect over 750,000 hectares of land and 800 miles of coastline.

As part of our current strategy:

- We aim to be a **policy powerhouse** for the sector: keeping a broad overview, but targeting a small number of strategic areas where we can generate new, detailed and ambitious policy proposals that will influence policymakers. Our policy groups will forge progressive consensus: aiming for strong, common positions that complement individual members' work.
- We aim to be an **amplifier for our individual voices**: highlighting great work in our membership and lending focus and coherence to our common messages in the press and in political advocacy. Our communications will reflect and reinforce members' communications: creating opportunities for members large and small, as well as providing a collective identity in the media and in Westminster.
- We aim to be a **strategic hub and institutional touchpoint**: providing leadership in agreeing cross-sector strategic direction, supporting our members in Westminster, and acting as a nodal point for working with other groups. Our secretariat will lead and serve: adding value to members' interactions by identifying strategic opportunities, creating alliances and providing professional policy insight.

Last year, we swiftly redeployed our day-to-day resources to respond to the changing political situation, focusing reactive attention on fending off unforeseen political risks, such as the deregulatory agendas of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, risks to the Habitats Regulations, and revision of the Farming Transition programme, and Planning White Paper reforms.

Link has played a lynchpin role in seeing off the worst of the deregulatory proposals, and helping Government re-establish a more constructive path toward delivery of its long-term environmental promises.

These new risks combined with rising financial pressures to mean that many of our members had markedly less capacity than usual to respond and engage with Government consultations and legislation at a time of high demand, following the passage of DEFRA's three framework Acts on Environment, Fisheries and Farming. Link responded by taking on more of the work to draft and coordinate shared consultation responses, ensuring that the environment movement continued to be heard in these important deliberations. We also successfully renewed our work advocating for more public funding for nature's recovery, with the announcement of a significant new Species Survival Fund, dedicated to delivery in the target of halting nature's decline.

¹ The Trustees of Wildlife and Countryside Link confirm that the organisation has Charitable Purposes pursuant to the Charities Act 2011. The Trustees believe there are clear and identifiable public benefits arising from the pursuit of Link's aims and objectives, in terms of an enhanced natural environment, more abundant wildlife, and the health wellbeing and economic benefits they bring, and that these benefits are freely available to the public without restriction.

Objectives and Activities

In the year ahead, we plan to take a much more proposition and positive stance, convening the sector around a new set of ambitious policy proposals designed to ensure the UK is successful in meeting the ambitious targets set out in the Global Biodiversity Framework.

We aim to capitalise on the political leverage afforded by the new, legally-binding target to halt the decline of wildlife by 2030, which Link secured as part in the successful State of Nature campaign.

We hope to convene our members and partners across the environment movement around a small set of “big ideas” for nature’s recovery—including the need for more public investment in nature, regulatory drivers of private investment in nature, green jobs support, land management reform, and people’s rights to a healthy environment. Ahead of the next General Election, we will advocate for these policies with all political parties, and promote them with public campaigns.

The next Parliament is likely to last almost until the deadline of the Global Biodiversity Framework’s 2030 mission, so we hope all political parties will begin the Parliament with a plan to succeed. Through the Parliament, we will continue to report annually on progress toward delivery of the 2030 goals, making collective recommendations for the steps the Government must take to get on track.

Of course, 2023/24 will also be a critical year for designing detailed delivery of the reforms set underway in this Parliament. The detail of programmes like biodiversity gain, Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Species Recovery Plans and Environmental Outcome Reports will be significant in determining on-the-ground results for nature in the years ahead. New policies are needed to kickstart delivery of the Environmental Improvement Plan promise to connect more people with nature. This year will be the last chance for the Government to fulfil the remaining animal welfare commitments made in its manifesto, and to get the new Animal Welfare Committee up and running.

With these many delivery challenges ahead, we will continue to draw on the collective expertise of the sector to ensure that Link supports its members in contributing to the design of these critical delivery details for animal welfare, environmental wellbeing and wildlife recovery.

Achievements and Performance

In 2022, Link was at the forefront of political debate, working closely with other coalitions to guard against the risks of political change and to create new opportunities for improvement.

In 2022, Link managed and provided support for 15 groups on the following policy areas:

- Agriculture: Chair, Christopher Price (Rare Breeds Survival Trust); Vice Chair, Alice Groom (RSPB)
- Animal Welfare: Chair, Claire Bass (Humane Society International-UK); Vice Chair, Emily Wilson (Four Paws UK)
- Blueprint for Water: Chair, Ali Morse (The Wildlife Trusts); Vice Chair, Nik Perepelov (RSPB)
- Bovine TB: no Chair
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Chair, Miriam Bentley-Rose (The Wildlife Trusts), Vice Chair, Meera Inglis (RSPB)
- Invasive Non-Native Species: Co-Chairs: Craig Macadam and David Smith (Buglife)
- Land Use Planning: Chair, Rebecca Pullinger (Woodland Trust); Vice Chair, Carl Bunnage (RSPB)
- Legal Strategy: Co Chairs, Carol Day and Rosie Sutherland (RSPB)
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies: no Chair
- Marine: Chair, Kirsten Carter (RSPB), Vice Chair, Jacques Villemot (RSPB)
- Marine Mammals: Chair, Lucy Babey (ORCA), Vice Chairs, Sue Fisher (AWI) and Nicola Hodgins (WDC)
- Nature Policy: Chair no Chair
- Nature and Wellbeing Strategy Group: Co Chairs, Sue Young and Dom Higgins (TWT)
- Resources & Waste: Chair, Paula Chin (WWF-UK)
- Wildlife Crime & Trade: Chair, Dominic Dyer (Born Free); Vice Chair, Craig Fellows (Badger Trust)

Link also took on new workstreams in 2022, including work on chemical pollution, support for the ban on the use of peat in horticulture (March 2022) and making the case stronger controls on grass burning on upland peat (June 2022), working with Greener UK on briefings (June 2022) and UK Forestry Standard updated content response (December 2022). Key achievements in 2022 include:

Blueprint for Water

Critical plans and strategies for the water environment were published in 2022. Blueprint engaged significantly, submitting consultation responses, including on [Flood Risk Management Plans](#), [River Basin Management Plans](#), and the [PR24 methodology](#), but also through regular engagement with Ofwat and the Environment Agency. Positive changes secured include Ofwat making better use of powers to control water industry dividends, and [environmentally beneficial amendments to abstraction charges](#). Blueprint remains one of few environmental voices meaningfully engaged in these processes.

PR24 continued to be a significant focus in 2022; Blueprint representatives met with water company CEOs to further advocate our [Environmental Manifesto for PR24](#). Storm overflows also remained a focus, with Blueprint [responding critically](#) to the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan and working with the End Sewage Pollution coalition to [submit a parliamentary briefing](#) challenging the plan. The 2022 drought also saw Link securing [new attention](#) for a story [analysing river flow and water level figures](#), and Blueprint engaging with the National Drought Group [to advocate for](#) more proactive, long-term action to build drought resilience. These areas remain important for Blueprint in 2023.

The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill and the wider deregulatory agenda present significant challenges to water policy, with the risk that we will need to spend significant resource defending existing legislation such as Water Framework Directive Regulations, rather than progressing efforts to better protect and enhance UK waters. The deregulatory risk is also apparent in Government's decision not to follow Link's recommendation of a new target for overall water quality under the Environment Act framework. We have established strong, cross sector consensus on the need for an overarching target and will continue to make the case as the 2027 deadline set by the Water Framework Directive approaches.

Bovine TB

Link's Bovine TB Working Group continues to provide a forum for eNGOs to discuss the issue of bovine TB, and to build consensus around this controversial issue. 2022 was a quieter year in terms of Government activity on bovine TB, and the activity of the Link bTB group, though individual members continued to push – for example, the publication of [new research from Born Free Foundation](#) that found no evidence that the badger cull prevents bTB in cattle, which Link was able to amplify and support on social media. In 2023, the group will continue to act as a forum for organisations to engage and build common ground, and will also be exploring potential joint outputs focused on cattle measures, working to shift the focus of bTB policy away from badgers. Risks and

challenges remain around potential lack of common ground or capacity to engage from member organisations, exacerbated by a lack of Government action or interest in this policy area in 2023.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

With our [Route Map Towards Greater Ethnic Diversity in the Environment Sector](#) published in October 2022, Wildlife and Countryside Link continues to focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Our [working group](#) seeks to address the lack of diversity within the environment sector, taking collective action to understand and to help overcome barriers to delivering change. The route map has had significant impact within the sector, with over 42 organisations pledging their support so far, and work now ongoing to engage wider stakeholders from academia, local authorities, and Government agencies.

Thus far, efforts have focused on the delivery of actions within the route map, through three dedicated sub-groups – on Data & Reporting, Training, and Peer Support, Inclusion and Culture. The group has also been working with a project team from the consultancy [Mayvin](#) to develop ways of working that will ensure sector-wide action on EDI does not lose momentum – a loss of momentum and interest is the main risk to this workstream, in addition to ongoing challenges around lack of funds and resource. In 2023, the group will focus on delivering key outputs from the three sub-group, and developing further actions for the sector for years 2-5 of the route map.

INNS

The Link INNS Group continues to build on our 2020 report '[Prevention is Better Than Cure](#)', raising awareness of the need and advocating for increased funding and resources for tackling invasive species. A 1-year scoping trial of the INNS inspectorate was secured in 2021, and in 2022 this was extended into a 3-year trial – a significant achievement for INNS biosecurity. The group will now continue to advocate for this inspectorate to be made permanent in 2023. Securing the necessary interest and funding from Government in an already crowded environmental policy space will be a significant challenge to achieving this.

2022 saw the group contributing to and reviewing a Government [POSTnote briefing on INNS](#), and also engaging with the [refresh of the GB INNS strategy](#), and the [comprehensive review of species of special concern](#), in all cases calling for a stronger and more precautionary approach to INNS management and biosecurity. The Plant Biosecurity Strategy for GB published in 2022 includes some positive steps but further action will be needed to manage the horticultural pathway. This will be a major focus for the INNS Group in 2023, building on [our response](#) to the plant biosecurity strategy consultation and [our media work](#) in INNS Week 2022.

Safeguarding legal mechanisms to protect nature

The Legal Strategy group made important progress in 2022, when its work helped persuade the Government to make a key concession as the Judicial Review & Courts Act passed through the Parliament. The initial version of the Act had contained a presumption on judges to issue weaker “prospective” and “suspended” quashing orders, instead of legal remedies that overturn unlawful decisions. This presumption would have potentially allowed environmental damage to continue, even after a judge had ruled a decision as unlawful. Link worked with MPs and peers to highlight the dangers of the presumption and built parliamentary opposition to the point whereby the Government caved in and [removed the presumption](#).

The group is keeping a close eye out for any renewed Government attempts to weaken judicial review and access to environmental justice. It is also working on blueprint Environmental Rights Act, which would deliver an enforceable right to a healthy environment. Over the next few months the group will be highlighting how such a right could both drive nature recovery and improve human health outcomes.

The Wildlife Crime Working group published its sixth annual [Wildlife Crime Report](#) (with 2021 figures) in November 2022. The Report secured extensive press coverage, including a segment on BBC Countryfile, and is increasingly seen as the key marker of wildlife crime levels. The group's efforts to make such eNGO-led wildlife crime reports redundant, through enabling Government collection of wildlife crime data by the granting of notifiable status for these crimes, continues. In summer 2022 the group met with Home Office and Defra officials to directly make the case for notifiable status and submitted an [evidence dossier](#) to both departments highlighting police support for this change.

The group continues to press for notifiable status for key wildlife crimes, along with more support for the National Wildlife Crime Unit (which works closely with the group) and for further wildlife crime training for police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service, building on training delivered by group members over recent years. The group also continues to press for thorough investigation of wildlife crime cases, [writing](#) to Defra and relevant police forces to highlight the need for further consideration of suspicious deaths of white-tailed eagles in southern England in 2021 and 2022.

Delivering a post-Brexit framework for high animal welfare standards

Two years on from the Government's Animal Welfare Action Plan (May 2021), progress is mixed. The Link Animal Welfare Strategy group was pleased in 2022 to help see one of the key commitments in the Plan, the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act, safely onto the statute book. The Act recognises the sentience of animals in UK law and establishes an Animal Sentience Committee to advise policymakers. After working hard with Ministers and parliamentarians to progress and [increase the ambition](#) of the Act (over some opposition from some Conservative backbenchers affiliated with hunting and shooting interests) the group is pressing the Government to now speedily appoint the Animal Sentience Committee.

The opposition to the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act was overcome in that instance, however it remains a blocker on other Animal Welfare Action Plan proposals, including the Kept Animals Bill (stalled in Parliament since November 2021). The group is working to unblock these measures, including through work to influence upcoming General Election Manifestos. Further ongoing workstreams include attempts to include animal abuse content in the scope of the Online Safety Bill and continued support for the [Lead Ammunition All Party Parliamentary Group](#), set up by [Link and WWT](#) in 2022 to make the case in Parliament for a ban on lead ammunition use on welfare and environmental grounds.

Convening a cross-sector campaign to secure Nature for Everyone which put access on the agenda

In February, Link [launched](#) the Nature for Everyone campaign, aimed at securing legal changes to access to nature in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The campaign quickly garnered [support from 90 organisations](#) from across the environment, planning, transport, and health organisations and endorsements from celebrities and politicians, including Steve Backshall, Gillian Burke, Lord Crisp, and Baroness Jones.

Through a public petition which received more than 35,000 signatures, an [open letter](#) to Secretary of State Michael Gove, [research](#) about the declining provision of greenspace in new developments, and several pieces of media coverage at key points over the last year, the campaign has raised public awareness of the legislative opportunity to address environmental inequality through amendments to the Levelling Up legislation.

The campaign has been instrumental in uniting various sectors behind a single ask and raising access to nature up the agenda, successfully securing a commitment from Government in January 2023 to deliver access to nature for all within a 15 minutes of home, a key campaign ask.

The Government's Environmental Improvement Plan [announcement](#) included a commitment to ensure everyone lives within a 15 minute walk of a green or blue space.

As the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill progresses through Parliament and we will continue to apply pressure on Government to consider legal changes to make voluntary standards mandatory and to make Levelling UP nature one of the Bill's core missions, to tackle disparities in access to nature.

Staving off the #AttackonNature and environmental deregulation, including the Retained EU Law (REUL) Bill

The autumn of 2022 saw a rapid political shift. Several high risk proposals arrived in quick succession, including the Retained EU Law (REUL) Bill, relaxed planning requirements in new investment zones and a watering down of Environmental Land Management schemes, which could have all had a highly negative impact on the state of nature in England. The environment sector swiftly branded this an #AttackonNature and banded together to #DefendNature against these proposals. Link convened a cross-sector group to discuss and develop joint messaging and campaigning actions, including a [joint complaint](#) to Defra and the OEP on the Government's breach of the legally-binding deadline to lay the Environment Act targets and a [letter to the PM](#).

The #AttackonNature campaign played its part in persuading incoming PM Rishi Sunak to shelve the worst of the damaging measures proposed by his predecessor. Plans to 'minimise the burden of environmental assessments' in new Investment Zones were dropped and the Review of Environmental Land Management retained the core aspects of the scheme.

However, Rishi Sunak has continued to progress the REUL Bill through Parliament. Link has collaborated closely with Greener UK on advocacy and [briefings](#) to highlight the environmental risks of the REUL Bill to MPs and peers, urging them to scrap the Bill. Link also published two reports on the [environmental costs](#) of the REUL Bill and the [economic costs](#) of the REUL Bill, the second of which was picked up by [several media outlets](#) and was noted by Ministers. Link will continue to campaign against the REUL Bill and add value to the movement by convening the environment sector's voice and messaging.

Cost of living crisis sector survey

Following on from our surveys in 2020 and 2021 on the financial and organisational impact of the pandemic on the environment sector, Link investigated the implications of another financial crisis swiftly off the back of COVID-19.

We surveyed 39 organisations across the four nations on the impact that the cost-of-living crisis was having. Our [Cost of Living Impact Report](#) revealed a picture of dramatically increased running, staffing and project costs, paired with reduced income across multiple streams, all of which were resulting in constrained capacity and reductions in project delivery for nature organisations. On average environment NGOs predicted an income reduction of 13% going into 2023, on top of already reduced income during the pandemic, significantly reducing overall financial resource. The research also highlighted increased staffing pressure throughout the sector, particularly as a result of low wages, alongside notable challenges in the grant-funding environment.

Link's new research built upon findings from the National Lottery Heritage Fund Pulse survey, and was used as a deep-dive into the issue. As with our pandemic surveys we received wide-ranging responses from the Defra group and funders about the worth of the research in helping to make decisions on the funding approach for the sector. Link's fleet of foot response and in-depth analysis gave the data to back-up calls for further support for struggling nature restoration programs in particular.

Putting wildlife, nature recovery, and access to nature at the heart of the planning system

Link's Land Use Planning Group has been highlighting the importance of and opportunities to embed nature recovery for wildlife and people. There have been several opportunities to do so this year as planning reform trundles on, including through Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, the [reform of environmental assessment](#), reform of major infrastructure planning, and the [detail of the Biodiversity Net Gain](#) regulations.

The group developed and drafted [several amendments](#) for the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, including ones which would strengthen Local Nature Recovery Strategies, create a new planning designation called Wildbelt for the recovery of nature, update the purposes and duties of National Parks and AONBs to strengthen them for nature recovery and to enable portions of them to be included in 30x30, and to introduce a [levelling up mission for access to a healthy natural environment](#). Working with and through the [Better Planning Coalition](#), Link has been able to share our environmental messages and boost the overall cross-sector message of the coalition that better planning is needed for nature, climate and people.

We will continue to build on this work in 2023, advocating for primary legislation, regulation and policy which supports nature-positive planning and access to nature for all.

Recovering nature for wildlife and people

The Link Nature and Wellbeing Strategy Group has been hard at work influencing nature policy and highlighting opportunities to embed nature into access, health and education policy.

Building on its work on 30x30 last year, the group produced a [progress report](#), finding that the Government has only reached 3.22% of land protected for nature in 2022. The Government needs to level up and expand the network of protected sites, as well as update and strengthen protected landscapes for nature recovery and people, so that portions of National Parks and AONBs can contribute to 30x30. Link laid out these positions in [a response to the Nature Recovery Green Paper](#) and [response to the Glover Landscapes Review consultation](#).

The group also seized several opportunities to advocate for a thriving natural environment everywhere to support people's health and wellbeing. We highlighted the opportunity for nature recovery and connecting young people with nature through education policy when [responding to the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#). We also [submitted evidence](#) to the Department for Health and Social Care's mental health and wellbeing plan, making the case for more and better nature for all to improve mental health outcomes.

Towards a sustainable farming future

Our focus for 2022 spanned across both inside-track advocacy with Defra and political/parliamentary advocacy. With Defra, we continued to help them to develop their thinking on the schemes, including recommendations in our '[Priorities for the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Local Nature Recovery](#)' paper. Many of these recommendations were taken up in the 2023 schemes which were announced at the beginning of 2023, for example by introducing planning and training for Integrated Pest Management. We continue to advocate for closer alignment between the ELM schemes and the Government's environmental targets, however as yet there are still no set of objectives set within the programme.

In parliamentary advocacy we tried to influence the damaging narratives that emerged around food security in 2022 as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We have had relative success in ensuring that biodiversity and climate resilience are at the heart of food production, and must be protected and underpinned to shore up food security. We have engaged parliamentarians through [briefings](#), select committee [evidence](#) and meetings with MPs and peers.

Reducing the chemical pollution burden

In 2022, we began a project to highlight and tackle chemical pollution in England and the rest of the UK in the Government's upcoming Chemicals Strategy. While most of the public-facing work is scheduled for 2023, we made some headway with engaging organisations, parliamentarians and Defra in our agenda.

The key asks of our campaign are that the government: puts group restrictions on the worst chemicals, so that only the most essential uses are allowed; accounts for the 'cocktail effect' whereby chemicals interact within the environment (by introducing a Mixtures Assessment Factor); and that Government monitoring is vastly improved so that we can build up a more comprehensive picture of chemicals in air, waters and soils.

Ensuring clean healthy and thriving seas

The Marine Group has continued to maintain pressure on the Government to deliver its flagship Highly Protected Marine Areas, publishing a [paper on the criteria for success of the programme](#) and responding to [the consultation over the summer](#). The group has most recently [responded in the press](#) to the disappointing scaling back of the initial pilot sites from 5 sites to 3. The group is highly engaged in the Marine Management Organisation's programme to restrict damaging fishing activity in offshore MPAs, making the case that these restrictions should go further and be delivered faster.

The group drafted a [briefing for MPs](#) on the harm that new offshore oil and gas production will cause to the marine environment, particularly through oil spills and underwater noise. This led to an MP tabling written questions on the issue, and subsequent [press coverage](#) of the number of oil spills.

Protecting marine mammals

The group have been engaged with the EFRA Committee's ongoing inquiry into marine mammals, submitting [a written response](#) and with a number of members giving evidence in front of MPs. Since the initial hearings, the group have submitted further information on the harms of bycatch, providing evidence of the inadequacy of current monitoring and trials.

Link organised an event in July to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the moratorium on commercial whaling passed by the International Whaling Commission. This was held at the Brighton Metropole Hotel, where the original agreement was reached. A permanent memorial plaque was unveiled in the hotel lobby by James Smith, UK Commissioner to the IWC. In his speech, he reaffirmed the UK Government's commitment to the conservation and welfare of whales and the future of the IWC and announced a new UK contribution of £300,000 towards its conservation work and operating costs.

Providing a pollution solution

Link's Waste and Resources Group have continued to advocate for stronger and faster action to tackle polluting items, ensuring that ocean pollution is halted at source. The group responded to Government consultations on banning items such as single use plastic cutlery and plates, arguing for the most ambitious bans. They produced a [draft private members' bill](#) which would halt the consenting of new waste incinerator plants. The group also published its [plan for delivering the widespread adoption of reuse and refill systems](#), highlighting how these systems could dramatically reduce litter and cut resource use.

The group have sought to highlight how improved policies could deliver environmental benefits across the Government's agenda, responding to a consultation on improved food waste reporting by businesses, on reforming the landfill tax, and on the [policies needed to tackle illegal waste exports](#). Working with colleagues at Green Alliance, the group produced a briefing for MPs for a Westminster Hall debate on the environmental harm of disposable vapes. This has been expanded into a public facing briefing, bringing the sector together to highlight the emerging harm from these badly designed, and frequently littered items.

Securing a global goal for nature

After a long delay, December 2022 finally saw the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 take place in Montreal. Across the two years leading up to the talks, Wildlife and Countryside Link had been working with colleagues in sister Links across the UK to develop recommendations on how the UK could demonstrate ambitious leadership to secure a strong global deal for nature at COP15.

In 2022 our focus was on raising awareness about COP15 amongst the Link membership, general public and across Westminster. We co-organised a Westminster event in early Summer to raise awareness of the CBD amongst parliamentarians and to promote the recommendations in our [ELUK COP15 report](#) and '10 species to save the world' report. We also attended regular stakeholder calls with the Defra CBD team, updates from which were fed back to members in regular information sessions to inform their own work around COP15.

The run up to COP15 also saw the launch of the 'Urgent Conversation' campaign, organised by RSPB with wide support across the Link membership. Link played an important role in sharing information about campaign plans and building support for the campaign amongst members.

Although we were pleased to see an ambitious agreement agreed at COP15 through the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the key will be its implementation. In 2023 and beyond, our focus will be on ensuring the UK produces a clear and ambitious National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which includes details about how delivery of the goals of the framework will be coordinated across all four UK nations.

Environmental markets in the UK

Following Link's initial discussions on carbon markets in 2021, 2022 saw a broadening of this work to look at environmental markets more generally. We undertook a project across 2022 to establish a series of principles for codes to guide projects selling credits through environmental markets, and set out the governance and market making requirements to ensure that markets are high integrity, work for local communities, and contribute to delivering national nature targets.

We carried out much of this work through the existing markets group, with support from the NGO Climate and Land Use group which became an official Link group in 2022. Alongside the development of a report which will be released in early 2023, we submitted responses to the CCC voluntary carbon markets consultation and the BEIS consultation on the development of the UK ETS. As part of our work on the latter, we secured a meeting with the ETS team in BEIS to discuss our concerns about the potential inclusion of nature-based greenhouse gas removals under the ETS. We will continue engagement on this topic in 2023.

In October 2022 we organised alongside RSPB an away day to RSPB Medmerry for members of Defra's Green Finance team and others working on environmental markets within Defra. We will continue to engage with the team going forwards, sharing the recommendations from our forthcoming report, including the suggestion to introduce a Nature Recovery Obligation across key sectors to drive investment in nature.

Structure, Governance and Management

Leadership

Link's Board of Trustees, and its Finance and Resources Sub Committee, each held four meetings during 2022.

In 2022, Philip Hewetson stepped down from his position as Treasurer on the Board. We would like to thank him for dedicated and exceptional service. Marcus Gilleard has served the maximum of three terms on the Board of Trustees and was re-elected for a further one year at Link's 2022 AGM. Sandy Luk has served her first term on the Board of Trustees and was re-elected for her second term at Link's 2022 AGM.

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 December 1999 and registered as a charity on 5 January 2005. Members of the Board of Trustees are Directors for the purpose of Company Law and Trustees for the purpose of Charity Law. Members who served during the year, and up to the date of this report, are set out on Page 3.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In 2007 the Memorandum and Articles of Association were reviewed, both to ensure compliance with the Companies Act (2006) and Charities Act (2006). Recognising the need to update the Articles, a further review was carried out in 2017/18 and the updated Articles were agreed upon by members at a special General Meeting on 22 May 2020.

Under the Articles, the members of the Board of Trustees are elected by a postal vote in advance or by secret ballot at the Annual General Meeting. Members of the Board of Trustees must retire at the third Annual General Meeting after that at which he or she was first elected, and is eligible for re-election for up to a further term ending on the sixth Annual General Meeting after their first election. The Treasurer must retire at the Annual General Meeting every three years but may stand for re-election with no maximum term of office.

Risk Management

Wildlife and Countryside Link views the management of risk as an integral element of its governance processes. The major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by Link's Director and Trustees, are reviewed annually with systems in place to mitigate those risks. It is recognised that any control system can only provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that major risks have been managed adequately.

The two main risks and uncertainties that face the charity, as identified in the Risk Register, include risks to income and reputation. Link aims to mitigate these risks by scrutinising the finances through the Finance and Resources Sub-Committee, by diversifying our funding sources, horizon scanning with members, non-members and other stakeholders, and regularly communicating with our member organisations to ensure they are updated, engaged and benefitting from their membership of Link.

The Link team adheres to protocols and procedures, with the finances being closely monitored to ensure expenditure is appropriate and within reasonable limits, and that adequate resources are in place. Link's Communications Manager also works with our Director and Trustees to reduce potential risks to Link's reputation.

Wildlife and Countryside Link has a health and safety policy to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities. Each new joiner is given an induction in the most up to date health & safety policy.

Diversity, equality and inclusion

Link is committed to being an inclusive workplace and to helping the environment sector become more diverse and representative. In Spring, 2022 Link had 11 staff including the CEO and a Board of 10 members.

- Six staff are female with a gender ratio of 54.5% female to 45.5% male, 66% male on SMT
- Of the 10 Board members 4 are female (40%) compared to 6 males (60%)
- No staff members are from ethnically diverse backgrounds
- One Board member is from an ethnically diverse background
- No staff members have reported disabilities or medical conditions

- No Board members have reported disabilities or medical conditions
- One staff member is in their 50s, one in the 40s, three in their 30s and six (54%) in their 20s
- Data on ages of Board members is not available
- Data on staff sexual orientation is unavailable
- We did not collect data on Board member sexual orientation

Pay Policy for senior staff

The Trustees consider that the Board of Trustees and the senior management team comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Charity on a day-to-day basis. Day-to-day operational responsibility is delegated from Trustees to the CEO and senior team. All Trustees give of their time freely and no Trustee received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in Note 6 to the accounts.

We have reviewed the pay and rewards given to staff to ensure we give fair terms in line with other similar organisations. One member of staff received a total emolument of £60-70,000.

Preparation of the report

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies' exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Exemptions from Disclosure

There are no exemptions required.

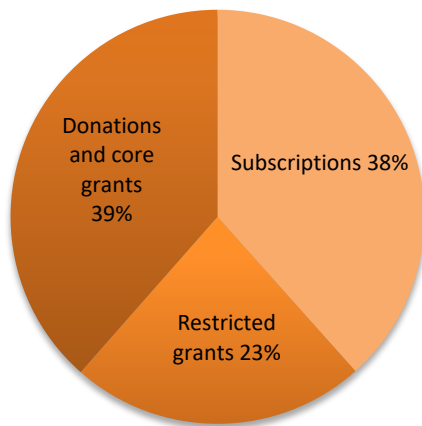
Funds held as custodian Trustee on behalf of others

Link does not have a custodian Trustee.

Financial Review

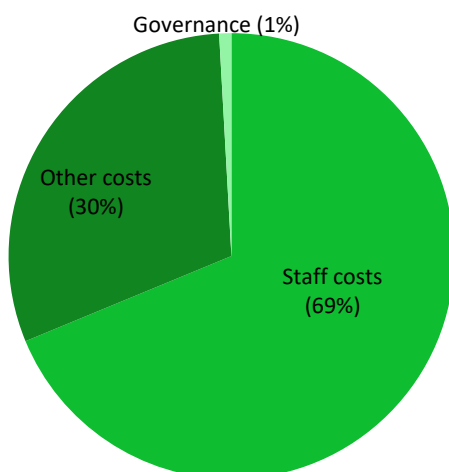
Here we summarise financial information to give an overview of the charity's financial performance during 2022, by using selected information from the full annual accounts. The full accounts are set out at page 17 and thereafter.

2022 Income



During 2022, a number of restricted grants contributed towards funding the ongoing implementation of Link's five year Strategy 2020-25. Link's total income in 2022 was £589,596 (2021 £675,485). Member subscriptions for the year totaled £225,880 (2021 £197,131).

2022 Expenditure



Link's total expenditure amounted to £542,179 (2021 £470,929).

Total expenditure on staff costs totaled £387,389. As in past years, this does not take account of the contribution made to Link's collaborative work by staff within our member organisations, who help us to achieve so much. These results show that Link has and continues to develop a secure financial model based on member subscriptions with a level of grants that allow Link to maximise its effectiveness for its members.

Reserves Policy

Link's Reserve policy is to maintain free reserves of six months operating expenditure, over a rolling period of three years. This allows Link's Board of Trustees to maximise the use of the financial reserves but demands a plan to achieve the policy. At 31 December 2022, free reserves (in the general fund) amounted to 9.85 months of total 2022 expenditure. This level of reserves will allow Link to continue to implement the current interim Strategy.

Grants

Link secured valuable grant funding in 2022 to support its work with members for the next several years. Link confirmed two three years fundings from The Helvellyn Foundation and from The Treebeard Trust for 2022 to 2025. This is in addition to the existing four years funding from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation for 2022 to 2025 and three years funding from the John Ellerman Foundation for 2021 to 2023. This unrestricted core funding will help support the salary costs of the core team, including Link's CEO, Head of Advocacy, Communication manager, Policy officers and Admin and Finance officer. These unrestricted funds, in addition to other unrestricted core income from member subscriptions, are essential for Link's core policy work that helps the organisation deliver on its own objectives on areas such as wildlife crime, the freshwater environment, agriculture, and nature and wellbeing.

Link also secured restricted funds to support particular Policy officers and projects, including grants from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation to support the Head of Communications, from the European Climate Foundation to support carbon offsetting work, from the Woodland Trust towards work on Local Nature Recovery, from the European Climate Foundation towards planning work, from Esme Fairbairn Foundation and the Savitri Trust towards work on chemical pollution.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those individuals and organisations that made 2022 such a great year for Link, including our members, partners, funders and colleagues. With their generous support, we will continue to work hard in 2023 and beyond to conserve and protect wildlife and the countryside.

Preparation of the report

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies' exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006. It was approved, and authorised for issue, by the Trustees on 22 May 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Martin Spray CBE, Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link

Members



Wildlife and
Countryside

LINK 



GREENPEACE



earthwatch
EUROPE



Council for
British Archaeology



ANGLING
TRUST



FISH
LEGAL

waterwise



**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Wildlife and Countryside Link ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31st December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 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 matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

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.



Richard Appleyard FCA
The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
Gibbons Mannington & Phipps LLP
Chartered Accountants
20 Eversley Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN40 1HE

Date: 15 June 2023

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	2021 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	226,446	69	226,515	195,773
Charitable activities	4				
Charitable Activities		225,880	136,499	362,379	479,609
Investment income	3	<u>702</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>702</u>	<u>103</u>
Total		<u>453,028</u>	<u>136,568</u>	<u>589,596</u>	<u>675,485</u>
 EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable Activities		<u>325,152</u>	<u>217,027</u>	<u>542,179</u>	<u>470,929</u>
 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		127,876	(80,459)	47,417	204,556
 RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>434,659</u>	<u>147,661</u>	<u>582,320</u>	<u>377,764</u>
 TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>562,535</u>	<u>67,202</u>	<u>629,737</u>	<u>582,320</u>

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET
31ST DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	2021 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12	2,850	-	2,850	6,180
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	13	24,097	-	24,097	11,415
Cash at bank and in hand		575,879	67,200	643,079	610,160
		599,976	67,200	667,176	621,575
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	14	(40,289)	-	(40,289)	(45,435)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		559,687	67,200	626,887	576,140
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		562,537	67,200	629,737	582,320
NET ASSETS		562,537	67,200	629,737	582,320
FUNDS	16				
Unrestricted funds				562,537	434,659
Restricted funds				67,200	147,661
TOTAL FUNDS				629,737	582,320

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31st December 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

BALANCE SHEET - continued
31ST DECEMBER 2022

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 22 May 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



M Spray - Trustee

**CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>32,217</u>	<u>209,851</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>32,217</u>	<u>209,851</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received		<u>702</u>	<u>103</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities		<u>702</u>	<u>103</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		32,919	209,954
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>610,160</u>	<u>400,206</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>643,079</u>	<u>610,160</u>

**NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	47,417	204,556
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	3,330	3,329
Interest received	(702)	(103)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(12,682)	30,288
Decrease in creditors	(5,146)	(28,219)
Net cash provided by operations	<u>32,217</u>	<u>209,851</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/1/22	Cash flow	At 31/12/22
	£	£	£
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>610,160</u>	<u>32,919</u>	<u>643,079</u>
	<u>610,160</u>	<u>32,919</u>	<u>643,079</u>
Total	<u>610,160</u>	<u>32,919</u>	<u>643,079</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, 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 Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Subscription income from full and associate member organisations is invoiced on a calendar year basis and is recognised accordingly.

Grants are recognised as income in the Statement of financial activities in accordance with the terms attached by the grantor.

Income from recharged costs is accrued when the associated costs are incurred. Other donations and sundry income are recognised in the Statement of financial activities when received.

Expenditure

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.

Governance costs are those incurred in connection with compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Tangible fixed assets

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

Plant and machinery	- 4 years
Fixtures and fittings	- 4 years
Computer equipment	- 4 years

All assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Fund accounting

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 charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the opening of the deposit.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their recoverable amounts to which the charity is entitled.

Creditors

Creditors 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 are normally recognised at their settlement value.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Donations	298	3,999
Grants for core funding	226,217	189,488
Government grant: Furlough Scheme	-	2,286
	<u>226,515</u>	<u>195,773</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2022	2021
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>702</u>	<u>103</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		2022	2021
	Activity	£	£
Subscriptions	Charitable Activities	225,880	197,131
Grants for project work	Charitable Activities	136,499	282,478
		<u>362,379</u>	<u>479,609</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs (see note 6)	Support costs (see note 7)	Totals
	£	£	£
Charitable Activities	<u>539,655</u>	<u>2,524</u>	<u>542,179</u>

6. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	387,389	327,218
Payroll management	896	708
Insurance	1,545	927
Rent, rates & electricity	30,334	29,201
Sundries	67	160
Publications, research and reports	30,050	22,355
Consultant fees	47,581	49,854
Subscriptions expense	14,498	4,223
Events	3,842	10,495
Communications	4,623	4,526
IT Technical Support	6,507	8,431
IT software and consumables	2,160	1,959
Travel and subsistence	3,240	1,305
Office maintenance & repairs	1,950	1,220
Staff training	1,643	1,874
Bad debts	-	100
Depreciation	<u>3,330</u>	<u>3,329</u>
	<u>539,655</u>	<u>467,885</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

7. SUPPORT COSTS

	Governance costs £
Charitable Activities	<u>2,524</u>

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

	2022 Charitable Activities £	2021 Total activities £
Preparation of statutory accounts	1,190	1,638
Accountancy fees	288	-
Independent examination	1,000	1,332
Legal and professional fees	26	13
Bank charges	<u>20</u>	<u>61</u>
	<u>2,524</u>	<u>3,044</u>

8. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2022 £	2021 £
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>3,330</u>	<u>3,329</u>

9. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st December 2022 nor for the year ended 31st December 2021.

Trustees' expenses

Expenses for travel and subsistence were reimbursed to one trustee and amounted to £319 (2021 £97).

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

10. STAFF COSTS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Wages and salaries	339,744	289,012
Social security costs	30,193	24,246
Other pension costs	17,452	13,960
	<u>387,389</u>	<u>327,218</u>

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

	2022	2021
	11	10
Staff members	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>

One employee received remuneration of between £60,000 and £70,000 in the year (exclusive of employer pensions and employer National Insurance contributions). (2021: 1 employee was paid between £60,000 and £70,000). The employer pension contributions for that member of staff amounted to £3,750 in the year.

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise all staff members. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the Charity were as disclosed above.

11. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	191,872	3,901	195,773
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	197,131	282,478	479,609
Investment income	<u>103</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>103</u>
Total	<u>389,106</u>	<u>286,379</u>	<u>675,485</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	<u>250,355</u>	<u>220,574</u>	<u>470,929</u>
NET INCOME	138,751	65,805	204,556
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	<u>295,908</u>	<u>81,856</u>	<u>377,764</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>434,659</u>	<u>147,661</u>	<u>582,320</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1st January 2022 and 31st December 2022	<u>5,159</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>2,160</u>	<u>13,319</u>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1st January 2022	<u>3,479</u>	<u>2,697</u>	<u>963</u>	<u>7,139</u>
Charge for year	<u>1,290</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>3,330</u>
At 31st December 2022	<u>4,769</u>	<u>4,197</u>	<u>1,503</u>	<u>10,469</u>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31st December 2022	<u>390</u>	<u>1,803</u>	<u>657</u>	<u>2,850</u>
At 31st December 2021	<u>1,680</u>	<u>3,303</u>	<u>1,197</u>	<u>6,180</u>

13. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	12,500	300
Other debtors	7,508	7,508
Prepayments	4,089	3,607
	<u>24,097</u>	<u>11,415</u>

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	17,062	2,523
Social security and other taxes	9,830	7,894
Pensions	2,185	1,826
Deferred income	-	1,000
Accrued expenses	11,212	32,192
	<u>40,289</u>	<u>45,435</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

15. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Within one year	<u>14,893</u>	<u>7,447</u>

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/1/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/12/22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	434,659	127,878	562,537
Restricted funds			
Environment Links UK	1,631	-	1,631
Agriculture	1,079	-	1,079
Marine Projects	32,344	(32,344)	-
Blueprint for Water	846	-	846
Planning Coalition	289	-	289
Head of Communications	33,899	(21,011)	12,888
Wildlife Crime and Trade	-	18	18
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	27,103	(27,103)	-
European Climate Foundation	29,633	(29,633)	-
Green Recovery	20,687	(20,513)	174
Local Nature Recovery Strategies	-	125	125
Peer Support Network for People of Colour	150	-	150
Chemical Campaign	-	50,000	50,000
	<u>147,661</u>	<u>(80,461)</u>	<u>67,200</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>582,320</u>	<u>47,417</u>	<u>629,737</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

16. 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	453,028	(325,150)	127,878
Restricted funds			
Marine Projects	-	(32,344)	(32,344)
Head of Communications	21,001	(42,012)	(21,011)
Wildlife Crime and Trade	68	(50)	18
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	-	(27,103)	(27,103)
European Climate Foundation	38,206	(67,839)	(29,633)
Green Recovery	-	(20,513)	(20,513)
Local Nature Recovery Strategies	7,293	(7,168)	125
Chemical Campaign	<u>70,000</u>	<u>(20,000)</u>	<u>50,000</u>
	<u>136,568</u>	<u>(217,029)</u>	<u>(80,461)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>589,596</u>	<u>(542,179)</u>	<u>47,417</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/1/21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/12/21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	295,908	138,751	434,659
Restricted funds			
Environment Links UK	3,225	(1,594)	1,631
Agriculture	1,179	(100)	1,079
Marine Projects	22,832	9,512	32,344
Blueprint for Water	-	846	846
Planning Coalition	289	-	289
Head of Communications	31,032	2,867	33,899
Wildlife Crime and Trade	400	(400)	-
Convention on Biological Diversity	8,199	(8,199)	-
Environmental Funders Network	14,700	(14,700)	-
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	-	27,103	27,103
European Climate Foundation	-	29,633	29,633
Green Recovery	-	20,687	20,687
Peer Support Network for People of Colour	-	150	150
	<u>81,856</u>	<u>65,805</u>	<u>147,661</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>377,764</u>	<u>204,556</u>	<u>582,320</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	389,106	(250,355)	138,751
Restricted funds			
Environment Links UK	-	(1,594)	(1,594)
Agriculture	-	(100)	(100)
Marine Projects	38,000	(28,488)	9,512
Blueprint for Water	3,750	(2,904)	846
Head of Communications	21,000	(18,133)	2,867
Wildlife Crime and Trade	-	(400)	(400)
Convention on Biological Diversity	1	(8,200)	(8,199)
Environmental Funders Network	-	(14,700)	(14,700)
DWP Kickstart Scheme	6,065	(6,065)	-
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	74,999	(47,896)	27,103
European Climate Foundation	41,206	(11,573)	29,633
Green Recovery	55,000	(34,313)	20,687
Local Nature Recovery Strategies	20,208	(20,208)	-
Peer Support Network for People of Colour	150	-	150
State of Nature campaign	26,000	(26,000)	-
	<u>286,379</u>	<u>(220,574)</u>	<u>65,805</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>675,485</u>	<u>(470,929)</u>	<u>204,556</u>

Purposes of material restricted funds:

Marine Projects

The final instalments of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's generous support for the role of Marine Policy Manager have been received. The Marine Policy Manager funding has been spent on a Link policy officer role, convening the work of the Marine Policy working group.

Head of Communications

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation provided funding for Link's Head of Communications role, particularly to support Link's work in sharing marine conservation policy and messages. The majority of the funding has been spent and the remainder will be spent in the next financial year to continue to develop Link's strategic communications.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Final payment has been made to the consultancy Full Colour Ltd for our work together to understand and improve ethnic diversity in the environment sector. The funding was kindly provided by the John Ellerman Foundation, Natural England, the Joseph Rowntree Trust, and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

European Climate Foundation - climate, NBS

The Foundation supported work on nature-based solutions and environmental markets, leading to proposals for principles for high-integrity environmental markets, engagement with DEFRA and HMT, and new ideas for new regulations to require private sector investment in nature's recovery. The funds were spent on a Link policy officer role.

Green Recovery

This project with Green Alliance focused on ensuring that economic policy responses to the pandemic focused on environmental improvement, for example by showing that the remit of the UK Infrastructure Bank could be expanded to cover natural capital. Funding supported a Link policy officer role.

Chemical Campaign

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Savitri Trust provided essential core support for a new chemicals campaign, intended to strengthen the regulation of toxic chemicals in the UK. The campaign particularly focuses on river pollution. Most of the funding has been spent commissioning the Rivers Trust to undertake mapping and analysis of contaminants including pesticides, pharmaceuticals and "forever chemicals", using Environment Agency data. Additional funds have been spent to produce a shared parliamentary briefings and consultation responses, and to host an event on chemicals with UK Youth For Nature, advocating better monitoring and management of chemical pollution.

17. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Other than as disclosed in note 9 to the accounts, there were no related party transactions for the year ended 31st December 2022.

18. GUARANTEE BY MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY

Every member of the Company agrees to contribute to the Company £1 or any smaller amount if required if:-

- (a) The Company is wound-up while he or she is a member or within a year afterwards; and
- (b) The Company has debts and liabilities which it cannot meet out of its assets.