

Wildlife and  
Countryside



# Wildlife and Countryside Link

(A company limited by guarantee)

Company number: 03889519

## Annual Report 2024

The Trustees submit their report together with the financial statements of Wildlife and Countryside Link for the year ended 31 December 2024.

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## A Message from Link's Chair

2024 was a year of campaigning action for Wildlife and Countryside Link.

We brought our first ever judicial review, challenging the Government's decision not to consider a revision of the Environmental Improvement Plan in light of a damning progress report by the Office for Environmental Protection. The legal action brought together members large and small to call for Government to honour the intention of the Environment Act 2021 by strengthening the Plan. We were delighted that the incoming Government agreed to revise the EIP and the process is already well underway. We hope for a new plan that links targets with science-based action plans and clear allocation of responsibility for delivery.

At the opposite end of the scale, perhaps, we also organised our first mass demonstration. Working with Chris Packham's team and a huge array of environmental groups, Link led development of Restore Nature Now. The march was the largest march for nature ever in the UK, bringing together 60,000-100,000 people in Westminster in support of stronger action for nature recovery. We are hugely grateful to everyone who made the effort to join us, for the heartfelt speeches, the camaraderie and the humour. Surely the message was heard loud and clear. There's no time to lose to restore nature.

As the General Election approached, we already had a strong shared platform for action through the Nature 2030 campaign. We put politicians on the spot at a National Nature Hustings, kindly hosted by Chester Zoo, and in conjunction with The Wildlife Trusts Wild Live event. We were pleased to see Nature 2030 proposals reflected in party manifestos across the political spectrum, particularly with renewed commitments to halt the decline of biodiversity by 2030.

Alongside all this, our work on day-to-day policy and legislation continued. I am astonished and delighted by the level of collaboration and expertise shown every day in Link working groups, pressing for bolder and more effective law and policy for nature.

These actions have set a high bar of expectation for the new government. Sir Keir's team take office at a time of unprecedented national and international challenges for environmental policy, and finding a way to honour their environmental promises will be difficult with so many obstacles in the way. But that is exactly what they must do. Restoring nature and stopping climate change, improving animal welfare, and improving the quality of people's environment is critical to our future. We will be there to challenge and support the new Government in making this the Parliament that the decline of nature was finally turned around.

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 / resigned 2024)
Sandy Luk	(appointed December 2018 / resigned 2024)
Nadia Shaikh	(appointed December 2021 / resigned 2024)
Allison Ogden-Newton	(appointed December 2021)
Jason Reeves	(appointed December 2021)
Ali Plummer	(appointed December 2023)
Dr James Cooper	(appointed December 2023)
Jemima Child-Clarke	(appointed December 2023)
Adam Royle	(appointed December 2024)

**Company Registered Number**  
03889519

**Charity Registered Number**  
1107460

### Principal Office Address

N101C Vox Studios  
1-45 Durham Street  
London  
SE11 5JH

### Company Secretary and CEO

Dr Richard Benwell

### Independent Examiner

Richard Appleyard FCA  
Gibbons Mannington & Phipps LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
20 Eversley Road  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
TN40 1HE

### Bankers

The Co-operative Bank  
PO Box 101  
1 Balloon Street  
Manchester  
M60 4EP

Nationwide  
5-11 St George's Street Douglas  
Isle of Man  
IM99 1RN

### Solicitors

Russell-Cooke Solicitors  
2 Putney Hill  
London  
SW15 6AS

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

Link is the largest environment and wildlife coalition in England. We bring together 86 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.

With a General Election ahead, we aim to ensure that all political parties make clear commitments for nature and animal welfare, capable of improving the lives of animals, and stopping the decline of species abundance by the end of the decade.

We want to play our part in bringing the huge and varied environmental movement together to express people's love of animals and nature in a way that cuts through the short-termism of politics. We will support the sector in coming together in a major public demonstration, we will team up with organisations with strong local networks to support informed doorstep questions and local hustings events focused on nature, and we will ensure that all parties are held to account at national level for their environmental commitments. We will continue to work with close partners in the delivery of this work, including Green Alliance, the Climate Coalition, Sustain, the Nature Friendly Farming Network and others.

At the same time, we will ensure that the day-to-day delivery of environmental ambition is not slowed down by political timelines. The year starts with the Offshore Petroleum Licensing Bill, which we oppose. We will work with Parliamentarians to propose measures to strengthen protection for Marine Protected Areas and to prioritise space for nature and renewable energy generation at sea, rather than expanding fossil fuel industries.

Key animal welfare legislation is also moving forward, with the Animal Welfare (Live Exports) Bill, which would fulfil a long-standing shared campaign, and the Hunting Trophy (Import Prohibition) Bill early in the year. At the same time, we will press for effective implementation of animal welfare provisions in the Online Safety Act, following our successful work on the bill last year.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.



Both offshore and onshore, strategic planning will be key to ensure that climate change mitigation can go hand-in-hand with nature recovery. Last year, we added to public debate about the need for a Land Use Framework with a detailed description of what an effective framework would include: it should be target-driven, carry weight in planning, permitting and spending decisions, and it should be transparent and adaptable. This year, we will expand on that work with our Planning Ahead project, bringing together climate-focused and nature-focused organisations to ensure that the environment movement stands together against harmful deregulation in planning and in support of reforms that can deliver an integrated climate and nature agenda.

## Achievements and Performance

In 2024, Link was at the forefront of public policy debate, working closely with other coalitions to guard against environmentally harmful policy proposals and to create new opportunities for improvement.

In 2024, Link managed and provided support for 19 groups on the following policy areas:

- Agriculture: Chair, Barnaby Coupe (The Wildlife Trusts); Vice Chair, Alice Groom (RSPB)
- Animal Welfare: Chair, Claire Bass (Humane Society International-UK); Vice Chair, Arthur Thomas (Four Paws UK)
- Blueprint for Water: Chair, Ali Morse (The Wildlife Trusts); Co Vice Chairs, Tessa Wardley (The Rivers Trusts) and Emily Smith (Angling Trust)
- Bovine TB: no Chair
- Bycatch: no Chair
- Chemical Taskforce: no Chair
- Circular Economy (formerly Resources & Waste): Chair, Paula Chin (WWF)
- Education and Learning: Co-Chairs, Suzanne Welch (RSPB), Cathriona Hickey (ZSL), and Jenny Davis (The Wildlife Trusts)
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Chair, Miriam Bentley-Rose (The Wildlife Trusts), Vice Chair, Meera Inglis (RSPB)
- Invasive Non-Native Species: Chairs: David Smith (Buglife)
- Land Use Planning: Chair, Rebecca Pullinger (The Wildlife 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, Bernadette Butterfield (RSPB)
- Marine Mammals: Chair, Lucy Babey (ORCA), Chair, Sue Fisher (AWI)
- Nature Policy: no Chair
- Nature and Wellbeing: Co-Chairs, Kate Conto (The Ramblers) and Dom Higgins (TWT)
- Trees and Woodlands: Chair, Nick Phillips (Woodland Trust); Vice Chair, Andrew Weatherall (RSPB)
- Wildlife Crime & Trade: Chair, Dominic Dyer (Born Free); Vice Chair, Craig Fellows (Badger Trust)

Key achievements in 2024 include:

### General Election Hustings

In June, Wildlife & Countryside Link organised the 'Big Nature & Climate Debate', which transpired to be the only environmental hustings in the 2024 General Election. Held at Chester Zoo, covered by Channel 4 and filmed by The Wildlife Trusts, the debate saw spokespeople from England's largest parties asked to set out how they would halt the decline in nature and get the country on track to achieving net zero. This pressure saw the following commitments made at the hustings:

Toby Perkins pledged that one of the first actions of a Labour Government would be to ratify the Global Oceans Treaty, as well as reviewing the Environmental Improvement Plan to ensure Environment Act targets are met (**when Labour entered Government in July, they announced the [EIP Review](#), securing this essential step forward for nature. Pressure has also been exerted by a pioneering [legal case](#) led by Link**).

Rebecca Pow pledged that the £1 billion extra proposed by the Conservatives for farming budget would cover funding for innovative technology designed to reduce chemical use. Adrian Ramsay pledged that Green MPs would give the achievement of the commitment to protect 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030 the same attention and focus as the achievement of net zero. Lord Newby pledged that Liberal Democrats would require all large companies to publish and implement plans to make their operations a net positive for nature.

The hustings followed on from the handing of the Nature 2030 open letter, signed by over 100,000 people, to major parties in alignment with Restore Nature Now asks, adding further pressure for nature commitments.

### **Leveling up the planning system to support nature's recovery**

Recognising planning as a key issue in the general election and for any new Government, the Land Use Planning Group published a report called '[Planning Ahead](#)', setting out how planning reform could deliver nature recovery alongside housing and energy infrastructure. This report helped build consensus within the Link coalition and beyond about the reforms needed to deliver key infrastructure to fight climate change and restore nature.

With the aim of influencing the new Government's planning reforms and forthcoming Planning and Infrastructure Bill, the Group followed up with a series of briefings on key topics, including fixing [Biodiversity Net Gain](#), accelerating [nutrient neutrality](#) solutions, [nature-friendly design](#) and building standards, improving the [Green Belt for nature](#), and on proposals for a [Nature Restoration Fund](#). Towards the end of the year, Link launched the public campaign [Wilder by Design](#), aimed at ensuring that the planning reforms and the forthcoming Bill do not undermine nature protections and include the policies needed to recover nature.

The group also responded to the Government's [consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework](#) and to the Environmental Audit Committee's call for [evidence on housing growth and environmental sustainability](#).

### **Blueprint for Water**

Blueprint for Water published its PR24 scorecard '[Achieving Environmental Ambitions](#)' in September 2024, which [was covered](#) in national press. Several of the recommendations have been taken on-board in Ofwat's Final Determination, most notably around transparency, reporting of environmental outcomes, and greater flexibility to allow companies to swap to green or hybrid solutions within the AMP.

The Water (Special Measures) Bill has been strengthened and will deliver more for nature due to Government partially accepting Link amendments, [including the](#) addition of Water Only Companies to pollution incident reduction plans, a requirement on water companies to report on the implementation of the plans, and a requirement for water companies to address the use of nature-based solutions within drainage and sewage management plans. The Government also agreed to a new duty for Ofwat to have regard to the need to contribute to the achievement of Climate Change and Environment Act targets.

Link was successful in coordinating early, proactive engagement with the Sir Jon Cunliffe Water Commission, beginning with [a letter](#) and [briefing](#) in October 2024 which was covered in [national press](#). Link was subsequently invited to a roundtable with Sir Jon to set out priorities and aspirations for the review, and is now represented on the Commission's panel by Richard Benwell. Link was heavily involved in the organisation of the [March for Clean Water](#) (led by River Action), tying this into wider advocacy regarding the Water Bill and the Commission. Link was also significantly involved with delivery of the March on the day, which was attended by 15,000 people and was extensively covered in national press.

### **Bovine TB**

Link's Bovine TB Working Group continues to provide space for eNGOs to discuss and build consensus on the issue of bovine TB, and to coordinate strong joint outputs. 2024 saw Government take a new policy direction on bTB, in line with Link's longstanding position that culling must end. Government announced it would not be taking forward 'targeted badger intervention', a policy which [Link strongly opposed](#). It also announced a refresh of the bTB strategy, and confirmed that no further cull licences will be issued after January 2026. Though we must be attentive to the risk that bTB remains a highly contentious and politicised issue, this change of direction is a significant win.

We have also re-established relationships with the Defra bTB team, and were able to meet for productive discussions through a series of roundtables regarding co-design of the new strategy – previously, a lack of trust between eNGOs and Defra officials meant that a meeting had not taken place in over 2 years. This marks a significant change in ways of working on bTB policy; engagement with Defra and work to influence the bTB strategy refresh will continue to be priorities for the group in 2025.



### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

In 2024, Link's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group has continued to support the sector in implementing the Route Map, including through delivering targeted support for small eNGOs via our ['SEEDS' programme](#). The 'Small eNGO Ethnic Diversity Support' (SEEDS) programme was developed in partnership with leadership consultancy Full Colour, with funding from Natural England. The 18-month programme includes 1-2-1 advice sessions, training and resources to help enable and equip smaller organisations to break down barriers and progress on their ethnic diversity journey. Temperature check surveys with the first trial cohort, which began in 2024 and will continue until summer 2025, have revealed that the scheme is meeting or exceeding expectations for the vast majority of participants. Work began in 2024, and will continue in 2025, to develop proposals for upscaling the programme.

The Route Map is now supported by over 50 organisations, and the EDI Working Group attended regularly by over 35 organisations. In July 2024, Link supported delivery of [The RACE Summit](#), a full-day in-person EDI event in London led by SOS-UK and attended by over 100 people. On the day, Link led a workshop on engaging senior leadership. This will be an area of ongoing focus in 2025, with plans to deliver a series of CEO roundtables to reaffirm commitment to the Route Map and to build networks at senior leader level.

### **Invasive Non-native Species**

In 2024 the group published a report 'Stemming the flood of invasive species' building on previous work and exploring how flooding can spread invasive species. We received significant media attention during INNS week. The report was featured in the Defra Stakeholder Forum event presentation. Very recently the INNS and Animal Welfare groups collaborated to submit evidence to the EFRA inquiry on Biosecurity at the Border and sent a letter to the EAC to ask that they conduct another review or investigation into the slow progress of INNS. A win for the group in 2024 was confirmation that the Non-Native Species Inspectorate has been made a permanent recourse – a longstanding priority of the group.

The group will now focus on increasing the powers for inspectors to allow them to be able to check for INNS effectively at the border. We intend this to be the focus of INNS week 2025, as well as a story mapping recorded INNS in SSSI in England. Additional ongoing work seeks to monitor management of INNS in freeports. We must maximise the opportunity we have with Baroness Hayman of Ullock as Minister for Biosecurity as she has an interest in the area and wants to make improvements to speed up progress.

### **Trees and Woodland**

In 2024 the trees and woodlands group published two briefings outlining our positions on [woodland management](#) and [woodland creation](#). A briefing on ancient woodland will be published very soon. Two Link Blogs were published by the group in 2024: [More Trees Please](#) and [COP promises on forests must be delivered, at home and overseas](#). The group are engaged across a variety of link work streams and are keen to secure a ministerial site visit. One focus has been on the green skills gap this year, meeting with HMT in autumn, coordinated by Lauren and the education group and meeting with Skills England. There is also now a quarterly check-in with the Forestry Commission on their upcoming 10-year skills strategy. Link now has a seat in the Forestry Commission Delivery Advisory Group which PTES attend on our behalf.

In 2025 the group secured an in-person site visit to Broughton Estate in May to view the rewilding and tree planting work and are coordinating inviting Defra civil servants to join. We are hopeful that we will be able to gain a seat in the UK Tree Planting Taskforce this year.

### **Safeguarding legal mechanisms to protect nature**

The Legal Strategy Group continued to make the case for the [Environmental Rights Bill](#) in 2024. This draft piece of legislation, drafted for Link, ClientEarth, the RSPB and Friends of the Earth by David Wolfe KC and Kate Cook of Matrix Chambers in 2023, would establish in UK law a human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for everyone. The Bill was included as a Nature 2030 Link campaign ask, and the Liberal Democrats included the Bill in their 2024 General Election Manifesto. Link produced an [updated briefing](#) on the Bill during the General Election campaign.

As well as this propositional work, Link continues to support members of the group to engage with the Aarhus process for ensuring environmental rights, and to work to improve [UK compliance](#) with the convention. In December 2024, the group submitted a full [response](#) to the Government's consultation on ways to improve compliance and [wrote](#) to the Government to highlight opportunities to advocate for Aarhus principles at the Council of Europe. The group also submitted a [response](#) to the Government's call for evidence on possible changes to judicial review for planning decisions recommended by the Banner Review.



### **Tackling wildlife crime**

The Wildlife Crime Working Group published its eighth annual [Wildlife Crime Report](#) in November 2024, presenting a snapshot of the scale and causes of wildlife crime in 2023 and calling for reforms to legislation, policing and sentencing to better tackle these offences. The report received media coverage in the [Independent](#) and on LBC news, and an executive summary was distributed at the UK Wildlife Crime Enforcers Conference. The group has followed up these calls with letters proposing reforms to the [Home Office](#), [Sentencing Council](#) and to the [Crown Prosecution Service](#).

The group also engaged with the Metropolitan Police, following their decision to scale down their wildlife crime unit, and secured a retained dedicated point of contact for environmental organisations wishing to raise wildlife crime concerns with the Met.

### **Raising the bar for animal welfare standards**

The first few months of 2024 saw the group [support](#) a legal ban on live exports to finally get over the line. This was achieved in May, when the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024 passed into law. Progress has also been made on another long standing welfare and environmental ask, for a ban on lead ammunition use. After years of Link input to strengthen recommendations, UK REACH submitted proposals for a lead ammunition ban to Defra in December 2024. Link coordinated [letters](#) to the UK, Scottish and Welsh Governments calling on them for these recommendations to be accepted, with a shorter transition period than that recommended by REACH. Defra is due to make a decision soon. More broadly, the group has [written](#) to the new Government to set out how it could deliver further effective welfare reforms.

The group has also been working to ensure effective implementation of the win it secured in 2023, additions to the Online Safety Act to require social media companies to prevent animal cruelty content on their platforms. [Two submissions](#) have been sent to Ofcom to assist them in implementing these requirements.

### **Ensuring a healthy natural environment and access to nature for all**

The Nature and Wellbeing Strategy Group (NWSG) continues to advocate for access to nature for all. In 2024, NWSG published a response to the Play Commission's Call for Evidence on the value of (outdoor) play for children and a briefing on public access in ELM in collaboration with Link's Agriculture group. NWSG continues to take opportunities forward to build on the commitment in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan to ensure all people live within a 15-minute walk of a green or blue space. This includes stakeholder sessions with Defra and Natural England, parliamentary events, access to nature statistics, and more. The NWSG has also been involved in online sessions and discussions for green social prescribing and continues to influence government policies to ensure sustained funding and policy focus on nature-based well-being initiatives.

The Nature and Wellbeing Strategy Group developed a strong shared position on extending public access rights, accompanied by responsibilities and good management for nature. This position has been embedded in Link's advocacy work ahead of the general election, including a [mini-manifesto on People and Nature](#).

### **Advocating for robust sites and species protections**

Building on the new Government's commitment to review the Environmental Improvement Plan, the Nature Policy Working Group published a [briefing](#) on action needed within the first 100 days of the new Government to meet 2030 species targets.

The group also published the annual [Link progress report](#) on meeting the target to protect at least 30% of England's land for nature by 2030 (also known as 30x30). The report secured significant media coverage and parliamentary attention. Link's advocacy on 30x30 contributed to the Government recognising that protected sites in unfavourable and declining condition should not count towards the 30% target and the new Government commitment to publish a delivery strategy for 30x30 on land in 2025.

Link's work advocating for boosting nature in Protected Landscapes, including National Parks and National Landscapes, through the 30x30 report and [separate briefings](#), helped secure a commitment by the Government in December 2024 for legislative reform to help boost nature recovery in these areas.

Link also worked alongside ELUK colleagues to advocate for robust domestic implementation of 30x30 and other international biodiversity targets, around the international nature conference COP16 in October 2024. Link published an [updated policy progress tracker](#) on all the Global Biodiversity Framework targets in England.

### **Towards a sustainable farming future**

Link continues to bring a range of organisations together to advocate for nature-friendly farming, hosting fortnightly agriculture advocacy meetings with Green Alliance, to share intelligence and plan joint interventions. A notable intervention took place in December, when Link and over forty other organisations came together to [call](#) for more funding for Environmental Land Management schemes and for supply chains reforms, securing extensive media [coverage](#).

Link's Agriculture Group has made a series of complementary policy interventions, including [two briefings](#) setting out next steps for ELMS schemes and a [call](#) for reforms to the permitting system for intensive livestock farming.

### **Ensuring clean healthy and thriving seas**

Our focus for the Marine Group in 2024 was largely on marine spatial planning and the impacts of offshore energy infrastructure. This saw us effectively oppose the Offshore Licensing Bill of the previous government as well as secure a sustainable development duty in The Crown Estate Bill which will help ensure offshore wind does not damage marine nature. We also published a major report concerning "[Planning Ahead on Land and Sea](#)" to help set the agenda for protecting marine nature in the planning system.

We also sought to protect Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) from damaging fishing and industrial activity. We published our [30x30 Progress Report](#) noting the minimal progress in protecting MPAs from bottom-towed fishing gear and calling for swift action. This was supported by responding to a major call for evidence on fishing in MPAs.

### **Protecting marine mammals**

Much of the work of the Marine Mammals Group focused on the meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), IWC69. We provided effective [briefings](#) to Defra. This helped ensure 2024 IWC negotiations saw positive developments compared to recent years with an anti-whaling resolution being passed, quorum numbers being reached, and a pro-conservation stance being well represented. We also continued to influence the UK Government's approach to whale-hunting nations through letters and advocacy through Defra.

We produced a significant [briefing](#) on the reforms to wildlife legislation needed to protect marine mammals, which is being used to influence Defra work on marine mammal protection as well as parliamentary engagement.

### **Circular Economy**

Link's renamed Circular Economy Group published a [Circular Economy Roadmap](#) with three key asks, including establishing a joint Defra/DESNZ Joint Circular Economy Unit. Defra has since announced the establishment of a cross-department, cross-industry Circular Economy Taskforce, a direct achievement of advocacy by the group. This provides a strong opportunity to accelerate progress on circular economy policy. We also prepared a more specific paper on [financial incentives to grow the circular economy](#).

All regulations for the Collection and Packaging Reforms are now in law. We pushed the Government to remain focused on fast, effective implementation of these reforms through submissions to the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee and briefings for parliamentarians ahead of debates on the regulations. Our [briefings](#) were used directly in parliamentary debates.

We also coordinated NGO work on the Global Plastics Treaty and successfully advocated for the new Labour Government to take an ambitious stance in negotiations.



## Structure, Governance and Management

### Leadership

Link's Board of Trustees, and its Finance and Resources Sub Committee, each held four meetings during 2024.

In 2024, Marcus Gilleard served the maximum of three terms on the Board of Trustees and stepped down in December 2024. Both Sandy Luk and Nadia Shaikh served two terms, and both also stepped down in December 2024. Dominic Dyer served two terms on the Board of Trustees and was re-elected for a further one year at Link's 2024 AGM. Link welcomed one new Board member, Adam Royle.

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 environmental sector become more diverse and representative. At the end of year 2024, Link had 11 staff including the CEO and a Board of 8 members.

- Six staff are female with a gender ratio of 55% female to 45% male, 67% male on SMT
- Of the 11 staff members, all identified as heterosexual.
- Of the 8 Board members, 3 are female (38%) and 5 males (62%)
- No Board members have reported disabilities or medical conditions
- Two staff members are in their 40s, three in their 30s and six (55%) in their 20s
- Data on ages of Board members is not available
- Data on staff and Board sexual orientation is unavailable

### **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 their time freely and one Trustee received remuneration for additional consultancy work done for one of Link's working groups. 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 amount of £70,000-80,000.

### **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**

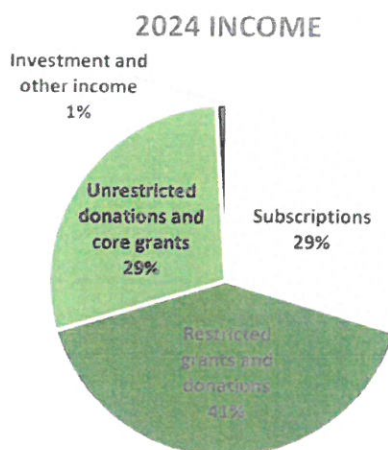
There are no exemptions required.

### **Funds held as custodian Trustee on behalf of others**

Link does not have a custodian Trustee.

## Financial Review

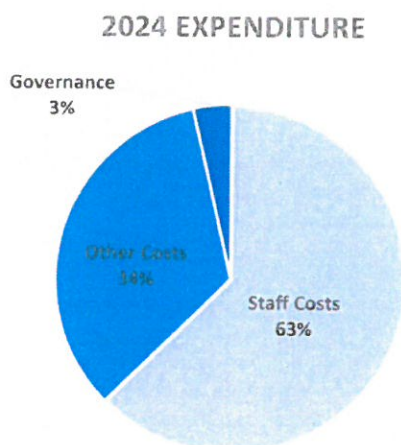
Here we summarise financial information to give an overview of the charity's financial performance during 2024, by using selected information from the full annual accounts. The full accounts are set out at page 19 and thereafter.



Link's total income in 2024 was £909,221 (2023 £738,240). Member subscriptions for the year totaled £269,197 (2023 £258,469).

During 2024, a number of restricted grants contributed towards funding the ongoing implementation of Link's five-year Strategy 2020-25.

A number of restricted donations from both members and the public were received towards the Restore Nature Now event held in June 2024. A couple of restricted grants received in 2024 are for project work due to be carried out in 2025.



Link's total expenditure amounted to £843,406 (2023 £603,600).

Total expenditure on staff costs totaled £528,167. 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 2024, free reserves (in the general fund) amounted to 12.04 months of total 2024 expenditure. This level of reserves will allow Link to continue to implement the current interim Strategy.

## Grants

Link secured valuable grant funding in 2024 to support its work with members for the next couple of years. Link received the final payment from the European Climate Foundation towards Nature 2030, and confirmed a second one from them also for Nature 2030, as well as confirmed two grants towards Impact 2024, one from Green Alliance and one from the Samworth Foundation. The final payment from the New to Nature scheme was also received. Two new multiyear grants were confirmed, one from the Lund Trust and one from The Sigrid Rausing Trust. The first payments for these two grants were received in 2024 but will be used for work due to be carried out in 2025.

This is in addition to the existing core grants funding received from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for 2022 to 2025, the final year for Helvellyn Foundation and the Treebeard Trust (2022 to 2024). This unrestricted core funding will help support the salary costs of the core team, including part of the Link's CEO, Director of Impact and Operations, Media and Campaigns manager, Chemical policy officer, Nature 2030 Policy and Engagement Officer and Director of advocacy. The unrestricted funding also covered the salary costs for a Policy and Advocacy advisor, Policy officers and Admin & 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, marine, the freshwater environment, agriculture, and nature and wellbeing.

Some of the restricted grants secured went to support particular salaries and projects, including part of the CEO's, Director of Advocacy, Director of Impact and Operations, Chemical policy officer and the Media and Campaigns manager salaries for their work on Nature 2030, Impact 2024 and Chemical policy work. The remaining grant from the New to Nature scheme covered the salary cost of a work placement for a Nature 2030 Policy and Engagement Officer.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those individuals and organisations that made 2024 such a great year for Link, including our members, partners, funders and colleagues. With their generous support, we will continue to work hard in 2025 and beyond to conserve and protect wildlife and the countryside.

## Preparation of the report

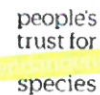
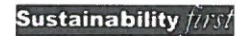
This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies' exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006. It was approved, and authorised for issue, by the Trustees on 9 June 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Martin Spray CBE, Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link



## Members









## **Independent Examiners 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 2024.

### **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.

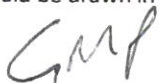
### **Independent examiner's statement**

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  
Gibbons Mannington & Phipps LLP Chartered Accountants  
20 Eversley Road  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
East Sussex  
TN40 1HE

Date 02/09/2025

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	<b>2024 Total funds £</b>	<i>2023 Total funds £</i>
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	<b>260,404</b>	<b>149,023</b>	<b>409,427</b>	<i>345,491</i>
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4				
Charitable Activities		<b>269,197</b>	<b>221,427</b>	<b>490,624</b>	<i>385,955</i>
Investment income	3	<b>8,931</b>	-	<b>8,931</b>	<i>6,349</i>
Other income		<b>239</b>	-	<b>239</b>	<i>445</i>
<b>Total</b>		<b>538,771</b>	<b>370,450</b>	<b>909,221</b>	<i>738,240</i>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>					
<b>Charitable activities</b>	5				
Charitable Activities		<b>486,669</b>	<b>356,737</b>	<b>843,406</b>	<i>603,600</i>
<b>NET INCOME</b>		<b>52,102</b>	<b>13,713</b>	<b>65,815</b>	<i>134,640</i>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Total funds brought forward		<b>735,225</b>	<b>29,152</b>	<b>764,377</b>	<i>629,737</i>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>787,327</b>	<b>42,865</b>	<b>830,192</b>	<i>764,377</i>

**CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

The notes form part of these financial statements

# WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

## BALANCE SHEET 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible assets	12	1,123	-	1,123	481
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	13	27,569	-	27,569	19,287
Cash at bank and in hand		859,370	79,882	939,252	778,703
		886,939	79,882	966,821	797,990
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	14	(100,737)	(37,015)	(137,752)	(34,094)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		786,202	42,867	829,069	763,896
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		787,325	42,867	830,192	764,377
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		787,325	42,867	830,192	764,377
<b>FUNDS</b>	16				
Unrestricted funds				787,325	735,225
Restricted funds				42,867	29,152
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>				830,192	764,377

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31st December 2024.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- 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.

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 9TH JUNE 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



M Spray - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements



**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK****CASH FLOW STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>153,115</u>	<u>129,275</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>153,115</u>	<u>129,275</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,497)	-
Interest received		<u>8,931</u>	<u>6,349</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities		<u>7,434</u>	<u>6,349</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>		<u>160,549</u>	<u>135,624</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period</b>		<u>778,703</u>	<u>643,079</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>		<u>939,252</u>	<u>778,703</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**

**NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

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

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)</b>	<b>65,815</b>	<b>134,640</b>
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation charges	<b>855</b>	<b>2,369</b>
Interest received	<b>(8,931)</b>	<b>(6,349)</b>
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	<b>(8,282)</b>	<b>4,810</b>
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<b>103,658</b>	<b>(6,195)</b>
<b>Net cash provided by operations</b>	<b>153,115</b>	<b>129,275</b>

**2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS**

	<b>At 1/1/24</b>	<b>Cash flow</b>	<b>At 31/12/24</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Net cash</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand	<b>778,703</b>	<b>160,549</b>	<b>939,252</b>
	<b>778,703</b>	<b>160,549</b>	<b>939,252</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>778,703</b>	<b>160,549</b>	<b>939,252</b>

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

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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.

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.



**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued****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**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Donations	<b>157,024</b>	<b>23,488</b>
Grants for core funding	<b>252,403</b>	<b>322,003</b>
	<b><u>409,427</u></b>	<b><u>345,491</u></b>

**3. INVESTMENT INCOME**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Deposit account interest	<b>8,931</b>	<b>6,349</b>

**4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Subscriptions	<b>269,197</b>	<b>258,469</b>
Grants for project work	<b>221,427</b>	<b>127,486</b>
	<b><u>490,624</u></b>	<b><u>385,955</u></b>

**5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS**

	Direct Costs (see note 6) £	Support costs (see note 7) £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<b><u>813,097</u></b>	<b><u>30,309</u></b>	<b><u>843,406</u></b>

# WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

### 6. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs	528,167	460,497
Payroll management	1,134	753
Insurance	10,059	1,331
Rent, rates & electricity	37,815	34,840
Sundries	533	42
Publications, research and reports	15,196	21,790
Consultant fees	128,715	36,358
Subscriptions expense	14,071	2,382
Events	35,636	10,645
Communications	12,205	9,818
IT Technical Support	10,386	9,137
IT software and consumables	2,710	1,565
Travel and subsistence	6,075	4,242
Office maintenance & repairs	2,550	2,983
Staff training	6,990	2,380
Depreciation	855	2,369
	<u>813,097</u>	<u>601,132</u>

### 7. SUPPORT COSTS

	Governance costs
	£
Charitable Activities	<u>30,309</u>

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

	2024	2023
	Charitable Activities	Total activities
	£	£
Preparation of statutory accounts	1,328	1,240
Independent examination	1,240	1,208
Legal and professional fees	27,731	-
Bank charges	10	20
	<u>30,309</u>	<u>2,468</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>

# WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

### 9. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

Consultancy fees were paid to Nadia Shaikh of £3,860 during the year (2023 £3,020) in respect of helping to run the PSN & Raven's working group.

#### Trustees' expenses

Expenses were reimbursed to one trustee during the year of £226.21 (2022 £319).

### 10. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	460,350	403,939
Social security costs	44,128	36,210
Other pension costs	23,689	20,348
	<u>528,167</u>	<u>460,497</u>

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

	2024	2023
	12	11
Staff members	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>

One employee received remuneration of between £70,000 and £80,000 in the year (exclusive of employer pensions and employer National Insurance contributions). (2024: One employee was paid between £60,000 and £70,000). The employer pension contributions for that member of staff amounted to £4,293 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 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>			
Donations and legacies	322,803	22,688	345,491
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Charitable Activities	258,469	127,486	385,955
Investment income	6,349	-	6,349
Other income	49	396	445
<b>Total</b>	<u>587,670</u>	<u>150,570</u>	<u>738,240</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>			
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Charitable Activities	414,983	188,617	603,600
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>	172,687	(38,047)	134,640
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>			
Total funds brought forward	562,537	67,200	629,737



**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

**11. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued**

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<u>735,224</u>	<u>29,153</u>	<u>764,377</u>

**12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
<b>COST</b>				
At 1st January 2024	<b>5,159</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>2,160</b>	<b>13,319</b>
Additions	-	-	<b>1,497</b>	<b>1,497</b>
At 31st December 2024	<u><b>5,159</b></u>	<u><b>6,000</b></u>	<u><b>3,657</b></u>	<u><b>14,816</b></u>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>				
At 1st January 2024	<b>5,098</b>	<b>5,697</b>	<b>2,043</b>	<b>12,838</b>
Charge for year	<b>61</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>855</b>
At 31st December 2024	<u><b>5,159</b></u>	<u><b>6,000</b></u>	<u><b>2,534</b></u>	<u><b>13,693</b></u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>				
At 31st December 2024	-	-	<b>1,123</b>	<b>1,123</b>
At 31st December 2023	<u>61</u>	<u>303</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>481</u>

**13. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	<b>14,867</b>	7,700
Other debtors	<b>7,445</b>	7,445
Prepayments	<b>5,257</b>	4,142
	<u><b>27,569</b></u>	<u>19,287</u>

**14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	<b>25,157</b>	3,455
Social security and other taxes	<b>11,511</b>	12,662
Pensions	<b>2,441</b>	2,824
Grants in advance	<b>84,708</b>	-
Accrued expenses	<b>13,935</b>	15,153
	<u><b>137,752</b></u>	<u>34,094</u>

# WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

### 15. LEASING AGREEMENTS

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	6,734	34,865
Between one and five years	-	6,733
	<u>6,734</u>	<u>41,598</u>

### 16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/1/24	Net movement	At
	£	in funds	31/12/24
	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	735,225	52,100	787,325
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Environment Links UK	1,382	(369)	1,013
Agriculture	1,079	(370)	709
Blueprint for Water	846	-	846
Planning Coalition	289	-	289
Wildlife Crime and Trade	18	-	18
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	2,850	(1,161)	1,689
Local Nature Recovery Strategies	125	-	125
Chemical Campaign	22,271	3,246	25,517
Raven's Network (name changed from Peer Support Network for People of Colour)	292	179	471
Restore Nature Now Project	-	4,370	4,370
EDI Seed's Scheme	-	7,820	7,820
	<u>29,152</u>	<u>13,715</u>	<u>42,867</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>764,377</u>	<u>65,815</u>	<u>830,192</u>

# WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

### 16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	538,771	(486,671)	52,100
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Environment Links UK	-	(369)	(369)
Agriculture	-	(370)	(370)
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	1,500	(2,661)	(1,161)
Chemical Campaign	26,375	(23,129)	3,246
New To Nature Scheme	8,477	(8,477)	-
Nature 2030	65,324	(65,324)	-
Raven's Network (name changed from Peer Support Network for People of Colour)	2,022	(1,843)	179
Restore Nature Now Project	123,902	(119,532)	4,370
EDI Seed's Scheme	29,100	(21,280)	7,820
Impact 2024	113,750	(113,750)	-
	<u>370,450</u>	<u>(356,735)</u>	<u>13,715</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>909,221</u>	<u>(843,406)</u>	<u>65,815</u>

### Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/1/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/12/23 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	562,537	172,688	735,225
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Environment Links UK	1,631	(249)	1,382
Agriculture	1,079	-	1,079
Blueprint for Water	846	-	846
Planning Coalition	289	-	289
Head of Communications	12,888	(12,888)	-
Wildlife Crime and Trade	18	-	18
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	-	2,850	2,850
Green Recovery	174	(174)	-
Local Nature Recovery Strategies	125	-	125
Peer Support Network for People of Colour	150	142	292
Chemical Campaign	50,000	(27,729)	22,271
	<u>67,200</u>	<u>(38,048)</u>	<u>29,152</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>629,737</u>	<u>134,640</u>	<u>764,377</u>



## WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

#### 16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	587,670	(414,982)	172,688
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Environment Links UK	-	(249)	(249)
Head of Communications	-	(12,888)	(12,888)
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	3,100	(250)	2,850
Green Recovery	-	(174)	(174)
Peer Support Network for People of Colour	3,388	(3,246)	142
Chemical Campaign	5,500	(33,229)	(27,729)
New To Nature Scheme	13,997	(13,997)	-
Nature 2030	124,585	(124,585)	-
	<u>150,570</u>	<u>(188,618)</u>	<u>(38,048)</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>738,240</u>	<u>(603,600)</u>	<u>134,640</u>

#### Purposes of material restricted funds:

##### 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. This funding has now been spent

##### 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.

##### 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 spent to produce a produce 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.

##### Nature 2030

This is Link's General Election campaign, consisting of public campaigning, policy and advocacy for the regulation and investment needed to halt nature's decline by 2030.

##### New to Nature

This is an inclusion scheme, funded by Government and facilitated by Groundwork, aimed at increasing diversity in the environment sector. These funds contribute to the salary of Link's New to Nature trainee.

**16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

**Restore Nature Now**

Dedicated member contributions, individual donations, revenue from t-shirt sales and grant funding via the Environmental Funder's Network enabled the delivery of the Restore Nature Now March in June 2024. This was the largest ever nature and climate gathering in the UK with between 60,000-100,000 participants, and the most collaborative piece of work between traditional environmental NGOs and direct action groups to date.

**SEEDS (Small eNGO Ethnic Diversity Support Scheme)**

Natural England provided crucial funding for a trial cohort for the SEEDS scheme and funding to develop a proposal for an enhanced scheme. This has provided tailored support and bespoke 1-2-1 advice for 9 organisations on readying their organisation to improve ethnic diversity within their staffing and a proposal on upscaling the programme to support a further 50 organisations.

**Impact 2024**

The joint project between Green Alliance, The Climate Coalition, and Link provided a senior sectoral space for strategic discussion and collaboration with intelligence sharing, political analysis and strategy, and influence collaboration. The project was kindly funded by multiple environmental funders with Link receiving £33,750 from the project towards our Nature 2030 campaign sector co-ordination.

**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 2024 or 31st December 2023.

**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.