

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Michael Williams

In some respects, 2022 was a quiet year for the Society but then when you read about the five conservation working holidays during the year, you may appreciate it has been a productive and busy one! But before I get on to that, a summary of some of the committee's business. Frances Stuart stood down from the committee at last year's AGM. Frances continues as our Safeguarding Officer and is supporting the revision of the Society's Health & Safety policy. Our thanks to Frances for her work. John Tyrer is working on preparing a library of contemporary and historical images of Lundy. Richard Breese and André Coutanche are also working up a proposal for a film archive which has the potential to support future research and possible grant making opportunities. Although the purposes may not be fully developed at this time, it presents an opportunity to bring together video content, anticipating that opportunities to use it may arise in the future. It would provide a route to preserve Lundy films digitally in a strategic way for the long term.

Two grant enquiries were made in 2022 but unfortunately did not result in applications. As a result the Committee agreed to raise grant funding from £500 to £1000 and to remove the application deadline. Financial support was given to the Marine Festival and the Society contributed to the provision of new weather station equipment on Lundy. The Rodley legacy funded the restoration of the Heligoland Bird Trap, and the equipment for the WiFi in the church. The WiFi is being well used and is especially valuable to visitors when stranded on the island. A generous donation from the family of the late Charles Ellis was gratefully received. This has been used to fund £200 of new book purchases for the LFS Library and will support a student's attendance at a conference in Scotland where she is presenting the results of her study of Lundy's Manx Shearwaters. Preparations are underway for a LFS Day Trip to Lundy in June 2023 and in 2024 we are planning a Field Studies break to attract new wildlife recorders for Lundy and support succession planning. Chris Pawson is leading on this with support from Trevor Dobie.

As I mentioned, there were five working holidays during 2022. The first in early March was at the request of the Lundy Warden and consisted of just six volunteers. The purpose of this early date was for the transplanting of saplings from nursery areas to their permanent positions. New young trees were imported and used to infill areas in St John's Valley and around Quarters Pond. Old fencing was removed, plus the usual ongoing tasks given to working groups. For the second working party, also in March, fencing, walling, Rhododendron searching, and the usual tasks were offered plus an unusual request to valet the Lundy Land Rover, and all were completed. The third group in May was a full party with a good mixture of experienced and new members. Again, fencing, walling, gully cleaning, Rhododendron seedling searches were all on the menu and the job of shifting several tons of spoil and digging a bypass trench for power cables in the corner of Tent Field, towards Benjamin's Chair, occupied a lot of their time. The log store was repositioned from the farmyard to The Linhay in preparation for a new power generator. The area around the diesel fuel tanks was weeded and upgraded to install some steps for easier access.

There were two conservation breaks in October. Thirteen people participated in the first week with the usual mix of walling, gully clearing, tree maintenance and Rhododendron seedling searching being enjoyed, plus the unusual treat of digging a trench for replacement heating pipes for the staff quarters before the winter cold set in. Work continued on the Terrace Heligoland Trap. Thirteen people also attended the fifth and final trip of the year. Tasks included the installation of a gate near the old incinerator site to replace a stile, clearing some of the vegetation from Millcombe Pond and building nest boxes for Starlings. Our grateful thanks to everyone who joined the working

holidays. We think this is the first time that the LFS has sent as many as five groups to Lundy in a single year and we should record our thanks to Trevor Dobie who works very hard taking bookings and managing the staffing of each trip, which he has been doing for over 15 years!

Members of the LFS committee have assisted the Lundy Conservation Team in developing an application for Lundy to be re-admitted to the UK and Ireland Bird Observatories Network, after an absence of 50 years. It has included transitioning responsibilities for bird recording and negotiating funding arrangements for bird ringing - an aspect of the bird observatory operations for which the LFS will continue to provide some financial support. 2022 saw a record number of Manx Shearwater nest boxes occupied and a record eight chicks fledged from them. The other good news story concerned the Wheatear colour-ringing project, with the results leading to record estimates of 55 pairs in the study area and 129 pairs for the whole island. Adult survival between the 2021 and 2022 breeding seasons was at least 53%. The long-term study of breeding House Sparrows continued as normal, but in the autumn work on Manx Shearwaters and Storm Petrels had to be curtailed because of the risks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza spreading.

Numbers of migrants ringed were down compared to the 2021 figures, because of less suitable weather for mist-netting and fewer weeks being covered by visiting ringers, particularly in autumn. In all, 2716 birds were ringed in 2022. The highest species total was for Blackcaps, which topped the list for the sixth year running with 753 birds caught. The task of digitising all available Lundy ringing and recapture records, from 1972 onwards, was completed in October. Details of about 120,000 records are now available for research purposes, via the British Trust for Ornithology's web-based DemOn system.

The very dry conditions left Lundy looking really parched for the duration of the hot sunny spell. The effect this had on the flora was seen later in the season when some species had a second flush of flowering and were seen in full bloom much later than normal. An example of this was the Wood Vetch growing near the bottom of the beach road which was in fine condition in the middle of October when the bracken had already started to turn brown. Our Lundy Cabbage surveyors Alan & Sandra Rowland report a warmer and wetter winter and spring caused a slightly earlier flowering than normal which affected numbers recorded during the regular survey week. Although estimates of flowering plants declined from an unusual high of over 8000 plants in 2021 to under 3000 (down 66%), this represents a typical average annual estimate. This is an example of a natural cycle rather than a sudden decline. John Hedger and Mandy Dee were able to make several visits to study fungi during the year, with the main island-wide survey being carried out in November, aided by several helpers and a group of students from Imperial College. Two fungus forays were held and were well attended.

A memorial service for our late President, Diana Keast, was held in St Helen's church in June. Your Honorary Secretary had the privilege of giving the eulogy. Diana lived a long and full life – her association with Lundy lasted for 96 years – and her obituary was printed in the 2021 Annual Report. We also record the passing of Dave Preece in December. Dave was a long-standing regular attender of LFS working holidays and rarely missed the AGM. He loved everything about Lundy and treasured the certificate we presented to him in 2019 for attending conservation breaks for 25 years. A fuller obituary for Dave written by Trevor Dobie can be found later in the Annual Report. I happened to be on Lundy when the Queen died in September. I was able to help with flag flying protocol and tolling of the bells to mark her passing. For me, it was one of those

moments in life when you remember exactly where you were and what you were doing when the news broke. We also raised the flag for the Proclamation of King Charles III and you can read my full account of an unusual few days in the recent Discovering Lundy bulletin.

Looking forward, we anticipate a new volume of the LFS Journal to be published in 2023 and Chris Webster is preparing a new archaeology book with support from André Coutanche, Mandy Yates and Alan Rowland. John Hedger edited his first Annual Report in 2022 and Belinda Cox continues to produce the engaging Discovering Lundy bulletin. Our thanks to them both.

Finally, at the very end of the year, it was announced that Dr Keith Hiscock had been awarded an MBE for services to marine conservation in the King's New Year Honours. Starting from Lundy, Keith has been a pioneer of using diving for underwater marine biology in the UK and using the knowledge gained to promote marine conservation. His MBE is so richly deserved and I'm sure you'll join me in passing on congratulations to Keith.

I hope you'll now agree that it has been far from a quiet year -with a huge amount achieved for such a small society. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to a successful 2023.



Dr Keith Hiscock MBE receiving from LFS Chair Alan Rowland a framed illustration of his younger self, drawn by John Dyke (photo: Belinda Cox).

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chris Dee

The accounts presented here show a surplus for the year of £16,790 which includes £13,974, being the final tranche of the generous bequest from the estate of Patricia Rodley. The remaining surplus of £2,816 is largely the result of increased membership and the lack of expenditure on the usually biennial Journal.

As reported last year, 20% of individual legacies or donations exceeding £1,000 is allocated to a 'project fund', and the remainder invested. We now have £35,200 set aside for investment, but with the poor performance of share-based investment funds in the financial crisis, we have been reluctant to add to the existing investment fund. We plan to reassess this position in 2023. To ensure that the day-to-day operation of the society is covered by subscription income, other donations (excluding the regular Jennetts Trust income) are now also diverted to the 'project fund', which at the end of the year stood at £11,242. Money from this fund has, this year, contributed to the terrace Heligoland trap refurbishment, a replacement weather station for the island, an LCD projector for the tavern wheelhouse and additions to the LFS library.

Without increasing rates, membership income has grown by 5%, but donations have decreased slightly. Included in the donations is a total of £135 from Amazon Smile, which will sadly cease to operate in February 2023. We also continue to benefit from generous monthly donations from the Jennetts Trust, which the donor is happy for us to use to support general running costs, for which we are grateful. The 2020/21 Gift Aid claim is included in these accounts and the 2021/22 claim will be included in the 2023 accounts.

Sales of *The Harman Family's Lundy* and *Protecting Lundy's Marine Life* in 2022 have been included in Sundry sales, along with sales of past Annual Reports and other donated publications and Lundy ephemera. We were also pleased to sell some of the remaining stock of *Protecting Lundy's Marine Life: 40 Years of Science and Conservation* through the Lundy General Stores during the 2022 Marine Festival. We continue to sell *Lundy Fungi* through the website and Lundy General Stores, which is also our primary outlet for Colouring Books. The stock shown as assets includes the value at cost of these two publications at the end of the year.

One research grant was claimed this year with a small amount being carried over for sample analysis in 2023. Also included in the grants figure is £2,500 in support of the Marine Festival and £650 toward the St.Helen's Centre WiFi equipment. The remainder of the LFS contribution of £1,650 towards the refurbishment of the terrace Heligoland trap, is shown as project expenditure. Funding of Conservation Breaks has returned to more normal levels, with five breaks being run. We continue to see a high number of cancellations, some related to the Covid pandemic, and as a result £240 of lost deposits were treated as donations.

Two new ventures are being funded from the Project Fund; an LFS day trip by MS *Oldenburg* on 4 June 2023, and a field course in April 2024 to attempt to expand the number of wildlife recorders. The deposit for the day trip and the accommodation booking for the field course are shown as assets.

The Society continues to provide financial support to ornithological research on the island through bird ringing, by fully subsidising the cost of rings for Manx Shearwaters and Storm Petrels. Visiting members who are qualified bird ringers are also subsidised to an individual annual maximum of £25, and re-imburse the LFS for ring usage above that. The new assistant warden has been able

to ring birds independently and the LFS has covered the costs of rings used by him, as we did for the previous warden. No significant ring purchase was made during the year, although an order will need to be placed early in 2023. The net value of our contribution to bird ringing in 2022 was £585.

The 2022 expenditure shown for our regular publications – Bulletin and Annual Report – includes typesetting, printing and distribution costs. We are grateful to the Lundy Company and the Ilfracombe Shore Office staff for handling the franking of the Annual Report, which reduced the distribution costs.

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2022

Income	2022	2021
	£	£
Subscriptions	10,973	10,423
Donations	1,777	1,923
Jennetts Trust	2,040	2,040
Legacies	13,974	52,000
Gift Aid	1,445	-
Conservation break deposits	820	590
Book sales – <i>Lundy Fungi</i>	403	328
Book sales – <i>Colouring Book</i>	201	54
Sundry sales	1,573	679
Postage	17	17
Bird ringing	311	1,216
Interest	26	3
Stock value increase	-	448
Total income	33,560	69,721
Deduct expenditure	16,770	10,455
Surplus for the year	16,790	59,266

Expenditure	2022	2021
	£	£
Bulletin	946	763
Report	3,507	3,106
Website	43	52
Publicity	-	201
Bird ringing	164	1,802
Grants	3,529	1,018
Conservation breaks	4,629	2,214
Projects	1,682	897
AGM expenses	490	38
Postage	131	170
Stationery	40	93
LFS Library	226	-
Stock value reduction	1,293	-
Sundries	90	101
Total expenditure	16,770	10,455

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£
Current Assets				
Stock – books	2,797	3,348	3,702	5,234
Stock – bird rings	1,803	2,545	1,743	
2023 day trip charter deposit	435	-		
2024 field course booking with Landmark	2,054	-		
NS&I account	384	384	381	381
Current account	59,846	43,387	31,523	3,239
Reserve account (project fund)	11,242	10,679	9	9
Subtotal	78,561	60,343	42,966	29,580
Less				
Advance subscriptions	761	963	882	597
Advance conservation break deposits	2,240	610	450	350
Net current assets	75,560	58,770	23,604	28,588
Other assets				
LionTrust Sustainable Fund	44,100	44,100	20,000	20,000
Total assets	119,660	102,870	43,604	48,588
Reserves				
Brought forward	58,770	23,604	28,588	41,704
Transfer to specific reserve	-	-24,100	-	-20,000
Surplus for the year	16,790	59,266	(4,984)	6,884
General Reserves	75,560	58,770	23,604	28,588
Specific reserve	44,100	44,100	20,000	20,000
Total reserves	119,660	102,870	43,604	48,588

Note: In 2019 an Ethical Fund was established as an endowment in which income and capital would be accumulated to meet the costs of future major projects. This is shown above as a specific reserve. At the balance sheet date the investment had a market value of £44,294.

Lundy Field Society Accounts Examination for 2022

'I have examined the accounts of the Lundy Field Society for the year 1 January to 31 December 2022, and can report that the figures presented to me by the Honorary Treasurer, in my opinion, represent fairly and accurately the overall financial situation of the Society for the financial year.'

R A Williams
Honorary Independent Examiner
10 February 2023