



**Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020
together with the reports of the Board of
Trustees and auditors**

Company number: 1522897

Charity number: 281213

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1 WHO WE ARE

The British Ecological Society (BES) is the largest scientific society for ecologists in Europe with a membership of 6,500 ecologists in 117 countries around the world.

We support the ecology community at all stages of their careers through our journals, meetings, grants and education and policy work. The first ecology society to be established anywhere in the world, we have been the champion of ecology for more than a century.

Ecologists study the interactions of living things and their environment, providing new understanding of these critical systems as they are now and how they may change in the future.

Ecology enriches our world and is crucial for human wellbeing and prosperity. It provides new knowledge of the interdependence between people and nature that is vital for food production, maintaining clean air and water and sustaining biodiversity in a changing climate.

- Our vision and mission

The objects for which the Society is established are to:

- Advance the education of the public in the subject of ecology as a branch of natural science;
- Advance and support research in that field; and
- Disseminate the results of such useful research.

Our current strategic plan for 2020 to 2023 is set within that framework and focuses on the science of ecology, the world and the people who live in it. We are seeing unprecedented change in the earth's ecosystems and environment, and ecology is more relevant than it has ever been.

Our strategic plan is set in a context of great uncertainty for both political and publishing landscapes, and where science itself is being challenged in some areas. But ecological science is of growing importance in explaining how nature works and in finding solutions to some of the greatest challenges facing, and caused by, human society.

Our strategy sets out how we will work towards our vision in which nature and people thrive in a world inspired by ecology. As a financially robust and well-governed charity and scientific society, with our staff and our membership providing talent and energy in abundance, we are confident that we will lead positive change towards our vision.

2 WHAT WE DO

We deliver a wide range of activities and events to further our vision and mission. From publishing world-leading research and running conferences on cutting-edge ecological advances to raising the profile of ecology and fostering diverse communities, we aim to increase the impact of our science.

The following sections give a taster of what we have achieved in 2020.

- COVID-19

The BES moved fast to react to the coronavirus pandemic and our day-to-day operations switched seamlessly to home working. Like so many organisations, we had to consider all that we do in light of the virus. We made the health and wellbeing of our staff, members and all those involved in our activities the absolute priority. We understood when people were unable to use their grant money as planned when research was halted or changed. We recognised that many researchers faced challenging circumstances, and that affected the peer review of journal papers.

But we are also really proud of how we reacted to provide new opportunities, from free online talks on the latest ecological research and tips for online teaching, to training resources for members on science communication and webinars on maintaining mental health. We moved our whole Annual Meeting online in December to create a real celebration of our science and bring our community together.

We are confident that we have the right skills, experience and technology to draw on as COVID-19 continues to impact on how we support ecology in 2021.

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- Major goal 1: Advance and promote ecological science and its applications

- We support new ideas, make connections and increase the impact of ecological science.
- We aim to be the best place for the ecological community to publish, meet and discuss their work.
- We directly support the generation of new ecological knowledge and its application through our grant-giving programme.

Applied Ecology Resources (AER) was launched in 2020 as a dynamic searchable platform for research papers and grey literature (a catch-all term which includes project reports, policy documents and technical reports). This completely new platform can be used for free by ecologists anywhere in the world to search for and access information on ecological management and environmental resources. The first phase of the AER website launched in March 2020, and the full searchable repository will go live in 2021. AER welcomed its first Founding Members, who will upload their content to the resource. These include the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Field Studies Council and the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation. A series of free virtual interactive workshops has been established to cover a range of useful topics for applied ecologists and practitioners. Our newest journal, *Ecological Solutions and Evidence*, sits at the heart of the AER project. The inaugural ESE issue published in July 2020 with a wide range of articles from research and practice, just eight months after opening for submissions during the 2019 BES Annual Meeting. ESE adds a range of novel article types suitable for this audience of people producing and putting new ecological science to use. These include Data Articles and Registered Reports, which will appear in coming issues.

Several of our volunteer-led Special Interest Groups (SIGs) embraced online platforms for their events this year, and were rewarded with much greater numbers of people from more countries joining in. The Palaeoecology SIG was first out of the blocks with an online communication workshop, followed by annual meetings of the Aquatic and Quantitative SIGs, both of which attracted more than twice as many delegates as usual. Unlike in-person SIG events, which typically attract UK-based audiences, moving online meant these groups could connect with ecologists internationally, with delegates from Canada, Nigeria, Singapore, and beyond.

We launched Ecology Live, a weekly series of free online talks on the latest ecological research, shortly after the start of the coronavirus lockdown, when campuses were closing and little research was possible for many. The first Ecology Live talk was broadcast in April and the series ran until September, 20 talks later. With ecologists from around the world giving fascinating insight on a wide range of topics, Ecology Live proved very successful. Several hundred people watched each talk live on Zoom, with the recordings receiving thousands more views on YouTube.

Before the pandemic hit the UK in earnest, we welcomed over 140 delegates to a broad-reaching meeting to explore the theme Multiple Values of Nature: what these values are and how they can be conceptualised, measured and applied. The joint Symposium from our journal, *People and Nature*, and the Valuing Nature Programme brought together experts from a wide variety of disciplines and organisations for two days in early March. Several of the sessions included speakers joining remotely, which was warmly welcomed by the delegates. A public debate at Bristol Zoo discussed the purpose of nature documentaries as entertainment versus their role in encouraging conservation efforts.

- Major goal 2: Raise the profile of ecology to make a difference

- We are the evidence-based voice for ecology and our environment, working with our members, decision makers and public groups to apply ecological science expertise to solving societal challenges.
- We aim to excite, fascinate and enthuse everyone about ecology.

Thousands of visitors enjoyed our free 'Capturing Ecology: Hidden Worlds' exhibition at Ulster Museum in Belfast, which ran throughout February and March. The exhibition revealed ingenious methods used to explore unknown aspects of the natural world and uncover its complexity. BES members brought their knowledge to life through objects ranging from 3D-printed pollen grains to infrared drone cameras. Visitors also shared their 'Hidden Connections' to nature on a wall of ideas, adding how they aim to protect their environment. We thank our exhibition partners at National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI), Ulster, without whom this successful exhibition would not have been possible.

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The BES teamed up with the Universities of Southampton, Durham and Leeds in 2020 to develop a UK Schools Outreach pilot project. It aimed to spread a message of positivity in tackling some of our biggest ecological challenges to secondary school students. Year 8 pupils and their teachers were invited to take part in a day of workshops to explore ecology. Schools were asked to encourage pupils from low-income backgrounds, those who may be the first in their family to consider university and those belonging to ethnic minorities. It was an opportunity to cover the breadth of opportunities available in ecology and address diversity within our science. The UK Schools Outreach pilot will feed into future projects and we will develop it further using the positive feedback received from both pupils and teachers. We aim to expand to reach more pupils in more locations and demonstrate that ecology is for everyone no matter what their background.

As part of our drive to make our policy work more proactive, we started developing a report on nature-based solutions during 2020. Our initial workshop had to be quickly moved online because of the impact of COVID-19 but we still managed to bring together over 100 experts to work on the project and we expect to publish the report in Spring 2021. It will be the first complete assessment of the potential of nature-based solutions in the UK. It looks at how nature-based solutions could be implemented to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and also their limitations and the inevitable trade-offs involved. We fully expect this report to guide policy development on nature-based solutions in all the four devolved nations. It could also help more widely as many countries worldwide look to make new commitments with the CBD and COP26 conferences likely to set new climate change and biodiversity targets later in 2021. Our communications continue to expand their reach, bringing the importance and fascination of ecology to larger audiences. All our journals have active blogs, helping ecologists to communicate and share their science with a wider community and the public. We also support ecologists to tell their stories effectively through our press and media work. BES-led news releases on research articles published in our journals resulted in over 300 news stories in 2020, over 40% published in outlets focussed on the public (i.e., national and international media).

- Major goal 3: Foster a strong and diverse community of ecologists

- We empower and enable a vibrant and influential global community of ecologists.
- We aim to make everyone interested in ecology feel valued, wherever and whoever they are.

We have launched a BAME Ecologist Network for People of Colour based in the UK. The group is for individuals of all career stages and ages currently studying or working in the UK who identify as Black, Asian or other Minority Ethnicities (BAME), and for whom systemic racism is impacting their education and career progression. This has been an important step in a year when Black Lives Matter protests illustrated the experience of Black people in all areas of society. The BES's Equality and Diversity working group worked with early-career ecologist Reuben Fakoya Brooks to launch the new network in September. Sixteen people attended the inaugural meeting of the BAME Ecologist Network in October and membership continues to grow with 38 currently involved. The Network is already very busy, developing a clear action plan for supporting BAME ecologists and raising the profile and importance of diversity beyond the BES, speaking to other societies and organisations and joining their events.

Our usual week-long residential course for undergraduates was not able to go ahead in 2020 because of the pandemic. However, we were able to move the Undergraduate Summer School online. We wanted to provide the students with the same content, careers guidance and opportunity to progress in the ecological sciences that makes our summer school so unique. 30 undergraduate students from across the UK took part virtually with a programme full of workshops they could take part in, whether they were in an urban or rural location. It included fungi finding, bird and tree surveys, insect adaptations through macro-photography, and even a field trip and methodology session in a Minecraft world. The Summer School also benefited from input from this year's team of mentors – PhD students who added a huge amount into the programme and supported the undergraduates. As one student put it, "Even though it was online, I feel like I have gained so much experience and knowledge that I can use to further my career in ecology." A successful adaptation!

The BES bursary scheme has now been running for two years to support aspiring ecologists without the finances or opportunities to pursue their passion for a career in ecology. The scheme was founded through the generosity of John Condrón and Naomi Condrón, directors of the ecological consultancy, Ecology Resources Ltd. It is now supporting a growing number of individuals who have attended our BES Summer Schools. The Ecology Resources Ltd Bursary, administered by the BES, has provided support for equipment, training and work experience opportunities. It is making a difference too. Our

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bursary awardees are now successfully pursuing a range of ecological careers, from consultancy and conservation to environmental outreach and filmmaking.

We continue to work hard to open opportunities to as wide a group of people as possible. There are many people in the ecological community who make a significant contribution to our world-class journals, and one really important group where we have successfully increased diversity is the Associate Editors. These editors assess manuscripts, find reviewers, consider reviewer comments, handle revisions and write recommendation letters to authors – all vital steps in the publications process. We receive manuscripts on a huge range of ecological topics from around the world and it is crucial that our Associate Editors are as diverse as the manuscripts we receive. During 2020 we ran an open call for new Associate Editors, including sessions on Twitter taking questions from prospective applicants. We had an amazing response with 906 applicants from 35 countries and this has helped us increase the diversity of our Associate Editor community.

- Major goal 4: An effective and financially sustainable BES

- We are astute in managing and developing the Society's assets for the benefit of ecology and the ecological community.
- We aim to use the Society's resources in the most effective and sustainable ways possible.

At the end of 2020, the Board of Trustees agreed a new financial strategy for the organisation, setting out a long-term vision for our reserves and investment policy to increase our sustainability and resilience. Through better financial management, we aim to free up more money to pursue the vision and mission of the Society. One of the key performance indicators is to maintain the defined time horizons for decisions at a level that does not constrain the launching of new activities identified within the Strategic Plan. Our publications activities return a substantial surplus to the Society, which currently is reinvested through core activities of events, membership, education, policy and research to further our goals. We have identified several actions to take over the coming years, including steadily reducing the financial deficits in membership and events work, leveraging the new contract relationship management database (CRM) to generate more diverse income and resource-in-kind streams, and continuing to model the impact of moving journals from a subscription to an open access model.

During 2020 we split our investment portfolio and moved to two new investment fund managers to improve performance, mitigate risk and develop a more sophisticated approach to increasing environmental sustainability. Rathbones and Waverton now manage our investment portfolio and they have different criteria for stock selection, which widens the range of our holdings and spreads risk more effectively. A key factor in the appointment of both investment fund managers was their track record and commitment to ethical investing. In addition to not investing in companies that damage the environment – for example we do not hold stocks in companies that primarily extract fossil fuels – we aim to invest in those companies seeking to make a positive impact. We also see our portfolio as a tool to leverage positive environmental change and are working with our fund managers to find opportunities for knowledge exchange between ecologists and fund managers.

We made significant strides in 2020 to reduce the environmental impact of our own activities and you can read more about that work in the section 'Our commitment to reducing the environmental impact of our activities' on p9.

How our work delivers public benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. All our trustees give their time voluntarily and do not receive any private benefit. Details of trustees' expenses and remuneration are disclosed in note 6.

The first three of our major goals provide clear public benefits, while the final one defines the ways in which we gain greater leverage from our finite resources and ensure our long-term sustainability.

Fundraising

Our fundraising policy follows the Charity Commission's CC20 'Charity fundraising: a guide to trustee duties' guidelines. Our guiding principles are that we always:

- Protect personal data and confidentiality;
- Treat donors courteously and fairly;

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- Respond promptly to donor queries or complaints.

We will never:

- Share donor details with another charity for the purposes of their fundraising;
- Telephone to ask for a donation unless donors have specifically asked us to do so;
- Bombard donors with emails;
- Pass donor personal data to a third party such as a commercial partners or publishers unless we have been given explicit consent to do so.

We do not have any fundraising campaigns aimed at the general public and we have not received any complaints about our fundraising activities. Our full fundraising policy is available from our office.

Ensuring our grant giving is effective, fair and transparent

In 2020 we gave away £518k in grants, which is 13% of our spending. We recognise that this substantial sum needs to be carefully managed, and we have several processes and policies in place to do that.

Application and scoring criteria are published on our website and are regularly reviewed. We provide examples of successful applications and the success rates for each grant scheme. Except for our Training and Travel Grants, all applications go through a peer-review process to comment on their suitability for funding. Grant reviewers are recruited to our Review College through regular open calls to build a community of individuals who have the knowledge, skills, experience and expertise in ecology to assess grant applications. Successful applications are required to provide a report on the outcome and impact of their project. During 2021 we will be reviewing our grant-giving programme to ensure that it continues to support our strategic vision and the needs of the ecological community.

The contribution of volunteers to our work

We rely on a huge number of volunteers to achieve our strategic vision. They contribute in a myriad of ways to our work and we also recognise that volunteering with us provides valuable experiences for our community. Volunteers are members of our Board of Trustees, committees and working groups, helping to shape the direction of our work every day. Our 19 Special Interest Groups produce a range of events, workshops and communications – efforts that benefit many across the full breadth of ecology – and are all run by volunteers. Our journals would not be able to run without the dedicated band of ecologists across the world who peer review papers and serve as Associate Editors. And much of our careers work relies on ecologists willing to give up their time for free to help us inspire the next generation. The direct involvement of the ecological community in much of what we do helps to ensure that we continue to be a community-led organisation.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

We value the diversity and wide range of perspectives that people from different backgrounds bring to their work and to ecology.

Everyone at the BES has a role to play in ensuring that individuals are valued, treated with dignity and respect, and that discrimination does not occur. Every member of staff and the Board of Trustees are responsible for implementing relevant policies, objectives and working practices linked to equality and diversity to ensure equal opportunity at all stages of engagement with the Society.

We remain committed to addressing inequalities and more details of our work can be found in the section 'Major goal 3: Foster a strong and diverse community of ecologists'.

Our commitment to reducing the environmental impact of our activities

Our community has done much to raise awareness of the impact of human society on the natural world. It is important that we reduce the impact of our own activities and improve environmental sustainability. We are committed to making continual improvements and are pleased to have made significant progress in 2020.

- In 2020 for the first time, we quantified our greenhouse gas emissions at 112 tonnes CO₂e and agreed to offset these through the UK Peatland Code.

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- Our biggest source of emissions is travel and we introduced a new travel policy in 2020 aimed at reducing this. Covid-19 has accelerated progress with the rapid adoption of online meetings and we are embedding these new ways of working permanently.
- The Society has moved to a 100% renewal energy tariff for its offices.
- We have changed our investment fund managers to two companies with a stronger commitment to ethical investment, and are working with them to reduce the environmental impact of our own portfolio and cultivate opportunities for knowledge exchange between investment fund managers and ecologists.
- Our Personal Group Pension Provider, Aviva, was chosen so that staff have an excellent range of environmental and ethical funds in which to invest their pensions.
- Improving the ESG quality score of our investment portfolio, underpinned by strongest values in the Environment Pillar, by moving towards an AAA rated portfolio.

We see engagement and knowledge exchange as a key way in which we can leverage the assets of the BES to create positive change for the natural environment, so we will continue to work with our fund managers and others, as well as drive down the carbon emissions from our activities.

3 OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

While 2021 will continue to be challenging because of COVID-19, we have developed flexible workplans so that events and activities can adapt quickly if circumstances change. We are also cognisant of the broader pressures on the time of our core members who volunteer.

Our report and synthesis of nature-based solutions will be published in Spring 2021 and we have developed an ambitious communications plan to increase its impact. We will then start collecting evidence and working with experts to produce a report on protected areas with the aim of informing policy. This is timely given that the Prime Minister has committed to protecting 30% of UK land to support the recovery of nature.

After the successful move of our Annual Meeting to an online platform in December 2020, our plans for the 2021 conference include both online and in-person elements so that we can continue to reach a more diverse audience and bring people together to showcase the leading ecological research. The 2021 Student Futures conference, an event organised in collaboration with the Linnean Society, will host 400 students and aims to give them the tools they need to plan their academic futures.

Our Capturing Ecology exhibition, which builds on the success of our annual photographic competition, will be heading to the Edinburgh Science Festival in 2021. It is one of Europe's largest science festivals, and we hope to reach a diverse audience and enthuse them about our science through striking images and the science and stories behind them. We also look forward to partnering with SMASH-UK, a STEM and arts engagement charity specialising in community engagement and which has had success in linking with diverse audiences underrepresented in STEM careers. Together we will explore the theme of 'Future Green Cities', connecting the ecological community with local community groups.

In our support for research and researchers, we will be working on data-curation standards across the discipline, seeking to involve key stakeholders in ecology and related subject areas. 2021 should also see the final phase of the Applied Ecological Resources project completed, with the launch of the full searchable repository. A further significant project is a review of our grants programme, which we want to align with our organisational strategy more closely and with the needs of the community.

These are just some of the activities and events we are planning in 2021 in delivering the second year of our strategic plan.

4 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of our financial position

In 2020 total income was £4.6M (£6.5M in 2019, including the one-off realisation of the sale of tangible fixed assets), with 90% of income from publishing. The disposal of fixed assets in 2019 accounts for most of the difference in the total income from 2020. During the year expenditure was £4.0M (£4.8M in 2019) with 50% spent on publishing. The accounts show a surplus of £0.6M (surplus of £1.76M in 2019) before net gains on investments of £26k (gains of £903k in 2019). Total funds of the Society were £14.7M at the end of 2020 (£14.0M at the end of 2019).

Financial management and control

BES committees plan their work for the forthcoming year within the framework of our strategic plan. Annual budgets for the following year are drawn up in the fourth quarter and are approved by the Board of Trustees at their meeting in December. Throughout the financial year the Finance Committee considers management accounts at its meetings, with a narrative provided by the Honorary Treasurer, Chief Executive and external accountancy firm JS2, as appropriate. The narrative focuses on reasons for variation against budget. Monthly management accounts are also circulated to budget holders. At the mid-point in the financial year the budgets are reforecast, taking into account changes in planned activities and events.

We have a set of Financial Regulations which must be followed and are reviewed annually by the Finance Committee.

Our reserves

We hold reserves for four main purposes:

- Meet operational needs;
- Buffer against the high exposure to publishing income;
- Deliver specific major projects in areas defined by the Strategic Plan; and
- Generate additional income through an investment portfolio.

Our reserves help us meet our operational needs and working capital requirements (the free reserve). The free reserve aims to hold ~6 months operating costs, currently ~£1.4M excluding third-party operating costs and grants.

The major exposure in our income portfolio is its dependence on publishing income, which represented £4.1m (90%) of annual income in 2020. The high commitment to expenditure and substantial exposure to a single source of income is a major long-term risk to the organisation. We hold reserves as an expendable Endowment Fund to mitigate this risk. The Expendable Endowment ensures sufficient time to scope alternative operating models should publishing income collapse, and also to transition to the best solution in an orderly fashion. The Expendable Endowment represents ~18 months operating costs, which are predominantly direct staff costs (35% in 2020) that cannot be immediately adjusted in a new operating environment.

We are taking proactive steps to mitigate the over-reliance on a single income source by holding these reserves in an investment portfolio that is managed using an environmental screen. Returns on these investments are re-invested strategically to part fund new activities and specific major projects in the scope of the Strategic Plan.

The designated tangible fixed asset fund comprises the net book value of fixed assets, principally our office in London (~£5.1m). Designated Funds cover increasing the capacity of the BES Publications Team to focus on strategy and help to develop, research and launch new journals bringing in future income for the BES (£178k) to be spent over the next three years and a furniture and fixtures renewal fund (growing at £150k per annum) to be spent over the next 10 – 15 years. Neither of these designated funds are available to meet our general running costs.

The reserves policy is reviewed annually by Finance Committee and recommended changes are considered by the Board of Trustees. The policy was last updated in 2020.

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Going concern and viability

Based on the reserves policy and detailed cashflow forecasts there are no specific circumstances or uncertainties that impact on the Board of Trustees assessment that the Society is a Going Concern.

Our investment policy

The objectives of our investment policy are:

- Hold assets across a mixture of fixed assets in tangible (e.g., our headquarters at 42 Wharf Road) and 'investment' forms (e.g., the two portfolios managed by Rathbones and Waverton).
- The managed portfolios should, over the long term, generate surplus funds that help deliver our charitable objectives while also incentivising companies who engender positive change.
- If income from the managed portfolios both generates a surplus and outperforms our stated benchmark over a rolling three-year period, then we will pay a 'dividend' to the ecological community through the Society's activities.

Our headquarters at 42 Wharf Road is a long-term tangible fixed asset. We seek to optimise the use of this space in ways beyond traditional subletting by, for example, making meeting space available on a non-commercial basis for like-minded organisations.

Beyond tangible fixed assets and operational reserves, we hold a portfolio of investments. This portfolio is currently actively managed with the objective of achieving capital growth with an emphasis on preservation of capital and reasonable liquidity.

We take a holistic view of risk profiling across all our assets. As we hold a relatively high proportion of assets in illiquid tangible fixed assets, our managed portfolio contains a high proportion of equities and should be benchmarked against the midpoint of the ARC Constant Growth and Equity Risk mandates.

Investment decisions within the managed portfolio are not taken by trustees. The Trustees provide guidelines based on Environment, Society and Governance (ESG) criteria that are consistent with our goal. Products/stocks are included in the managed portfolio if they pass threshold standards based on criteria of ESG data providers. In addition to monitoring the capital growth of both portfolios, we also monitor the overall ESG score and seek to move towards an AAA rating (currently AA) and higher score on the 'Environmental Pillar'.

To mitigate risk, the managed portfolio should not be leveraged.

Investment management and performance

During the year we implemented the decision by the Board of Trustees to transfer the management of our investment portfolio to Rathbones and Waverton. The two companies have different investment strategies and thereby we have increased diversity and spread risk compared to having just one fund manager. At the end of 2020, our listed investments held by the BES and managed by Rathbones and Waverton had a combined value of £7.2M. We have agreed that the risk profile for the fund managers should be the second highest for each company as we are investing for the long term. Each fund manager uses a composite index as a benchmark and we also require them to report against CPI + 4% and the midpoint of the ARC Steady Growth and ARC Equities Risk benchmarks. We also use the SuggestUs portfolio to independently benchmark the performance of the fund managers. The investment managers attend two Finance Committee meetings a year to discuss performance and general strategy. Day-to-day investment decisions are delegated to the fund managers in accordance with the agreed mandates.

We have spread the risk of our assets as far as practicable by owning a very long lease on our headquarters and holding some of our reserves in cash accounts, in addition to the equities, bonds and trust funds in our two investment portfolios.

Our principal risks

We maintain a risk register, updated at least quarterly, and significant changes are reported to each Board of Trustees meeting.

The two most critical risks currently are:

A significant drop in income

Major funders and governments in key markets and the academic community may no longer accept the hybrid journal (subscription with an Open Access option) business model. Income generated through this model constitutes most of the Society's income and is under threat. We try to mitigate this risk in several ways. We stay abreast of industry developments, respond to consultations and participate in discussions to ensure the voice of learned societies is represented. We now meet with Wiley, the publisher of our Journals portfolio, every six months to review short and medium income projections so that the BES Board of Trustees can be informed in a timely manner if changes become apparent. We have also diversified our publishing business model by offering Open Access as an option in our subscription journals, launching new journals as Open-Access titles, collaborating with the Open-Access journal Ecology and Evolution, and developing new income streams, for example, legacy giving and sponsorship.

Disruption due to COVID-19

There is a risk that our activities and long-term income are significantly disrupted because of the impact of COVID-19. To mitigate the risk we are following UK government advice. Staff can seamlessly work from home with their laptops and the use of SharePoint/Microsoft Teams. Additional support for staff homeworking has been put in place after further home-based display screen equipment (DSE) checks took place in January. All events and activities in 2021 will be held online until at least the summer. Planning for our 2021 Annual Meeting in December is underway assuming there will be both face-to-face and online content so that we can be agile if the situation changes quickly. A COVID-19 workplace risk assessment was completed in 2020 and the office reopened on a voluntary basis but closed during the third lockdown. We continue to be guided by government advice. A 12-month cash flow report is reviewed at every Board/Finance Committee meeting and the Senior Management Team meets weekly to monitor events and agree the best response.

In 2019 we identified the underperformance of our investment portfolio as a third significant risk. A complete review of the investment portfolio strategy, taking the management of the portfolio out to competitive tender, the appointment of two new fund managers and increased evaluation of performance has mitigated this risk so that it no longer considered critical.

5 STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Our structure

We are a company limited by guarantee (Registration no. 1522897) and have no share capital. As a registered charity (Registration no. 281213), we are governed by our Articles of Association.

Our Board of Trustees comprises the President, President-Elect or Past President, two Vice Presidents, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, Chair of the Education and Careers Committee, Chair of the Events Committee, Chair of the Publications Committee, Chair of the Policy Committee, and three Ordinary Members. The Board meets quarterly and is responsible for our strategic direction and policies. There are eight committees which report quarterly to the Board on their areas of responsibility. We have a governance document which details the structure, terms of reference and membership of the Board of Trustees and committees.

Our day-to-day operation is delegated to the Chief Executive and the rest of the Senior Management Team, who are the key management personnel. The Chief Executive ensures our resources are effectively and efficiently focused on delivering our strategic plan and key performance indicators are met. The Senior Management Team ensures the smooth running of the organisation and leadership of the staff team. Remuneration of all staff, including key management personnel, is considered on an annual basis by our Personnel Committee which reports directly to the Board of Trustees. Factors such as affordability and inflation are considered by the Personnel Committee when agreeing staff cost-of-living increases. Market research, sector benchmarks and comparability with similar, existing roles within the Society are considered when salaries for new staff roles are agreed by the Committee.

Board of Trustees Report for the year ended 31 December 2020

Recruitment to the Board of Trustees

The Board is responsible for nominating officer and chair posts and members of the Society can put themselves forward for these roles through an open recruitment process. Nomination for Ordinary Members is open to the whole membership. All members of the Board are elected by the membership through an online ballot and the results of the election are announced at the Annual General Meeting. Online voting has enabled many more members to participate in the selection of the Board. When the selection was made in-person at an AGM ca. 150 members voted whereas in 2020 a total of 1,124 members voted online.

Induction and training of trustees

All newly appointed trustees go through a process of induction, which fully briefs them about their roles, responsibilities and the BES. During their tenure, trustees can have ongoing training, paid for by the Society, to help them fulfil their duties.

Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the BES (the trustees and directors) is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the Board has elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the BES and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the BES and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Members of the Board of Trustees, who are directors for the purpose of company law and trustees for the purpose of charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out in the "References and Administrative Details" section. In accordance with company law, as the company's directors, they certify that:

- So far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

6 REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity details

British Ecological Society
42 Wharf Road
London, N1 7GS

Charity Commission registration number 281213
Companies House registration number 1522897

Board of Trustees

R Bardgett	Resigned December 2020
A Birkett	Resigned December 2020
Y Buckley	Appointed December 2020
S Clarke	
M Edgar	Appointed December 2020
M Emmerson	
T Ezard	
W Gosling	Resigned December 2020
T Helgason	
D Hodgson	Resigned December 2020
J Hill	
Z Lewis	Appointed December 2020
Y Malhi	Appointed December 2020
P Manning	
J Memmott	
R Stafford	
A Vanbergen	

Office bearers:

President	J Memmott
President-Elect	Y Malhi
Vice President	M Emmerson
Vice President	Y Buckley
Hon. Secretary	A Vanbergen
Hon. Treasurer	T Ezard

Chairs of standing committees (as at date of this report):

Finance Committee	T Ezard
Education & Careers Committee	Z Lewis
Events Committee	P Manning
Grants Committee	M Emmerson
Membership Committee	Y Buckley
Personnel Committee	A Vanbergen
Policy Committee	R Stafford
Publications Committee	J Hill

Advisors

Senior Management Team:	
Chief Executive	H Norman
Director of Publishing	A Baier
Head of External Affairs	K Devine
Head of Society Programmes	J Wood

Board of Trustees Report for the year ended 31 December 2020

Bankers:

Barclays Bank plc
Leicester, LE87 2BB

Investments:

Rathbones Greenbank Investments
8 Finsbury Circus
London, EC2M 7AZ

Waverton Investment Management
16 Babmaes Street
London, SW1Y 6AH

Accountants:

JS2 Limited
One Crown Square
Woking, GU21 6HR

Auditors:

Haysmacintyre LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London, EC4R 1AG

Solicitors:

Stone King LLP
Boundary House
91 Charterhouse Street
London, EC1M 6HR

7 SIGNATURE OF THE REPORT ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 15 June 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Memmott', with a horizontal line above the first part of the signature.

Professor Jane Memmott
President

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the British Ecological Society

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of British Ecological Society for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheets, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report (which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the British Ecological Society

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report (which incorporates the directors' report).

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 12, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to regulatory requirements for GDPR, Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2006, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, income tax and payroll tax.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to posting inappropriate journal entries to revenue and management bias in accounting estimate and application of controls around authorisation of expenditure and payments. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions; and

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the British Ecological Society

- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Kathryn Burton (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP, Statutory Auditors

10 Queen Street Place

London

Date: 29 June 2021

EC4R 1AG

The British Ecological Society

Statement of financial activities Incorporating the income and expenditure account For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Expendable Endowment £'000	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Income from						
<i>Donations & Legacies</i>		25	12	-	37	38
<i>Other Trading Activities</i>						
Investment income	2	17	-	88	105	176
Profit on disposal of fixed assets		-	-	-	-	1,658
Other income		17	-	-	17	46
		<u>59</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>159</u>	<u>1,918</u>
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>						
Publications		4,142	-	-	4,142	3,997
Income from conferences		144	-	-	144	461
Subscriptions		180	-	-	180	151
		<u>4,525</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>4,625</u>	<u>6,527</u>
Expenditure						
Expenditure on raising funds						
Investment management fees		4	-	20	24	22
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>						
Publications		1,984	-	-	1,984	2,060
Meetings		428	-	-	428	1,004
Research		431	-	-	431	384
Education		429	5	-	434	482
Policy		293	9	-	302	359
Member engagement		386	-	-	386	457
		<u>3,955</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>3,989</u>	<u>4,768</u>
Total expenditure	3					
Net income before gains on investment		570	(2)	68	636	1,759
Net gains on investments	11	4	-	22	26	903
Net movement in funds in year		574	(2)	90	662	2,662
Fund balance brought forward		7,398	7	6,642	14,047	11,385
Fund balances carried forward	17	<u>7,972</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6,732</u>	<u>14,709</u>	<u>14,047</u>

All of the above results derive from continuing activities. There are no gains and losses other than those disclosed above. The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	5,135	5,266
Intangible fixed asset	10	187	-
Investments	11	7,185	7,880
		<u>12,507</u>	<u>13,146</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	2,451	1,282
Cash on deposit and in hand		1,302	578
		<u>3,753</u>	<u>1,860</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(1,331)	(739)
Net current assets		<u>2,422</u>	<u>1,121</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due over one year	14	(220)	(220)
Net assets		<u>14,709</u>	<u>14,047</u>
Represented by			
Unrestricted funds			
General fund		2,509	2,132
Designated funds:		5,463	5,266
		<u>7,972</u>	<u>7,398</u>
Restricted fund		5	7
Expendable Endowment fund		<u>6,732</u>	<u>6,642</u>
	17	<u>14,709</u>	<u>14,047</u>

Included in the above reserves are unrealised gains of £0.97M (2019 gains £1.03M). The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 15 June 2021 and signed on its behalf by.



Professor Jane Memmott Member of the Board of Trustees

Statement of Cashflows

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Cash flow from operating activities		
Net (expenditure)/income	662	2,662
Adjustments for:		
Investment income	(105)	(176)
Depreciation	140	74
Amortisation	11	-
Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets	-	(1,658)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	(1,099)	969
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	522	(757)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	131	1,114
Cash flow from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(207)	(5,317)
Disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	4,160
Investment income	105	176
Purchase of investments	(5,838)	(2,149)
Disposal of investments	6,558	3,099
(Gain)/Losses on investments	(25)	(903)
Net cash (used in) investing activities	593	(934)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	724	180
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	578	398
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	1,302	578

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies

- *Basis of accounting*

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) - (Charities SORP Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The Society meets the definition of a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these financial statements and have considered the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the charity's operations. In particular the trustees have considered the charities forecasts and projections and have taken account of pressures on donation and investment income. After making enquiries the trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

Financial Instruments

The BES has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments. Financial instruments are recognised in the Charity's balance sheet when the Charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously. With the exceptions of prepayments and deferred income all other debtor and creditor balances are considered to be basic financial instruments under FRS 102.

Income

- i) Subscriptions income: All subscriptions income is accounted for in the period to which it relates. Subscriptions receipts in advance are recorded as deferred income.
- ii) Other income: All other income has been accounted for on a receivable basis.

Expenditure (including grants)

Expenditure is classified under the principal categories of charitable and other expenditure rather than the type of expense, in order to provide more useful information to users of the accounts.

Charitable activities comprise direct expenditure including direct staff costs attributable to the activity. Support costs have been allocated to activities based on the average staff time spent. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with the management of the Society's assets, organisational

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies (continued)

- *Expenditure (including grants) (continued)*

administration and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements. Support costs are allocated on the basis of time spent on each activity.

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is conveyed to the recipient except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year-end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

Depreciation

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the cost of assets over their expected useful lives as follows:

Freehold & long leasehold property	- 2% per annum on a straight-line basis.
Leasehold improvements	- 5% per annum on a straight-line basis.
Furniture	- 10% per annum on a straight-line basis.
Equipment	- 20% per annum on a straight-line basis.

The Society's policy is to capitalise assets purchased over £1,000.

Amortisation

Amortisation have been calculated to write off the cost of intangible fixed assets over their expected lives at 20% per annum on a straight line basis.

The Society's policy is to capitalise intangible assets where future economic benefits from the asset are expected and the cost of the asset can be reliably measured.

Investments

Investments are stated at fair value. It is the BES's policy to keep valuations up to date such that when investments are sold there is no gain or loss arising. As a result the Statement of Financial Activities only includes those unrealised gains and losses arising from the revaluation of the investment portfolio throughout the year. Disclosure is made in note 9 of the difference between the historical cost and the sale proceeds of the investments sold during the year.

Foreign currencies

Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in a foreign currency are translated into sterling at the exchange rate ruling on the Balance Sheet date.

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate of exchange prevailing at the date of transaction.

All exchange differences are taken to the statement of financial activities.

Operating lease

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Pensions

BES operates defined contribution pension arrangements, the assets of which are held separately from those of the BES in independently administered funds. Contributions are charged to the income and expenditure account as they become payable.

Fund accounting

General funds comprise the accumulated surplus or deficit and are available for use at the discretion of the Board of Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the BES.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restrictive covenants imposed by donors or by the purpose of the appeal.

Designated funds comprise funds which have been set aside at the discretion of the Board of Trustees for specific purposes.

All income and expenditure of the BES has been included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Employee benefits

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense, unless those costs are required to be recognised as part of the cost of stock or fixed assets.

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Debtors

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

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments.

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 and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Judgements and estimates

The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies (continued)

- the estimates of the useful economic lives of tangible fixed assets used to determine the annual depreciation charge;
- the estimates of the useful economic lives of intangible fixed assets used to determine the annual amortisation charge;
- the assumptions adopted by the trustees and management in determining the value of any designations required from the charity's general unrestricted funds; and
- the basis on which support costs have been allocated across expenditure headings; and
- the value of accrued publication income.

In addition to the above, the full impact following the recent emergence of the global coronavirus pandemic is still unknown. It is therefore not currently possible to evaluate all the potential implications for the charity's activities, suppliers, beneficiaries and the wider economy. Estimates used in the financial statements, particularly with respect to the value of listed investments are subject to a greater degree of uncertainty and volatility.

2 Investment income

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Income from listed investments	103	166
Interest receivable	2	10
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	105	176
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Included in the above is £17K (2019: £46K) of unrestricted income and £88K (2019: £130K) expendable endowment funds.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

3 Analysis of total expenditure

2020	Direct Staff Costs £'000	Other Direct Costs £'000	Support Costs (note 4) £'000	TOTAL 2020 £'000
Cost of Raising Funds	-	24	-	24
Bulletin & Other services	186	9	191	386
Publications	535	1,137	312	1,984
Meetings	142	147	139	428
Research	23	395	13	431
Education	183	117	134	434
Policy	151	46	105	302
	<u>1,220</u>	<u>1,875</u>	<u>894</u>	<u>3,989</u>
2019	Direct Staff Costs £'000	Other Direct Costs £'000	Support Costs (note 4) £'000	TOTAL 2019 £'000
Cost of Raising Funds	-	22	-	22
Bulletin & Other services	156	61	240	457
Publications	475	1,191	394	2,060
Meetings	134	710	160	1,004
Research	23	343	18	384
Education	200	116	166	482
Policy	165	41	153	359
	<u>1,153</u>	<u>2,484</u>	<u>1,131</u>	<u>4,768</u>

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

4 Support Costs

Support Costs	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Governance Costs		
Governance staff costs	4	3
Audit Fee	10	10
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	14	13
Other Support Costs		
Support staff costs	192	148
Non salary staff costs	45	76
Property	112	349
IT costs	126	93
Venue Costs	-	11
Publicity	11	13
Fees / Affiliations	54	53
Office running costs	55	67
Depreciation	140	74
Amortisation	11	-
Bulletin	50	94
Outsourced finance & payroll	36	35
Legal & Consultancy	26	82
Bank charges	22	23
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	894	1,131
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Support costs are allocated on the basis of time spent on each activity.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

5 Grants

Grant commitments are as follows:

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Grant commitments at 1 January	101	136
Awards made during year	518	429
Payments made during the year	(433)	(464)
Grant commitments at 31 December	<u>186</u>	<u>101</u>

The majority of grants awarded are to individuals. Grants to institutions are relatively few in number and low value.

6 Net Movement in Funds

is stated after charging:

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Depreciation	140	137
Amortisation	11	-
Auditor's remuneration		
- audit services	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>

Other than disclosed in note 19 members of the Board of Trustees did not receive any remuneration during the year (2019: nil). Expenses reimbursed to 6 (2019: 16) Members of the Board of Trustees in the year equalled £1,292 (2019: £8,769).

7 Taxation

The BES is a registered charity and as such its income and gains are exempt from corporation tax to the extent that they are applied to its charitable objectives. There is no corporation tax charge for the year (2019: nil).

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

8 Employees

The actual number of employees during the year was 33.2 (2019: 32.6)

	2020	2019
Membership	4.2	4.1
Publishing	12.2	10.8
Conferences / Meetings	3.2	3.1
Research	0.5	0.5
Education	4.7	5.8
Policy	4.8	5.5
Society	3.6	2.8
	<hr/> 33.2 <hr/>	<hr/> 32.6 <hr/>
	£'000	£'000
Staff costs during the year amounted to:		
Wages and salaries	1,211	1,110
Social security costs	114	114
Employer's pension contributions	86	80
Redundancy	-	-
	<hr/> 1,411 <hr/>	<hr/> 1,304 <hr/>

One employee earned £90,000-£99,999 during the year (2019: one employee earned £90,000-£99,999). The employer's pension contributions in respect of this employee during the year was £7,321 (2019: £6,961).

The aggregate benefits including pension contributions of the key management personnel were £319,472 (2019: £297,277), the trustees were not remunerated for services to the charity.

During the year settlement agreements were paid of £nil (2019: £nil).

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

9 Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold & long leasehold property	Leasehold improvements	Furniture, fixtures & equipment	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost				
1 January 2020	4,724	428	278	5,430
Additions	-	-	9	9
Disposals	-	-	(113)	(113)
31 December 2020	4,724	428	174	5,326
Depreciation				
1 January 2020	35	8	121	164
Charge for the year	95	21	24	140
Disposals	-	-	(113)	(113)
31 December 2020	130	29	32	191
Net book value				
31 December 2020	4,594	399	142	5,135
31 December 2019	4,689	420	157	5,266

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Customer Relationship Management System	Total
	£'000	£'000
Cost		
1 January 2020	-	-
Additions	198	198
Disposals	-	-
31 December 2020	198	198
Amortisation		
1 January 2020	-	-
Charge for the year	11	11
Disposals	-	-
31 December 2020	11	11
Net book value		
31 December 2020	187	187
31 December 2019	-	-

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

11 Investments

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Market value 1 January 2019	7,879	7,928
Additions	5,838	2,079
Disposals proceeds	(5,747)	(1,909)
Net investment (loss)/gain	25	903
Movement in deposits	(810)	(1,121)
Market value 31 December 2020	<u>7,185</u>	<u>7,880</u>
Historical cost at 31 December 2020	<u>6,211</u>	<u>6,846</u>
Accumulated unrealised gains based on historic cost at 31 December 2020	<u>974</u>	<u>1,034</u>
Realised gain in year based on historic cost	<u>84</u>	<u>331</u>
Represented by:		
UK equity shares	2,181	1,579
Overseas equities	3,523	3,533
UK fixed interest	393	345
Overseas fixed interest	84	511
UK Other	727	519
Overseas Other	0	305
Market value of listed investments	6,908	6,792
Investment in associated undertaking	-	-
Investment in subsidiary undertaking	-	-
Amounts held in cash	277	1,087
Total	<u>7,185</u>	<u>7,879</u>

Subsidiary undertakings

The BES holds 100% of the issued share capital of BES Trading Company Limited, a company registered in England and Wales. The sole activity of BES Trading Company Limited was to organise the 11th International Congress of Ecology in August 2013. At 31 December 2020 the Share Capital and net assets of BES Trading Company Limited amounted to £2 - (2019 £2).

The BES had shares in a property company, alongside other learned societies, in order to jointly own our headquarters. Following the disposal of the property portfolio the directors are in the process of winding up the company and its affairs have been placed in the hands of a liquidator.

The British Ecological Society

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

12 Debtors

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Trade debtors	1,773	32
VAT	70	-
Other debtors	40	51
Prepayments and accrued income	568	1,199
	<u>2,451</u>	<u>1,282</u>

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Trade creditors	105	464
Social security & other taxes	32	30
Accruals	928	42
Deferred income (note 15)	80	68
VAT	-	34
Grants payable (note 5)	186	101
	<u>1,331</u>	<u>739</u>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due over one year

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Deferred Income (note 15)	220	220
	<u>220</u>	<u>220</u>

15 Movement in deferred income

	2020 £	2019 £
As at 1 January 2020	68	51
Released in year	(68)	(51)
Deferred in year	80	68
Deferred in year – falling due more than one year	220	220
As at 31 December 2020	<u>300</u>	<u>288</u>

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

16 Movement in Funds

2020

	Fund balances brought forward 1/1/2020 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net gains on Investment Assets £'000	Transfers £'000	Fund Balances Carried Forward 31/12/2020 £'000
Restricted						
Alex S Watt Breckland Research Trust	2	-	-	-	-	2
Policy Assistant Fund	-	9	(9)	-	-	-
Ecology the Next Generation Bursary	5	3	(5)	-	-	3
Total restricted funds	7	12	(14)	-	-	5
Unrestricted funds						
General	2,132	4,525	(3,955)	4	(197)	2,509
Designated funds:						
Tangible fixed asset fund	5,266	-	-	-	(131)	5,135
Office renewal fund					150	150
Journals development fund					178	178
Total unrestricted funds	7,398	4,525	(3,955)	4	-	7,972
Expendable Endowment Funds	6,642	88	(20)	22	-	6,732
Total Funds	14,047	4,625	(3,989)	26	-	14,709

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

16 Movement in Funds (continued)

Designated

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Tangible fixed asset fund | - Represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets in use by the Society and therefore not available to the Board of Trustees to meet future expenditure. A transfer is made each year to reflect the change in net book value. |
| Office renewal fund | - The total estimated cost of the Cat A and Cat B fitout of the BES office plus the cost of fixtures and fittings in 2019 was £1.5m. To ensure that the BES has the funds available in the future to renew these, a designated fund has been established in 2020 of £150k per annum, assuming an inflation rate of 1.3% per annum and a maximum renewal period of 15 years. |
| Journals Development Fund | - The Board of Trustees have agreed to allocate some of the funds generated by the current contract with Wiley to increase capacity in the BES Publications Team to focus on strategy and help to develop, research and launch new journals bringing in future income for the BES. |

Restricted

Restricted funds of £4k at 31 December 2020 are represented by cash on deposit (2019 - £7k).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Alex S Watt Breckland Research Trust | - Funds administered by the BES in the memory of Alex Watt to provide funding for small scale research projects aimed to enhance our understanding of the conservation of the Breckland Region. |
| Policy Assistant Fund | - Restricted donation to support a staff member to work in the policy area. The staff member was appointed in February 2013. |
| Ecology the Next Generation Bursary | - An original donation of £7,500 was received to finance three bursaries to attendees at the Undergraduate Summer Schools which took place in the Summer of 2019. The BES continues to fundraise for this scheme and provide bursaries for students attending our summer schools programme. Two students were supported in 2019 and four students in 2020. The funds are held in trust by BES and drawn down by the bursary winners to fund training in ecology and associated expenses such as travel related to attendance at training or meetings and equipment . |

The Society holds €39,467 to update (2019 €39,028) on behalf of the European Ecological Foundation. This balance does not form part of these accounts.

Endowment

Expendable endowment funds of £6.8M at 31 December 2020 are represented by investment (2019 - £6.64M).

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Expendable Endowment fund | - The Society is taking proactive steps to mitigate the over-reliance on a single income source by holding these reserves in an investment portfolio that is managed using an ethical screen. Returns on these investments are re-invested strategically to part fund new activities and specific major projects specified in the Strategic Plan |
|---------------------------|--|

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

16 Movement in Funds (continued)

2019

	Fund balances brought forward 1/1/2019 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net gains on Investment Assets £'000	Transfers £'000	Fund Balances Carried Forward 31/12/2019 £'000
Restricted						
Alex S Watt Breckland Research Trust	2	-	-	-	-	2
Policy Assistant Fund	-	8	(8)	-	-	-
Ecology the Next Generation Bursary	-	8	(3)	-	-	5
Total restricted funds	2	16	(11)	-	-	7
Unrestricted funds						
General	2,997	6,381	(4,740)	235	(2,741)	2,132
Tangible fixed asset fund	2,525	-	-	-	2,741	5,266
Total unrestricted funds	5,522	6,381	(4,740)	235	-	7,398
Expendable Endowment Fund	5,861	130	(17)	668	-	6,642
Total Funds	11,385	6,527	(4,768)	903	-	14,047

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

2020

	General £'000	Designated £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	Total £'000
Tangible assets	-	5,135	-	-	5,135
Intangible assets	187				187
Investments	453	-	-	6,732	7,185
Net current assets / liabilities	1,869	328	5	-	2,202
Net assets	2,509	5,463	5	6,732	14,709

2019

	General £'000	Designated £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	Total £'000
Tangible assets	-	5,266	-	-	5,266
Investments	1,238	-	-	6,642	7,880
Net current assets / liabilities	894	-	7	-	901
Net assets	2,132	5,266	7	6,642	14,047

18 Related party transactions

No transactions have taken place with either Members or with the Senior Management Team. It is the policy of the BES that Committee members who have an interest in any grant awarding decisions must leave the room at the time the awarding decision is made.

Richard Bardgett and Yvonne Buckley– existing editors of the Journal of Ecology, were appointed as trustees in the 2018 and 2020 respectively. They continued to be paid at the fixed rate and have received £8,368 (2019: £6,620) in the year. They have received no remuneration in their capacity as a trustee.

There were no other related party transactions during the current or prior year.

19 The George Jackson Estate

As part of the George Jackson bequest the Society was left as residuary beneficiary of a revisionary bequest. The property passes to the Society upon the death of the life interest. Because of the uncertainty as to value and timing the value of the property is not included with these financial statements.