

Wildlife and
Countryside



Wildlife and Countryside Link

(A company limited by guarantee)

Company number: 03889519

Annual Report 2021

The Trustees submit their report together with the financial statements of Wildlife and Countryside Link for the year ended 31 December 2021.

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A Message from Link's Chair

2021 was a very successful year for Wildlife and Countryside Link.

Thanks to dedicated policy, advocacy and campaigning by Link and its members, including over 200,000 members of the public, the Government agreed to Link's campaign for a legally-binding target to halt the decline of wildlife by 2030. We are very proud of this legal change and grateful to everyone who supported the campaign. Now we must make sure it is delivered.

Link was also instrumental in securing important new funding for the environment movement in a time of financial turmoil. Our Green Recovery campaign and proposals for shovel-ready environmental projects gave rise to the £80million Green Recovery Challenge Fund. It is extremely satisfying to see the results of that work begin to appear on the ground.

There were other law and policy successes too, many of which you can find listed in this report: strengthening the legal recognition of animal sentience; helping to avert dangerous new planning proposals; broadening rules on biodiversity net gain; playing our part in the sewage campaign; and ensuring that the scope of new waste reduction commitments extends to all single-use items.

Despite these successes, there remains a huge challenge for environmental law and policy in England. Environmental laws are being weakened, funding is being squeezed, and environmental pressures continue to intensify. Many of the promises that we have secured from Government still need further detail and firmer delivery plans before they begin to make a difference for nature and wildlife.

In 2022, we will make the case not just to defend environmental law and spending, but to redouble Government efforts to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies. We are grateful to all of our members and to all those who support our work more broadly—partners, funders, politicians, members of the public. We look forward to working with you in 2022.

Martin Spray CBE DSc, Chair, Wildlife and Countryside Link

Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife and Countryside Link



Reference and Administrative Details

Link Trustees

Martin Spray, Chair	(appointed December 2018)
Philip Hewetson, Treasurer	(appointed December 2020)
Dominic Dyer	(appointed December 2018)
Marcus Gilleard	(appointed March 2015)
Sandy Luk	(appointed December 2018)
Simon Marsh	(appointed December 2018)
Nicola Hutchinson	(resigned December 2021)
Nadia Shaikh	(appointed December 2021)
Sarah McMonagle	(appointed December 2021)
Allison Ogden-Newton	(appointed December 2021)
Jason Reeves	(appointed December 2021)

Company Registered Number

03889519

Charity Registered Number

1107460

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Independent Examiner

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Solicitors

Russell-Cooke Solicitors
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SW15 6A

Trustees' Report

Objectives and Activities

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

Our objectives and strategy

Wildlife and Countryside Link is the largest environment and wildlife coalition in England. We bring together our 65 organisations to develop and advocate proposals for improvements in law and policy for the benefit of wildlife and our environment. Our members campaign to conserve, enhance and access our landscapes, habitats, rivers and seas and protect our animals and plants. Together we have the support of over eight million people in the UK and directly protect over 750,000 hectares of land and 800 miles of coastline.

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous twelve months. The review also helps us ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

In 2021, we agreed a new ten year strategy:

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

Our working groups remain the stalwarts of our policy work, providing a backbone of policy thinking for the sector. They ensure that important consultations and policy agendas are properly addressed by the sector, whether large and high profile, or concise and technical. Working together, we want to ensure that every organisation can lend its expertise to add to our joint voice, even where they would not be able to do so individually. In this way, our core activities are tightly focused on delivering public benefit by generating innovative and compelling shared policy positions that can influence law and policy for the improvement of the natural environment.

At the same time, we are working through more targeted project groups, developing rapid thinking in response to policy threats and opportunities, then disbanding or reforming to move on to the next. In this work, our network of policy thinkers has shown huge flexibility and alacrity, allowing us to respond quickly to agendas like planning reform and targets development, with recognised influence in government. We are grateful to everyone who has contributed and look forward to more successful projects together next year.

Alongside our policy work, we aim to support members in their corporate governance and institutional development. During the pandemic, we have been a hub for understanding and expressing the practical and financial challenges faced by the sector.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Challenges and future plans

Following the passage of the Agriculture Act, the Environment Act, and the Fisheries Act, an intense period of implementation and delivery is required to secure promised environmental benefits.

There remain main practical and policy challenges to the successful roll-out of the legislation. Details that were not included in the legislation itself are, nevertheless, instrumental in ensuring its efficacy. For example, the design of Environmental Land Management schemes; monitoring and enforcement related to biodiversity net gain; the processes of agreeing and implementing local nature recovery strategies; the scope and ambition of Deposit Return and Extended Producer Responsibility; the designation of Highly Protected Marine Areas; and the details of the Fisheries Policy Statements; the details of Environment Act targets; and action to meet water quality goals all require much further detail.

In this context, one of the main challenges we face is capacity to contribute to such a great deal of technical work, aiming to lead thinking rather than simply respond to Government proposals. We aim to be agenda-setting. We have begun policy development in each of these areas, gathering views from members and partners.

At the same time, there come new political challenges. The cost of living crisis has already provoked some backlash against environmental thinking, most notably in the net zero arena. We will redouble our efforts to articulate and evidence the economic and social equity case for environmental action, including costs for future generations. We hope to make our work on equitable access to nature this year a good example of how environmental investment can benefit both biodiversity and people.

A second looming political challenge is renewed interest in deregulation and distancing from EU-derived law. This is manifest in questions about the future of the Habitats Regulations and in legislative proposals affecting access to environmental justice. We will be robust in defence of the Habitats Regulations and propositional about where a Nature Recovery Network can be strengthened, with added protection for sites and species.

A structural challenge for the environmental movement as a whole, including Link and its members, is to become more inclusive and representative. We are determined to change both because it is the right thing to do and because a more diverse and inclusive movement will be stronger and more resilient.

Public Benefit requirement

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

AGM

Link's Annual General Meeting took place on 6 December 2021 at Church House, Westminster. Alongside the formal AGM, we held a public conference. Keynote speakers included:

- Rt Hon George Eustice MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to speak about the Environment Act 2021.
- Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, to speak about planning reform.
- Marian Spain (CEO, Natural England) and Tony Juniper (Chair, Natural England) to speak about nature's recovery.

We used the platform of the conference to advocate for stronger environmental planning laws, increased access to nature, and improved environmental funding for farmers.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Achievements and Performance

In 2021, Link was at the forefront of political debate, working closely with other coalitions to guard against the risks of political change and to create new opportunities for improvement.

In 2021, Link managed and provided support for 13 groups on the following policy areas:

- Agriculture: Chair, Christopher Price (Rare Breeds Survival Trust); Vice Chair, Alice Groom (RSPB)
- Animal Welfare: Chair, Claire Bass (Humane Society International-UK)
- Blueprint for Water: Chair, Ali Morse (The Wildlife Trusts); Vice Chair, Jazz Austin (RSPB)
- Bovine TB: no Chair
- Invasive Non-Native Species: Chair, Emily Smith (Angling Trust)
- Land Use Planning: Chair, Rebecca Pullinger (Woodland Trust); Vice Chair, Carl Bunnage (RSPB)
- Legal Strategy: Chair, Carol Day (RSPB); Vice Chair, Rosie Sutherland (RSPB)
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies: Chair, Bruce Winney (WCL)
- Marine: Chair, Sean Clement (WWF), Vice Chair, Jacques Villemot (RSPB)
- Marine Mammals: Chair, Lucy Babey (ORCA)
- Nature and Wellbeing Strategy Group: Co Chair, Sue Young (TWT), Co Chair, Dom Higgins (TWT)
- Resources & Waste: Chair, Paula Chin (WWF-UK), Vice Chair, Pine Eisfeld-Pierantonio (WDC)
- Wildlife Crime & Trade: Chair, Martin Sims (LACS); Vice Chair, Craig Fellows (Badger Trust)

Link also took on new workstreams in 2021, including on green recovery, chemicals, and COP15. Key achievements in 2021 include:

Leading and winning a joint sector campaign to improve the State of Nature

Link's sector-leading State of Nature campaign launched in February 2021, aiming to secure a legal target to end nature's decline by 2030, in amendments to the Environment Bill. This had the support of 70 organisations, more than 30 celebrities including Steve Backshall, Chris Packham, and Stanley Johnson, and politicians from across the political spectrum. The campaign launched to high profile media fanfare in March 2021.

Coverage included: a Daily Telegraph [comment piece from Stanley Johnson](#), [Daily Express spread](#) with [comment piece from Craig Bennett](#), [Independent article](#), with [comment piece from Steve Backshall](#), [i news article](#), and [Times article](#). Three months of concerted campaigning achieved a [landmark Government promise for nature](#) in May 2021 when the Secretary of State confirmed a 'Net zero equivalent for nature' target would be included in the Environment Bill. However, this commitment was subsequently watered down with the target only needing to 'contribute to' halting species decline by 2030. Further heavy lobbying by Link's State of Nature coalition, supported by 208,000 petition signatures, succeeded in getting the change to legislation we needed for nature. Amended wording to 'deliver' a 2030 target to halt species decline was included in the Act.

This is widely regarded as the top achievement for the sector on the Environment Act, alongside influence on sewage pollution issues. Our campaign has meant that England is the first country in the world with a legally binding target to end nature's decline. Not only does this guarantee domestic action, it also puts the UK as a whole in a stronger negotiating position going into discussions of a global deal for nature at the COP15 biodiversity talks in 2022.

Providing sector insights and support through COVID-19 impact survey and Green Recovery funding

Throughout the pandemic Link conducted vital research into the financial and organisational impact of the COVID-crisis on the nature sector. Two initial pieces of research on the worrying financial position of the sector (with a quarter of eNGOS at high risk of becoming financially unviable or with less than four months of reserves) and on "shovel-ready" projects needing to be funded, were used to lobby Defra and Downing Street in Spring 2021. We received feedback that our research was central to securing [£80 million of funding for nature recovery](#), and public engagement projects, through the Defra/National Lottery Heritage Fund 'Green Recovery Challenge Fund'.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Further to this research, Link conducted two follow-up surveys, with an [in-depth report](#) published in summer 2021 on the state of the sector in the wake of the pandemic. This was shared widely with funders and feedback was received that this was invaluable in giving a sector-wide perspective and in helping several trusts to make decisions about their funding approach for the year ahead.

Towards a sustainable farming future

The early evolution of Defra's future farming plans has not been rooted in the Government's overall environmental objectives. Our focus last year was to encourage Defra to publish objectives for the Environmental Land Management scheme which demonstrate how the schemes will recover nature and reduce emissions, meeting Government targets such as net zero. Our report '[Digging Deeper](#)' put forward proposals for what such objectives could look like. In early 2022, the Government has published some [overarching objectives](#) for the scheme which is a notable positive impact.

At the end of 2021, Defra published its first [standards](#) for the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) due to be rolled out in 2022. By working closely with Defra, Link and its members managed to increase the ambition of the SFI to ensure that it was not paying for actions that farmers are already obliged to do under cross compliance or law. However, the SFI is currently still low in ambition. This year, Link will set out what a high ambition standard for the SFI look like, particularly for water quality and farmland biodiversity.

Finally, concerns remain about poor enforcement of farming rules, and the loss of some good practice measures in cross compliance from 2024. In 2022, Link will draw up proposals for improving farming regulation and enforcement over the Agricultural Transition.

Delivering a post-Brexit framework for high animal welfare standards

2021 was a busy year for animal welfare, with the Government publishing its [Animal Welfare Action Plan](#) in May. The Animal Welfare Strategy Group has been working to ensure that these welcome commitments are effectively delivered, starting with the cornerstone Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill which delivers the post-Brexit recognition of animal sentience Link has been calling for some years.

The group has worked closely with the Defra Bill team and the Labour frontbench team to secure the Bill, which came under attack from some interest groups shortly after its introduction to the House of Lords in summer 2021. Through engagement with Defra, No10, Conservative MPs and the Labour front bench the group shored up support for the Bill, which successfully passed through the Lords to the Commons in December, managing also to secure a key enhancement for the Bill in the form of the [addition](#) of cephalopods (including octopuses) and decapod crustaceans (including crabs and lobsters) to the Bill scope.

The group is pressing the Government to swiftly deliver other elements of the Animal Welfare Action Plan to a high ambition specification, including a full ban on the breeding and sale of primates as pets (through amendment to the [Kept Animals Bill](#)), a ban on the [fur trade](#) and a ban on the use of [lead ammunition](#). Link secured discussion of the latter issue in the closing stages of the Environment Act and has drafted a Private Members Bill calling for a ban, which has now been introduced to the Lords.

A new Vision for our freshwater environment

The main focus for Blueprint for Water in 2021 was the launch of our report '[Actions to Recover England's Waters and Wildlife](#)'. This comprehensive report sets out our 'vision' for the freshwater environment and our 'how to' strategy for bringing our freshwaters back to health before it is too late, with recommendations under three key themes - Recover Biodiversity, Drive Down Pollution, and Re-think Our Relationship With Water. Our September [launch event](#) was attended by over 100 people, including water industry, Defra, Environment Agency, MPs, Lords, and water campaigners, and was covered in national press. Environment Agency colleagues were particularly receptive to the report, flagging that it was timely and has significantly helped to make the political case for freshwater.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Alongside the vision report, Blueprint also launched an '[Environmental Manifesto for PR24](#)', setting out what Government, regulators and water companies must do if PR24 is to deliver a step-change for people and nature. Blueprint engaged extensively with the water industry throughout 2021, responding to a multitude of consultations covering the [price review](#), [abstraction](#), the [WINEP](#) and the [WISER](#). Blueprint have also been heavily involved in the Regional Water Resources Groups, developing our '[Top 10 Asks](#)' for the draft plans and delivering a [webinar series](#) to encourage greater eNGO engagement in this process. We will continue to build on our work on PR24 and the Regional Plans throughout 2022. Blueprint will also continue to advocate for the asks presented in our Vision report, identifying key opportunities such as targets under the Environment Act, and the EA and Ofwat investigation into illegal sewage pollution.

A strong joint voice for badgers

After a long hiatus, 2021 saw Link's Bovine TB Working Group come together to develop strong joint responses to Government consultations on bTB [policy](#), and cattle [measures](#). We set out our opposition to the badger cull policy, highlighting that the huge costs of the policy, in terms of animal welfare, biodiversity and finance, have not been matched by evidence of its efficacy in controlling disease. Government have been increasingly active on the issue of bTB, and the Link group has provided a forum for eNGOs to discuss and build consensus. The group have also established connections with the campaign and advocacy coalition Badger Cull Campaigners, and have successfully re-established lines of communication with Defra. The group will continue to build on this engagement in 2022, having secured an invitation to sit on Defra's bTB Partnership.

Safeguarding the UK from invasive species

Following the release last year of the '[Prevention is Better Than Cure](#)' report, the Link INNS Group has continued to build on this work raising awareness of the need and advocating for increased funding and resources for tackling invasive species. Since securing a 1-year scoping trial of the INNS inspectorate, we again pushed for this inspectorate to be extended permanently through the 2021 Spending Review. We also raised the issue through collaboration with the [ELUK response](#) to the marine strategy, and through our submission to [Defra](#) on what a successful plant biosecurity strategy for Great Britain should look like.

We will continue to build on this work in 2022, using the 1-year scoping inspectorate trial to again make the case for a fully-funded, permanent INNS inspectorate. The Link INNS Group also took part in Invasive Species Week 2021 through a series of blogs to raise awareness of this often neglected threat to biodiversity, and the actions needed from various stakeholders.

Planning for people and wildlife

Link's Land Use Planning Group has been busy [highlighting](#) the importance of planning in creating greener and healthier places for people and wildlife. After strong cross-sector resistance to the Government's original planning reforms as set out in 2020, Michael Gove took over the planning portfolio as the new Secretary of State for the renamed Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

With a joint letter to Mr Gove and [briefing](#) on our positive proposals to improve the planning system for nature, climate and people, the new SoS accepted an invitation to speak at the 2021 Link Conference and AGM, where he gave reassurances as to the importance of nature in levelling up and planning.

The group will continue to advocate for nature-positive planning and access to nature for all in forthcoming levelling up and planning legislation. Also, with the successful Link Environment Bill amendment to [extend Biodiversity Net Gain](#) to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and the Royal Assent of the Environment Act, the group continued to engage with civil servants on the regulations and implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain in different contexts to ensure it delivers genuine gains for nature.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Safeguarding legal mechanisms to protect nature

Link's Legal Strategy Group has been working hard to reduce the harmful impact of attempted Government changes to judicial review (JR), which will restrict the ability of campaigners (including environmental campaigners) to secure effective remedies through JR. Pressure from the group played its part in the Government decision not to include some of its initial proposals in the Judicial Review & Courts Bill, published in July 2021. The group has been working with the Labour frontbench in the House of Commons to remove the remaining harmful proposals from clause 1 of the Bill, securing tabled [amendments](#) to remove clause 1 at committee and report stage of the Bill. The group will work with peers to press these amendments as the Bill passes through the House of Lords in 2022.

The group continues to highlight the UK's failure to comply with the Aarhus Convention on access to environmental justice, and made [representations](#) setting out this failure at the meeting of parties to the Aarhus Convention in October 2021. The group are now working on a blueprint Environmental Rights Act, to show the UK could comply with the Convention and ensure equitable access to environmental justice for all citizens.

Ensuring clean healthy and thriving seas

Link's Marine Group has had a busy year. Together with Environment Links UK (ELUK) the group [responded](#) to the consultation on the Marine Strategy (Part 3), programme of measures.

The Marine Group has continued its 'Ocean Recovery' campaign, launching a [scorecard](#) setting out the policies the group hoped to see delivered in 2021, a year ministers had dubbed a 'super year' for the oceans. This led to a [report](#) this January setting out progress over 2021, finding that many actions remained outstanding and calling on the Government to deliver these as the basis of a marine recovery agenda for 2022. The group have met with Oceans Minister Rebecca Pow and the Labour Shadow Secretary of State to discuss the campaign as well as with senior Defra officials.

The group has also produced a [report on 30x30 in the marine environment](#), aligning the sector on a shared 2030 vision for protecting our seas.

Protecting marine mammals

A Link [paper](#) on the need for Government support for the International Whaling Commission's (IWC) secretariat's office costs was well received by Defra and we understand that a bid was put in to the Comprehensive Spending Review from Defra for additional IWC funding as well as a commitment to circa £250k from departmental underspends. Officials have said that Link's paper and subsequent engagement was crucial in helping them effectively make the case for this spending.

Link helped organise an event in December to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the IWC, with senior officials speaking on behalf of Ministers and celebrity speakers. The Marine Mammals group have also pressured the Government to take strong stances on abuses in other countries, having written to Lord Goldsmith last summer about the dolphin killings on the Faroe Islands and whale experiments in Norway.

Recovering nature for wildlife and people

The Link Nature and Wellbeing Strategy Group, a new Link group evolved from the 25 Year Plan Working Group, set out [its position](#) on the importance of nature to people, and the importance of people to nature, in a statement at the beginning of the year.

The group developed proposals and launched a [report](#) on how the Government should deliver its promise to protect 30% of land by 2030 – securing an acknowledgement in a later Government publication that the entirety of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should not count towards the 30% target. The group identified other opportunities across other policy areas that could contribute to improving the state of nature and people's access and enjoyment of thriving nature, including with a [briefing](#) on ELM and 30x30 and starting to develop policy proposals for improving access to nature for all in planning legislation.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Providing a pollution solution

Link's Waste and Resources Group have responded to a suite of waste reform consultations this year, ensuring that ocean pollution is halted at source. The group has published parliamentary briefings to highlight limited Government ambition (examples [here](#) and [here](#), with the group [praised for their work in Parliament](#)) and submitted a series of hard-hitting consultation responses (examples [here](#) and [here](#)) on the same theme, [securing press coverage](#) for warnings on a lack of strong ambition for the proposed Deposit Return Scheme.

The Waste and Resources group published a [briefing](#) for Parliamentarians on the importance of tackling all single use items which can pollute the natural environment, in addition to just single use plastics. The original Environment Bill proposed a power only for charges on single use plastic items. This was in response to fears that, without tackling single use consumption in the round, plastic waste would simply be replaced by other materials waste which will also damage the environment, rather than consumption shifting to more sustainable, reusable, alternatives. Working with colleagues at Green Alliance, this was the group's priority amendment for the Environment Bill and we were delighted to see it pass the Lords and subsequently be accepted by the Government.

Tackling wildlife crime

The group published their fifth Annual Wildlife Crime [Report](#) (with 2020 figures) in November 2021, with Shadow Secretary of State for Defra Luke Pollard speaking at the launch event. The Report secured extensive [press coverage](#) and presented new evidence to support the group's key ask of making a shortlist of wildlife crimes (agreed with the National Wildlife Crime Unit in February 2021) notifiable.

As well as seeking change from Westminster, the group has been working to improve the prevention and prosecution of wildlife criminals on the ground, running an [engagement campaign](#) with Police and Crime Commissioners in Spring & Summer 2021 to make the case for more resourcing for wildlife crime teams, and securing new wildlife crime training for members of the Crown Prosecution Service, delivered by members of the group. Increased funding for the National Wildlife Crime Unit has also been secured.

The group has also been working to secure swift and [comprehensive implementation](#) of the Ivory Act, and for more action to [tackle hare coursing](#) – the Government announced new [measures](#) to address the latter in January 2022, including Link recommendations.

Tackling hazardous chemicals

The Government's much awaited UK Chemicals Strategy was delayed continually in 2021. Link spent the year developing proposals for the Strategy, including feeding into NGOs' '12 Key Asks for the UK Chemicals Strategy'.

In 2021 Link has established a forum for the sector to break down silos of industrial, agricultural and pharmaceutical chemicals. We aim to present new proposals on chemicals management in 2022.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Link has two groups dedicated to improving equality, diversity and inclusivity among our membership and the wider movement: our EDI working group and our Peer Support Network for people of colour.

The main business of the EDI group this year has been to initiate a "State of the Sector" report on ethnic diversity in the environment movement, which aims to produce a roadmap for change alongside an analysis of the current situation. The quantitative and qualitative research element has been completed, with over 2,000 responses to our survey. The roadmap work is now in development. This work is a first attempt to plot a progressive course for the whole movement; it will only be a beginning, but we hope it will provide a framework for change and accountability.

The Peer Support Network follows a safe space "listening circle" model. It is intended to facilitate mutual support and learning for people of colour across the sector, especially for smaller organisations where there may not be an existing group and where diversity may be limited. The Network has made a positive and beneficial start and we are grateful to those who have given time to support the initiative.

Trustees' Report (continued)

A green (and blue) recovery

In 2021 Link put together its [proposal](#) for the Comprehensive Spending Review, including a minimum ask for £1.2bn for nature. This work highlighted a spending gap of over £4.5bn per annum for nature. In the Spending Review, the Government revealed that it would provide more than £250m for nature, but which includes some delivery of Environment Act commitments. It also increased the Nature for Climate Fund budget.

Link worked on the development of a [report](#) on levelling up through nature jobs in the UK, which Green Alliance spearheaded. This was followed by parliamentary advocacy, leading many MPs to see the potential for nature jobs in their constituencies.

Link helped to convene a coalition of finance NGOs and nature NGOs to work on creating a role for the Government's new UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) to invest in nature-based solutions (NbS). Work included writing to UKIB officials to call for this. In 2022, Link will continue to call for this, and will ensure that our members have a role in shaping UKIB policy on NbS.

Securing a global goal for nature

The four UK Environment Link organisations have continued to work together to set out what the four UK Governments need to deliver ahead of the delayed Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 in Kunming, China, now scheduled to go ahead later this year.

In 2021 the ELUK group produced our '*Achieving harmony with nature*' report, which recommends how the four Governments of the UK can develop a strong negotiating position capable of influencing the success of the post-2020 biodiversity framework. We have called for legally-binding targets for the recovery of species and habitats by 2030, proper delivery of the UK's 30x30 target, a robust monitoring, reporting, and verification framework, and commitment to 4-country coordination on nature's protection. Furthermore, as the UK continues its COP26 Presidency, we call for the four Governments to carry the momentum from COP26 and champion ambition in the CBD process at COP15, highlighting the synergies of acting on the twin climate and nature crises simultaneously.

To promote our recommendations and raise awareness of the Convention on Biological Diversity amongst Parliamentarians, we co-organised and ran a successful event with Westminster MPs earlier in 2021, with further advocacy activities planned for 2022. Alongside awareness-raising in Parliament, last year also saw the first COP15 information session for Link members, which was well-attended and will continue on a monthly basis in 2022. These sessions provide updates on political developments around the talks and will act as a touchpoint for organisations to learn more about the COP15 campaign which Link will be delivering with RSPB.

Carbon offsetting in the UK

2021 saw the start of a new work area for Link. With the market for voluntary offsets expected to grow rapidly over the coming years and the new, post-Brexit UK Emissions Trading Scheme still in development, Link launched a [report](#) in April to highlight the shortcomings of policy and regulation to support nature-based solutions through both the voluntary and regulated carbon markets. We noted the concerns that widespread use of offsetting could cover up business-as-usual emissions, or that nature-based solutions – whether linked to markets or not – are carried out in a way that is harmful to biodiversity or the local communities where they are created. The report also addressed the issue of carbon offsetting in the regulated market.

We secured funding to develop our recommendations further as part of a project that will extend throughout much of 2022. This work will identify the strong standards needed for offsets across a range of habitat types, and set out the role that carbon markets can play within the UK Government's broader environmental agenda and land use policies.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Securing nature recovery at the local level

May 2021 saw the completion of five pilot projects that ran from autumn 2020 to test the process of developing Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs). A new work stream was set up to assess the pilots and subsequently influence the guidelines and regulations. Once the group had access to all the outputs from the pilots, they put together a [comprehensive briefing](#), which was then published and shared widely. This helped inform the [response](#) to the LNRS consultation.

Further work went into [estimating the resources](#) that will be required to successfully deliver LNRSs, which was then used to [advocate for sufficient allocation](#) of funding from Defra's uplift in the comprehensive spending review via written parliamentary questions. The statutory guidelines and regulations should be published in the spring, after which Responsible Authorities will be appointed and LNRSs process begins. Link are continuing to work on influencing what is put in place through engagement with Defra and through developing a vision of how LNRSs and Environmental Land Management Schemes should be integrated.

Link continues to respond to nature recovery policy opportunities as they come up. This can require light-footed work, drawing on Link member expertise outside of the framework of established policy groups.

In 2021, such interventions included:

- A [paper](#) setting out the case for major infrastructure to be included within Biodiversity Net Gain. This recommendation was then adopted within the Environment Act.
- A [response](#) to the consultation on the future of the UK Forestry Standard, which made the case for more nature-friendly woodland creation practices. Link engages in woodland policy through a light-touch, informal policy group.
- Advocacy [work](#) to strengthen new regulations to restrict heather burning on upland peat. This work will continue in 2022, as data on the effectiveness of the new regulations becomes available.

Structure, Governance and Management

Leadership

Link's Board of Trustees, and its Finance and Resources Sub Committee, each held four meetings during 2021.

In 2021, David Lind, Nikki Williams and Nicola Hutchinson came to the end of their time with the Board. We would like to thank them for dedicated and exceptional service. We welcome four new Board members: Nadia Shaikh, Sarah McMonagle, Allison Ogden-Newton and Jason Reeves.

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

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

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

Trustees' Report (continued)

Risk Management

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

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

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

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

Pay Policy for senior staff

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

We have reviewed the pay and rewards given to staff to ensure we give fair terms in line with other similar organisations.

Preparation of the report

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

Exemptions from Disclosure

There are no exemptions required.

Funds held as custodian Trustee on behalf of others

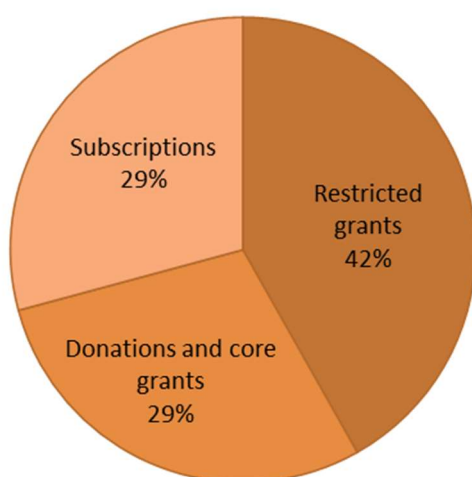
Link does not have a custodian Trustee.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Financial Review

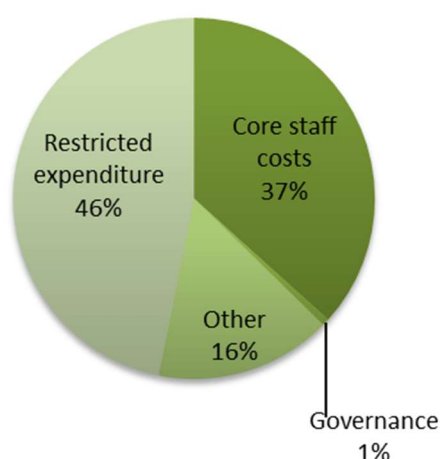
Here we summarise financial information to give an overview of the charity's financial performance during 2021, by using selected information from the full annual accounts. The full accounts are set out at page 17 and thereafter.

2021 Income



During 2021, a number of restricted grants contributed towards funding the ongoing implementation of Link's five year Strategy 2020-25. Link's total income in 2021 was £675,485 (2020 £483,159). Member subscriptions for the year totalled £197,131 (2020 £182,957).

2021 Expenditure



Link's total expenditure amounted to £470,929 (2020 £344,242).

Total expenditure on staff costs are shown in note 5, which totalled £327,218. As in past years, this does not take account of the contribution made to Link's collaborative work by staff within our member organisations, who help us to achieve so much. These results show that Link has, and continues to, develop a secure financial model based on member subscriptions with a level of grants that allow Link to maximise its effectiveness for its members.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Reserves Policy

Link's Reserve policy is to maintain free reserves of six months operating expenditure, over a rolling period of three years. This allows Link's Board of Trustees to maximise the use of the financial reserves but demands a plan to achieve the policy. At 31 December 2021, free reserves (in the general fund) amounted to 11.1 months of total 2021 expenditure. This level of reserves will allow Link to continue to implement the current interim Strategy.

Grants

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

Link also secured restricted funds to support particular Policy Officers and projects, including grants from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation to support the Head of Communications and the Marine Policy Officer, from Natural England to fund a Local Nature Recovery Strategies Policy Officer, from Green Alliance for a project on Green Recovery, the European Climate Foundation to support carbon offsetting work, and from Esmee, Joseph Rowntree, John Ellerman and Natural England for an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion project.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In addition to the risks that the Trustees have identified and considered, the Trustees have given due consideration for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic upon the charity's current and future activities. There will be a no negative financial impact in the short-term due to access to emergency funding from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and the other successful grant applications. There is a manageable medium term risk of some effects on membership and Link is keeping some additional reserves to cover that eventuality.

The charity has put in a range of steps in line with available guidance from HM Government to mitigate this threat to the charity. We have reviewed our budgets and forecasts for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. 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.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those individuals and organisations that made 2021 such a great year for Link, including our members, partners, funders and colleagues. With their generous support, we will continue to work hard in 2022 and beyond to conserve and protect wildlife and the countryside.

Preparation of the report

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies' exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006. It was approved, and authorised for issue, by the Trustees on 23 May 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

Martin Spray CBE, Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link

Independent Examiners Report to the Members of Wildlife and Countryside Link

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2021 as set out on pages 17 to 29.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act).

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters which I am required to state to them in an independent examiners report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charity and charity's trustees as a body, for my examination, for this report, or for the statement I have given below.

Independent examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

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

JOHN SPEED FCA FCIE

JS2 Limited
One Crown Square
Woking
Surrey
GU21 6HR

Date:

Statement of Financial Activities**For the year ended 31 December 2021****(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
INCOME FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	191,873	3,900	195,773	186,733
Income from Charitable activities:					
Grants for project work	10	-	282,478	282,478	113,050
Subscriptions		197,131	-	197,131	182,957
Other trading activities:					
Income from investments		103	-	103	419
TOTAL INCOME		389,107	286,378	675,485	483,159
EXPENDITURE ON					
Expenditure on Charitable activities	3	250,356	220,573	470,929	344,242
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		250,356	220,573	470,929	344,242
Net Income		138,751	65,805	204,556	138,917
Transfers between funds	10	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		138,751	65,805	204,556	138,917
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		295,908	81,856	377,764	238,847
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		£ 434,659	£ 147,661	£ 582,320	£ 377,764

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities.

There were no recognised gains and losses other than those stated above.

Registered Company number 03889519

Balance Sheet**As at 31 December 2021**

	Notes	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		6,180		9,509
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	8	11,415		41,703	
Cash at bank and in hand		610,160		400,206	
		621,575		441,909	
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	9	(45,435)		(73,654)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			576,140		368,255
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			582,320		377,764
NET ASSETS			£ 582,320		£ 377,764
FUNDS					
Restricted funds			147,661		81,856
General fund (unrestricted)			434,659		295,908
			£ 582,320		£ 377,764

For the year ending 31 December 2021 the Company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. They were approved and authorised for issue by the directors on 23 May 2022 and signed on their behalf by:-

Martin Spray, Chair

Philip Hewetson, Treasurer

Statement of Cash Flows**For the year ended 31 December 2021**

	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
CASH FLOWS FROM				
OPERATING ACTIVITIES:				
Net income for the year	204,556		138,917	
Adjustments for:				
Depreciation charges	3,329		4,922	
Interest	(103)		(419)	
Decrease/ (increase) in debtors	30,288		(27,309)	
Decrease/ (increase) in creditors	(28,219)		60,359	
NET CASH PROVIDED BY				
OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		209,851		176,470
CASH FLOWS FROM				
INVESTING ACTIVITIES:				
Interest	103		419	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-		(9,475)	
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/ (USED IN)				
INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		103		(9,056)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		209,954		167,414
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		400,206		232,792
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	£	610,160	£	400,206

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation of financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The Charity is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102 and therefore has also prepared the financial statements in accordance with the 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 (The FRS 102 Charities SORP) and the Charities Act 2011.

Going Concern

In addition to the risks that the Trustees have identified and considered, the Trustees have given due consideration for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic upon the charity's current and future activities. There will be no negative financial impact in the short-term due to access to emergency funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the other successful grant applications. There is a manageable medium term risk of some effects on membership and Link is keeping some additional reserves to cover that eventuality.

The charity has put in a range of steps in line with available guidance from HM Government to mitigate this threat to the charity. We have reviewed our budgets and forecasts for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. 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.

Company status

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the Charity.

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of financial activities when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

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

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

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

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

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

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

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

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures and fittings -	4 years
Office equipment -	4 years
IT equipment -	4 years

Operating leases

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

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
Donations	99	3,900	3,999	1,950
Government grant: Furlough scheme	2,286	-	2,286	3,907
Grants for core funding	189,488	-	189,488	180,876
	£ 191,873	£ 3,900	£ 195,773	£ 186,733

In 2020 all voluntary income was unrestricted.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

**3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES:
FACILITATION, COORDINATION & INFORMATION PROVISION****CURRENT YEAR**

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
Staff costs	172,889	154,329	327,218	255,567
Support costs (see Note 4)	3,044	-	3,044	5,302
Other costs	74,423	66,244	140,667	83,373
	£ 250,356	£ 220,573	£ 470,929	£ 344,242

PRIOR YEAR

	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2020 £
Staff costs	185,162	70,405	255,567
Support costs (see Note 4)	5,302	-	5,302
Other costs	67,813	15,560	83,373
	£ 258,277	£ 85,965	£ 344,242

Expenditure includes:

	2021 £	2020 £
Rent	28,035	28,097

4. SUPPORT COSTS

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
GOVERNANCE:				
Independent Examiner:				
Preparation of Statutory Accounts	1,638	-	1,638	1,560
Independent Examination	1,332	-	1,332	1,260
Legal and professional fees	13	-	13	2,400
Other expenses	61	-	61	82
	£ 3,044	£ Nil	£ 3,044	£ 5,302

In 2020 all support costs were unrestricted.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)**5. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS**

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	289,012	224,347
Social security costs	24,246	18,925
Pension costs	13,960	12,295
	£ 327,218	£ 255,567
	Number	Number
The average headcount during the year was as follows:	9.5	6.3

One employee received remuneration of between £60,000 and £70,000 in the year (exclusive of employer pensions and employer National Insurance contributions). (2020: 1 employee was paid between £60,000 and £70,000). The employer pension contributions for that member of staff amounted to £3,600 in the year.

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

6. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

During the year, no trustee received any remuneration (2020: Nil). Expenses for travel and subsistence were reimbursed to 1 Trustee and amounted to £97 (2020: Nil).

Due to the nature of the Charity's work, its Trustees are often Trustees or employees of member organisations. Member subscriptions for these organisations are always calculated on the same basis as for other members.

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	IT equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 January 2021	9,017	32,849	2,160	44,026
Additions	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2021	9,017	32,849	2,160	44,026
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2021	4,214	29,880	423	34,517
Charge for the year	1,500	1,289	540	3,329
At 31 December 2021	5,714	31,169	963	37,846
Net book value				
At 31 December 2020	4,803	2,969	1,737	9,509
At 31 December 2021	3,303	1,680	1,197	6,180

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)**8. DEBTORS**

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	3,607	2,816
Trade debtors	300	31,379
Other debtors	7,508	7,508
	£ 11,415	£ 41,703

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	32,192	7,959
Deferred income (see below)	1,000	55,755
Trade creditors	2,523	2,494
Taxation and social security	7,894	6,151
Pensions	1,826	1,295
	£ 45,435	£ 73,654

Deferred income:

Balance brought forward	55,755	13,295
Amount released to income	(55,755)	(13,295)
Amount deferred in the year (grants and subscriptions for the following year)	1,000	55,755
	£ 1,000	£ 55,755

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

10. STATEMENT OF FUNDS - CURRENT YEAR

	Brought Forward 1 January 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Carried Forward 31 December 2021 £
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
I Environment Links UK	3,225	-	(1,594)	-	1,631
II Agriculture	1,179	-	(100)	-	1,079
III Marine Projects	22,832	38,000	(28,488)	-	32,344
IV Blueprint for Water	-	3,750	(2,904)	-	846
V Planning Coalition	289	-	-	-	289
VI Head of Communications	31,032	21,000	(18,133)	-	33,899
VII Wildlife Crime and Trade	400	-	(400)	-	-
VIII Convention on Biological Diversity	8,199	-	(8,199)	-	-
IX Environmental Fundraising Network	14,700	-	(14,700)	-	-
X DWP Kickstart Scheme	-	6,065	(6,065)	-	-
XI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	-	74,999	(47,896)	-	27,103
XII European Climate Foundation - climate, NBS	-	41,206	(11,573)	-	29,633
XIII Green Recovery	-	55,000	(34,313)	-	20,687
XIV Local Nature Recovery Strategies	-	20,208	(20,208)	-	-
XV Peer Support Network for People of Colour	-	150	-	-	150
XVI State of Nature campaign	-	26,000	(26,000)	-	-
	81,856	286,378	(220,573)	-	147,661
GENERAL FUND	295,908	389,107	(250,356)	-	434,659
TOTAL FUNDS	£ 377,764	£ 675,485	£ (470,929)	£ Nil	£ 582,320

Purposes of restricted funds:

I **Environment Links UK**

The WWF-UK Environment Links UK (ELUK) project grant supports the four Link organisations in the UK (Wildlife and Countryside Link, Wales Environment Link, Scottish Environment LINK and Northern Ireland Environment Link) in updating each other and collaborating on work programmes, key priorities, and operational matters, through meetings, email communications and conference calls. Expenditure from this fund in 2021 was on costs to a facilitator for the UK Link Biennial events and for a meeting room hire for an ELUK meeting in Glasgow.

II **Agriculture**

This project relates to the activities of Link's Agriculture Working Group. Expenditure is due to one bad debt from 2019 written off in 2021.

III **Marine Projects**

Money within this restricted fund relates primarily to costs of employing the Marine Policy Officer. Income from the second installment of a 2-year grant from Calouste Gulbenkian for 2021 and a grant from Network for Social Change for marine projects. Expenditure related to the salary costs, NI costs and pension costs of the Marine Policy Officer from March 2021 (when Matt Dawson started) to December 2021.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

10. STATEMENT OF FUNDS - CURRENT YEAR (CONTINUED)

IV **Blueprint for Water**

The Blueprint for Water project was set up in 2009 to fund the publication and distribution of the Blueprint coalition's third report. This project relates to the activities of Link's Blueprint working group. Income in 2021 as donations from member organisations to design the Blueprint Vision and PR24 report. Expenditure was on the two report designs and an editable template for the report.

V **Planning Coalition**

The Planning Coalition fund was set up in 2010 to cover costs associated with the publication and distribution of the new Greenest Planning Ever Coalition's 'Vision for the Future of Planning' report. £289 was carried over into 2018. No funds have been spent since 2014 and £289 has been carried forward into 2019. No transactions in this fund in 2021.

VI **Head of Communications**

Money within this restricted fund relates primarily to costs of employing Link's Communications Manager. Income in 2021 is the first of two installments from a Calouste Gulbenkian 2-year grant to fund Link Head of Comms, Emma Adler. Expenditure is Emma A's salary, eNIC and pension (partial - 2/3 attributed to this fund, 1/3 of her employment costs to the State of Nature fund), from April 2021 to December 2021.

VII **Wildlife Crime and Trade**

This project relates to the activities of Link's Wildlife Crime Working Group. No funds were carried over into the beginning of 2018. No income to this fund in 2021. The expenditure in this fund in 2021 was for the design of the annual Wildlife Crime Report (a portion of the payment, the rest of the payment went to unrestricted general funds).

VIII **Convention on Biological Diversity**

This project relates to the activities of Link's CBD Policy Officer coordinating with other Links to collaborate on UK-wide response to upcoming COP15 and COP26. Income in 2020 from a restricted grant for this work from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. Expenditure on the CBD Policy Officer's salary, NI costs and pension costs from January 2021 to March 2021, and a video design cost.

IX **Environmental Funders Network**

This project relates to the activities of Link's work on the National Nature Service. Income from restricted grants from a variety of funders from the 'Environmental Funders Network', expenditure on design and communications related to the NNS, and a policy officer's salary to work on NNS (Matt Browne's salary from Jan 2021 to May 2021).

X **DWP Kickstart Scheme**

This project relates to the employment of an intern through the DWP Kickstart Race for Nature program for 6 months from May 2021 to November 2021. Link received partial funds to cover the salary of an intern, and the intern also received direct training and support from DWP.

XI **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

This project relates to the 'State of the Sector EDI Report' commissioned by WCL to consultancy Full Colour. Income includes large grants for the report from John Ellerman, Natural England, Joseph Rowntree, and Esmee Fairbairn. Expenditure relates to paying the consultancy Full Colour for 2/3rds of the work done in 2021 (one third expected to be done in 2022) and paying VOYAGE for youth consultancy services.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

10. STATEMENT OF FUNDS - CURRENT YEAR (CONTINUED)

XII European Climate Foundation - climate, NBS

This project relates to the project on climate and NBS and employment of a WCL Policy Officer to carry out this work. Income is grant from ECF. Expenditure is on policy officer Imogen's salary, pension and eNIC from September 2021 to December 2021.

XIII Green Recovery

This project relates to the project on green recovery and the employment of a WCL Policy Officer to carry out this work. Income is grant from Green Alliance. Expenditure is Hannah's salary, pension and eNIC from January 2021 to December 2021.

XIV Local Nature Recovery Strategies

This project relates to the project on LNRs and the employment of a WCL Policy Officer to carry out this work. Income is grant from Natural England, via Woodland Trust. Expenditure is Bruce's salary, pension and eNIC from January 2021 to December 2021 and partial payment of his laptop.

XV Peer Support Network for People of Colour

This project relates to the Peer Support Network for People of Colour, supported by Link. The income was from two donations to the work of this group by member organisations. There was no expenditure in 2021.

XVI State of Nature campaign

This project relates to the State of Nature campaign for legally binding targets for species abundance in the Environment Bill, run by Link in collaboration with member organisations. The income was from the Environmental Funders Network (Roger Manser, Mr Brown, James Thornton), the Waterloo Foundation, and a donation from RSPB, a member. Expenditure was various and related to the campaign materials and activity in 2021, 1/3 of Richard Benwell's salary for 2 months and 1/3 of Emma Adler's Head of Comms salary for 10 months for time on the campaign. The campaign concluded with a win in 2021.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

11. STATEMENT OF FUNDS - PRIOR YEAR

	<i>Brought Forward 1 January 2020 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers £</i>	<i>Carried Forward 31 December 2020 £</i>
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
I Environment Links UK	3,754	-	(529)	-	3,225
II Agriculture	885	1,050	(756)	-	1,179
III Marine Projects	12,813	36,000	(25,981)	-	22,832
IV Blueprint for Water	5,475	-	(5,475)	-	-
V Planning Coalition	289	-	-	-	289
VI Head of Communications	31,155	37,500	(37,623)	-	31,032
VII Wildlife Crime and Trade	400	-	-	-	400
VII Convention on Biological Diversity	-	15,000	(6,801)	-	8,199
VIII Environmental Funders Network	-	23,500	(8,800)	-	14,700
	<u>54,771</u>	<u>113,050</u>	<u>(85,965)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>81,856</u>
GENERAL FUND	184,076	370,109	(258,277)	-	295,908
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>238,847</u>	<u>483,159</u>	<u>(344,242)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>377,764</u>

12. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Current Year	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Tangible fixed assets	6,180	-	6,180
Net current assets	428,479	147,661	576,140
	<u>£ 434,659</u>	<u>£ 147,661</u>	<u>£ 582,320</u>
 <i>Prior Year</i>	 <i>Unrestricted Funds £</i>	 <i>Restricted Funds £</i>	 <i>Total Funds £</i>
Tangible fixed assets	9,509	-	9,509
Net current assets	286,399	81,856	368,255
	<u>£ 295,908</u>	<u>£ 81,856</u>	<u>£ 377,764</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

13. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At the year end the Charity had total commitments under the non-cancellable operating lease on its premises repayable as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Operating leases which expire:		
within one year	7,447	29,431
within two to five years	-	7,447
	<u>£ 7,447</u>	<u>£ 36,878</u>