

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**  
Company Limited by Guarantee no. 3889519 (England and Wales)  
Registered Charity no. 1107460

**REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

# WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

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## REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the year ended 31 December 2010

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**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**  
**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

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**Trustees**

*Chair* Paul de Zylva  
*Deputy Chair* Martin Harper (retired 7 December 2010)  
Victoria F Chester (appointed 7 December 2010)  
*Treasurer* David Lind  
David Bullock  
Rob Atkinson (resigned 29 September 2010)  
Jeremy Biggs  
Joan Edwards  
Lucy Cooper (appointed 7 December 2010)

**Vice Presidents**

David Kidney MP (retired 12 May 2010)  
Peter Ainsworth MP (resigned 12 April 2010)  
Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

**Company Secretary**

Jodie Bettis

**Registered Office**

89 Albert Embankment  
London  
SE1 7TP

**Company Registration Number**

3889519

**Charity Registration Number**

1107460

**Independent Examiner**

Simon Erskine FCA FCIE DChA  
Gotham Erskine LLP  
Friendly House  
52-58 Tabernacle Street  
London  
EC2A 4NJ

**Bankers**

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

**Solicitors**

Russell-Cooke Solicitors  
2 Putney Hill  
Putney  
London  
SW15 6AB

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK  
REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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The Trustees submit their report together with the financial statements of Wildlife and Countryside Link for the year ended 31 December 2010.

**Structure, governance and management**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 December 1999 and registered as a charity on 5 January 2005.

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 to ensure compliance with the Companies Act (2006) and Charities Act (2006) and following a number of years using the previous Memorandum and Articles of Association which had raised the need for further clarification. Under those Articles, the members of the Management Committee are elected by a postal vote in advance or by secret ballot at the Annual General Meeting. Members of the Management Committee must retire at the third Annual General Meeting after that at which he or she was first elected, and are eligible for re-election for 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.

**Objectives and activities**

Wildlife and Countryside Link (Link) brings together environmental voluntary organisations in the UK united by their common interest in the conservation and enjoyment of the natural and historic environment. Our aim is to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the voluntary sector through collaboration. We have over thirty member organisations which collectively employ 10,000 full-time staff, have the help of 170,000 volunteers in the UK and the support of over 8 million people.

Established in 1980, Link exists to further the conservation, protection and enhancement of wildlife and landscape and to further the quiet enjoyment and appreciation of the countryside by the public by facilitating collaboration between voluntary organisations in the UK. It does this in the following ways:

- Provision of secretariat support for a number of working groups addressing various policy issues;
- Convening and coordinating joint meetings with statutory conservation agencies, Government officials, departments and ministries;
- Coordination of environmental non-governmental organisation (NGO) representation on external fora;
- Preparing and publishing joint policy statements and press releases;
- Organising events such as seminars and conferences on particular policy areas; and
- Facilitating exchange of information and ideas between members.

**Statement of public benefit**

The Trustees (members of the Management Committee) of Wildlife and Countryside Link confirm that the organisation has Charitable Purposes pursuant to the Charities Act 2006. The Trustees believe that there are clear and identifiable public benefits arising from the pursuit of Wildlife and Countryside Link's aims and objectives, and that these benefits are freely available to the general public without restriction.

**Link Strategy (2010-2012)**

In 2010 Link began working to its first ever collectively agreed strategy to pursue a long term goal of ensuring that the issues which Link and its members represent are recognised as part of good government. Along the route we will work towards meeting a set of strategic objectives built upon the desires and aims of Link's specialist working groups. Through our network of members supported by a professional Secretariat, Link will deliver bolder campaigns, selective policy work, political engagement, and clearer messaging.

## **WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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To do this, Link's working groups will cooperate more on campaigns, policies and skill-shares, the Management Committee will think and act more strategically, and the Director and Secretariat will be more proactive in supporting and guiding members and advocating externally on behalf of Link and its aims. Link Strategy documents can be found at: <http://www.wcl.org.uk/our-work.asp>

### **Link's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Two main events in Link's 2010 calendar were its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in July and the Annual General Meeting in December. On 14 July Link was joined by around eighty guests including MPs, Peers and stakeholders from across the environmental sector to mark 30 years of Wildlife and Countryside Link. The event took place in the magnificent River Room in the House of Lords by kind permission of the Lord Speaker and was hosted by Link's Vice President, Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer. We were joined by the Environment Minister, Jim Paice MP, who gave an open and frank speech about the challenges to the sector as a whole. There was also a good turn out to Link's 2010 AGM in December, which this year included a discussion session on the challenges facing the conservation and environmental movement, led by a panel of four Link member CEOs.

Link photo albums can be found at: <http://is.gd/7KHDIW>

### **Ways of working in 2010**

In 2010 Link provided support for seven working groups on the following policy areas:

- Agriculture
- Biodiversity
- Land Use Planning
- Marine Legislation
- Water
- Whales
- Wildlife Trade

Link also provided support to a steering group on the Natural Environment White Paper and a task and finish group on the Comprehensive Spending Review (or 'Spending Cuts').

### **Progress towards Link's Strategic Objectives**

As part of our Strategy for 2010-2012, Link is working towards strategic objectives built upon the desires and aims of its members. As a coalition of environmental organisations, Link is working together to achieve five objectives (1-5). As a service provider, Link is pursuing four objectives (6-9).

#### ***1. To present an integrated vision for sustainable land and water use that promotes effective mechanisms for supporting landscape-scale natural and historic environment conservation***

Link was represented on the Campaign for the Farmed Environment's Evidence and Monitoring Committee, which was established in 2010 to ensure set aside replacement adequately retains environmental benefits. We continued to track implementation of the Rural Development Programme for England through Link representation on its Programme Monitoring Committee. Members were keen to retain adequate funds for Environmental Stewardship during the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). Lobbying by Link in advance of the CSR announcement in October helped ensure that Higher Level Stewardship remains a priority for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) over the next four years.

Link published a position statement on soil, which was used in the context of Link's Natural Environment White Paper work and submitted as part of Natural England's draft soil strategy consultation, informing Natural England's position on soils. Link's Agriculture Working Group responded to Defra's consultation on implementing European pesticides legislation, calling for the implementation of the EU Soils Directive to go beyond current UK control measures.

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK  
REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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We continue to seek full implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in England and our Blueprint for Water coalition launched an updated 10 step action plan for sustainable water with the Environment Minister, Richard Benyon MP, at a Parliamentary reception in November. As part of the re-launch we sought to recruit new Parliamentary champions to promote the Blueprint for Water's key messages at a political level and we were delighted to secure the support of Martin Horwood MP. The 10-step action plan was also submitted to Defra's early consultation on the forthcoming Water White Paper.

As part of our drive to ensure Landscape Scale Conservation (LSC) is incorporated into all aspects of Link's sustainable land and water management policy work, our collective statement on LSC was submitted as evidence to the Lawton Review and featured highly in Link's response to the Government's consultation on the Natural Environment White Paper.

**2. *Help protect and connect marine species and habitats through the promotion of an ecosystem based approach to marine conservation***

Throughout the year Link sought to influence the development of the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act's marine planning provisions and our *Marine Planning Principles* leaflet was distributed to key marine stakeholders, including the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Together with our Sister Links, we provided early input to the draft UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS) and met regularly with Defra's MPS Team. A summary of the Joint Links response was provided to the EFRA Committee in advance of its MPS inquiry and Link briefed Peers ahead of the Grand Committee Debate on the issue, at which our key points were highlighted. Link also inputted to Defra's consultation on the new marine planning system in England, calling for a national marine plan or planning guidance to link together the high level MPS and individual marine plans.

Monitoring and influencing the progress of the Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) regional projects and guidance was a priority for Link's Marine Working Group in 2010. Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's (JNCC) Ecological Network Guidance excluded nearly all mobile species as features for which MCZs should be selected and we raised this with Defra's agencies and the Marine Protected Area Science Advisory Panel. Our concerns were also taken up with the Environment Minister, Richard Benyon MP. We outlined further thoughts on the regional projects' work to identify MCZs in the first of a new series of Marine Act Policy Bulletins published by Link in 2010. We also briefed the Environment Minister on the creation of a network of MPAs, with the aim of influencing the development of the Ministerial Statement on the subject.

Link continues to monitor other UK marine issues, including Natura 2000 site designation and management and in November, we input to JNCC's consultation on the Dogger Bank possible Special Area of Conservation. We also worked to promote conservation issues to the newly established MMO, attending its launch event in June and meeting with its Chief Executive and other key staff.

**3. *Raise the political profile of the ethical and economic value of biodiversity and the socio-economic and ecological impacts of its loss***

As part of Link's Strategy, members planned to run a campaign in 2010 calling for the value of UK biodiversity to be recognised and understood at the highest political level. As part of this we prioritised our work on the Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP), forming a NEWP Steering Group and inputting biodiversity policy through this mechanism. In November, with the record support of 32 member organisations, Link submitted a response to Defra's discussion document on the NEWP, calling for key measurable outcomes to be included in the White Paper, including no net loss of biodiversity as a result of built development, forestry and agriculture; the establishment of a coherent and resilient ecological network; and the improved provision of key ecosystem services.

Representation on external groups is an important part of Link's advocacy work. This year we retained our influence on a variety of biodiversity related forums, including the National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) User Group, where valuing biodiversity policies are being developed. Link inputted to the NEA and submitted a written response to the Assessment's biodiversity chapter.

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**REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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Throughout the year Link continued to support the implementation of the England Biodiversity Strategy (EBS) Framework. Link was an active member of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan's Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group and the UK Biodiversity Partnership Standing Committee, in addition to being represented on the England Biodiversity Group and continuing our engagement with Natural England's Biodiversity Integration Groups. We retained our seat on the Local and Regional Strategy Implementation Group, inputting to the debate on Integrated Biodiversity Delivery Areas as a potential mechanism to deliver the EBS.

In 2010 Link set out to develop an understanding of 'biodiversity offsets' and identify potential failures. The Biodiversity Working Group continued its programme of work around this topical subject and our early findings were included in our NEWP response. In seeking to influence the streamlining of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) for the benefit of biodiversity and landscape, Link responded to the Government's consultation on a new PPS for a natural and healthy environment, calling for the PPS to emphasise the need for species and habitat restoration and enhancement, and progress beyond a policy of 'no net loss of biodiversity'. Link also highlighted the premature nature of the draft PPS and advocated a more fundamental review of PPS9.

We sought to ensure that the UK committed to an ambitious European post-2010 target before the Convention on Biological Diversity 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP10) in Japan in October. Link welcomed the UK Government's decision to push for the most ambitious post-2010 biodiversity option and was delighted that this option was also adopted by the EU Environment Council. Prior to CoP10 in Nagoya, Link seized the opportunity to share its views on global 2020 biodiversity targets at the UK Stakeholder Meeting. As a member of the UK Biodiversity Partnership Standing Committee, Link was also afforded the opportunity to input to the debate on the post-2010 biodiversity target.

**4. *Promote the delivery of access to nature that is compatible with conservation of wildlife, reconnects society with the environment, and enhances human health and welfare***

Link's response to the Government's consultation on a new PPS for a natural and healthy environment called for access standards to be addressed, recommending that local authorities adopt Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard and the Woodland Access Standard. This was reiterated in Link's NEWP response, which called for a category of measurable outcomes to be included in the White Paper concerning the relationship between people and the natural environment.

Following the formation of the Coalition Government, Link and a number of partner organisations formed the Greenest Planning Ever coalition to work on planning reform in England. The coalition's document, *Our Vision for the Future of Planning*, emphasised the importance of planning in helping to reconnect people with nature and was widely distributed to key MPs and stakeholders. Our views on access were advocated at a coalition briefing meeting attended by Government department representatives, the agencies and a wide range of NGOs.

Link's statement on the Government's CSR, which was published in July with the support of 28 member organisations, identified rights of way and access to the countryside as a front line service requiring protection. Link was involved in a range of lobbying activities in the run up to the statement's publication, sharing our thoughts on the implications of the CSR with the Secretary of State for Environment, Caroline Spelman MP, and her team. Link was pleased with the media attention that the statement received, including pieces in *The Independent*, BBC radio news and online, the front page of *The Guardian*, and local and regional media.

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**5. *Raise the UK's commitment to wildlife protection, animal welfare and respect for animals***

In seeking to co-ordinate NGO views on threats to cetaceans in UK waters, we hosted a workshop in September for Link members and other NGOs including ORCA, the Sea Watch Foundation and WSPA. Participants considered the present status of UK cetaceans in law, the designation of Special Areas of Conservation for cetaceans, chemical pollution, oil and gas developments, bycatch and marine renewables.

As part of our international work, Link's members identified and promoted recommendations for the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP15) in Qatar in March, and Link continued to engage with Defra on trade issues through the Joint NGO Liaison Group (JLG) meetings of conservationists and traders.

**6. *Improve the advocacy of agreed collective messages from the environmental voluntary sector to those who can help us bring about the change we desire***

Following the General Election, we introduced Link to the new Ministerial Teams at Defra and the Department for Communities and Local Government, and facilitated opportunities for Link members to attend meetings with the newly elected Secretary of State for Environment, Caroline Spelman MP.

In May Link convened the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of its Policy Directors to consider the advocacy of agreed collective messages in light of the then newly formed Coalition Government. As part of Link's Strategy, working groups were encouraged to produce and deliver on advocacy plans for publications and campaigns. These were used to guide work on presenting an integrated vision for sustainable land and water use that promotes effective mechanisms for supporting landscape-scale natural and historic environment conservation (Strategic Objective 1).

In promoting that vision, Link held two campaign related events. The Blueprint for Water coalition launched its new 10 step action plan for sustainable water with the Environment Minister, Richard Benyon MP, at a Parliamentary reception, and the Greenest Planning Ever coalition launched its *Vision for the Future of Planning* document with John Howell MP, author of the Conservative Party's *Open Source Planning Green Paper*. Link began the year with three Parliamentary Vice Presidents that we kept regularly briefed on key issues of concern to Link's membership and our proposed solutions. However, the exit of a large number of MPs meant a change of Vice Presidents for Link. Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Damer, Link's remaining Vice President following the General Election, continues to be actively engaged with Link, and hosted our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary event in June.

Link representatives attended numerous external advocacy events throughout the year and Link proactively provided advice and comment to the UK Government, Commissioners and senior officials on a wide range of issues. In 2010 Link was represented on 19 external forums in England and the UK. As well as supporting member representation at the UK level, the Secretariat also assists the identification of the most appropriate Link representation for international advocacy. For example in 2010 two Link representatives joined the UK delegation at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), which took place in Agadir, Morocco, in June.

Link members were keen to encourage the UK Government to take concerted action and positively influence the issue of EU competency and transparency. We raised these issues with the UK's Commissioner to the IWC during preparations for IWC62 and with the Environment Minister, Richard Benyon MP, when discussing proposals on the future of the IWC. Link together with Scottish Environment Link (SEL) also met with the European Agriculture Committee's "rapporteur", George Lyon MEP, to exchange ideas on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy and we re-opened dialogue with Green Alliance on joint opportunities to engage with European Environmental Bureau (EEB) activities, attending an EEB-UK meeting in March and an EEB hosted workshop in December.

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REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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**7. *Add value to the work of members by facilitating consensus on policies and providing support in the production of joint positions on a wide range of issues***

Link has established a web-based timetable of consultations linked to our monthly members-only e-bulletin, in order to selectively respond in a timely manner. This year the Secretariat assisted the production of over 50 collective statements, including position statements, press releases, joint letters and consultation responses, each supported by a minimum of five members.

Link collective statements can be found at <http://www.wcl.org.uk/link-publications.asp>

Consultation responses are now routinely followed up with meetings with the appropriate consulting Department or Agency and the Secretariat encourages joint work on UK-level policies of mutual interest between Sister Links' groups. We hosted and participated in UK-wide telephone conferences and assisted SEL in holding a Joint Links Seminar in Chester in October. We are grateful to WWF for providing a grant for Joint Links activities in 2010.

Link and its sister organisations submitted Joint Links responses to the consultation on the UK's draft transposing Regulations for the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well as Defra's draft UK Marine Policy Statement. Link and SEL worked together to raise members' concerns to the Chair of the Environment Committee and all UK MEPs on the European Agriculture and Environment Committees, and the Commissioners on George Lyon MEP's draft report on the future of the CAP.

Link has provided support to each of our seven working groups and convened at least two meetings of every group in 2010, involving at least four of its members. We assisted the refresh of a key Link publication, the *Blueprint for Water*, and actively supported cross-working between Link's policy areas. For example, the Land Use Planning and Biodiversity Working Groups contributed to the Marine Legislation Working Group's response to the consultation on the draft UK Marine Policy Statement. Other work that received cross-group input included our responses to the Conservative Party's *Open Source Planning* document, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office consultation on whether to establish a Marine Protected Area in the British Indian Ocean Territory, Chagos, and Defra's consultation on implementing European pesticides legislation. Drawing expertise from across the working groups was also crucial in both our input to the Lawton Review and our NEWP response.

To facilitate the consensus building process, Link undertook several internal workshops on key issues of collective interest. For example, two workshops were facilitated in September to ensure maximum input to Link's NEWP work from across the Link membership, and the Whales Working Group hosted an NGO workshop to consider the threats to cetaceans in UK waters. Link also sought collaborative partnerships and new members to help strengthen and broaden consensus among NGOs. In 2010 we formed and maintained collaborative partnerships with the Environmental Law Foundation, the Institute for European Environmental Policy, the Town and Country Planning Association and the Campaign for Better Transport. The People's Trust for Endangered Species also joined as a full member in 2010.

**8. *Provide a safe forum for members to exchange information, and develop and promote action that could effect positive change***

Throughout 2010 Link maintained a watching brief on a broad range of environmental, access and recreation, and animal welfare issues that affect the delivery of Link's strategic objectives. We provided opportunities for members to explore new areas of policy, or areas of policy where consensus has not been forthcoming in the past. Link began development of its position on conservation credits, with representatives of the Biodiversity Working Group participating in a Defra workshop in November to consider the proposal for a system of biodiversity offsets in England. Opportunities for regular formal and informal meetings of the Secretariat were taken up to promote intelligence sharing and aid cross working between Link's specialist groups.

To provide members with appropriate, accurate and timely information, all responses to Link letters were circulated to members within one week of receipt. The Secretariat ensured Link's protocols and procedures were followed, specifically around electronic communications and confidentiality, and we regularly reviewed and updated our mailing lists and databases of all Link contacts.

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK  
REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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We maintained three internal governance related mailing lists and three mini campaign sites on Link's website. Our monthly e-bulletin was retained as a Link member-only publication and the quarterly report was provided for members and non-member subscribers. Despite a freeze in member income from subscriptions, Link maintained a budget for hiring off-site meeting rooms when required for large or special meetings and used teleconferencing facilities as a way of cutting down on travel.

**9. *Maintain a high standard of service whilst developing the Secretariat's capacity to meet the needs of the membership***

Link continues to offer volunteering opportunities to people with a keen interest in Link issues. We maintain liaison with University College London, and Secretariat staff delivered Link's annual lecture to students of the Masters in Conservation degree in December. We retain a pool of at least two volunteers at any one time and provide opportunities for volunteers to undertake discreet projects aligned to their interests and expertise.

This year our volunteers produced reports on Defra's Ecological Networks Review and the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to CITES, and were given the opportunity to undertake work in relation to Link's online reference library, the NEA and Link's anniversary publication. In addition, the Link Secretariat invited its regular volunteers to become involved in the activities of our working groups by supporting meetings and providing assistance at our NEWP workshops. A number of our volunteers also helped out at Link's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary event in the House of Lords.

A review of the Secretariat's salary structure began in 2009 and a new salary system and policy for 2010-2012 was signed off by the Management Committee meeting in the fourth quarter of 2010. The organisation retained four full time staff and the Management Committee keeps under review the need for a fifth member of staff. Link worked with its members and donors to ensure receipt of funds to the level projected in our 2010 budget and managed to retain a staff training budget at 2009 levels, as well as seeking to provide low-cost internal and member-provided training opportunities, wherever possible. The Director convenes weekly team meetings to discuss policy and operational matters, and maintains a regular schedule of staff 1-2-1s and appraisal procedures.

**Link Personnel**

There were no changes to the Link Secretariat in 2010.

**Financial Review**

The 2010 accounts show an unrestricted deficit of £5,616 for the year, following an unrestricted surplus of £23,298 in 2009. The unrestricted reserves at 31 December 2010 amount to £128,661 and are equivalent to approximately 11 months' unrestricted expenditure.

**Reserves Policy**

Wildlife and Countryside Link shall maintain reserves equivalent to six months operating costs. These funds shall be unrestricted and therefore available to fund all aspects of Link's operations in the event that they should be required. These reserves shall allow Link to plan against future uncertainties.

The target level for reserves shall be set at that required for six months operation of the organisation so that, should Link encounter financial difficulty, it may continue to provide its members with services at the same level for six months, thus giving members ample warning should the financial situation deteriorate further. It is felt that this is an appropriate amount of time for a small organisation such as Link as it is likely that any additional or emergency funding would take some months to secure.

The reserve funds shall help to meet working capital requirements to cover Link's normal cash-flow operations throughout the year, and is reviewed on a regular basis. In 2010 Link's reserves were held in the Co-operative Bank and experienced no loss during the year.

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK  
REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

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**Risk review**

The major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the Trustees, have been reviewed and systems established to mitigate those risks. In September 2010 the Management Committee updated the approved register of risks, which will be reviewed regularly as part of the charity's risk management strategy.

**Members of the Management Committee**

Members of the Management Committee, 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 on Page 1.

**Preparation of the report**

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies exemption of section 415A(1) of the Companies Act 2006.

**Independent Examiner**

A resolution to confirm the appointment of Simon Erskine of Gotham Erskine LLP as independent examiner to the organisation was passed at the Annual General Meeting in December 2010 and will again be proposed at the next Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Management Committee

Signed: .....

Position: .....

Date: .....

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**

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I report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2010 set out on pages 11 to 18.

### **Respective responsibilities of Committee members and independent examiner**

As described on page 12 the Committee members, who are the Directors of Wildlife and Countryside Link for the purposes of Company Law and the Trustees for the purposes of charity law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The Management Committee members consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the Company is not subject to an audit under Company Law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 of the 1993 Act);
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, as amended; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Company, and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Management Committee members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - To keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
  - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charitieshave not been met; or
2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

### **Simon Erskine FCA FCIE DChA**

Gotham Erskine LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
Friendly House  
52 - 58 Tabernacle Street  
London EC2A 4NJ      Date:

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**(incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2010**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2010 £	Restricted Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2009 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Voluntary income		26,378	-	26,378	21,304
Grants for core funding		28,000	-	28,000	35,000
Investment income - bank interest		245	-	245	756
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants for project work	8	-	80,224	80,224	100,599
Subscriptions		74,249	-	74,249	77,803
Rent and service charges receivable		-	-	-	5,937
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		<b>128,872</b>	<b>80,224</b>	<b>209,096</b>	<b>241,399</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
Charitable activities	2	130,751	68,879	199,630	209,495
Governance costs	3	3,737	-	3,737	3,125
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>		<b>134,488</b>	<b>68,879</b>	<b>203,367</b>	<b>212,620</b>
Net income/(expenditure) before transfer		(5,616)	11,345	5,729	28,779
Transfer between funds	8	1,871	(1,871)	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		(3,745)	9,474	5,729	28,779
TOTAL FUNDS AT 1 JANUARY 2010		132,406	34,452	166,858	138,079
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 DECEMBER 2010</b>		<b>£ 128,661</b>	<b>£ 43,926</b>	<b>£ 172,587</b>	<b>£ 166,858</b>

The annexed notes form part of these financial statements

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK (company limited by guarantee no. 03889519)**

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**As at 31 December 2010**

	Notes	2010	2009
		£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible assets	6	1	1,534
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors - prepayments		5,628	3,137
Cash at bank and in hand		197,191	164,420
		<u>202,819</u>	<u>167,557</u>
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year</b>	7	<b>(30,233)</b>	<b>(2,233)</b>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>172,586</b>	<b>165,324</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b><u>£ 172,587</u></b>	<b><u>£ 166,858</u></b>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Restricted funds	8	43,926	34,452
General fund (unrestricted)	8	128,661	132,406
		<u>£ 172,587</u>	<u>£ 166,858</u>

For the year ended 31 December 2010 the Company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- (i) The members have not required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- (ii) The Directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008). They were approved, and authorised for issue, by the Directors on 16 March 2011 and signed on their behalf by:-

\_\_\_\_\_  
VICTORIA F CHESTER, Deputy Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID LIND, Treasurer

The annexed notes form part of these financial statements

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**For the year ended 31 December 2010**

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**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

***Basis of preparation of financial statements***

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" published in 2005, applicable accounting standards and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The effects of events relating to the year ended 31 December 2010 which occurred before the date of approval of the financial statements by the Management Committee has been included in the financial statements to the extent required to show a true and fair view of the state of affairs at 31 December 2010 and the results for the year ended on that date.

***Company status***

Wildlife and Countryside Link 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***

The General fund comprises the unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects 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 which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. Statutory grants which are given as contributions towards the Charity's core services are treated as unrestricted.

***Incoming resources***

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

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 income and expenditure account in accordance with the terms attached by the grantor.

Recharged costs are accrued when the associated costs are incurred. Other donations and sundry income are recognised in the income and expenditure account when received.

***Resources expended***

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Support costs, which cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, have been apportioned proportionately to the direct staff costs allocated to the activities. Governance costs relate to external examination of the accounts.

## WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2010

#### **Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

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 as follows:

Furniture/fittings	-	4 years
Office equipment	-	4 years

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

#### **Operating leases**

Rentals applicable to operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities over the period in which the cost is incurred.

### 2. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES: FACILITATION, CO-ORDINATION & INFORMATION PROVISION

	Unrestricted Funds 2010 £	Restricted Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2009 £
Staff costs	95,554	35,674	131,228	127,489
Other costs	35,197	33,205	68,402	82,006
	<b>£ 130,751</b>	<b>£ 68,879</b>	<b>£ 199,630</b>	<b>£ 209,495</b>

### 3. GOVERNANCE COSTS

	Unrestricted Funds 2010 £	Restricted Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2009 £
Independent examiner's fee	2,233	-	2,233	2,173
Other expenses	1,504	-	1,504	952
	<b>£ 3,737</b>	<b>£ Nil</b>	<b>£ 3,737</b>	<b>£ 3,125</b>

### 4. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS

	2010 £	2009 £
Wages and salaries	112,921	109,970
Social security costs	11,531	11,350
Pension costs	6,776	6,169
	<b>£ 131,228</b>	<b>£ 127,489</b>
	<b>Number 4</b>	<b>Number 4</b>

The average number of employees during the period was:

No employee received remuneration of more than £35,000.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2010

5. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

During the year, no trustee received any remuneration (2009 - £NIL). 1 trustee received reimbursement of expenses amounting to £176 (2009 - £49).

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 January 2010 and 31 December 2010	<u>17,725</u>	<u>1,308</u>	<u>19,033</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 January 2010	16,191	1,308	17,499
Charge for the year	<u>1,533</u>	-	<u>1,533</u>
At 31 December 2010	<u>17,724</u>	<u>1,308</u>	<u>19,032</u>
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31 December 2009	£ 1,534	£ Nil	£ 1,534
At 31 December 2010	<u>£ 1</u>	<u>£ Nil</u>	<u>£ 1</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2010 £	2009 £
Deferred grant income (see below)	28,000	-
Accruals	<u>2,233</u>	<u>2,233</u>
	<u>£ 30,233</u>	<u>£ 2,233</u>
<u>Deferred grant income</u>		
Amount deferred in the year	<u>28,000</u>	-
Balance at 31 December 2010	<u>£ 28,000</u>	<u>£ Nil</u>

## WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2010

#### 8. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	Brought Forward	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Carried Forward
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>					
1. Biodiversity	31	-	-	(31)	-
2. Joint Links	2,000	5,000	(6,160)	(840)	-
3. Beyond The Pillars	336	-	(158)	-	178
4. Landscape Scale Conservation	1,000	-	-	(1,000)	-
5. Marine Bill Campaign:					
i. General	1,433	-	(605)	-	828
ii. Lisbet Rausing & Peter Baldwin	1,552	-	(1,295)	-	257
iii. MPCC project 1	27,935	-	(27,935)	-	-
iii. MPCC project 2	-	61,012	(20,977)	-	40,035
iv. Marine Bill Fighting Fund	-	3,000	(1,296)	-	1,704
6. Blueprint for Water	165	9,050	(8,606)	-	609
7. Planning Coalition	-	1,450	(1,135)	-	315
8. Natural Environment White Paper	-	338	(338)	-	-
9. NCVO Governance Grant	-	374	(374)	-	-
	<b>£ 34,452</b>	<b>£ 80,224</b>	<b>£ (68,879)</b>	<b>£ (1,871)</b>	<b>£ 43,926</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF FUNDS</b>					
General fund	132,406	128,872	(134,488)	1,871	128,661
Restricted funds	34,452	80,224	(68,879)	(1,871)	43,926
	<b>£ 166,858</b>	<b>£ 209,096</b>	<b>£ (203,367)</b>	<b>£ Nil</b>	<b>£ 172,587</b>

#### Purposes of restricted funds:

##### 1. Biodiversity – 2010 leaflet

The Biodiversity fund was set up in 2006 for the production and publication of Link's Countdown 2010 leaflet. At the end of 2009 £31 was carried over into 2010. During 2010, it was agreed by members of the Biodiversity Working Group that the remaining £31 would be transferred to Link's core funds and the restricted fund closed.

##### 2. Joint Links

The WWF Joint Links project grant allows the four Link organisations in the UK (Wildlife and Countryside Link, Wales Environment Link, Scottish Environment LINK and Northern Ireland Environment Link) to update each other on work programmes, key priorities, and operational matters, through meetings and conference calls. In 2010, the Links held three conference calls, and the Joint Links Biennial Seminar. The Seminar provided an opportunity for participants to share intelligence about the new UK coalition government, changing political landscapes, the ongoing effects of recession, and EU level work. Funds remaining after the costs of the seminar were distributed amongst the Joint Links for use in individual Joint Link's core work.

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2010

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#### *3. FRD Beyond the Pillars*

This project was set up in 2008 to fund the publication and launch of the Farming and Rural Development Working Group's policy perspective on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy entitled 'Beyond the Pillars'. At the end of 2009 £336 was carried over into 2010. In 2010 £158 was used to pay for a Link representative to travel to the Common Agricultural Policy Post-2013 Conference in Brussels. The remaining £178 will be carried forward into 2011.

#### *4. Landscape Scale Conservation*

The Landscape Scale Conservation (LSC) fund was established in 2008 with a one-off £1,000 donation by a member to support Link work on LSC. At the end of 2009 £1,000 was carried over into 2010. In 2010 it was agreed by the donor that the full £1,000 would be transferred to Link's core funds and the restricted fund closed.

#### *5. Marine Bill Campaign*

##### *i) General*

This fund has been in operation since 2005. £1,433 was carried forward into 2010 and £605 of this was used during the year to cover Marine Working Group project support costs. The remaining £828 will be carried forward into 2011.

##### *ii) Lisbet Rausing & Peter Baldwin*

In June 2007 Link received a one-off £10,000 donation from Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin towards the costs of Link's Marine Bill Campaign. £1,552 was carried forward into 2010 and during the year £1,295 was spent on parliamentary activities to support the Marine Working Group's campaign work. The remaining £257 will be carried forward into 2011.

##### *iii) Marine Policy and Campaigns Co-ordinator (MPCC)*

In May 2007 Link received funding from the Tubney Charitable Trust and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation towards the costs of a full time Marine Policy and Campaigns Co-ordinator at Wildlife and Countryside Link. This project fund provides for the salary and all associated expenses of the MPCC post. The full cost recovery principle has been applied to this project and transfers from this fund are made to Link's core fund to cover all associated support costs. Phase 1 (2007 – 2010) of the project was completed on 30 April 2010. It was agreed with the Charitable Trusts that surplus funds from Phase 1, totalling £11,856, would be used to extend the project for a further 3 months. Phase 2 of the project (2010 – 2013) began on 1 August 2010, following agreement with the Charitable Trusts for a further 3 years of funding.

##### *iv) Marine Bill Fighting Fund*

In 2010 Link received a grant of £3,000 from WWF to fund work on the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act. £1,296 of the grant was used in 2010 to cover the publication and distribution of Link's Marine Planning Principles leaflet, and to commission work on the UK Government's Charting Progress 2 Report. The remaining £1,704 will be carried forward into 2011.

#### *6. 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. £165 was carried forward into 2010 and the project received a further £9,050 in member donations during the year, to fund the publication and launch of the Blueprint coalition's new 10 Step Action-plan for Sustainable Water. The remaining £609 will be carried forward into 2011.

## WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2010

#### 7. 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 document. The fund received £1,450 in member donations during the year and the remaining £315 will be carried forward into 2011.

#### 8. Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)

The NEWP fund was set up in 2010 to facilitate Link's NEWP Steering Group work and £338 was received during the year in member donations, to cover the costs of two NEWP workshops. The restricted fund was closed at the end of 2010.

#### 9. NCVO Governance Grant

In 2010 Link received a bursary from NCVO to cover the costs of a governance review of Link's Management Committee. The review was carried out at Link's June Management Committee Away Day, and £374 was received to cover all costs associated with the review. The restricted fund was thereafter closed.

### 9. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	General Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Tangible fixed assets	1	-	1
Net current assets	128,660	43,926	172,586
	<u>£ 128,661</u>	<u>£ 43,926</u>	<u>£ 172,587</u>

### 10. OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 December 2010 the Company had annual commitments under the non-cancellable operating lease on its premises as follows:

	2010 £	2009 £
Operating leases which expire: within two to five years	<u>20,561</u>	<u>-</u>