

Scottish Environment LINK
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
for the year ended 31 March 2018

Scottish Charity number SC000296
Company number SC250899

Scottish Environment LINK

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Reference and administration information	1
Chair's Foreword	2
Trustees' report	3-26
Independent examiners' report	27
Statement of financial activities (incorporating income and expenditure account)	28
Balance sheet	29
Notes to the financial statements	30-42

Scottish Environment LINK

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Scottish Environment LINK

Scottish Charity Registration Number: SC000296

Company Registration Number: SC250899

Registered and Principal Office: 13 Marshall Place
Perth
PH2 8AH

Trustees: Charles Dundas – Chair
Craig Macadam – Vice Chair
Tim Ambrose - Treasurer
Sam Gardner
Lucy Graham
Beryl Leatherland
Clare Symonds
Paul Walton
Helen Watson

Company Secretary: Jennifer Anderson

Solicitors: J&H Mitchell WS
51 Atholl Road
Pitlochry
PH16 5BU

Independent Examiner: Emma Marshall CA
Geoghegans
Chartered Accountants
6 St Colme Street
Edinburgh
EH3 6AD

Chair's Foreword

I took up the chair of this remarkable network from Helen Todd in December 2017, and in those intervening months the sheer scale of LINK's achievements, aspirations and commitment have been made abundantly clear to me.

Navigating - and influencing - the Brexit process makes huge demands on the network, as these pages will go on to show; but at the same time a much wider programme of policy advocacy has also been pushed on, through collective discussion and coordination. A quick glance at LINK's many [outputs](#) demonstrates the impressive breadth of agenda, and depth of commitment of our members combined with a pragmatic recognition of the need to manage our aspirations realistically too.

LINK's contributions on Brexit process planning have focussed on securing the principles, policies and structures that we need for a positive future. For me, the highlight from this year surrounded our engagement with the Scottish Parliament's Legal Continuity Bill which eventually included not only the environmental principles we feel are missing at a UK level, but also a commitment to robust environmental governance measures. Further legislation to protect and enhance our environment is inevitable in Scotland, and LINK's collaborations with partners from the Scottish Human Rights Consortium, Scottish Land and Estates, NFUS among others, show that there is widespread support for changes to make Scotland more sustainable across the management of our land, sea and air.

In November LINK co-hosted a major European environmental conference with fantastic support from the Scottish Government and its environment agencies among others. At the conference the Scottish Government renewed top-level commitments to environmental standards in Scotland, pledging that these would not slip as a consequence of Brexit.

After braving a challenging few years around funding LINK's finances are currently in good shape and we gratefully acknowledge our member organisations' and funders' support for our strategic objectives which are achieving a sustainable Scotland and being a strong voice for the environment, efficiently and accountably. To ensure the network stays in good health, LINK's trustees have held conversations over the last year with nearly all member organisations to gauge their engagement with LINK and to find out what they think of LINK's services. This dialogue turned up a rewarding and reassuring level of satisfaction: members value LINK highly, and appreciate the work of everyone involved. Several observed that if there wasn't a LINK, it would have to be created. The collective expertise and advocacy around Brexit was praised strongly, as was the excellent work of LINK staff.

It was satisfying to see a full Board elected at the AGM in December, including new trustees Helen Senn and Clare Symonds. At the AGM LINK acknowledged also the big contribution which Helen Todd had made in her seven years as a trustee including two as Vice Chair and three as Chair. With pleasure, the AGM welcomed new Fellows Ian Findlay and Stuart Housden to our impressive array of Honorary Fellows and re-appointed our President, Joyce McMillan.

We celebrated 30 years of LINK this year, and I encourage you to take ten minutes to watch our [video](#) marking the occasion. It shows, simply and strongly, the benefits which working together on shared objectives, and over time, are continuing to bring to Scotland.



Charles Dundas
LINK Chair

2018

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Board members are pleased to present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018, prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and complying with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, Companies Act 2006 and Statement of Recommended Practice, "Accounting and Reporting by Charities", effective from January 2015.

Overview

As the intermediary for Scotland's voluntary sector environment organisations, LINK provides them with a forum through which to exchange intelligence, build consensus and take collective action. By engaging, they present a stronger voice and case to decision makers and stakeholders, advocating together for sustainable approaches and achieving efficiencies of scale by pooling expertise and combining effort. Over half a million people in Scotland and beyond who subscribe to one or more of LINK's member organisations are collectively represented by the network.

LINK has continued to shadow and input to the debate over Brexit particularly around the implications for environmental standards and governance. In parallel and to some extent supporting that overarching focus, LINK has continued to concentrate on land use and management, recovery of the marine and coastal resource, strategic planning concerns, Scotland's legal strategy for the environment commitments and ways in which Scottish economic strategy can and should drive greater sustainability and a swift transition to a low carbon economy.

LINK's assessment of the impact which the network has had on key policy issues, is that as the national voice for Scotland's environment, LINK is heard more and in a number of cases its thinking is being taken on board. This assessment draws for example on the language of parliamentary debate, the topics covered by First Minister's Questions, and the content of legislation and policy. Necessary access to Government and to decision-makers is generally good and there is evidence of growing awareness in Scotland of the cross-cutting nature of environment and sustainability. While members judge that LINK's traction on some policy areas is strong there are other areas where the score is 'way to go' and where we must develop our case and review tactics and opportunities for engagement. The network's internal procedures for developing consensus, making best use of LINK's diversity, and making common cause with other voices, are robust.

Meantime, over the reporting year, investment in fundraising has begun to show results and has put the organisation on a more sustainable footing than this time last year.

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance

Celebrating 30 years of LINK

Marking three decades of sustained and successful networking, LINK commissioned a [video](#) from Nick Underdown. This short and engaging production captures the spirit of the network as well as the rationale for LINK's establishment in 1987 (originally Scottish Wildlife and Countryside Link) and the flavour of issues benefitting from collective endeavour and of the ups and downs of the first thirty years. The creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 was clearly an important milestone both for environmental advocacy and for opportunities to make a difference in terms of Scotland's environmental governance. The 30th anniversary was enjoyably celebrated at a ceilidh for members and guests including colleagues from the European Environmental Bureau, in Greyfriars Kirk Edinburgh on 7 November 2017, with addresses by Honorary Fellow Michael Scott, one of LINK's early founders, and President Joyce McMillan.

European Environment Bureau Annual Conference 2017 - Changing Landscapes

Coinciding with these celebrations, LINK collaborated with the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) to co-host EEB's Annual Conference in Edinburgh. LINK had been invited in 2016 as an EEB member to co-host this, the second of EEB's annual events to be held outside Brussels. The 2017 Conference took place at a critical time for Scotland and the UK as discussion of options for the UK's post-Brexit relationships with the EU gathered pace, providing Scotland an excellent opportunity to showcase its credentials at a European level, demonstrate its success in progressing EU environmental policy on biodiversity, climate change, marine, agriculture and the circular economy. The event was a platform for Scottish Government, its agencies, and the wider policy community to explore with UK and EU stakeholders how we can continue to pursue ambitious environmental policy in a time of change, to benefit Scotland and the EU. There was good attendance by NGOs, officials from Scottish Government including Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham, UK Government representation, the EU and the EEB. A workshop for EEB members including LINK players also took place exploring campaigning opportunities and experience across Europe. LINK thanks its joint funders EEB, Scottish Government's Environment and Climate Directorates, SEPA, SNH, HES, the EC office in Scotland, SEFARI, Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh University Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

Sea Scotland 2017

The second successful [Conference](#) in this series co-organised by LINK Marine Group with other partners, took place in Dundee in June 2017 with almost 100 delegates from industry, government, NGO and academic sectors. Delegates discussed implications of constitutional change on environmental policy and in terms of securing progress towards sustainable development. In her [keynote](#) address Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham reaffirmed Scottish Government commitments not to roll back environmental protections post-Brexit, acknowledging the important contribution and relevance of eNGOs. Sponsorship from MCS, RSPB, WWFS, MASTS, LUC and Edinburgh University is acknowledged with thanks.

Championing Scotland's nature

It has been a good year for this high-profile initiative with [MSP Champions](#) reaching 100 in number by the end of March 2018. With over three-quarters of Scotland's MSPs working with us, in relation to 103 threatened species, to rekindle excitement about nature's diversity and understanding of its importance to our health, wealth and wellbeing, we are optimistic. Members have engaged with Champions on how they can contribute to the conservation of their species through Parliament and by supporting practical action in the community. The scheme offers a brighter future for these species and for Scotland's biodiversity and members hugely appreciate the MSP Champions' support.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

Environment, economy and a fairer footprint for Scotland

LINK's Flourishing Scotland project funded by the Friends Provident Foundation (FPF) closed in May 2017, having enabled LINK's Economics Group to work to improve the National Performance Framework and increase the Framework's profile and effectiveness and to influence Scottish economic debate including around circular economy issues and thinking about transition. Legacy materials of the three-year project are [online](#). Although capacity for joint work reduced on the end of contract of project officer Phoebe Cochrane, an internal statement on 'Valuing Nature' was produced, a response was submitted to Government's consultation on Air Passenger Duty, evidence was submitted to Holyrood's Economy Jobs & Fair Work Committee's Inquiry into Economic Data, the Group responded to Government's Scottish National Investment Bank consultation and contributed to LINK's Climate consultation response – all during 2017. Language in Scottish Government's September 2017 Programme for Government and in the First Minister's speech at the SNP's autumn conference showed a shift towards the narrative LINK promoted – that transition to a sustainable economy is not just necessary but beneficial in terms of job creation and economic development. The inclusion of a Just Transition Commission in the Programme for Government is a campaign achievement. LINK continues to participate in Government's review of the National Performance Framework, making proposals for changes to some indicators and the outcomes and liaising with allied organisations. While welcoming some proposed revisions at spring 2018 LINK will brief parliamentarians on continuing concerns. After securing a new three-year award from FPF in January 2018 for a project aimed at building support for a circular economy, LINK has recruited the project officer, Phoebe Cochrane and is developing milestones and work programme and considering an advisory panel to inform its approach.

Improving Scotland's environmental governance

LINK's Governance Group continued to shadow and input to debate around the UK's withdrawal from the European Union including on implications for the devolved administrations in the UK. This has been a strategic and consistent advocacy line, aimed at maintaining at a minimum the current levels of environmental protections and standards in Scotland, and where possible seeking commitments for enhancement. For strength of voice and to ensure UK outputs are devolution-proofed, the effort involves LINK and members in joint work with the Environment Links UK (ELUK) and the London-based Greener UK Coalition.

Ahead of the both the Scottish local elections May 2017 and the UK General Election in June 2017, LINK's [manifesto](#) and blogs highlighted environmental governance issues. LINK responded to a series of calls for evidence issued by the Scottish Parliament on Article 50, delegated powers, the devolution settlement and an expected legislative consent memorandum, providing evidence to Holyrood Committees and the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee. LINK supported a meeting of the Brussels-based ENGO coalition 'Green 10' with Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham and promoted the Greener UK MPs 'Pledge for the Environment' via its website. LINK coordinated Brexit-relevant work across its policy groups including around marine and farming matters. There has been consistent liaison with political parties in Scotland to ensure mutual updates and to consider environmental protections, the fate of environmental principles post-Brexit, progress on issues such as environmental courts and ENGO views on "bank and build".

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

LINK made a [written submission](#) on Westminster's EU (Withdrawal) Bill and worked to influence the Continuity (Scotland) Bill, passed in March 2018, which secured amendments on environmental principles and in terms of addressing the governance gap that departure from the EU will create; these strengthen the Bill in terms of environmental protection. LINK [responded to](#) the ECCLR Committee's call for evidence on EU Environmental and Animal Welfare Principles. In parallel, the network has participated in various subgroups of the Scottish Government's Scottish Standing Council set up to focus on Brexit's implications for Scotland and has continued to liaise with academics on the implications of Brexit for UK environmental policy and governance and LINK inputs to wider civic thinking via the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Regular contact was maintained with the Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe (Mike Russell), Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham), Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity (Fergus Ewing), Scottish Government Environmental Advisor on Brexit (Ian Jardine), Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Scotland Office (Lord Ian Duncan) and with MSPs, Scottish MPs and MEPs.

As the pace and pitch of the debate progress, LINK is planning a public-facing campaign to highlight the environment in the context of Brexit, with funding raised from members and LINK's discretionary fund, member organisations' input and commissioned communications expertise.

Standing up for environmental rights

Another area of LINK's focus in recent years has been the unmet need in Scotland's civil society around understanding of legal rights and access to legal remedies in environmental matters and the gap in access to affordable legal services. LINK's Legal Strategy subgroup has co-opted several lawyers to add to its collective expertise and during 2017-18 developed a prospectus for an Environmental Law Centre and commissioned a [Report on the feasibility of an environmental rights centre Scotland](#) from Dr Ben Christman with funding from member organisations and LINK. A seminar involving players in the broader NGO and legal arenas in December 2016 had already signalled strong interest in the concept. The LINK Subgroup will assess how to take forward the report's recommendations regarding the establishment of an Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland. Current thinking favours an independent entity whose roles would include the provision of affordable legal advice and representation to the public in planning and environmental law, carrying out public education and research, advocating for change and pursuing strategic litigation. In parallel, the Subgroup responded to the Scottish Civil Justice Council's consultation on rules for Protective Expenses Orders (PEOs), input to the PEOs working group and has monitored progress of the Civil Litigation Bill through Holyrood. Given the close relationship between these legal aspects and the implications of Brexit, LINK plans a public event in later 2018 to encourage broad discussion.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

Compliance with Scottish lobbying legislation

LINK will monitor the potential impact of the Scottish Lobbying Register on the collective activities of members. LINK is responsible for registering lobbying by its directly employed staff and registered an account on 12 March 2018. Given the importance of lobbying to the network and in the interests of transparency and best practice, LINK will voluntarily register all instances of lobbying carried out on behalf of LINK; a briefing has been provided to the network.

Championing better standards of land use, public goods for public money and respect for wildlife

LINK's Land Group and its various Subgroups have continued the network's long-standing interest in higher standards of land management which would underpin environmental recovery and enhancement. Members met with the new Land Commission to build relationships and learn of the Commission's developing programme. The Group compiled an information paper on the policy context around land and land needs in Scotland, lessons learned from the Scottish Land Use Strategy pilots and other land use work streams, and outputs of an integrated land use workshop held by LINK with other stakeholders to inform communication and messaging. Members continue to advocate for action by Scottish Government in an arena where it has statutory obligations i.e. to regularly update the Scottish Land Use Strategy, and to deliver political commitments to land reform, which are highly relevant to a broad sweep of LINK's interests and objectives.

Members have also monitored developments on the landscape policy front in liaison with SNH, the Scottish Landscape Institute, the John Muir Trust and others. Taking forward LINK's campaign on hilltracks and with funding from the Scottish Mountaineering Trust, British Mountaineering Council ACT Trust, LINK and some of its members, the Hilltracks Subgroup employed consultant Mel Nicoll to coordinate volunteers, take over monitoring and screening work and produce a report for summer 2018. This involves monitoring planning authorities' websites for applications, prior notifications or prior approvals relating to hilltracks, coordinating receipt of photos and data from an engaged public, and following up with planning authorities on tracks which appear to show bad practice or have no prior notification. The Subgroup also (unsuccessfully) requested that the Cabinet Secretary include hilltracks in the scope of an upcoming review of grouse moor management, and received an encouraging response. The summer will be spent on advocacy and interviews with stakeholders and it is anticipated that the report will be launched in the Autumn. The objective of this work is to achieve a legislative change to bring all Hilltracks into the full planning system.

LINK's Food and Farming Subgroup liaised with Scottish Government on the future of rural support holding a useful workshop with Scottish Land & Estates about the future of farming in June 2017 with input from agri-economist Andrew Moxey who had prepared an analysis for LINK. The Subgroup inputted to the agriculture workstream of Greener UK on the successor to the Common Agricultural Policy attending a Defra meeting on post-CAP policy. Members gave evidence to parliamentary committees and wrote to both Scottish Cabinet Secretaries offering expertise in relation to the [Griggs Greening Group paper](#) on greening beyond the context of the current CAP. LINK co-ordinated [a letter to the Cabinet Secretaries](#) on Just Transition towards carbon-neutral farming, signed up by 50 NGOs, farmers, rural groups and academics. A broad and inclusive policy workshop is being planned with key stakeholders which will build on [paper](#) published in April 2017 by the subgroup, *LINK Future of Farming and Rural Land Use in Scotland* and develop policy thinking and potential on the ground scenarios more thoroughly. The Subgroup has commissioned a public poll to gauge public attitudes with regard to future agriculture support.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

LINK members worked on Holyrood's Forestry and Land Management Bill through to Stage 3, influencing several amendments in the final Bill including a duty to develop a new forestry strategy. A positive result for the environment is that the new strategy will include a definition of sustainable forest management, strategy for land acquisition and disposal, and must address afforestation and woodland creation. LINK representatives completed work on Mackinnon Review reforms to the forestry grant application process. An internal workshop for LINK members and policy groups was held in March 2017 to inform thinking on the synergies of a future forestry strategy with agriculture, tourism, access to the outdoors, landscape and more.

LINK's Wildlife Crime Subgroup has pursued concerns about continuing levels of wildlife crime in Scotland and how Scotland assesses and addresses these. The subgroup held meetings with the Crown Office and maintained useful contact with Holyrood's ECCLR Committee and LINK's MSP Species Champions. Liaison took place with Police Scotland about the Government's wildlife crime annual figures and a [response](#) by the subgroup to those figures was widely circulated. In February 2018 the subgroup responded to the Government's Wildlife Crime report and ECCLR evidence session; in this LINK welcomed some improvements in reporting and efforts by Police Scotland and COPFS to secure convictions of a number of wildlife criminals, but highlighted members' continuing concerns at the low likelihood of detection of a suspect, that reported figures can only represent a sample of the unknown number of such crimes actually taking place, at the omission of some crime data in the Government report and discrepancies in numbers and dates of incidents recorded between the police and specialist partner agencies and at the decline in the proportion of cases prosecuted by COPFS.

Mainstreaming Biodiversity

LINK's Wildlife Subgroup had a major role in drafting the Scottish Pollinator Strategy published in July 2017. The Subgroup has continued to promote a National Ecological Network with Government and parliamentarians as a framework for delivery of biodiversity strategy in future. LINK signed up to an Environment Links UK [briefing](#) on EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation and Brexit in November 2017. LINK met Holyrood's Public Audit and Post-Legislative Scrutiny Committee in December to discuss implementation of the Biodiversity Duty. Subsequently the Committee issued a formal call for evidence on the biodiversity duty, to which [LINK responded](#). LINK will respond to the Aichi report due out in April 2018 to highlight the case for dedicated biodiversity funding, profile case studies of statutory work, the disparity of funding between regions and the decrease in LIFE funding. Useful discussion is in train with SNH at March 2018 about funding for biodiversity, post-Brexit.

Through LINK's innovative Species Champions scheme, members are working with 100 MSP Species Champions at March 2018. These are particularly useful connections within each political party and a route by which a number of Champions can engage on wider issues in Parliament such as cross-cutting land management matters. The support from MSPs making connections with aspects of the political debate which LINK has not achieved before, is important progress. [LINK submitted](#) a briefing for the Parliamentary debate on Earth Hour, 28 March, making the connections between climate change, biodiversity, land use strategy and the National Performance Framework. The next phase of the Species Champions scheme aims to engage champions and develop youth links through the Scottish Youth Parliament and "Year of Young People" events.

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

LINK is pleased that advocacy to both the Holyrood Committees on Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (for deer management) & Rural Economy and Connectivity (for forestry) has resulted in environmental issues being brought into better balance with commercial interests.

LINK's fundraisers' forum met with Heritage Lottery Fund representatives in Scotland and in London, subsequently responding to HLF's consultation on future funding. They attended the Environmental Funders Network launch of the Scottish version of *Where the Green Grants Went* in December. The overall picture of funding is that with more of the UK's natural heritage resource to manage than any other UK country, Scotland receives considerably less support from Lottery and from the Trusts and Foundations sector – a situation which LINK members are keen to change.

Recovery of Scotland's Seas

Throughout 2017 LINK worked to secure two years' further funding from the John Ellerman Foundation (JEF) for LINK's marine project, by then ten years old, having successfully made the case for legislation and now working to ensure its implementation. JEF's continuing support is very critical and welcome as there is still 'way to go' to deliver on our network objectives around marine planning, the designation of protected areas for various species and management of the marine environment. Members were pleased to see plenty of positive marine content in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government at autumn 2017 and the year has seen progress in all members' areas of interest – in terms of management measures at national and regional level, protection of sites and thinking around of management of the fisheries resource.

LINK finalised its 'Vision for Scotland's Seas' for the EU Exit team at Marine Scotland and the Group has liaised with Marine Scotland Conservation Team on MPA management & designation plans. A highly successful field trip to the Isle of Mull in September 2017 was organised for and welcomed by Holyrood's ECCLR Committee including a boat trip with Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust.

LINK subsequently successfully advocated to inform and secure a Green-SNP budget deal which accelerated plans to consult on 4 nature conservation MPAs in late 2018 rather than 2019 through an extra £200,000 made available to SNH and Marine Scotland. LINK members are preparing campaign documentation for the second tranche public consultation on MPAs to support progression of the 4 MPAs which remain to be established for nature conservation.

The Group has worked jointly with Environment Links UK, also contributing to the Greener UK coalition's Brexit-related positions especially on fisheries management. Members have met with the Marine Scotland Fisheries team and LINK will input to Scottish Government's review of the future of fisheries management in Scotland. Group members were at the annual Inshore Fisheries Management and Conservation (IFMAC) meeting in November 2017. LINK is represented on a new Marine and Fisheries Rural Advisory Group on EU Exit (for Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing, chaired by Marine Scotland) and has continued planning for the second tranche of MPA/SAC inshore fisheries management measures due in spring 2018.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

Members have engaged with regional marine planning in the Clyde and are keeping an eye on regional planning arrangements for Orkney and Shetland. The Marine Group is planning in partnership with SNH and Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen for the third Sea Scotland Conference (June 2018). LINK attended the MASTS Annual Science Meeting in Glasgow inputting to the SNH marine conservation session. Members' concerns about the increasing environmental impact of the aquaculture industry echo those of [LINK's campaigning from 1987 to 1997](#) and a new aquaculture subgroup set up in 2017 has developed a policy position which will provide briefing for members giving evidence to Holyrood Committee inquiries into salmon farming anticipated in spring 2018.

Planning for sustainability

LINK's Planning Group continued to engage with the Planning Bill through consultation response and attendance at various stakeholder group meetings, regular liaison with Scottish Government and SNH including Scottish Government planning reform working groups and related conferences. As presented to Holyrood in December the Bill was poor and LINK's main focus has been ensuring that it will deliver for sustainability. LINK was represented at a meeting of the Independent Review Panel in the autumn and at a DPEA stakeholder meeting in January. There were multiple meetings with MSPs from early 2018, seeking to influence changes in terms of improved oversight of the National Planning Framework, better join-up across government, retention of consultation and environmental scrutiny opportunities and the introduction of equal rights of appeal. LINK assisted coordination of a particularly busy parliamentary event in March hosted by Andy Wightman MSP giving local community representatives opportunity to highlight their concerns with their MSPs. Support has gradually grown and the Bill has been criticised by the Local Government and Communities Committee and others whose scrutiny is informed by submissions from LINK and its members. LINK has set up a [public petition](#), and submitted written and oral evidence to the lead Committee. Group member National Trust for Scotland published a Friends of the Scotsman article, reproduced on [LINK Thinks](#) in January.

Climate, environment, wellbeing and social justice

LINK's objective of helping to secure a sustainable Scotland assumes that Scotland will deliver on its ground-breaking climate legislation, pursuing an ambitious strategy which supports the country in as swift as possible a transition to a low carbon economy. LINK advocacy promotes that particular policy direction combined with better integration of Scotland's strategies for national performance, economics, planning, land use and management and marine resource management, among other.

With the prospect of fresh climate legislation in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government in 2017, the network complemented the advocacy of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, by focussing on nature needs and opportunities which could be addressed in the new Bill. A members' workshop was convened in June to consider response to consultation on the draft Bill and LINK's subsequent [response](#) was informed by all its policy Groups and Subgroups. In parallel LINK engaged in the Climate Change Bill Technical Discussion Group on some mechanisms in the proposed Bill and how these might work. LINK's Species Champions scheme kept MSPs up-to-date with network asks on climate and LINK coordinated [a letter](#) from 50 NGOs, farmers, rural groups and academics to Cabinet Secretaries Fergus Ewing and Roseanna Cunningham on just transition towards carbon-neutral farming. LINK's briefing for Holyrood's Earth Hour debate in spring 2018 flagged key climate issues including land use and biodiversity loss. A parliamentary reception in April informed MSPs on impacts of climate change on different species groups. LINK will maintain a watching brief and plans a Parliamentary event ahead of the introduction of the Bill in 2018.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Achievements and performance (continued)

LINK, through its Unconventional Fossil Fuels Subgroup, in Spring 2017 [called on Scottish Government to act to prohibit onshore oil and gas extraction](#) because of demonstrable risks to the climate, the environment and public health. LINK's response to the Government's Talking Fracking Consultation in summary was that evidence of the potentially harmful impacts of UOG extraction was increasing, the industry remained unable to demonstrate its safety in relation to impacts on human health and the environment as the precautionary principle demands, and that in the context of the climate crisis, for a hydrocarbon rich country like Scotland to open up a new source of fossil fuels while it remains committed to continued exploitation of North Sea oil and gas reserves would be irresponsible and run counter to the Scottish Government's efforts to be a world leader on climate action.

Connections between good environmental governance, people's wellbeing and social equality are strong and LINK's advocacy has continued to promote approaches and solutions which will deliver fairness. During the year LINK contributed to the to the [Rights at Risk](#) report by the Human Rights

Consortium Scotland, supported [WWF](#) and [Sustrans](#) positions on [Petition PE1653](#) relating to active travel infrastructure, and responded to the consultation on [Building Low Emission Zones for Scotland](#). The progress towards Low Emission Zones has been seriously disappointing, despite concerns across the UK about air quality. LINK's delegates to the Cleaner Air for Scotland Governance Group, Emilia Hanna (FoES) and James Curran, Honorary Fellow, withdrew from this Group on 24 March. Their [letter of resignation](#) concluded that CAFSGG failed to deliver on its own remit and that Government continues to fail to implement the commitments of the CAFS strategy in such a way as to comply with legislation, and continues to fail to protect people from dangerous levels of air pollution. They will continue to work for better measures outside of the official stakeholder group.

Financial report

Financial review

There was a net increase of £23,524 (2017: £7,067 decrease) in the year in the level of unrestricted funds, leaving unrestricted funds carried forward at the year-end of £260,586 (2017: £237,062). Restricted funds increased by £15,421 in the year (2017: decreased by £28,032), leaving restricted funds carried forward of £55,312 (2017: £39,891).

The improvement of some £30,500 in Unrestricted Funds compared to the previous year is largely attributable to an award mid-year of £20,000 from the William Grant Foundation, the first of three equal annual instalments, and an increase in membership subscriptions of almost £6,400. After the year end, LINK has been awarded a very generous grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation of £250,000 to meet core costs and the challenges of Brexit over the three years from 2018/19 to 2020/21, which will enable additional expenditure on advocacy for the Scottish environment and additional related projects.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

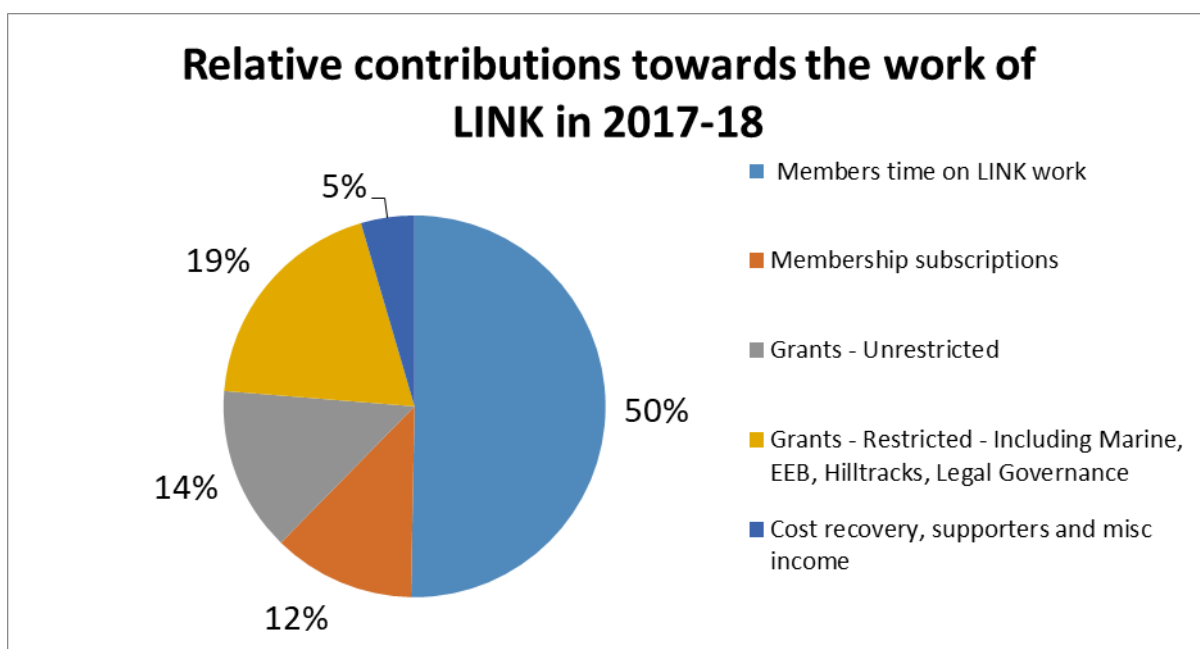
Reserves policy

LINK Board has determined that unrestricted funds held by the charitable company, not designated or invested in tangible fixed assets ("the free reserves" i.e. general reserves less fixed assets) should aim to be enough to cover 12 months of operation in a scenario where LINK were to sustain significant loss in one or other of its funding streams; also, that this should include enough funds to close the organisation down if it were to prove unviable to continue. The Board estimates this at approximately £200,000 in unrestricted funds. At present LINK's free reserves amount to £260,475, which modestly exceeds this target, and the generous grants receivable over the next two/three years are likely to enable LINK to avoid unfavourable financial constraints during this period. The trustees are very conscious of the need to ensure this additional income is spent wisely and effectively, and also to ensure that LINK is prepared for the inevitable substantial decline in income when the life-spans of these grants expire in 2020 and 2021. The trustees maintain a 5-year forward funding projection, and are well aware of the need to ensure that they keep a firm control on fixed and establishment costs.

Funding and support

LINK would be nothing without the support and active engagement of its [member organisations](#). Besides paying subscriptions these organisations engage actively in LINK policy advocacy, representing the network on [stakeholder forums](#) and giving evidence and at relevant events. Members determine direction of the network and lead LINK's policy Groups and Subgroups, making considerable commitment to joint endeavour and to the network's impact and reputation. LINK trustees' time on the Board and Board subgroups is freely given by their employers - often member bodies of LINK. A big thanks to all who contributed over the year: Trustees, Group and Subgroup leads, Fellows, President and LINK's excellent staff team.

Together with membership subscriptions, total member organisation contributions account for 62% of all contributions to LINK (comparing with a 68% contribution in 2016-17) the time voluntarily committed by member organisations on collective work carried out under LINK auspices over the year equates to around £375,000, or 1,300 days.



TRUSTEES' REPORT

Funding and support (continued)

Membership subscription income remains a fundamental plank of LINK's funding base and this year contributed almost 25% of LINK's total income, not including various member financial contributions to specific projects. In summer 2017, in the context of significant fundraising challenge, the Board consulted with members about a possible 7% rise in subscriptions to provide ongoing stability. Member responses indicated that subscription levels were reaching biting point and that this is not a budget heading against which organisations can easily raise funding. LINK Board subsequently decided to review LINK's subscriptions model and to consider options which could make movement between subscription bands less of a make-or-break issue for the membership. The review, led by the Treasurer, commenced during the year.

The year was witness to almost 140 LINK meetings including policy Groups and Subgroups, Board and network meetings and liaison meetings with Ministers and other stakeholders. Network meetings were held on 4 May and 11 December 2017, the latter also forward planning for the year ahead. The May meeting determined to coordinate LINK input to the upcoming Climate Bill in addition to existing priorities. Given the volume of work involved in preparing for the EEB conference and 30th anniversary in November, the April Board took the decision not to hold a members' Congress in 2017; however, Congress will go ahead as usual in 2018, in August. Workshops for members were organised on: Climate (June 2017); Food & Farming in conjunction with Scottish Land and Estates (June 2017); Advocacy Training (July 2017); Forestry & Land Use (March 2018).

With regard to wider funding sources, 2017-18 saw LINK move to a brighter funding position with new funding awarded for core needs and for projects. LINK much appreciates the continuing support of Scottish Government and Scottish Natural Heritage at the same level for network intermediary roles and contribution to a sustainable Scotland. The network was delighted with the William Grant Foundation's award for core funding for three years from July 2017 and the John Ellerman Foundation's award for LINK's marine work from November 2017 for two years. More recently LINK had very welcome confirmation that Friends Provident Foundation will fund new work from April 2018 and that the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation will support the network with an unrestricted grant for three years from July 2018, recognising the extra draw that Brexit has on the sector. These awards have transformed LINK's funding position compared to a year previously and will safeguard our ability to support members' collective advocacy.

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Funding and support (continued)

LINK acknowledges with sincere thanks the support of all funders over the year to 31 March 2018:

LINK Member Organisations

LINK Organisational Supporters

Scottish Natural Heritage for core funding and support for the EEB Conference

Scottish Government Environment for core funding and support for the EEB Conference

Scottish Government Climate Directorate for core funding and support for the EEB Conference

Edinburgh Council for support for the EEB Conference

Edinburgh University Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability for support for the EEB Conference

European Commission Edinburgh Office for support for the EEB Conference

Historic Environment Scotland for support for the EEB Conference

Scottish Environment Protection Agency for support for the EEB Conference

SEFARI (Scottish Environment, Food & Agriculture Research Institutes) for support for the EEB Conference

British Mountaineering Council ACT for the Hilltracks project

Craignish Trust for core work

European Environmental Bureau for support for the EEB Conference

Friends Provident Foundation for the final stage of the Flourishing Scotland project

John Ellerman Foundation for the Marine project

[LUC \(Environmental Planning, Design and Management\)](#) for support for Sea Scotland

Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland for support for Sea Scotland

Marine Protected Areas Fighting Fund for the Marine project

Scottish Mountaineering Trust for the Hilltracks project

Tay Charitable Trust towards the Marine project

William Grant Foundation for core work

Friends of the Earth Scotland for environmental rights centre research

Marine Conservation Society for Sea Scotland

National Trust Scotland for the Food & Farming event and Hilltracks project

Ramblers Scotland for the Hilltracks project

RSPB Scotland for Sea Scotland, the Food & Farming event, the Hilltracks project and environmental rights centre research

Soil Association Scotland for the Food & Farming event

Scottish Wild Land Group for the Hilltracks project

WWF Scotland for Sea Scotland and environmental rights centre research

WWF UK for continued support to the Environment Links UK

Mamas & Papas which chose LINK as their charity for the proceeds of the plastic carrier bag tax

Scottish Land and Estates for support for the joint workshop in June 2017

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Risk management

LINK Board reviews risk via a register which identifies key processes and players in the charitable company's operations as well as potential risks in broader contexts. Trustees consider a political strategy report every six months which flags issues for discussion and is shared with member organisations. Succession planning is ongoing for Board and plans exist for key staff, Group leads and President.

Structure, governance and management

LINK is a Scottish charity and company incorporated on 10th June 2003, limited by guarantee and without share capital. It was founded by voluntary sector bodies in 1987 to provide a forum for the voluntary environment sector in Scotland, for information, discussion and concerted action. LINK is governed by [Articles of Association](#) adopted in June 2003 and last amended in 2017. In the event of the company being wound up, LINK trustees (directors) must contribute an amount not exceeding £1. LINK [Operating Principles](#) guide all involved about how to engage and derive benefit from doing so

Through an EGM held electronically on 4 May 2017, member organisations approved a range of constitutional changes and updates. Owing to the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, LINK was obliged to change its constitutional format from two separate documents (Memorandum of Association, Articles of Association) into one new composite document, the [Articles](#) of Association. At LINK's AGM on 11 December 2017 members thanked outgoing Chair and long-time trustee Helen Todd for her many contributions as an ordinary trustee, as Vice Chair and then Chair. The meeting also thanked Ian Findlay as he stood down from the Board for his valuable contributions to LINK governance. Members elected Charles Dundas and Craig Macadam as Chair and Vice Chair, Tim Ambrose (continuing) as Treasurer, and new trustees Helen Senn and Clare Symonds. Members supported the Board's recommendations to re-appoint Joyce McMillan for a further year as [President](#) and new [Honorary Fellows](#) Stuart Housden and Ian Findlay.

The Board met in April, August, October and January on governance issues including budget and fundraising, evaluation of LINK progress towards its objectives, membership applications, succession planning and strategic liaison. New guidance on safeguarding children when involved in LINK work was signed off in February. A round of dialogue with member organisation representatives is reporting high levels of satisfaction in the value of membership, especially for coordination and advocacy support to the policy groups and subgroups, the regular advocacy monitoring and bulletin, support with the coordination of marine and economics projects, among other. Suggestions for practical adjustments to LINK's processes are being pursued, including short regular bulletins keeping CEOs in the network informed (from February 2018), improved teleconferencing equipment (from spring 2018), a drive for some meetings of the policy groups and subgroups to be held nearer to members based in areas more remote from central Scotland (ongoing).

LINK published its ninth [carbon emissions](#) report in spring 2018, reporting a general reduction in emissions from both travel (mostly staff commuting) and energy use (with both LINK's offices now entirely electric, and to a high degree using power generated from renewable resources). Ambitions are to continue to promote the Cycle to Work scheme to staff, to encourage the Perth landlord to choose a 100% renewable electricity supplier and to be able to capture waste data once again regarding the Edinburgh office.

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Structure, governance and management (continued)

After over a decade organising Scottish Environment Week as a week of events in Holyrood each year, a review carried out with members concluded that LINK should identify more opportunity throughout the year to promote members' work to parliamentarians in relation to network policy priorities. LINK remains keen to continue with an annual parliamentary evening reception around a topical theme; owing to Parliamentary calendar issues the next was scheduled in April 2018.

Management of LINK on a day to day basis is delegated to Chief Officer and senior staff, working to agreed policy priorities, events, fundraising and other collective plans. In autumn 2017 Esther Brooker resigned as Marine Policy Officer to take up a position with WWF Scotland, albeit continuing to input to LINK's marine work on WWF's behalf. LINK welcomed Calum Langdale to a new Species Champions Internship in November. Fresh funding from the John Ellerman Foundation then enabled LINK to increase working hours for Emilie Devenport to full-time (from January 2018), in the role of Marine Policy & Engagement Officer. As frontrunner in a recruitment at March 2018, Phoebe Cochrane has been appointed Sustainable Economics Officer.

In November, LINK moved its Perth operations from its base of the past twenty-three years in Shore Road, to more economical accommodation in Marshall Place near the centre of Perth and the rail and bus stations. The lease of LINK's Edinburgh office has been renewed. Both offices offer 'hotdesking' facilities for visiting members and meeting space for use by LINK policy groups; the Perth meeting room is available for member organisations' events and its use has been picking up this spring.

Public Benefit

Those who ultimately benefit from LINK activity are the general public, in respect of development which is more sustainable, a context in which people can be more involved in decision-making, and action being taken to ensure Scotland addresses the impacts of climate change, transitions to a low carbon economy and protects its environment for itself and for the benefit of future generations.

LINK's environmental voice champions resources and processes which cannot speak for themselves. LINK is mandated by its member organisations and their combined membership of 500,000 people who pay memberships to charities which will take action over environmental concerns in Scotland.

LINK's purposes as a charitable company are to: promote the effectiveness and efficiency of voluntary organisations involved with conservation and improvement of Scotland's natural environment and associated cultural heritage; to advance the conservation and improvement of Scotland's natural environment and associated cultural heritage as part of the pursuit of environmental sustainability; and to advance the education, understanding and responsible awareness of the natural environment and associated cultural heritage as part of the pursuit of environmental sustainability.

LINK has been active in policy advocacy at Scottish, UK and international levels, over impacts which Brexit may have on environmental standards and protections which UK currently achieves as a member of the EU and on a wide range of specific policy areas reported above.

The network draws on science and evidence, developing solutions-focussed approaches, with allies, seeking to influence decision-making at these levels. LINK's relationship with parliamentarians and political parties at 2018 is very constructive.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Plans for 2018-19

Monitoring the Brexit debate and influencing political thinking on how the UK including Scottish environment should be managed, protected and enhanced in future will continue to be a high priority, including liaison with governments and eNGO and academic sectors across the UK and in the Republic of Ireland, inputting to legislation including the UK's EU (Withdrawal) Bill and Fisheries Bill and the (Scottish) Continuity Bill processes, responding to consultations around governance and principles, and commissioning legal advice.

In parallel the network will engage in policy advocacy in relation to land, planning, environmental governance, economics and the marine environment, inputting to and making the case for legislation and policy regulation. This will include influencing land reform to integrate principles of sustainable land use and promoting proactive application of Scotland's Land Use Strategy; promoting the concept that public goods should be delivered by public subsidy, and influencing thinking on support for farming post-CAP and engaging with the creation of the new Scottish Forestry Strategy in 2018. Members will work to bring about a change in attitude to how Scotland's landscape is supported by government strategy and will continue to press for the SNP manifesto commitment for a Scottish Wildlife Crime Unit to be delivered and for a statutory code for deer management in future.

LINK will make the case for better alignment of Scotland's National Performance Framework with the UN Sustainable Development Goals to which Scotland is signed up and will build support for greater circularity in Scotland's economy. There will be close engagement with the Planning Bill to ensure it helps contribute to a sustainable Scotland and even introduces a limited right of appeal. LINK will make the case for Scotland's new Climate Bill to deliver ambitious greenhouse gas emission targets, better integration with biodiversity in energy and climate decisions, to set targets for land use emissions and a nitrogen budget, among other aspirations. With help from others, LINK looks forward to establishing an Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland.

Plans are being made for a Species Champions campaign from later spring 2018 and LINK members will develop a manifesto for Scotland's post-2020 biodiversity targets, also advocating for delivery within the framework of a national ecological network. LINK will encourage Government to progress Scotland's Marine Protected Area network, engaging in Government work to protect a subset of vulnerable priority marine features outside of MPAs from fisheries, and contributing to Government reviews of the National Marine Plan and fisheries legislation (at UK level). LINK is hosting the third Sea Scotland Conference at Kinghorn in Fife on 20 and 21 June 2018.

LINK Congress in August 2018 will once again bring members and others together, around the theme of successful campaigning. Network meetings are planned for May and December, the latter linked to AGM and festive reception.

In the wake of recent confirmation from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation of 3-year funding LINK will recruit an Advocacy Officer to join the advocacy team from spring 2018, supporting work areas prioritised on a rolling basis. Esmée Fairbairn Foundation's award enables LINK to greatly increase its usually small discretionary fund, from which policy Groups and Subgroups can draw support for one-off initiatives.

The Board will review and revise LINK's subscriptions model to take account of the challenges this can have for members, taking proposals to the AGM in December. LINK will fundraise for specific work areas including marine and members will take forward joint work looking at alternative sources of funding for biodiversity, post-Brexit, and 'son of LIFE' sources, producing evidence and communicating the need for continued, secure funding for biodiversity action in Scotland.

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Trustee selection

Members may elect up to nine Trustees and the Board has the option to co-opt two trustees to secure key skills. Trustees are required to declare any interests at election and a register of interests is scrutinised by the Board at its first meeting after the AGM. Induction for trustees is carried out by the Chair and Chief Officer and training opportunities are flagged through the year. The LINK Chair is participating in a new ACOSVO-led Chairs' Network. The Chair's three-yearly appraisals with trustees will be carried out in 2018 with a summary report going to the Board in 2019.

Trustees

Helen Todd (Chair) (resigned 7 December 2017)
Charles Dundas (Chair) (elected 7 December 2017)
Craig Macadam (Vice-Chair) (elected 7 December 2017)
Tim Ambrose (Treasurer) (re-elected 7 December 2017)
Ian Findlay (resigned 7 December 2017)
Beryl Leatherland
Paul Walton
Sam Gardner
Lucy Graham
Clare Symonds (elected 7 December 2017)
Helen Senn (elected 7 December 2017)

Staff & Interns

Jen Anderson, Chief Officer
Alice Walsh, Development Officer
Daphne Vlastari, Advocacy Officer
Karen Paterson, Finance and Office Manager
Lisa Webb, Advocacy Office Manager
Emilie Devenport, Marine Policy and Engagement Officer
Phoebe Cochrane, Sustainable Economics Policy Officer (to May 2017), Climate Coordinator (June 2017 to March 2018)
Calum Langdale, Wildlife Subgroup Species Champion Intern (appointed November 2017)
Esther Brooker, Marine Policy Officer (left LINK September 2017)

Key Management Personnel

The Trustees consider that they, together with the Chief Officer, comprise the key management personnel. The Trustees give their time freely and the pay and remuneration of the key management personnel is set by the Board and is kept under annual review.

President

Joyce McMillan (re-appointed 7 December 2017)

Fellows newly appointed at 7 December 2017

Ian Findlay and Stuart Housden joined LINK's group of [Fellows](#) at 7 December 2017

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Group Conveners and Vice-Conveners

Economics - Matthew Crighton, Friends of the Earth Scotland and Bruce Wilson, Scottish Wildlife Trust
Climate – Jim Densham, RSPB Scotland

Marine - Calum Duncan, Marine Conservation Society and Sarah Dolman, Whale and Dolphin Conservation

Land – Vicki Swales, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland and Charles Dundas, Woodland Trust Scotland

Governance – Lloyd Austin, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Planning – Aedán Smith, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland and Clare Symonds, Planning Democracy

Subgroup Leaders and Deputies

Aquaculture - Sam Collin, Scottish Wildlife Trust

Brexit – Lloyd Austin, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Food and Farming - Pete Ritchie, Nourish Scotland and Anna Brand, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Deer - Duncan Orr-Ewing, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland and Maggie Keegan, Scottish Wildlife Trust (until March 2018)

Hilltracks - Helen Todd, Ramblers' Scotland and Beryl Leatherland, Scottish Wild Land Group

Land reform, Land use, landscape - John Thomson, Scottish Campaign for National Parks and Sheila George, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Landscape - John Thomson, Scottish Campaign for National Parks and Beryl Leatherland, Scottish Wild Land Group

Legal Strategy – Mary Church, Friends of the Earth Scotland and Lloyd Austin, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Wildlife - Craig Macadam, Buglife and Elizabeth Ferrell, Bat Conservation

Wildlife Crime – Eddie Palmer, Scottish Badgers and Ian Thomson, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Woodlands – Charles Dundas, Woodland Trust Scotland and Sian Williams, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

Unconventional Fossil Fuels – Mary Church, Friends of the Earth Scotland

Membership

Membership has remained strong, with ongoing commitment to the enterprise of LINK by a wide range of environmental NGOs, listed further into this report. This year LINK welcomed with pleasure two new member organisations bringing fresh perspectives: Salmon and Trout Conservation Scotland and Scottish Wild Beaver Group. It is with regret that the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust withdrew over the same period, owing to limits on their capacity to engage.

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

LINK outputs over the reporting period

Aquaculture

[Scottish Environment LINK Aquaculture letter to Mr Haddon](#), Marine Scotland

Brexit

[LINK submission to inquiry on Article 50 withdrawal](#)

[ELUK response to Great Repeal Bill](#)

Climate

[LINK response to Scottish Government Climate Change Bill White Paper consultation](#)

[Press release and Letter](#): Scottish Government must drive Just Transition towards carbon-neutral farming, urge 50 NGOs, farmers, rural groups and academics

Deer

[LINK Parliamentary Briefing for Deer Management Debate 2 May 2017](#)

Economics

[LINK response to the Scottish Government's Scottish National Investment Bank consultation](#)

[Scottish Environment LINK response to Scottish Government's Consultation on Air Departure Tax](#)
A Response to [Local Government and Communities Committee consultation on City Deals](#),

General

Press release - [Environmental organisations welcome UK-leading environmental commitments in Scottish Continuity Bill](#)

[LINK's letter of resignation from the Cleaner Air For Scotland Governance Group](#)

[Annual Report Summary April 2016 to March 2017](#)

[Letter to Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham following Scottish Parliament's vote in support of Scottish budget](#)

[LINK response to Scottish Government consultation, Building Low Emission Zones for Scotland. 30 November 2017](#)

Press Release [2017-2018 Programme for government green commitments an important first step towards UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[LINK Response to call for evidence from the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee Economic Data](#)

[LINK response to: "Talking Fracking" A Consultation on Unconventional Oil and Gas](#)

Press release - [Environmental groups call on Scottish Government to prohibit fracking](#)

[A Roadmap for adopting a National Ecological Network for Scotland](#)

[LINK Manifesto for UK 2017 elections](#)

Food & Farming

[Open letter to Cabinet Secretaries on Carbon-neutral Farming](#)

[Scottish Government must drive Just Transition towards carbon-neutral farming, urge 50 NGOs, farmers, rural groups and academics](#)

[Renewing Scotland's Rural Areas - LINK's vision for future farming and rural land use policy](#)

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

LINK outputs over the reporting period (continued)

Governance Group

[LINK Briefing to the Scottish Continuity Bill](#)

[LINK submission to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee on possible common/shared frameworks and related issues](#)

[Legal aid review response \(May\)](#)

[LINK written evidence on the impact of the EU Withdrawal Bill upon the devolution settlement and expected legislative consent memorandum](#)

Hilltracks

[Hilltracks letter to Roseanna Cunningham – Independently-led expert group on the environmental impact of grouse moor management](#)

[LINK Hilltrack group calls for evidence to assess the damage caused to Scotland's iconic mountains by controversial vehicle tracks](#)

[Hilltracks letter to CNPA re Hilltrack in Glen Clova](#)

Joint Environment Links UK

[The EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation and Brexit – a joint ELUK response](#)

Land

[LINK response to the Forestry and Land Management \(Scotland\) Bill](#)

Legal Strategy

[Report on the Feasibility of an Environmental Rights Centre Scotland](#)

[Consultation on Scottish Court Fees 2018-2021- Response from LINK Legal Strategy group, Jan 2018](#)

[Consultation on Draft Court Rules in Relation to Protective Expenses Orders response \(June\)](#)

[Evidence to the Justice Committee Call on the Civil Litigation \(Expenses and Group Proceedings\) \(Scotland\) Bill \(August\)](#)

[Response to the Scottish Civil Justice Council consultation on Protective Expenses Orders](#)

Marine

[Sea Scotland 2017 – Conference summary report](#)

[Response to the Loch Carron Marine Protected Area consultation](#)

[Living With the Seas Report - LINK report published 2016, updated 2018](#)

[LINK Marine group updated response, February 2018 to National Marine Plan Review](#)

[Marine: It's time to invest in the future of Scotland's young people by investing in healthy seas](#)

[LINK Marine Group Comment on JNCC draft conservation advice for East of Gannet and Montrose Fields offshore ncMPA](#)

[Marine: Scottish Government show support for iconic mobile species](#)

[Environmental Impacts of Salmon Farming in Scotland. LINK evidence to the ECCLR Inquiry](#)

[LINK Consultation Response: National Marine Plan Review](#)

[Letter to the Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham in relation to four proposed nature conservation MPAs](#)

[LINK Marine Group Briefing: The future of Scotland's seas](#)

[Members of Scottish Parliament celebrate Scotland's marine life](#)

[Marine Group letter to Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham – Loch Carron MPA](#)

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

LINK outputs over the reporting period (continued)

Planning

[Blog](#): Planning bill is an opportunity to put right a system Scots see as flawed and failing

[Guest Blog](#): An opportune moment for marine spatial planning

[LINK Briefing on Incinerators, Public Health and Planning in Scotland \(S5M-10364\)](#)

[LINK comments to Minister's response on Planning Bill and equal rights of appeal](#)

[LINK evidence to the Local Government and Communities Committee on the Planning Bill](#)

[Help us plan a better Scotland: Environmental charities launch e-action to fix Scotland's Planning Bill](#)

[LINK evidence to the Finance and Constitution Committee on the Planning Bill](#)

[LINK Response to the Scottish Government consultation on the future of the planning system.](#)

[Consultation response from the LINK Planning Group on the future of the planning system](#)

Wildlife Subgroup

[LINK Briefing on Earth Hour Debate](#)

[LINK response to Government Wildlife Crime report and ECCLR evidence session](#)

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Member organisations 2017-18

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland
Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group
Bat Conservation Trust
British Ecological Society – Scottish Policy Group
Buglife
Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation Scotland
Cairngorms Campaign
Friends of the Earth Scotland
Froglife Trust (Scotland)
Hebridean Whale & Dolphin Trust
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust for Scotland
North East Mountain Trust
Nourish Scotland
Planning Democracy
Plantlife Scotland
Ramblers Scotland
RSPB Scotland
Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
Salmon and Trout Conservation Scotland
SCAPE Trust
Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society
Scottish Badgers
Scottish Campaign for National Parks
Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association
Scottish Farming and Wildlife Advisers' Group
Scottish Geodiversity Forum
Scottish Raptor Study Group
Scottish Wild Beaver Group
Scottish Wild Land Group
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Soil Association Scotland
Trees for Life
Whale and Dolphin Conservation
Woodland Trust Scotland
WWF Scotland

The support of LINK's **Organisational Supporters** (listed below) is valued.

Confor: Confederation of Forest Industries (UK)
Crown Estate Scotland
Keep Scotland Beautiful
Paths for All Partnership
ScottishPower
University of Edinburgh, Department for Social Responsibility & Sustainability

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Stakeholder forums on which LINK was represented by member body representatives or by staff (continued)

Cross Cutting Forums

Scottish Air Passenger Duty (APD) stakeholder forum: Mike Robinson, LINK Honorary Fellow
ScotRail Stakeholder Advisory Panel, Mike Robinson, LINK Honorary Fellow
Cleaner Air for Scotland Governance Group, Emilia Hanna, FoES and James Curran, LINK Honorary Fellow

Food and Farming

Agricultural and Rural development Stakeholder Group (formerly CAP): Pete Ritchie, Nourish Scotland, Vicki Swales, RSPB
National Programme Assessment Committee (Agri-Environment Climate scheme) John Thomson, SCNP, Vicki Swales RSPB
Joint Programme Monitoring Committee: Vicki Swales, RSPB
Rural Development Operational Committee: Vicki Swales, RSPB
Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group (sub-group of RDOC): Vicki Swales, RSPB
Climate Change and Agriculture Strategy Group: Jim Densham, RSPB
NFUS Farmed Environment Forum: Pete Ritchie, Nourish Scotland

Deer

Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group: Duncan Orr-Ewing RSPB
Association of Deer Management Advisory Groups: Duncan Orr-Ewing RSPB
Deer Management Round Table, Duncan Orr-Ewing, RSPB

Economics

Scottish Forum on Natural Capital: Economics Group fields rep as appropriate
Scottish Government Roundtable to review National Performance Framework: Daphne Vlastari, LINK
SEPA International Innovation Panel – Matthew Crighton (FoES)

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Stakeholder forums on which LINK was represented by member body representatives or by staff (continued)

Marine

Clyde Marine Planning Partnership: Calum Duncan (MCS)

Marine Monitoring Network Project Steering Group: Sarah Dolman (WDC), Charles Nathan (RSPB)

Marine Protected Areas Sustainability Appraisal Project Advisory Group: Calum Duncan (MCS)

Marine Strategic Studies Forum: Sarah Dolman (WDC)

Marine Strategy Forum Lloyd Austin (RSPB), Calum Duncan MCS (alternate)

Offshore Renewable Energy – Project Advisory Group: Sarah Dolman (WDC), Charles Nathan (RSPB)

DECC SEA Steering Group: Richard Luxmoore (NTS)/Sarah Dolman (WDC)

Scottish Coastal Forum: Calum Duncan (MCS)

Scottish Bathing Waters Review Panel: Calum Duncan (MCS)

Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum: Dawn Purchase (MCS), Piers Hart (WWFS).

Scottish Marine Renewables Research Group: Sarah Dolman, (WDC)

Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group - Fisheries: Calum Duncan (MCS)/Sarah Dolman (WDC), WWF & RSPB attend

Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group - Marine Tourism and Recreational Boating: Emilie Devenport (LINK), other members attend

Wave and Tidal Energy Sector Plan, Habitats Regulations Appraisal Steering Group: Sarah Dolman (WDC), Charles Nathan (RSPB)

Ministry of Defence Advisory Forum: Sarah Dolman (WDC) (watching brief only)

Scottish Government Inshore Fisheries Management and Conservation Group (IFMAC): Calum Duncan (MCS)

Marine Scotland – Renewables Sectoral Engagement Strategy: Sarah Dolman, (WDC), Charles Nathan (RSPB Scotland)

The Crown Estate – offshore renewables: Sarah Dolman, (WDC), Charles Nathan (RSPB Scotland)

Planning

Scottish Forum for Planning – Aedan Smith, RSPB

DPEA Stakeholder forum - Clare Symonds, Planning Democracy

Wildlife

SBS Non-Native Species Action Group – Paul Walton RSPB Scotland, Craig Macadam Buglife

SBS Habitats and Species Group – Paul Walton RSPB Scotland, Craig Macadam Buglife

ELUK Brexit Nature Coalition - Paul Walton RSPB Scotland

Woodland

Forestry Commission Customer Reps Group: Jill Aitken, WTS, Sian Williams, RSPB

Scottish Tree Health Advisory Group: Tim Hall WTS, Sian Williams, RSPB (sharing representation)

STHAG sub-group on Sustainable Woodland Management: Tim Hall, WTS, Sian Williams, RSPB

Mackinnon Review Delivery Board: Andrew Campbell (WTS) alternating with Sian Williams, RSPB

Scottish Environment LINK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees (who are also directors of Scottish Environment LINK for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by the Board of trustees on 2nd August 2018 and signed on their behalf by:



Charles Dundas
Chair

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENT LINK

I report on the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2018 which are set out on pages 28 to 42.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (a) to (c) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the financial statements as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.


Basis of independent examiners' statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charitable company and a comparison of the financial statements presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the financial statements.

Independent examiners' statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respects the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
 - to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations;have not been met; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



Emma Marshall CA
Independent Examiner

2 August 2018

Geoghegans
Chartered Accountants
6 St Colme Street
Edinburgh
EH3 6AD

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
for the year ended 31 March 2018**

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	2	113,848	500	114,348	91,225
Charitable activities	3	99,146	141,575	240,721	207,595
Investment income	4	1,119	-	1,119	2,322
Total income		<u>214,113</u>	<u>142,075</u>	<u>356,188</u>	<u>301,142</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	<u>(190,589)</u>	<u>(126,654)</u>	<u>(317,243)</u>	<u>(336,241)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(190,589)</u>	<u>(126,654)</u>	<u>(317,243)</u>	<u>(336,241)</u>
Net income/(expenditure) and movement in funds	6	23,524	15,421	38,945	(35,099)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>237,062</u>	<u>39,891</u>	<u>276,953</u>	<u>312,052</u>
Total funds carried forward	14	<u><u>260,586</u></u>	<u><u>55,312</u></u>	<u><u>315,898</u></u>	<u><u>276,953</u></u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing operations.

Scottish Environment LINK

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 March 2018

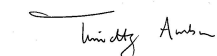
	Notes	2018 £	2017 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	<u>111</u>	<u>931</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	10	51,004	39,096
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>295,562</u>	<u>248,377</u>
		346,566	287,473
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	<u>(30,779)</u>	<u>(11,451)</u>
Net current assets		<u>315,787</u>	<u>276,022</u>
Net assets		<u>315,898</u>	<u>276,953</u>
The funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted funds	12	260,586	237,062
Restricted funds	13	<u>55,312</u>	<u>39,891</u>
		<u>315,898</u>	<u>276,953</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2018 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from the requirements to have an audit under the provisions of section 477 of the Companies Act 2006. No notice has been deposited under the company under section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 requiring an audit to be carried out. The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for:

- (i) Ensuring the charitable company keeps accounting records which comply with sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- (ii) Preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of the financial year, and of its surplus or deficit for that financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small company's regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved and authorised for issue by the Board of trustees on 2nd August 2018 and signed on their behalf by:



Tim Ambrose

Director – Treasurer FCA

Company Registration No: SC250899

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 March 2018**

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historic cost convention and are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and Accounting and Reporting by Charities – Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 (as updated through update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and the Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

Scottish Environmental Link meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Income

Income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charitable company is entitled to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Donations, legacies and similar incoming resources are included in the period in which they are receivable, which is when the charitable company becomes entitled to the resource.

Income from charitable activities includes grant income which is recognised when the charitable company has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grant have been met, it is probable the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. It also includes membership income which is recognised over the period to which the membership relates.

Investment income relates to bank interest which is recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably; this is normally upon notification of the interest payable by the bank.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs relating to the category.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes costs incurred in supporting the charitable company in meeting its objectives. It comprises both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. Support costs are allocated between governance costs and other support costs. Governance costs comprise these costs including the public accountability of the charitable company and therefore include the cost of independent examination.

Other support costs relate to the administrative costs of managing the charitable company.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the Year Ended 31 March 2018**

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset evenly over its expected useful life, as follows :

Fittings and equipment - 33% straight line

Minor fixed asset additions costing less than £250 are written off in the year of acquisition.

Debtors

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

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charitable company has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured reliably.

Financial instruments

The charitable company has only financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Pensions

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for the benefit of its employees. Contributions are charged in the statement of financial activities as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme.

As a charity, Scottish Environment LINK is exempt from tax on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charitable company.

Operating Leases

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company. Where designated, these are unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for specific future purposes or projects. Restricted funds are funds subject to specific conditions imposed by the donors.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 March 2018

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Donations				
Scottish Government	37,725	-	37,725	37,725
Scottish National Heritage	50,500	-	50,500	50,500
William Grant Foundation	20,000	-	20,000	-
Craignish Trust	3,000	-	3,000	3,000
Other donations	2,623	500	3,123	-
	<u>113,848</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>114,348</u>	<u>91,225</u>

Income from donations and legacies in the year was £114,348 (2017: £91,225) of which £113,848 was unrestricted (2017: £91,225 unrestricted) and £500 (2017: £Nil) was restricted.

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Projects				
Friends Provident Foundation	-	-	-	29,300
John Ellerman Foundation	-	50,000	50,000	-
Historic Scotland	-	-	-	5,000
Calor Gas	-	-	-	5,000
WWF UK	-	3,000	3,000	55,695
Marine MPA Fighting Fund	-	3,709	3,709	4,360
Clydesdale Bank	-	-	-	5,000
Sea Scotland Conference	-	11,404	11,404	6,261
EEB	-	55,600	55,600	-
Brexit Communications	-	2,000	2,000	-
Food & Farming Workshop	-	7,847	7,847	-
Other project income including from member bodies	719	8,015	8,734	5,949
Other income				
Subscriptions – member bodies	89,555	-	89,555	83,162
Subscriptions – organisational and business supporters	6,500	-	6,500	6,500
Rental income	1,010	-	1,010	1,105
Other income	1,362	-	1,362	263
	<u>99,146</u>	<u>141,575</u>	<u>240,721</u>	<u>207,595</u>

Income from charitable activities in the year was £240,721 (2017: £207,595) of which £99,146 (2017: £93,700) was unrestricted and £141,575 (2017: £113,895) was restricted.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 March 2018

4 Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Interest on cash deposits	1,119	-	1,119	2,322

Investment income in the current and the previous year was unrestricted.

5 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Basis of allocation	2018 £	2017 £
Direct costs			
Employment costs (note 7)	Direct	187,022	230,351
Project expenditure	Direct	82,370	52,653
Other supporting costs	Direct	11,930	13,896
Establishment costs	Direct	31,751	33,455
Depreciation	Direct	820	2,655
Governance costs: Independent examiners' fee	Direct	3,350	3,231
		<u>317,243</u>	<u>336,241</u>

Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £317,243 (2017: £336,241) of which £190,589 (2017: £194,314) was unrestricted and £126,654 (2017: £141,927) was restricted.

6 Net income/(expenditure)

	2018 £	2017 £
<i>This is stated after charging :</i>		
Independent examiners' fee (net)	2,791	2,692
Depreciation	820	2,655

7 Staff costs and numbers

	2018 £	2017 £
Salaries	162,624	199,976
Social security costs	11,206	15,786
Pension costs	13,192	14,589
	<u>187,022</u>	<u>230,351</u>

Average number of employees:

Core	6	5
Project	2	4
	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 March 2018

7 Staff costs and numbers (continued)

No employee received emoluments greater than £60,000 in the year (2017: None).

The total amount of employee benefits received by key management personnel is £41,831 (2017: £40,077). The key management personnel are considered to be the trustees and the Chief Officer.

During the year a total of £68 (2017: £Nil) was paid to one trustee (2017: none) in respect of reimbursement of travel, subsistence and other business related expenses. None of the trustees received any remuneration during the period.

8 Pension scheme

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension charge for the period represents contributions payable by the charitable company to the scheme and amounted to £13,192 (2017: £14,589). An amount of £1,953 (2017: £Nil) was included within creditors at the year end.

9 Tangible fixed assets

Fixtures,
fittings &
Equipment

Cost

At 1 April 2017	14,158
Disposals	(650)
	<hr/>
At 31 March 2018	13,508

Depreciation

At 1 April 2017	13,227
Charge	820
Disposals	(650)
	<hr/>
At 31 March 2018	13,397

Net Book Value

At 31 March 2018	<hr/> <hr/> 111
At 31 March 2017	<hr/> <hr/> 931

10 Debtors

	2018	2017
	£	£
Trade debtors	28,106	7,753
Prepayments and accrued income	2,898	3,091
Other debtors	20,000	28,252
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	51,004	39,096
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Scottish Environment LINK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

11	Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year				2018	2017
					£	£
	Trade creditors				17,756	941
	Taxation and social security costs				3,900	3,960
	Pension fund				1,953	-
	Other creditors				1,638	-
	Accruals				5,532	6,550
					<u>30,779</u>	<u>11,451</u>
12	Unrestricted funds					
	2017/18	At 1 April	Income	Expenditure	Transfer	At 31 March
		£	£	£	£	£
	General funds	<u>234,809</u>	<u>213,394</u>	<u>(186,617)</u>	<u>(9,400)</u>	<u>252,186</u>
	Designated funds:					
	LINK Liaison	-	719	(719)	-	-
	Legal Strategy	1,253	-	(2,253)	1,000	-
	Food and farming	-	-	-	4,000	4,000
	Brexit Communications	-	-	-	4,400	4,400
	Hilltracks	1,000	-	(1,000)	-	-
		<u>2,253</u>	<u>719</u>	<u>(3,972)</u>	<u>9,400</u>	<u>8,400</u>
	Total unrestricted funds	<u>237,062</u>	<u>214,113</u>	<u>(190,589)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>260,586</u>
	2016/17	At 1 April	Income	Expenditure	Transfer	At 31 March
		£	£	£	£	£
	General funds	<u>243,126</u>	<u>178,876</u>	<u>(184,703)</u>	<u>(2,490)</u>	<u>234,809</u>
	Designated funds:					
	Scottish Food Coalition	-	1,800	(1,800)	-	-
	Local Links trial	1,003	-	(1,258)	255	-
	LINK Liaison	-	180	(180)	-	-
	Deer Subgroup	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
	Legal Strategy	-	1,600	(347)	-	1,253
	LINK Congress 2016	-	2,491	(4,726)	2,235	-
	Governance Rights of Appeal	-	300	(300)	-	-
	Hilltracks	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
		<u>1,003</u>	<u>8,371</u>	<u>(9,611)</u>	<u>2,490</u>	<u>2,253</u>
	Total unrestricted funds	<u>244,129</u>	<u>187,247</u>	<u>(194,314)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>237,062</u>

Scottish Environment LINK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

12 Unrestricted funds (continued)

Designated funds represent funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the Board for specific purposes.

LINK liaison

Links Liaison – The regular contact and communication between secretariats of the four Link networks across the UK, allowing exchange of information and good practice, and of advice on issues in common. This includes a joint conference held every two years in a different part of the UK; English LINK will host the next conference in 2018 in London (in October). The 4 Links continue to demonstrate broad support for federally approached, collective effort on environmental issues needing a UK-wide perspective. Joint work is badged as ‘Environment Links UK’ and informed by a joint strategy and memo of understanding.

Legal Strategy

Scottish Environment LINK Legal Strategy Subgroup received funding for production of a prospectus to put before potential funders and partners, covering

- The case for an Environmental Rights Centre – building on and refining the thinking set out in context and vision
- What an Environmental Rights Centre could do – developing options from seminar workshops
- How it could be structured and governed – developing options from seminar workshops
- How it could be financed both initially and longer term – developing options from seminar workshops, and outlining a business plan for these
- Potential partners – explore options for potential partnerships with key stakeholders and academic institutions
- How it could be implemented – setting out potential phases for roll out.

This culminated in the publication in March 2018 of a study on the feasibility of an environmental rights centre for Scotland, which LINK commissioned from Dr Ben Christman. The report is available online at [Report on the feasibility of an environmental rights centre Scotland](#) with [Press Release](#).

This project was jointly funded from LINK’s Discretionary project fund, and contributions from RSPB Scotland, Friends of the Earth Scotland and WWF Scotland.

Food & Farming Research and Event

LINK’s Food and Farming Subgroup received support to produce a joint position paper on a future farming and rural land use policy, through the organisation of a workshop bringing together stakeholders from across the rural sector with the aim to find common ground between LINK and both likely and unlikely partners. The overall aim is to seek to influence Scottish Government’s policy on future farming and land use. Funding was provided by the LINK Discretionary project fund, Scottish Land and Estates, RSPB Scotland, the Soil Association and the National Trust for Scotland.

Further funding was subsequently made available to undertake Polling on opinion of farm/rural support, to provide LINK with the intelligence on public opinion to inform and support campaigning work on greener farm support post 2020. This funding was provided by the LINK Discretionary project fund and RSPB Scotland.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

12 Unrestricted funds (continued)

Brexit Communications

A Brexit Comms Budget is being applied to run a comms campaign over a period of 6-9 months during 2018 to highlight the environment in the context of Brexit. Through a series of actions focusing on proactive media stories and direct public engagement (such as e-actions) the initiative will focus on mobilizing people living in Scotland, beyond members of LINK member organisations. The campaign will focus on accentuating the positive environmental outcomes we have seen in Scotland and asking people to support that these protections are maintained and enhanced as the UK leaves the EU. Work will combine the use of images of (iconic) Scottish species and habitats but also address issues such as water and air pollution. The campaign will be developed based on member input and with the expert support of a comms freelancer. The campaign will be coordinated by a small steering group on behalf of LINK's Brexit Subgroup and the work is jointly funded through LINK's Discretionary project fund, RSPB, WWF Scotland and the Woodland Trust.

Hilltracks

The LINK Hilltracks group continues to believe that full planning control is needed to bring greater measures of environmental and landscape protection and a measure of public oversight to the construction of tracks in upland areas. Funding was secured in 2017 from the LINK Discretionary project fund, National Trust for Scotland, Scottish Wild Land Group, Ramblers, RSPB, North East Mountain Trust, The Scottish Mountaineering Council and the British Mountaineering Council to employ a consultant, Mel Nichol, for 12 months (one day per week) on this project. Mel collated a portfolio of evidence, gathered as a result of volunteer input and communications with stakeholders, and carried out further research which culminated in a final report (to be published during 2018) encompassing a review of the current system of prior notifications for hilltrack construction across Scotland. The ultimate aim of this project is to bring Hilltracks into the planning system such that full applications must be lodged in order to construct one, so there is some measure of public scrutiny regarding purpose, construction standards, natural heritage matters and so on.

Scottish Food Coalition

With support from LINK Board, LINK's Food and Farming Subgroup employed a part-time Intern, Bella Crowe, to help to establish the Scottish Food Coalition, a civil society coalition made up of established organisations working on food-related issues including agriculture and environment, poverty, health, workers' rights, food production and animal welfare. LINK is funding Bella's post initially for a 9 month period, while the Coalition seeks continuation funding (outwith LINK) to continue this work into the future.

Local Links trial

LINK Local is a new online address book for Scotland's local environment community groups. It has been established to link up Scotland's campaigning and local action groups interested in environmental issues. This includes a wide range of topics from localising food production, conserving wildlife, to cleaning and greening our energy and transport systems. Initial funding approved by LINK Board supported development of the website and employment of an Intern last year for 3 months to launch the initiative and raise awareness. The trial of LINK Local will be evaluated in the forthcoming year and if it proves valuable, further long term funding will be sought to maintain it as a service.

Scottish Environment LINK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

12 Unrestricted funds (continued)

Deer Subgroup

LINK Discretionary Project Fund (DPF) funding (along with some funding from members) funded the LINK Deer subgroup in the production of an advocacy document to support the forthcoming work around the publication of the SNH Deer Management Review.

LINK Congress 2016

LINK's annual conference for members and other sectors with which we work is designed to build community within the network. Congress is used to advance debate around specific themes. The 2016 Congress was held in Glasgow on 21 November and considered – Scotland, UK, International: Keeping the environment on the political agenda during the Brexit years. A report is available on our website [here](#).

Governance Rights of Appeal

The LINK Planning group secured funding from the LINK DPF for a Participatory Enquiry into Balanced Rights of Appeal in Planning

13 Restricted funds

2017/18	At 1 April £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March £
Marine	36,647	65,613	(50,746)	51,514
Flourishing Scotland	2,644	-	(2,644)	-
Food and Farming	-	7,847	(7,847)	-
Brexit Communications	-	2,000	-	2,000
EEB 2017 Conference	-	55,600	(55,264)	336
Species Champion	-	615	(615)	-
Legal Strategy	-	6,000	(6,000)	-
Hilltracks	600	4,400	(3,538)	1,462
	<u>39,891</u>	<u>142,075</u>	<u>(126,654)</u>	<u>55,312</u>
2016/17	At 1 April £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March £
Marine	65,923	66,316	(95,592)	36,647
Flourishing Scotland	2,000	30,550	(29,906)	2,644
Scottish Environment Week	-	9,079	(9,079)	-
Species Champion	-	7,350	(7,350)	-
Hilltracks	-	600	-	600
	<u>67,923</u>	<u>113,895</u>	<u>(141,927)</u>	<u>39,891</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

13 Restricted funds (continued)

The purpose of each restricted fund is as follows:

Marine

Marine Phase 4 – WWF Scotland funded a fourth phase of this project, ultimately employing 1 FTE dedicated project post which allowed the project to run to November 2017. Further funding was by then secured from the John Ellerman Foundation to allow the project to continue for a further 2 years at a capacity of 1.2FTE staff support. Earlier funding for the Marine project from 2007 afforded two FTE dedicated project staff posts to support LINK's Marine Group up to the end of Phase 3. The Marine Group successfully campaigned in these early years for a Marine (Scotland) Act, which was secured and received Royal Assent 10th March 2010. To properly protect Scotland's marine wildlife, make our seas resilient to climate change and, where appropriate, recover damaged areas, the Act must be well-implemented and the Marine Group's focus now is on ensuring that the Act is fully implemented in terms of marine protection, planning and management.

Flourishing Scotland

This was a three-year project running from 2014 to 2016 providing capacity to enhance LINK members' understanding of and ability to engage with the debate on the economics of sustainable development. The main focus was around appropriate measures of success for Scotland, including environmental and social wellbeing, alongside economic growth and GDP, and seeking to influence relevant political strategy and development of national policy. Due to a small underspend throughout the life of the project, LINK was able to continue this project to May 2017.

Food & Farming Research and Event

LINK's Food and Farming Subgroup received support to produce a joint position paper on a future farming and rural land use policy, through the organisation of a workshop bringing together stakeholders from across the rural sector with the aim to find common ground between LINK and both likely and unlikely partners. The overall aim is to seek to influence Scottish Government's policy on future farming and land use. Funding was provided by the LINK Discretionary project fund, Scottish Land and Estates, RSPB Scotland, the Soil Association and the National Trust for Scotland.

Further funding was subsequently made available to undertake Polling on opinion of farm/rural support, to provide LINK with the intelligence on public opinion to inform and support campaigning work on greener farm support post 2020. This funding was provided by the LINK Discretionary project fund and RSPB Scotland.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

13 Restricted funds (continued)

Brexit Communications

A Brexit Comms Budget is being applied to run a comms campaign over a period of 6-9 months during 2018 to highlight the environment in the context of Brexit. Through a series of actions focusing on proactive media stories and direct public engagement (such as e-actions) the initiative will focus on mobilizing people living in Scotland, beyond members of LINK member organisations. The campaign will focus on accentuating the positive environmental outcomes we have seen in Scotland and asking people to support that these protections are maintained and enhanced as the UK leaves the EU. Work will combine the use of images of (iconic) Scottish species and habitats but also address issues such as water and air pollution. The campaign will be developed based on member input and with the expert support of a comms freelancer. The campaign will be coordinated by a small steering group on behalf of LINK's Brexit Subgroup and the work is jointly funded through LINK's Discretionary project fund, RSPB, WWF Scotland and the Woodland Trust.

European Environmental Bureau (EEB) 2017 Annual Conference

LINK was invited in winter 2015/16 to co-host the 2017 annual conference of the EEB of which LINK is member. The 2017 conference was the second to be held outside Brussels. Importantly, the event took place at a critical time for Scotland, the UK and the EU, as discussions and options regarding Scotland's and the UK's future relationship with the EU are gathering pace. The conference provided Scotland with an excellent opportunity to showcase its credentials at a European level, demonstrate our success in progressing EU environmental policy particularly on conservation and biodiversity as well as climate change, marine, agriculture and the circular economy. The event was also a platform for Scottish Government, its agencies, and the wider policy community to explore with UK and EU stakeholders how we can continue to pursue ambitious environmental policy in a time of change, to benefit Scotland and the EU. This project was jointly funded by the EEB, LINK, Scottish Government's Environment and Climate Directorates, SEPA, SNH, Historic Environment Scotland, The European Commission office Edinburgh and SEFARI.

Species Champions

This LINK initiative was first launched in 2013, and by 2016 a parliamentary majority (76 MSPs) championed 94 Scottish species. Following the elections in May 2016, Species Champions 2020 was re-launched in the new Scottish Parliament in September. It has inspired similar programmes in [Wales](#), [Northern Ireland](#) and [England](#) as well as Scottish local authorities. Species Champions asks Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to lend political support to the protection of Scotland's threatened wildlife by becoming 'Species Champions'; over 75% of MSPs are now Species Champions with 100 MSPs now Champions of one or more species. The project is supported by Calum Langdale LINK's Species Champions Intern, who joined LINK in November 2017.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2018

13 Restricted funds (continued)

Legal Strategy

Scottish Environment LINK Legal Strategy Subgroup received funding for production of a prospectus to put before potential funders and partners, covering

- The case for an Environmental Rights Centre – building on and refining the thinking set out in context and vision
- What an Environmental Rights Centre could do – developing options from seminar workshops
- How it could be structured and governed – developing options from seminar workshops
- How it could be financed both initially and longer term – developing options from seminar workshops, and outlining a business plan for these
- Potential partners – explore options for potential partnerships with key stakeholders and academic institutions
- How it could be implemented – setting out potential phases for roll out.

This culminated in the publication in March 2018 of a study on the feasibility of an environmental rights centre for Scotland, which LINK commissioned from Dr Ben Christman. The report is available online at [Report on the feasibility of an environmental rights centre Scotland](#) with [Press Release](#).

This project was jointly funded from LINK's Discretionary project fund, and contributions from RSPB Scotland, Friends of the Earth Scotland and WWF Scotland.

Hilltracks

The LINK Hilltracks group continues to believe that full planning control is needed to bring greater measures of environmental and landscape protection and a measure of public oversight to the construction of tracks in upland areas. Funding was secured in 2017 from the LINK Discretionary project fund, National Trust for Scotland, Scottish Wild Land Group, Ramblers, RSPB, North East Mountain Trust, The Scottish Mountaineering Council and the British Mountaineering Council to employ a consultant, Mel Nichol, for 12 months (one day per week) on this project. Mel collated a portfolio of evidence, gathered as a result of volunteer input and communications with stakeholders, and carried out further research which culminated in a final report (to be published during 2018) encompassing a review of the current system of prior notifications for hilltrack construction across Scotland. The ultimate aim of this project is to bring Hilltracks into the planning system such that full applications must be lodged in order to construct one, so there is some measure of public scrutiny regarding purpose, construction standards, natural heritage matters and so on.

Scottish Environment Week

Also known (in every alternate year) as Scottish Environment Festival, this is a programme of events organised by LINK and hosted mainly in Holyrood. It aims to profile the work of member organisations with MSPs and to showcase sustainable development. The 2017 theme was Environmental Futures to highlight how we want Scotland to take sustainable actions now to safeguard the future of all who share this country. The Week highlighted how sustainable planning, education, science and art, all have a valuable role to play.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 March 2018

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2018 £
Tangible fixed assets	111	-	111
Net current assets	<u>260,475</u>	<u>55,312</u>	<u>315,787</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2018	<u><u>260,586</u></u>	<u><u>55,312</u></u>	<u><u>315,898</u></u>

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2017 £
Tangible fixed assets	931	-	931
Current assets	236,131	39,891	236,022
Net assets at 31 March 2017	<u><u>237,062</u></u>	<u><u>39,891</u></u>	<u><u>276,963</u></u>

15 Operating lease commitments

	Buildings	
	2018 £	2017 £
Total commitments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows :		
Expiry date:		
Within one year	11,450	10,650
Between one and five years	<u>10,800</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><u>22,250</u></u>	<u><u>10,650</u></u>

16 Related party transactions

During the year the charity received subscriptions from eleven (2017: eight) organisations associated with eleven (2017: eight) of the charitable company's trustees amounting to £46,783 (2017: £34,089). Other income was also received from five (2017: three) of the organisations totalling £6,590 (2017: £56,124). Payments of £38 (2017: £1,000) were paid to organisations associated with one trustee (2017: one) in the year.