

Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee
and financial statements

31 March 2023

Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee and financial statements

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Swansea Environmental Forum

Legal and administrative information

Executive Committee	A Baharie	Treasurer
	S Bolchover	
	H Beharrell	
	J Childs	
	R Corcoran	
	I Davies	
	H Grey	
	J Goddard	
	D Hill	Joint Chairperson
	C Howell	
	P Jones	
	T Maddocks	
	C O'Brien	
	H Osborn	Joint Chairperson
	J Sayce	
	M Sherwood	
	H Smith	
	J Wagstaff	

Secretary	P McDonnell
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Principal address	c/o The Environment Centre Pier Street Swansea SA1 1RY
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Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 34 The Kingsway Swansea SA1 5LG
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Independent examiner	Martin Waterworth Martin Waterworth Limited Bronwylfa Llangunnor Road Carmarthen SA31 2PB
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Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee presents its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Executive Committee has adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard FRS 102 (effective 1 January 2019).

Objects and activities

Swansea Environmental Forum (“SEF”) is established as an unincorporated association under a Constitution. Although not a registered charity the Forum operates along charitable lines.

The purpose of SEF is to promote and facilitate environmental sustainability. In order to achieve this SEF will strive to:

- influence policy and action;
- drive behaviour change;
- encourage and support partnership working;
- develop and support environmental projects and innovation;
- provide expertise, collate evidence and highlight priority areas for action.

The principal activities of the association at present are to operate as Swansea’s strategic environmental partnership and to run projects, which aim to make a significant and long-lasting contribution to changing Swansea into a more sustainable place to live, work and visit and developing more environmentally sustainable communities.

Organisational structure

The policy and general management of the affairs of the association are directed by an Executive Committee. Meetings of the Committee take place not less than four times a year. The Committee may appoint such special or standing committees as it deems necessary.

The Forum employs a SEF Coordinator, Philip McDonnell, and a Community Green Spaces Project Officer, Josh Pike, on a contract basis. A Contracts Group, made up of SEF Executive Committee members, oversees contracted work, including a Service Level Agreement with PMDevelopments (Philip McDonnell) relating to SEF coordination, strategy and partnership work, project management, secretariat functions and financial management. The Low Carbon Swansea Bay project is overseen by a Project Board made up of members of the SEF Executive Committee and the Low Carbon Swansea Bay network. The Community Green Spaces project is overseen by a Working Group made of SEF Executive Committee members and project partners.

Subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, membership of the Forum is open to individuals and voluntary or other non-profit distributing organisations with an interest in furthering the work of the association. For-profit organisations and individuals under 18 years old can become non-voting associates.

Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee (*continued*)

Achievements and performance

Strategic and Partnership Work

2022-23 was a year of transition as core funding from Swansea Council came to an end in March 2022. This had a significant impact on SEF's capacity to maintain its core functions e.g. to collaborate with a wide range of organisations, actively promote and support partnership working and play an active role in strategic activities. The resources to support this type of work primarily came from unrestricted funds and were significantly reduced from previous years.

However, the SEF Coordinator and other SEF representatives did continue to attend meetings and supporting events of several other networks and forums such as Swansea Local Nature Partnership, Swansea Climate Action Network, the Bwyd Abertawe food partnership, Swansea Community Growing Network and Swansea Fair Trade Forum. The SEF Coordinator also continued to represent SEF on the Swansea Third Sector (Compact) Liaison Group and the national Climate Cymru Steering Group. Most of these activities were undertaken on a voluntary basis.

The SEF Coordinator maintained the Swansea Built Heritage Group, though at a very low level, and organised a successful meeting of the group in September 2022 (the first since 2020) which included updates from Swansea Council and heritage related projects.

SEF continued to work closely with NRW to support the environment strand of the Swansea Wellbeing Plan. In the early part of the year, this involved continuing to convene and chair the PSBs Working with Nature Task Group and helping to complete the second Wellbeing Assessment. Later in the year, work began on the development of a new Swansea Wellbeing Plan for the next five years. SEF joined the editorial team overseeing the process and worked with NRW and others on drafting the wording for the new climate change and nature recovery wellbeing objective. SEF also joined the Climate Change and Nature Action Signatories Group, which would eventually replace the Working with Nature Task Group.

Climate Action and Nature Recovery Programme

SEF continued to focus on key elements of its Climate Action and Nature Recovery programme with a particular emphasis on the need to transform the food, transport and energy systems in order to tackle the climate and nature emergencies, as highlighted by NRW's SoNaRR report.

Targeting Transport – SEF collaborated with Swansea CVS, 4theRegion and other partners to deliver the Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions project, funded through the Community Renewal Fund. The SEF Coordinator chaired the project coordination meetings, led on the creation of a comprehensive portfolio of practical guides and project case studies related to community-led transport themes, played an active role in organising a number of community engagement events, and supported several pilot projects that received funding under the scheme.

SEF also continued to play a coordinating role for the Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter project, in partnership with Public Health Wales and Swansea University. This included collating quarterly progress reports from the 14 charter partners and supporting them to progress their charter commitments – both through one-to-one mentoring sessions and the Swansea Bay Travel Planning Group meetings.

The SEF Coordinator continued to represent SEF on the South West Wales Community Rail Network Steering Committee, and started to attend Transport for Wales regional meetings (including given a presentation to the meeting in September 2022 on SEF's transport-related activities). We also continued to liaise with 4theRegion, Community Transport Association Wales and others about building on the regional transport conference of the previous year and the Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions project.

Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee *(continued)*

Progress through Partnership – The relationship with Swansea Council changed as we moved to a new funding arrangement – part of a consortium with The Environment Centre on the Council’s Environmental Partners Framework, which came into operation from April 2022. During the year, SEF contributed to four projects under this framework:

- Community Mapping: undertaking a survey of community groups across Swansea about their activities and future interests related to environmental action.
- Community Projects Research: researching examples of good practice from across the UK and beyond in community projects related to environmental action.
- Sustainable Food/Agriculture Activity Position Statement: providing a report for the Council on food, community growing and farming initiatives and partnerships in Swansea.
- Swansea Environmental Events: collating a list of environment related events taking place in Swansea from April to December 2023 for publication on the Council’s website.

Other partnership work included support to NRW and the PSB with the Wellbeing Plan (as outlined above) and support for the Bwyd Abertawe food partnership, which included sitting on the steering group, helping with staff recruitment and organising their presence at the City Centre Conference. We also collaborated with 4theRegion on a regional online food event in April 2022, which followed up the regional food conference in the previous year, and also supported a second regional food conference in January 2023.

Awareness and Engagement – During the year, SEF supported a variety of events and engagement activities to raise awareness with the general public, communities and organisations, working in collaboration with various partners. These included organising or supporting events related to food and transport (outlined above), arranging activities for the Low Carbon Swansea Bay network (see below) and the Swansea Built Heritage Group (above), and compiling the Swansea Environmental Events for Swansea Council under the funding framework (see above). In June 2022, the SEF Coordinator gave a talk to SwanseaCAN about the work of SEF, and helped The CAE with their green schools grants scheme. In July 2022, SEF facilitated a talk on soils and growing food for health, and in February 2023 helped compile the Swansea Fairtrade Fortnight events programme.

Solutions for All – Sadly, due to ongoing issues with the main project partner, the *Solutions for All* online resource was not completed or launched. Despite efforts to find a way forward, the difficult decision was taken to cease work on this project.

Low Carbon Swansea Bay

SEF continued to coordinate the Low Carbon Swansea Bay network which connects organisations from across the public, business and voluntary sectors to share knowledge and promote carbon reduction. Whilst the restrictions experienced in the previous two years came to an end, it remained a challenge to organise in-person events as partners’ workloads seemed to have increased and the switch to online meetings persisted. In May, a second in the series of *Pathways to Net Zero* LCSB events took place – an online webinar focused on Swansea Bay University Health Board and NHS Wales which included an overview of the NHS Wales national decarbonisation strategic delivery plan and an introduction to the SBUHB’s decarbonisation action plan. There were also presentations on a broad selection of SBUHB community and partnership initiatives linked to decarbonisation and the environment. This event was well attended and well received. Attempts to get in-person network events going again were hampered by various delays but in July a short face-to-face session – *LCSB Reconnected* – was arranged with representatives from six member organisations coming together to discuss future LCSB activities/support.

The Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter remained a key focus for LCSB in this year and much time was given to supporting the partners (see above under *Targeting Transport*). The number of paid membership subscriptions returned to pre-pandemic levels reflecting the value members continue to place on the network.

Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee *(continued)*

Swansea Community Green Spaces Project

The Swansea Community Green Spaces Project, managed by SEF in partnership with the Environment Centre, Swansea Council, Swansea CVS and NRW, and delivered by Josh Pike of Summit Good CSA, continued to provide support to a diverse range of community projects and collaborate with various partner organisations. However, project worker time was reduced to less than half that of previous years due to a reduction in the funds available. SEF was also able to help distribute some capital funding to a number of projects, though this again was a lower amount than in the previous year.

During the year, the Green Spaces project connected with almost 50 different groups within Swansea, from “Friends of” groups to commercial farms and CSA’s, supporting 3 types of stakeholders in various ways:

Individuals – including emotional wellbeing, mentoring, technical advice and guidance

Community Groups – practical support, tree planting, crop rotations, capital funding, community engagement

Networks – connecting groups with each other and external support to strengthen the network of green spaces

Examples of groups supported include:

- St Samlet Church in Llansamlet where Josh worked with them to establish a veg bed and show them the fundamentals around sowing seeds, weeding, watering and crucial maintenance to see the space thrive.
- Swansea University’s Tree Planting Society which Josh helped link up with several green spaces throughout the year to plant hedgerows and trees across a range of Swansea’s green spaces, and joined with them on 3 planting days to achieve a winter target of 3,000 trees planted with the students.
- Llangefelach Gardening Group where Josh led a Q&A around horticulture and agriculture for the group’s members, and helped them with advice on establishing their own small green space in the parish grounds.

The Green Spaces Project also helped develop the growing network of CSA’s within Swansea, which included supporting 2 new CSA projects to each secure £10k funding from the National Lottery and assisting them on the ground with initial setup i.e. creating and cultivating suitable beds for growing produce and developing the sites to accommodate volunteers and customers.

In March 2023, the SEF Coordinator and Green Spaces Officer facilitated the distribution of capital funds from Swansea Council to four community projects – Women4Resources (for the Quaker community garden), The Environment Centre, Summit Good CSA and Spring Mills Community Project.

Swansea Environmental Forum

Report of the Executive Committee *(continued)*

Reserves policy

As substantially all the Forum's activities are externally funded, the Executive Committee's policy is to maintain reserves sufficient to enable it to fund basic meeting, administration and governance costs for at least a year and to meet its responsibility to provide redundancy payments to any salaried staff.

Executive Committee

The following were members of the Executive Committee during the year:

P Anderson (until May 2022)
A Baharie
S Bolchover
J Childs
R Corcoran
I Davies
J Goddard
H Grey
D Hill
C Howell
C Lindley (until November 2022)
T Maddocks
C O'Brien
H Osborn
F Rolfe (until December 2022)
J Sayce
M Sherwood
H Smith
J Wagstaff

Members of the Executive Committee are elected at Annual General Meetings of the association, initially for a three-year period. The Committee will appoint a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and other officers as appropriate. This will be reviewed annually. Up to 18 members will be elected from SEF's membership. The elected members can co-opt up to 9 additional committee members to ensure that all the relevant areas of expertise are represented on the Committee. The total should not exceed 27 and not have more than two-thirds of its members from either the public or voluntary sectors.

By order of the Executive Committee

D Hill
Chair Swansea Environmental Forum Executive
04 December 2023

Pier Street
Swansea
SA1 1RY

Independent examiner's report to the Executive Committee of Swansea Environmental Forum

I report on the Executive Committee on my examination of the accounts of Swansea Environmental Forum ("Forum") for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 9 to 12.

Responsibilities and basis of report

Since the Forum operates along charitable lines it has been decided that, although the Forum is not a registered charity, it should prepare its accounts along the lines of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act") and that an independent examination should be undertaken as though the Forum did have formal charitable status.

As such and as the Forum's Executive Committee, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

I report in respect of my examination of the Forum's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with my examination which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Martin Waterworth FCA
Chartered accountant
04 December 2023

Bronwyflfa
Llangunor Road
Carmarthen
SA31 2PB

Swansea Environmental Forum

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income and endowments from:					
Charitable activities	4	4,554	33,081	37,635	45,490
Investment income		-	-	-	-
Total income		<u>4,554</u>	<u>33,081</u>	<u>37,635</u>	<u>45,490</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	-	40,466	40,466	44,797
Governance costs		1,758	-	1,758	1,621
Total expenditure		<u>1,758</u>	<u>40,466</u>	<u>42,224</u>	<u>46,418</u>
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		2,796	(7,385)	(4,589)	(928)
Transfers between funds		(6,624)	6,624	-	-
Total funds brought forward		12,799	2,960	15,759	16,687
Total funds carried forward		<u>8,971</u>	<u>2,199</u>	<u>11,170</u>	<u>15,759</u>

Swansea Environmental Forum

Statement of Financial Position

at 31 March 2023

	<i>Note</i>	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Current assets					
Debtors	6	290		3	
Cash at bank		12,281		17,428	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		12,571		17,431	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
	7	(1,401)		(1,672)	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net assets			11,170		15,759
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Funds					
Unrestricted funds			8,971		12,799
Restricted funds			2,199		2,960
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Total funds			11,170		15,759
			<hr/>		<hr/>

The financial statements were approved by the Executive Committee on 04 December 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:

A Baharie
Treasurer

Swansea Environmental Forum

Notes to the accounts

1 **Basis of accounting**

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102 “Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)”, Financial Reporting Standard 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

2 **Accounting policies**

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material to the association's financial statements:

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are funds available for use at the discretion of the Executive Committee in furtherance of the general objectives of the association. Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors. The costs of administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. Details of the restricted fund are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Grants and other income

Grants and other income are recognized in the Statement of Financial Activities when the association has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognized as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the association to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement 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 costs related to the category.

3 **Staff and other costs**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was nil (2022: nil). No employees received more than £60,000.

No member of the Executive Committee received any remuneration or expenses from the association in the year to 31st March 2023, nor in the previous financial year to 31st March 2022.

The independent examiner's fee of £700 (2022: £700) and other governance costs are shown separately on the Statement of Financial Activities.

Swansea Environmental Forum

Notes to the accounts

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 total £	2022 Total £
<u>SEF Coordination Development and Strategy Work</u>				
Swansea Council Contract	-	1,300	1,300	16,754
Natural Resources Wales contract fee	-	2,900	2,900	1,925
	-	4,200	4,200	18,679
<u>Low Carbon Swansea Bay</u>				
Membership / sponsorships	631	5,679	6,310	4,050
<u>Swansea Community Green Spaces Project</u>				
Swansea Council Contract	-	-	-	8,078
ENRaW Grants via Swansea Council	445	10,050	10,495	12,990
	445	10,050	10,495	21,068
<u>Swansea Climate and Nature Projects</u>				
Swansea Council Contract	-	5,340	5,340	168
	-	5,340	5,340	168
<u>Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions Project</u>				
Community Renewal Fund (via SCVS)	3,303	7,812	11,115	1,500
<u>Unrestricted</u>				
Other fees/ donations	175	-	175	25
	175	-	175	25
Total income from charitable activities	4,554	33,081	37,635	45,490

Swansea Environmental Forum

Notes to the accounts

5 Charitable activities expenditure

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 total £	2022 total £
SEF Coordination Development and Strategy Work	-	10,824	10,824	17,888
Low Carbon Swansea Bay	-	5,740	5,740	4,788
Community Green Spaces Project	-	10,050	10,050	21,153
Climate and Nature Projects	-	5,340	5,340	168
Community-led Sustainable Transport Solutions Project	-	8,512	8,512	800
Total charitable expenditure	-	40,466	40,466	44,797

6 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Other debtors & prepayments	<u>290</u>	<u>3</u>

7 Creditors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors & accruals	<u>1,401</u>	<u>1,672</u>