Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru | Wales Environment Link

Members' Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to Wales Environment Link. This handbook sets out all the information an organisation needs to make the most of its membership of the network.

Wales Environment Link (WEL) is a network of environmental, countryside and heritage NGOs with an all-Wales remit. We support and build the capacity of our members by providing tailored information and coordinating opportunities for them to work together. WEL is a respected intermediary body, connecting environmental NGOs with the Welsh Government.

Membership provides an avenue for combined action, a forum for discussion where your views count, and an opportunity to present a united front on those key issues common to eNGOs. It also provides access to a network of contacts, support and joint working opportunities.

Our general principles for collective working are:

- WEL members engage with the Welsh Government and other bodies primarily on issues of over-riding importance to the network as a whole;
- WEL staff support the work of the members – however, they are not Wales Environment Link, the members are;
- Members will get out of Wales Environment Link what they put into it; and
- WEL operates by consensus where possible.

WEL's organisational structure is set out in Annex I of this document.

WEL Staff

Karen Whitfield, Director



Karen has worked for WEL since 2009, supporting our working groups to work collaboratively on the issues that are important to them, building consensus and trust amongst environmental NGOs. As WEL Director, Karen provides strategic oversight of the organisation, staff management and organisational development, as well as representing the network at stakeholder meetings and advocating WEL policies to key decision makers.

Karen has a BA in English Literature, an MSc in Publishing and a BSc in Environmental Studies. She has previously worked for the Senedd Research Service Environment Team and the Royal Bank of Scotland's Market Research Team.

Susan Evans, Business Manager



Sue started working for WEL in 2005, initially as full-time Director, developing our capacity and over-seeing much change in the way the network operates and the services it provides. She moved to working part-time alongside other commitments in more recent years and was pleased to take up the new post of Business Manager for WEL in 2024. Sue is responsible for financial and operational management, fundraising and areas of organisational governance.

Sue has a BSc in Environmental Biology and an MSc in Protected Landscape Management, both from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. She held posts at Keep Wales Tidy, Student Community Action Cymru and the WWF English Regions Team before returning to Wales to work for WEL.

Liz Smith, Advocacy and Policy Lead



Liz Smith started working as a Policy Officer for WEL in November 2016, supporting WEL's working groups to work collaboratively on the issues that are important to them. She took on leading on advocacy in 2021, coordinating campaigns and events, based on members' priorities. In 2024 she was promoted to Advocacy and Policy Lead.

Prior to that, she acted as Head of Monitoring at Newsdirect Wales, a political monitoring company that specialises in live reporting of Assembly proceedings, as well as Westminster business. Her background is in working for Labour MPs in Parliament and AMs in the Assembly. In Spring 2016, she undertook a brief secondment with the Wales Stronger In campaign. In her spare time, she undertakes occasional freelance work in political analysis with BBC Wales. She ran a housing campaign for 6 years called Let Down in Wales, calling for better rights for renters and volunteers in local community gardens.

Tessa Marshall, Policy Officer



Tessa joined WEL as a Policy Officer in August 2024 and is supporting the work of our policy groups. Tessa completed her LLM in the Legal and Political Aspects of International Affairs in 2021 and committed to delivering positive change for people and nature by taking part in the Equal Power Equal Voice Programme in 2022-23.

Tessa has also been active in communities in Cardiff and across Wales for over 10 years, leading the delivery of grassroots campaigns, advocacy, and policy support for community groups and leading charities including Save the Northern Meadows, WWF Cymru, and Breast Cancer Now.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

A more detailed version of this policy is contained with the WEL staff handbook, giving clear guidance to staff on the policy's application. Below is a summarised version of the full policy, focusing on the way that WEL works with members.

Purpose

This policy lays out Wales Environment Link's (WEL's) commitment and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

WEL is committed to ensuring and providing equality of opportunity, access, service and outcomes for all staff, volunteers, trainees, apprentices, interns, work placements, trustees, members, and beneficiaries. We will also work with contractors and third parties to maximise their contribution to equality of opportunity, access, service, and outcomes.

We are committed to creating an organisational culture that respects and values people from all sections of society, and the contribution that each individual can make. We will act positively to ensure equality of opportunity, access, service, and outcomes for everyone. We are committed wherever practicable to achieving and maintaining a workforce that reflects the local community in which we operate. We will create a culture that encourages and supports all individuals to develop and reach their full potential, and recognise that in the interests of equity, some individuals may need more support to achieve equality of opportunity, access, service or outcomes. We will make sure that dignity, equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of all aspects of our work. We will ensure that these objectives are fundamental to all our activities and underpin our policies, procedures and operating practices.

Aims and principles

We will:

- value and respect every individual we interact with;
- recognise that many people have complex identities made up of multiple characteristics. We will value and celebrate that diversity;
- make sure that all policies and practices take full account of the different requirements, needs, and views of all individuals and communities;
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and all forms of bullying in our organisation and work;

- make sure that employment and volunteering roles are accessible to and inclusive of all communities and individuals;
- take positive action to address under-representation in our workforce, including as volunteers and on our board;
- provide a supportive working environment for our employees, volunteers, temporary workers, students and Trustees taking full account of each individual's background and requirements;
- actively support groups of individuals who may experience discrimination to achieve their full potential;
- train our staff, volunteers and trustees in all areas of equality, diversity and inclusion and raise awareness and understanding of all communities and groups;
- make sure that all our staff, volunteers and trustees are fully committed to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion and are aware of their responsibilities;
- promote and improve equality of opportunity, access, service and outcomes;
- foster good relations between different groups of people and communities;
- take action to enforce our zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation;
- consider equality, diversity and inclusion in our strategic decisions and planning processes;
- consider equality, diversity and inclusion in all our day-to-day business and activities;
- consider and integrate equality, diversity and inclusion in our purchasing and procurement processes;
- reach out and engage seldom heard voices and all communities;
- actively widen participation of under-represented groups in our work;
- seek to identify the requirements of groups that experience discrimination and disadvantage and take action to address any barriers and needs;
- recognise that individuals' needs, wishes, and experiences vary and that a flexible approach is needed to ensure full participation and access to all our work and activities;

- monitor and evaluate this and all our policies through the lens of equality, diversity, inclusion, dignity and respect and make changes whenever necessary.

This policy is also underpinned by our values including:

- Dignity
- Respect
- Inclusion
- Equality
- Fairness
- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Empowerment
- Coproduction

Responsibilities

Directors
The directors have overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and are responsible for integrating it into recruitment and selection, staff supervision and management, staff support and development, staff promotion, team practices, strategic planning, and in WEL projects, services and work. The directors are the day-to-day point of contact in relation to this policy and its implementation. They are responsible for bringing this policy and related procedures to the attention of all employees, workers, volunteers, interns, work placements, apprentices and trainees and making sure they understand it.

The directors will work with the Board to respond promptly and effectively to any queries or concerns raised in relation to this policy and its implementation. The directors will report on effective implementation of this policy to the Board. These reports will include effectiveness, performance, and operation of the policy and procedures and progress against implementation.

Board of Trustees
The Board of Trustees is responsible for oversight and setting targets in relation to services or areas of work in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Board of Trustees will also implement this policy in relation to recruiting, developing and supporting Board members, and in their oversight role in relation to all aspects of WEL's work.

All staff
All employees, workers, volunteers, interns, work placements, apprentices and trainees are responsible for making sure that this policy is implemented in their day-to-day work.

They are also responsible for helping to create an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where there is equality of opportunity, access, service, and outcome.

Beneficiaries, members, and contractors (third parties)
All beneficiaries, members and contractors must treat staff and other beneficiaries, members, and contractors with dignity and respect at all times. All beneficiaries, members and contractors are responsible for:

- not victimising, intimidating, harassing, abusing, or bullying any staff member, member, or beneficiary for any reason;
- not suggesting or causing others to behave in discriminatory or non-inclusive ways;
- reporting any discriminatory acts or practices;
- treating everyone they meet with dignity and respect; and
- acting in non-discriminatory and inclusive ways towards staff and service users at all times.

Implementing equality, diversity and inclusion

WEL is committed to promoting equality and diversity throughout the organisation. Members can expect that we will:

- ensure equality of opportunity, access, treatment and outcomes for all individuals in the provision of employment of staff, volunteers and board members and throughout our activities;
- recognise that to achieve equality of opportunity, the concept of equity is important: we will ensure that where individuals need additional support to achieve their goals, they will receive it;
- ensure that no person applying to work or volunteer for WEL; or to access WEL's work is treated less favourably in the grounds of their gender, gender identity or expression, race, class, colour, racial group, ethnicity, marital status, sexual orientation, age, relationship status, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief or physical or mental impairment;

- ensure all staff, volunteers and board members have equal opportunity, access, treatment and outcomes to training and development and that our training and development is inclusive and accessible;
- actively assist groups that experience disadvantages to achieve their full potential in an inclusive working / learning / social environment when accessing WEL's work or services;
- seek to identify the requirements of groups that experience disadvantage in achieving an inclusive working / learning / social environment within WEL;
- actively seek to widen participation to enable all persons from diverse ethnic backgrounds and other characteristics to access our work;
- actively pursue its commitment to equality and diversity in the composition of both its staff and its members;
- promote and understand the principles and practices of equity, equality, justice and integration;
- identify and remove practices and procedures which may result in unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation or disadvantage for any community;
- promote equality of opportunity, access, service, experience and outcomes;
- promote good race relations between people from diverse ethnic backgrounds;
- promote good relations between people from the full diversity of protected characteristics and communities;
- develop partnerships with community groups representing groups under-represented or disadvantaged in our workplace or society;
- recognise that individuals' requirements, wishes, and experiences vary and that a flexible approach is required to ensure full participation and access to all its activities;

We are committed to a programme of action to put this policy into practice and to promote and advance equality, diversity and inclusion for everyone. WEL's equality, diversity, and inclusion action plan has been published separately. It will be reviewed and updated at least every 2 years.

Monitoring outcomes and review

WEL is committed to making sure that we are achieving equality, diversity and inclusion in practice. We are committed to measuring progress and continually improving.

To achieve this, we will measure and report to the Board:

- data in relation to recruitment, progression or promotion, training and development, disciplinaries and grievances, complaints and concerns, and leavers in relation to all protected and other characteristics in relation to staff and volunteers;
- experiences of staff and volunteers in relation to trust, confidence, feeling included, and other measures of inclusion from staff meetings, along with issues raised and actions taken;
- success and impact of positive action measures taken;
- Equality Impact Assessments and related progress on implementing actions;
- actions taken to improve and advance equality of opportunity, access, services, and outcome and the success of these actions;
- issues raised in meetings with WEL members, via email or Basecamp regarding equality, diversity and inclusion and actions taken.

We will publish information and progress as part of our annual report, where this does not identify individuals. Information reported may not be in the same level of detail as we collect, to prevent identification where there are small numbers or specific issues.

This policy will be fully reviewed and revised at least every 2 years.
The accompanying action plan and implementation processes and progress will be reviewed every 3 months by the board and amended whenever needed.
A full progress and implementation review will be undertaken at least once a year.

To achieve our commitment to achieving a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion, this policy will be reflected in all our other policies and practices.
We will commit resources to achieving equality, diversity and inclusion for all.

WEL email groups (egroups)

Wales Environment Link has several egroups that staff/representatives of member organisations can join. These egroups are used to:

- Circulate information from the WEL offices to members on policy/topic areas
- Circulate information between full members of the network
- Inform members of any events or requests for representation from the network specific to the interests of the stakeholder group
- Seek input and endorsement from Working Group members for work programmes, statements, consultation responses and proposed actions

All emails sent to these egroups have a consistent prefix to the subject header, to enable members to set up and use mail message rules to manage emails from WEL. Email groups have been established under the following subject headings:

Email Group	**Email Subject Prefix**
Access	WEL Access –
Advocacy	WEL Adv –
Biodiversity	WEL Bio –
Climate Change	WEL Cli –
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	WEL EDI –
Fresh Water	WEL Water –
Funding	WEL Fund –
Green Recovery	WEL GR –
Job Adverts *	WEL JobAd –
Land Use	WEL LU –
Marine & Coastal	WEL Marine –
Planning	WEL Plan –
Press Releases *	WEL PR –
Recycling and waste management	WEL Recyc –
Species Champions	WEL SC –
Sustainable Development	WEL SD –
Volunteering	WEL Vol –

* Egroup includes some external contacts

Following the prefix, the type of email will be indicated by the insertion of:

ACT: email requiring members' action

INFO: email circulated for members' information
MTG: meeting papers, timings and venues/meeting links

For subjects which also have an active Working Group, meeting agendas, minutes and updates/requests regarding current work being undertaken will be circulated via the associated egroup.

For IT security reasons, only WEL staff can email the egroups above. Members can ask WEL staff to circulate information to the egroups on their behalf and can reply directly to WEL staff. WEL uses Basecamp to put members in touch with each other directly, and this is where you can post questions or start discussion threads with other members.

The Council representative/main contact for each member organisation will also be included on a Council email list to receive key correspondence and important Council documentation. The prefix for these message subjects is 'WEL Council - '. Please note - it is the Council member's responsibility to forward any information mailed to this list which is of importance to other staff in their organisation.

Members who become Trustees of the organisation and sit on WEL's Management Committee also receive emails with the prefix 'WEL ManCom – '.

WEL Working Groups

Definitions

Working Group: a members' forum to address ongoing issues within a particular area of environmental policy or legislation. Working Groups may have associated project or Task and Finish Groups that focus in more detail on a specific policy area or legislation. All Working Groups are reviewed every 12 months to ensure they are still required.

Task & Finish Group: a group set up to undertake a time-limited piece of work. The group will be disbanded when the piece of work it was set up to do is finished. T&F Groups should only be set up for pieces of work that have a defined time-limit, preferably within a year.

Project Group: a group set up to manage a specific piece of work or campaign, but where this is likely to continue for longer than a year.

Current WEL Working Groups and Project Groups

Advocacy (WG)

- Species Champions (PG)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (WG)

Land Use (WG)

Marine (WG)

Biodiversity (WG)

WEL also provides secretariat to the Cross Party Group on Biodiversity.

WEL Task and Finish Groups are subject to more regular change, being short-term in nature. For further information please contact karen@waleslink.org.

How to get the most out of WEL Working Groups

All Full Members are entitled to participate in WEL Working Groups, project groups and Task & Finish Groups. Associate Members cannot participate in these groups unless specifically invited by the Full Members of the group, with the exception of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, to which all are welcome. A comprehensive Terms of Reference for WEL Working Groups can be viewed in Annex I, which covers principles for group working, production of WEL papers and responsibilities of the Chair. Remember…

- any Full Member of WEL can propose agenda items and ideas for future work of WEL working groups
- meetings can take place face to face, via Zoom or Teams, or as a hybrid set-up
- face to face meetings tend to take place in the location nearest to the majority of participants, but suggestions for new locations are always welcome
- if you can't participate in regular meetings, you can feed in views via the relevant egroup, Basecamp or via WEL's Policy Officers

How we work together

WEL members need to abide by the following code of conduct when working together and with WEL staff in meetings, organising events and producing joint papers.

Members will:

- respect one another as possessing individual and corporate skills, knowledge and responsibilities
- respect the equal status of the English and Welsh languages
- have the mandate/authority to take decisions on behalf of their organisation and abide by these
- show group support and loyalty towards each other and an agreed common purpose
- listen carefully to all ideas and comments: be tolerant and respectful of other points of view
- be honest, open and constructive
- be courteous and respect freedom to speak, disagree or remain silent
- regard challenge as a test of the robustness of arguments – ensure no one becomes isolated in expressing their view
- focus discussion on the resolution of issues and finding positive and constructive ways forward

Members should also:

- read all papers before meetings
- arrive on time and participate wholeheartedly
- seek to represent the views of those not in the room
- make the most of time by
    - ensuring individual points are relevant and short
    - taking account of deadlines and providing input as early as possible in the process

Members will not:

- dwell on past systems or actions as being responsible for today's situation
- act as 'stoppers' or 'blockers'
- regard any arrangements as unchangeable or unchallengeable

- adopt territorial attitudes – any member has the right to challenge / question another
- regard papers presented as being 'rubberstamped' without discussion and agreement
- act in an attacking, crushing or dismissive manner
- focus on the detail at the expense of the strategic picture

Developed with the Good Governance Institute, Dec 2014.

WEL Teams & Projects on Basecamp

Why does WEL use Basecamp?

Wales Environment Link uses Basecamp – an online portal only accessible to WEL members – to facilitate collaboration. It's very useful for ensuring all members can contribute to a discussion or topic area, even if they're unable or don't have the capacity to join regular Working Group meetings.

Basecamp is also the main way that members can engage directly with each other, share information and discuss issues. We no longer use our email groups for group discussion for IT security reasons.

Once you've been added to Basecamp, WEL staff will send you two guides on how to use it in more detail and how to adjust your notifications to an optimum amount for your work patterns. We recommend one daily email each morning to give you a summary of activity; it's important to adjust them as soon as your account is created. Please email WEL staff if you need help or want to set up some training or 1:1 support, we're always happy to lead you through it on a shared screen as well.

How does it work?

The Basecamp groups are called 'Teams' and one has been made for each Working Group. Several others – such as Access and Planning – have been created as Discussion Groups, but they do not directly correlate to email lists to ensure we don't have an unmanageable number of different forums.

The teams are used by WEL to:

- start discussion threads on information that has been shared from email;
- share information and documents, such as papers from NGOs, Welsh

Government and the Senedd;

- notify members about agendas, times and dates for meetings (although this will also be shared over email as well);
- put 'actions' up from Working Group meetings in each Team's 'To Do' section. Members are assigned actions and can tick them off once completed;
- enable members to kick off their own discussion topics on relevant issues;
- enable WEL reps to share any points to note or feedback on from their latest Welsh Government or Natural Resources Wales meetings; and
- enable UK-wide working through UK Species Champion project and Environment Links UK project areas.

When joining WEL, members are added to all of Basecamp's 'Teams' and are expected to choose which areas they wish to 'follow' or not. Some 'Teams' or 'Projects' are set up with a smaller, specific memberships in mind, e.g. the UK Species Champions Group. Members will only be added to these by request or if they are directly involved in a short-term task group. Members are only notified of updates in Teams they follow. If they wish to access other areas, they can, but will not be notified.

So, for example: if you work on marine policy, you likely want to prioritise your notifications and only 'follow' the Teams on Marine, Advocacy and Planning. BUT, at any time, you can scroll down to 'Teams You Don't Follow' and access these areas and dip in and out of discussions.

Which groups are on Basecamp?

Team	**Working Group or Discussion Group?**	**Areas of discussion**
Wales Environment Link HQ	**A new area for all WEL staff, members and volunteers.**	Only for sharing WEL-wide information – such as new staff, the WEL Policy Plan, announcements or altered ways of working. This will have ALL Working Group meetings put in its calendar, so members can see all at a glance. We will also keep a list of WEL

		reps (on Welsh Gov & NRW groups) to keep track of which members should feedback after meetings. Reps should feedback to their appropriate Groups.
Access	Discussion Group	Access policy
Advocacy	Working Group	Advocacy, campaigns and the Cross Party Group for Biodiversity.
Biodiversity	Working Group	Focused on biodiversity policy, from both Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales. Used to track output from the Environment Act and manage the WEL-NRW relationship.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Working Group	A peer learning space where organisations can work on improving diversity in the sector together.
Green Recovery	Discussion Group	Discussion on ideas to improve the way we work post-Covid 19 and lock in the public's newly found interest in nature. Discussion of green economy and funding for the nature and climate crisis.
ELUK Nature Targets Group	UK-wide Discussion Group	An area to help WEL and ELUK members to collaborate and share information on UK-wide developments on nature target policy.
Land Use	Working Group	Sustainable land policy, nature friendly farming, public goods, agricultural pollution,

		woodland creation, landscape and public access.
Marine	Working Group	Anything to do with marine policy, plus plastic pollution. MPAs, MCZs, marine plans, healthy marine ecosystems.
Planning	Discussion group	NDF, planning, renewable energy, green infrastructure, Planning Policy Wales, Local Development Plans.
Species Champions	Project Steering Group	Not a Working Group, but a Project Steering Group. For planning Species Champ events, briefings, joint advocacy and updating on most active AMs.
UK Species Champion Project	UK-wide Discussion Group	The four nations' Species Champion projects have 6-monthly catch ups to share information. WEL made this area to enable collaboration between WCL, SEL, NIEL and WEL.

From time to time there may also be other, time-limited, project groups added to Basecamp, such as Task & Finish Groups for focused working on a Senedd Bill. Please ask WEL staff about being added to these.

What can we use Basecamp for?

There are several areas in Basecamp, including: **Campfire; Message Board; To-Dos; Docs & Files; Schedule.**

WEL staff will use the Message Board for most types of information. The categories should be (mostly) the same in each Team and members are encouraged to use it as much as possible. We would ask members to use the category labels and to try and make the subject line clear and understandable.

If you don't think any category fits your message, then don't worry too much. WEL staff are able to edit both categories and subject lines. We'll only do this to make your request clearer, we will not edit any content in your message (unless, in extreme circumstances, it's caused offence to other members).

What can I expect on email from WEL and what will stay only on Basecamp?

When it comes to 'Can I expect this information on email or Basecamp?' The answer is, email if it's urgent or particularly important, Basecamp if it's not. Below are details on what kind of information you'll get on Basecamp and which on email first. Each message board thread can use the following categories:

Category or email subject line	What kind of message?	Over email or Basecamp?
Act	Email requiring members' action or input	Email first, Basecamp second
Doodle	Asking members to fill in a Doodle for a WEL meeting or event	Email
Event / Invite	Information about or an open invite to an event	Basecamp
Info	Important announcements and information will likely be email first. If it's less important and more general, it'll be posted on Basecamp	Basecamp (email first when urgent or important)
Letters	Highlighting any letters of significance in the public domain or that has gone through the Senedd or letters as replies to WEL.	Basecamp (also email if it's a specific response to WEL)
Meeting	Information and papers relating to a WEL meeting. Each team has a separate 'Schedule / Calendar' for their own meetings.	Email first, with dates recorded in the Basecamp calendar.
Question	A question posed to members, when someone is seeking a specific answer	Basecamp

	(rather than a more general discussion)	

WEL staff will most commonly be posting information in the Message Board. You can also expect us to:

- put all actions from meetings as a 'to do' list, where each is assigned to members who can tick it off when it's completed;
- post all relevant documents to a Working Group in 'Docs & Files' (although we'd encourage members to do this too);
- put details of WEL meetings under 'Schedule', but we will likely be doing this over email as well, as we appreciate that not everyone checks Basecamp every day (and meeting agendas and locations can change quite last minute).

What is NOT on Basecamp

WEL is deliberately keeping consultation drafts **off Basecamp**, as it's difficult to coordinate edits and amendments without having a clear email chain.

Whilst we will share final consultation papers, inquiry responses and position statements on Basecamp, WEL staff will keep the drafting and approving process over email.

How to Use Basecamp as a WEL member

Message Board

You can post anything you like on here, so long as it's of relevance to the Team / Working Group, but we ask members to ensure they:

- categorise the message to make it clear whether you're asking a question and want a response or whether you're just sharing something for information.
- add a clear subject line. Please don't use too many acronyms that aren't explained on first use and signpost as best you can.
- avoid duplication: before you post, check to see if there are any other recent threads that are on the same subject. If possible, add to previous threads rather than starting new ones.

Campfire

This is an informal way of sharing information in a quick and casual way. We don't recommend putting anything on here that you'll want to save or refer back to, as it will disappear as more messages come up.

It's a good way of double-checking information, sharing quick links that don't

need discussion, or drawing attention to something that's already stored elsewhere in Basecamp.

To-Dos
WEL staff will assign you actions from meetings (although only with your agreement!) and post them on the To-Dos area. You should be notified when one is assigned to you and any member can tick this off once it's completed. You can also post below the 'To-Do' with any thoughts to share or to help keep other members in the loop on its progress.

Docs & Files
Any WEL member is welcome to upload documents here; such as your own NGO's position papers; Welsh Government papers; letters or anything else you think the group would find useful. This is one of the most productive aspects of Basecamp; you will no longer have to scroll through emails and look for attachments (especially when trying to store large files which take up your inbox space). You can organise and categorise different types of documents into folders; we expect this will be done a little differently in each Team. We would, again, ask members to clearly label the file name to ensure it is accessible and easy to see what the document is before members download it. The better the label is, the easier it will be to find on a search.

Schedule
WEL staff will put ALL Working Group meetings in the WEL-wide HQ area. However, each Team will still post their own Working Group meetings in their calendars, and can use their calendars for dates, deadlines and workshops related to their work area.

Other features:
Direct Message or 'Pings' – a very helpful way to chat with WEL members without having to set up a new email chain. Any member can use this and all messages between members are private. WEL staff are admins but will never be able to read your private messages or see passwords. WEL staff, as admins, can edit public Message Board posts, but we would only do this at your request or edit a subject line / category to make it clearer.

Activity – good way of seeing a timeline of history across WEL. If you want to see the Latest Activity in just one group, then scroll down in its Home screen to see 'Team Activity'. This is presented in a timeline format so easy to see when and how often people post in the group.

Find – a very effective search function. Can be highly specific, so for example

you can search through one person's posts or in one particular Team / Working Group.

WEL staff support

And finally, WEL staff are here to help you. We're all 'administrators' on Basecamp, which means we're able to send members a new link to login if you're having any trouble accessing it. We are also very happy to give you a one-on-one training session or to send over online guides that explain how it works in more detail.

WEL staff are the only ones allowed to set up new 'Teams' (which will, going forward, continue to mirror WEL's structures of Working Groups and Discussion Groups). We ask members to not set up new 'Teams', but you're welcome to set up 'Projects', with our permission.

Please ask us first, and then add all WEL staff to the project. We recommend only doing this if you are experienced with using Basecamp.

'Projects' are identical in every way to Teams, except they're stored in a different section in Basecamp, just below the Teams**.** These are time limited and, if inactive for more than 3 months, WEL staff will archive the project.

Let us know if you have any questions and… Happy Basecamping!

The WEL weekly monitoring report

An important benefit of membership is WEL's weekly political and environmental policy monitoring service, provided by Newsdirect, which all members receive. The weekly report covers the latest environmental news of relevance to the NGO sector, tailored to our members' needs. So, even if you don't have access to political monitoring packages, you can keep up with everything you need to know. This includes Welsh Government, Senedd and Political Party news, upcoming Welsh Government consultations, new policies, legislation, funding news, Assembly Committee inquiries, and relevant plenary questions, committee summaries and debates.

The WEL Website

WEL's website – www.waleslink.org – is a source of information for the general public, but also has resources which members may wish to refer back to. It

includes:

- our 2021 Manifesto
- our responses to consultations and committee inquiries
- position statements on a range of issues
- briefings and information sheets
- WEL blog
- social wall for the latest Twitter updates from WEL

Social Media

WEL's Twitter account is @waleslink.We also have a LinkedIn account here: https://www.linkedin.com/company/wales-environment-link/

Any other accounts will be highlighted on Basecamp's Advocacy Group in future and we coordinate any shared social media material through threads and Docs and Files (for share infographics) there.

We use our Twitter account to promote our members' initiatives and ideas, and to generate more interest in our members' work. Email WEL staff if you'd like us to help promote a particular issue. We also use our Twitter account to promote WEL positions, papers and events.

WEL members' Twitter accounts can be added to our shared DM group so members can quickly share each other's tweets in real time to promote a message. Individual members' accounts are welcome to be added, but it's primarily members' organisation accounts. If your social media lead is not part of WEL, we can add them on there or just to the Communications email group, which we will only email about relevant comms activity.

Third Sector Partnership Council

WEL is a member of the Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC). The TSPC is a key mechanism for the third sector to talk to, and hear from, the Welsh Government. It is always chaired by the relevant Welsh Government Minister and is made up of representatives of third sector networks. WEL represents the environment sector. The main purpose of the TSPC is to make sure that the principles of the Third Sector Scheme are put into practice. Cross-cutting issues of concern to the third sector can be raised through this forum.

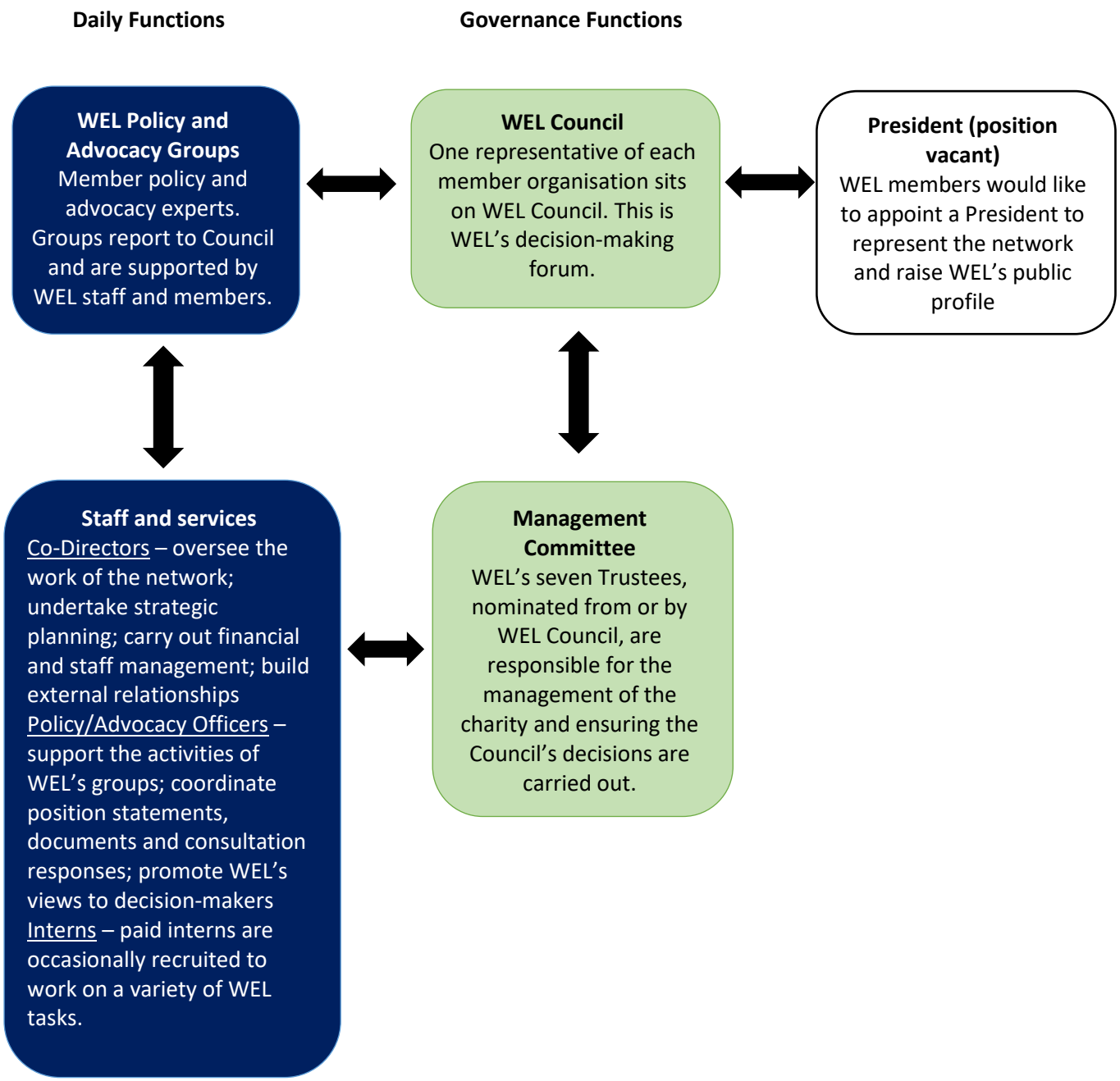
WEL can participate in third sector meetings with all Ministers in the Welsh

Government and asks for volunteers from our membership to represent the network at these. This allows us to raise environmental issues with Welsh Government departments that do not usually hear from our sector.

Current WEL members

For an up-to-date list of our members, go to our website.

Annex 1: Organisational Structure of WEL



Annex 2: Terms of Reference for Working Groups and Task & Finish Groups

1. Introduction

It is important that WEL can influence government policy and legislation in the areas covered by members' interests.

WEL groups are established to enable members' staff with relevant expertise and resources to work together in a representative group format to achieve common outcomes.

These groups are open to all full WEL members, and they fairly represent the balance of views of the wider WEL membership as far as is possible. WEL groups provide a forum to exchange views and information and are empowered to develop the consensus views' of the members.

The following pages set out the terms of reference for these groups, recognising the significant constraints on the capacity of members and WEL staff.

2. Accountability

Fundamental to the operation of each Working Group, Project Group or Task & Finish Group is respect and trust. In exchange for the ability to undertake joint work and act on matters of concern to their organisation, each member must accept that WEL groups need to reflect the common interest of member organisations. Each group gains legitimacy from its accountability to the full membership of WEL via the Council.

This means each group:

- must undertake forward planning and contribute to the development of the WEL Policy Plan
- must report to Council as required

3. Rules of Conduct / Procedure

- The most appropriate staff members or volunteers from full member organisations of WEL can participate in any WEL group.
- WEL staff will send introductory information about WEL to new employees who start engaging with WEL groups.

- WEL groups may invite associate member organisations to attend particular group meetings, when specific knowledge and expertise could benefit discussions. However, associate members will not be able to vote on group activities or override decisions on wording agreed by the full members.
- Working groups can invite outside (non-WEL) organisations to work with them, but should seek the advice of the WEL Director first.
- Members should be clear from the outset what level of commitment they can make.
- Members should be prepared to engage via the egroups when necessary.
- If unable to participate directly or at a limited level, members should be realistic about what they expect the group to do on their behalf (i.e. it is not appropriate to ask for something to be put forward as a WEL position without explaining why it is relevant or engaging to reach a consensus).
- Papers, agendas, action notes, draft policy statements and consultation responses will be circulated to the email group(s) related to the policy area concerned. (See section 4 for further details on production of WEL papers.)
- It is the responsibility of the Co-Chairs and WEL Policy Officers to ensure that timescales for preparation of papers and statements allow for adequate input by active members of the group.
- Meetings can be held face-to-face or by video conference, depending on which is most appropriate for the circumstances. For face-to-face meetings an 'in principle' agreement of where these will be held will depend on the location of active members of the group.
- Invitations for WEL representatives to sit on external groups will be circulated to members of the relevant egroup(s).
- Representatives will be expected to report back regularly, either to the relevant egroup(s), via Basecamp or in person at group meetings (see section 6).
- Delegations from groups to meet with officials, Ministers, Assembly Members or NRW should be kept small and focused. Delegations will be agreed in advance by members of the group and WEL staff.
- A planning meeting (pre-meeting) at which participants, agenda, key messages, objectives and lead speakers / proponents are agreed is a requirement for all WEL meetings with external bodies. Pre-meetings should focus on the forthcoming meeting and not stray into issues not relevant to the meeting itself.
- Failure to participate in the pre-meeting will preclude involvement in the final meeting (with possible exceptions under extenuating circumstances, for decision by the Chairs of the Group).

- WEL groups/representatives can take it as read that statements and 'asks' already included in the most recent WEL Manifesto document or agreed position statements can be presented as broad WEL views, with the caveat that the detail regarding how to achieve these may differ between individual members.
- Groups should consider whether there are any potential cost or legal implications to their work, or overlaps with the work of other bodies (e.g. other UK Links). If there is a need to commission work (e.g. research or document printing / design) then it should be noted that any costs may need to be borne by the group members themselves.

4. Protocol for Production of WEL Papers

The standard procedure for production of WEL papers is:

1. Relevant WEL Group meets to discuss and agree common positions as early as possible in the process, e.g. shortly following release of a consultation document.
2. There is a requirement for a minimum of 5 members or the whole of the relevant WEL Group to confirm they wish to commit to providing input before WEL allocates time to coordination.
3. Members may be asked to email their individual organisation's thoughts/positions/relevant text/draft papers to the agreed co-ordinator (usually a WEL Policy Officer) to assist them in putting together the first WEL draft.
4. Co-ordinator circulates first draft (using WEL template) around the group via email and members engage in the process on behalf of their organisation – providing comments/suggestions, ideally using 'track-changes', on behalf of their organisations as soon as possible.
5. Discussions take place about content of draft response via meetings or email, particularly regarding any points which are not unanimously agreed.
6. Further drafts may need to be circulated for comment before the final document is agreed by active members of the group. It is the responsibility of the Chairs and Co-ordinator to ensure that timescales for preparation include sufficient time for circulation and feedback.
7. WEL documents will be presented and submitted as being from WEL itself. A disclaimer will be added, to avoid concerns from members who a) work in a relevant area of policy but haven't had a chance to input or b) do not have a remit to work in a particular area.

One of these paragraphs will be included in each paper, according to the context in which the document has been produced:

- "This paper/consultation response represents the consensus view of a group of WEL members working in this specialist area. Members may also produce information individually in order to raise more detailed issues that are important to their particular organisation."
- "This document represents the consensus views of the members of the WEL network."

We would only use the final example here for documents where all member organisations need to be engaged and to check drafts being circulated for input.

8. A list of members or a page of all members' logos will be included as standard practice, with a brief explanation of what WEL is. Associate members may decide if they wish to be included on this list.

5. WEL Group Chairs

Each working group, project group or task and finish group must elect a Chair in order for that group to be active. WEL Groups generally operate with two Co-Chairs to share the burden of work and to enable faster decision making. However, groups can operate with one Chair if necessary. The Chairs are responsible for:

- agreeing/producing agenda of meetings, working with the relevant WEL Policy Officer
- chairing meetings
- initiating forward planning and input to WEL Policy Plans
- monitoring and ensuring targets for the groups are met
- monitoring development of WEL documents and their related timescales and deadlines (see section 4 above)
- assisting in reporting on the group's work and achievements during the year
- asking members their access, language and other requirements to participate and work with WEL staff to meet those requirements whenever possible

WEL will hold election for Co-Chairs every two years to give members of the network the opportunity to chair a group if they wish. Members can notify the relevant WEL Policy Officer of their interest in chairing a group. Existing Chairs

can stand again if they wish and if there are more than two nominees this will be put to a vote of WEL Council. If a Chair is unable to continue in their role before an election period is reached, they can speak to WEL staff to arrange for the opportunity to be publicised to the membership.

Annex 3: Terms of Reference for WEL Representatives on External Groups

Wales Environment Link Trustees, staff and members are very grateful to our representatives who input to a wide range of external groups in various policy areas. The time and effort representatives put in to ensure members' views and priorities are voiced is a very important part of the network's activities. It is an especially important aspect for some of our smaller member organisations with their specialist areas of expertise, who would be unable to reach such a range of external partnerships without their place in our active network.

Representatives of the Wales Environment Link network are voted on or agreed (if only one nominee) by WEL Council. Representatives need to adhere to the following requirements.

Representatives must:

- introduce themselves at external meetings as representing Wales Environment Link (as opposed to their own organisation), so that it is clear they are representing the whole network.
- provide regular reports* with requests for ideas and input from members as appropriate. Reports may be provided either verbally at the relevant WEL Working Group / Task & Finish Group meeting, posted in the relevant Basecamp group or emailed to WEL staff for circulation via the relevant email group(s). It is important that all full members are given the opportunity to input feedback or ask questions which the representative should then take to the external partnership/committee.
- keep up to date with correspondence for the relevant WEL egroup.
- speak and (if applicable) make written submissions from a WEL point of view, or the point of view of the relevant WEL group, having consulted with the relevant WEL group to agree the messages being presented.
- contact the WEL office if unable to make a future meeting, so that WEL staff can try to arrange for another representative to attend on the day. This applies unless an alternate representative has already been officially agreed, in which case the alternate representative should be contacted directly and given as much notice as possible.

WEL representatives can take it as read that statements and 'asks' already included in the most recent WEL Manifesto document or WEL position statements can be presented as broad WEL views, with the caveat that the detail regarding how to achieve these may differ between individual members.

If under certain circumstances it is appropriate to put forward an individual member organisation's point of view during a meeting, it must be stated that at that point in time comments are not necessarily reflective of WEL consensus, but of the individual organisation.

Representatives may, at some point, be asked to attend a meeting with Council to update members or to allow a detailed discussion to take place.

* **Reps Report Template**

The following are suggested contents for a written WEL 'Reps Report' to be circulated by WEL staff to relevant egroup(s) or to be posted on Basecamp:

1. Name of external group
2. Contact details for WEL Rep
3. Date of last meeting
4. List of key attendees
5. Key points discussed and agreements made
6. Any information or actions required of WEL members (provide appropriate deadline)
7. Invitation for members to comment / ask questions (provide appropriate deadline)
8. Date of next meeting

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment of any of WEL's staff or members, or undertaken by any of WEL's staff or members, will not be tolerated. As such, any representatives who experience bullying while undertaking representative duties for WEL should report the matter to WEL's Directors or Chair. Any reports of WEL representatives bullying WEL staff, other members or colleagues on external groups will be fully investigated.

A full copy of WEL's Bullying and Harassment Policy is available on request.

Annex 4: Protocol for Production of WEL Press Releases

The standard procedure for production of WEL press releases is:

1. Ideally, there will be an opportunity to discuss the proposed press release at a working group meeting. If not, whoever is proposing the press release must email the working group to agree the general content of the press release and the angle to be taken.
2. An individual will be agreed by the group to draft and coordinate the press release. Members may be asked to email thoughts or quotes to the agreed coordinator before drafting, if appropriate.
3. The coordinator of the press release or WEL Policy Officer will circulate the first (and any subsequent) drafts to the relevant egroup via email and members must engage in the process on behalf of their organisation as soon as possible – providing comments and any suggested improvements to wording by a specified deadline.
4. Coordinator incorporates requested changes or comes to agreement on wording with those making comment. If wording cannot be agreed in particular sections, certain passages may have to be omitted from the document.
6. Before the final draft is circulated, advice should be sought from WEL's Director or Policy Officer to agree introductory text / editors notes and ensure proper use of WEL's logo, format, etc.
7. The final draft is circulated to the relevant egroup(s) before it is sent to media contacts.
8. The press release will be presented as being from Wales Environment Link unless any full members object to this.
9. On completion of the final press release, its distribution should be discussed and arranged with WEL's Policy Officer or Director.
10. WEL staff will upload the press release to the WEL website and/or promote on social media.

Annex 5: WEL Constitution

Constitution of
Wales Environment Link / Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru
(As amended 4th July 2018)

1. NAME

1.1 The name of the Charity shall be “Wales Environment Link” "Cyswllt Amgylchedd Cymru", hereinafter called “WEL”, or such other name as the Charity may from time to time decide with the approval of the Charity Commissioners

2. ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Subject to the matters set out below the Charity and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by the members of the Management Committee, constituted by clause 8.1 of this constitution (“the Management Committee”)

3. OBJECTS

WEL is established to:

3.1 Promote for the public benefit the conservation, protection, sustainable use and quiet and responsible enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Wales.

4. POWERS

In furtherance of these objects WEL may:

4.1 Develop relations with international, national and local government, its agencies and all other bodies which have an influence on the issues specified in 3.1 above.

4.2 Agree action on matters of mutual interest.

4.3 Employ and pay any person or persons not being a member/members of the Management Committee to supervise, organise and carry on the work of WEL and make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and superannuation to or on behalf of employees and their surviving spouses/partners and other dependants.

4.4 Have a bilingual policy.

4.5 Promote and carry out research, surveys and investigations, and publish the results thereof.

4.6 Arrange and provide for, or join in arranging and providing for, the holding of exhibitions, conferences, meetings, lectures, classes, seminars and training courses.

4.7 Collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the said objects and exchange such information with other bodies.

4.8 Undertake, execute, manage or assist any charitable trusts which may lawfully be undertaken, executed, managed or assisted by WEL.

4.9 Have written and print, publish, issue and circulate, gratuitously or otherwise, such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets or other documents or films or recorded tapes as shall further the said objects.

4.10 Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the said objects and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections necessary for the work of WEL.

4.11 Make regulations for any such property.

4.12 Subject to such consents as may be required by law, sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of WEL.

4.13 Subject to such consents as may be required by law, borrow or raise money for the objects of WEL, and accept gifts on such terms and on such security as shall be deemed necessary provided that WEL shall not undertake permanent trading activities in raising funds for the said objects.

4.14 Invest the moneys of WEL not immediately required for the said objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject to such conditions (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law.

4.15 Do any lawful thing which is ancillary to, preparatory to or consequential upon, the exercise of the preceding powers and do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

4.16 Appoint and constitute such advisory committees as the Management Committee may think fit

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Membership shall be open to fully constituted, voluntary and / or charitable not for profit organisations with an international or national (Wales) remit whether corporate or unincorporated.

5.2 At least one of a Members' principle areas of work must be aligned with WEL's purpose to support the conservation, protection, sustainable management, access to or responsible enjoyment of landscape, seascape, biodiversity, cultural heritage and amenity in the Welsh environment.

5.3 Each member organisation shall appoint a representative to attend Council Meetings. If this person resigns from or otherwise leaves the member organisation, he or she shall forthwith cease to be its representative.

5.4 Each member organisation may appoint a deputy if its appointed representative is unable to attend any Council Meeting of WEL.

5.5 Each member organisation may, with the agreement of the Chair, send observers to any Council meeting who shall not have a vote and shall only speak if invited to do so.

5.6 Applications for membership must be approved by a two-thirds majority of all member organisations present and voting.

5.7 The membership of any organisation may be terminated for good and sufficient reason if a majority of all member organisations so decide, provided

that an individual representing the organisation shall have the right to be heard at a Council meeting of WEL before a final decision is made.

5.8 Each member organisation shall pay an annual subscription. The level of subscriptions shall be agreed annually at the Annual General Meeting.

5.9 The procedure for application, and criteria for acceptance of membership, shall be recorded in the Standing Orders for membership.

5.10 The Management Committee of WEL reserves the right to cease access to WEL services if it is determined that an individual / organisation has acted so as to risk the reputation or efficacy of WEL or one of its groups.

6. ASSOCIATES

6.1 Organisations whose primary aims match WEL's charitable purpose (as defined in 5.2) but do not qualify for membership under section 5.1 used to be able to apply to become an Associate member of WEL. This category of membership is no longer open to new members.

6.2 Associates may attend most Council Meetings of WEL, at which they may request permission to speak, but not vote. Associates shall receive the agenda, minutes and other papers tabled for Council Meetings. When there are matters determined by the Management Committee to be of overriding importance, which must be discussed and voted on by Full Members, Associate Members may not be invited to particular Council meetings, or they may be asked to leave the room for certain agenda items. In such cases, WEL staff will inform Associate Members of the reason they are unable to participate in the discussion.

6.3 Associates shall pay a subscription, the level of which shall be agreed annually at the Annual General Meeting.

6.4 Restrictions of Associate membership shall be recorded in the Standing Orders for membership.

7. HONORARY OFFICERS

7.1 At the Inaugural Meeting and thereafter at Annual General Meetings, WEL

shall elect a President, Chair, an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, and such other Honorary Officers as it shall from time to time decide.

7.2 The Chair and Hon. Secretary must be nominees of member organisations.

7.3 The member organisation whose representative is elected to hold the position of Chair shall appoint another representative to attend Council Meetings on its behalf during the Chair's term of office.

7.4 In the event of a tied vote at Management Committee, the Chair shall have a second, casting vote.

7.5 All such Honorary Officers shall serve in one position for a period of three consecutive years and shall be eligible for re-election, excepting the President who shall be eligible for re-election annually for a period not exceeding 5 consecutive years.

7.6 Any vacancy among the Honorary Officers may be filled by agreement of a majority of the full member organisations attending the appropriate Council Meeting.

7.7 WEL shall appoint qualified auditors or independent examiners to fulfil the requirements of clause 12.2 and determine their remuneration, if any.

7.8 WEL may appoint an administrative officer, namely a Director, and shall determine his / her terms of employment. The Director will undertake the day to day management of the Charity.

8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

8.1 The affairs of WEL shall be managed by a Management Committee (the Trustees) which shall be responsible to and implement the decisions of Council Meetings.

8.2 It shall be composed of the Honorary Officers (excepting the Hon. President) and four other representatives from member organisations elected at the Annual General Meeting. There will be a total of up to seven Trustees at any time.

8.3 The Management Committee may in addition appoint up to two co-opted members, as long as no more than one third of the members of the Management Committee would be co-opted members. Each appointment of a co-opted member shall be made at a special meeting of the Management Committee and shall take effect from the end of that meeting unless the appointment is to fill a place which has not then been vacated in which case the appointment shall run from the date when the post becomes vacant.

8.4 Any vacancy on the Management Committee filled by the use of powers to co-opt under clause 8.3 shall require ratification by agreement of a majority of the member organisations at the next Council meeting

8.5 The Management Committee shall appoint, manage and agree the remuneration of staff (not being a member/members of the Management Committee) to manage and coordinate the work of WEL, as deemed to be necessary within the limits of its resources.

9. DETERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

9.1 A member of the Management Committee shall cease to hold office if he or she:

a) is disqualified from acting as a member of the Management Committee by virtue of section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);

b) becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;

c) is absent without the permission of the Management Committee from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the Management Committee resolve that his or her office be vacated; or

d) notifies to the Management Committee a wish to resign (but only if at least three members of the Management Committee are in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect).

10. STATEMENTS BY WEL

10.1 Public statements may only be issued on behalf of WEL after they have been consulted on in order to reach agreement by the Full Members of the

network.

10.2 Public statements will always be presented as being from WEL, with members of WEL listed on the document. A caveat will always be included explaining that WEL statements are produced by a group of members working in the specialist area that the statement addresses, unless it is a cross-cutting statement which has had input/approval from all WEL members.

11 MEETINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

11.1 There shall be at least two Council Meetings of WEL during each calendar year, one of which shall be the Annual General Meeting.

11.2 All Full Members of WEL shall be entitled to attend Council meetings. Associate Members may attend Council meetings when invited as per section 6.3.

11.3 Every matter shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the voting members of the Council present and voting on the question. In the absence of a separate Council representative the Chair may cast a vote on behalf of their organisation. In the case of equality of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

11.4 The Council may from time to time make and alter rules of conduct of the Council business, the summoning and conduct of Council meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this constitution.

12 MEETINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

12.1 The Management Committee shall hold at least 4 ordinary meetings each year. A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chair or by any two members of the Management Committee upon not less than 4 days' notice being given to the other members of the Management Committee of the matters to be discussed but if the matters include an appointment of a co-opted member then not less than 21 days' notice must be given.

12.2 Management Committee shall implement relevant decisions of Council,

cognisant of legal and financial responsibilities of the Charity

12.2 The Chair shall act as chair at meetings of the Management Committee. If the Chair is absent from any meeting, the members of the Management Committee present shall choose one of their number to be chair of the meeting before any other business is transacted.

12.3 Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members of the Management Committee present but in the case of equality of votes the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

12.4 The Management Committee may from time to time make and alter rules for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this constitution.

12.5 The Management Committee may utilise teleconferencing facilities to conduct meetings or special meetings (see clause 12.1)

12.6 The Management Committee may appoint one or more sub-committees including at least three members of the Management Committee for the purpose of making any inquiry or supervising or performing any function or duty which in the opinion of the Management Committee would be more conveniently undertaken or carried out by a sub-committee: provided that all acts and proceedings of any such sub-committees shall be fully and promptly reported to the Management Committee.

13 MEETINGS AND PROCEEDING OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

13.1 The Annual General Meeting of WEL shall be held during October or November of each year at such place as WEL shall determine.

13.2 Every Annual General Meeting shall be called by the Honorary Secretary of the Management Committee, who may delegate the responsibility to the Director. At least 21 days' notice of the Annual General Meeting will be given to all the members of the Charity. All the members of the Charity shall be entitled to attend and those full members attending are able to vote at the meeting. Associates are also able to attend but do not have voting rights.

13.4 The Management Committee shall present to each Annual General Meeting the report and accounts of the Charity for the preceding year.

13.5 At the AGM the business shall include:

- the consideration of the annual report
- the work done by or under the auspices of WEL
- the statements of account
- the election of Honorary Officers and Management Committee
- the transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be necessary

13.6 Resolutions for an Annual General Meeting must be submitted from member organisations to the Chair in time for circulation with notice of the Annual General Meeting.

13.7 The Chair of WEL may at any time at his or her discretion and shall, within 21 days of receiving a written request so to do signed by not less than 7 members and giving reasons for the request, call a Special Council Meeting of WEL. At least 14 days notice of such a meeting shall be given in writing to each member.

14. NOMINATIONS FOR HONORARY OFFICERS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

14.1 Nominations for Honorary Officers or members of the Management Committee must be made by a member of WEL and seconded by a member of WEL in writing with the written agreement of the person concerned and must be in the hands of the Chair or Secretary in time for circulation with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. Should nomination exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot at the Annual General Meeting. In the event of there being no nomination for a particular office, consenting nominations may be made at the Annual General Meeting.

15. RULES OF PROCEDURE AT ALL MEETINGS

15.1 Quorum: The quorum at a Council Meeting shall be a third of the membership and not less than six individual members, and a quorum at a meeting of Management Committee shall be at least four Trustees.

15.2 Voting: Consistent with the provisions of the constitution all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. No person shall exercise more than one vote notwithstanding that he or she may have been appointed to represent two or more member organisations.

15.3 Minutes: Minutes shall be kept of Council and Management Committee meetings of WEL. The Director shall be responsible for ensuring drafting of the Minutes which shall record the proceedings and all resolutions. The Council Minutes shall be circulated to all member organisations.

15.4 Standing Orders and Rules: WEL shall have the power to adopt and issue Standing Orders and/or Rules for the conduct of the affairs of WEL. Such Standing Orders and/or Rules shall be agreed by a Council Meeting and shall come into operation immediately provided that they are consistent with the provisions of the Constitution and may be subject to review in any subsequent Council Meetings.

16. FINANCE

16.1 All monies raised by or on behalf of WEL shall be applied to further the objects of WEL and for
no other purpose, provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of WEL not being a member/members of the Management Committee or the repayment of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

16.2 The Management Committee shall comply with their obligations under the current Charities Act (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of the Act) with regard to:

- keeping of accounting records for the Charity;
- the preparation of annual statements of account for the Charity;
- the independent examination, or auditing, of the statements of account of the Charity; and
- the transmission of the statements of account of the Charity to the Charity Commission

16.3 Annual statements of account for the preceding financial year shall be submitted to the Annual General Meeting for approval

16.4 A Bank Account shall be held in the name of WEL with such Bank as the Management Committee shall from time to time decide. WEL may authorise the Chair, the Director, the Treasurer and up to three other members of WEL to sign cheques on behalf of WEL. All cheques must be signed by not less than two of the authorised signatories, of whom one must be an Honorary Officer of WEL.

17. ANNUAL REPORT

17.1 The Management Committee shall comply with their obligations under the current Charities Act (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual report and its transmission to the Commission.

18. ANNUAL RETURN

18.1 The Management Committee shall comply with their obligations under the current Charities Act (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual return and its transmission to the Commission.

19. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

19.1 Any alteration of this constitution shall require the assent of not less than two-thirds of the members of WEL at an Annual General Meeting or at a Special Council Meeting called for the purpose, provided that notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the Chair or Secretary in writing in time for circulation with the notice of such a meeting and further provided that no alteration shall be made which would cause WEL to cease to be a Charity in law and no alteration shall be made to clause 3, or this clause, without the prior written approval of the Charity Commissioners.

20. DISSOLUTION

20.1 If a simple majority of the Management Committee or not less than 7 member organisations of WEL decide at any time that it is necessary or

advisable to dissolve WEL, the Chair shall call a meeting of all members giving not less than 28 clear days' notice, stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed thereat.

20.2 If such a decision is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at such a meeting the decision shall take effect and the Management Committee shall have the power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of WEL.

20.3 Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of WEL as WEL may determine at such a meeting.

20.4 A copy of the statement of accounts, or account and statement, for the final accounting period of the Charity must be sent to the Commission.

21. NOTICE

21.1 Any notice may be served by the Chair or the Secretary on any member organisation by sending such notice through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member organisation at its last known address in the United Kingdom, and any such letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within four days of posting.

22 PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

22.1 The above objects and powers shall be exercised in ways which minimise WEL's impact on the environment and encourage its members to do likewise.

23. INTERPRETATION

23.1 For the interpretation of this Constitution, the Interpretation Act (1978) shall apply as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.