



# Annual Impact Report and Accounts 2019-2020



# Contents

## INTRODUCTION:

A message from the Directors .....	5
Our strategy .....	6
Our goals.....	7
Our year in a snapshot .....	8

## GOVERNANCE

Reference and Administrative Detail.....	12
Structure, Governance and Management.....	13

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Key Achievements and Performance .....	17
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## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Trustees' Responsibilities .....	22
Statement of Financial Activities.....	23
Notes on Financial Activities .....	24

# INTRODUCTION



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

We're thrilled to report on our biggest year yet as an organisation. We feel we say that every year, and it's true every year, but this year was a BIG one!

When we look back at 2019-20 in years to come we are sure we will remember it as the year where we experienced huge growth of our public profile, and with that our capacity for effective public engagement.

Whilst many of our now regular annual activities continued, it was our collaboration with WWF, Sky Ocean Rescue and Swansea University that really caught the public's imagination.

Planting 750,000 seeds in Dale, Pembrokeshire, with over 2000 volunteers involved in the process, and with another 250,000 to be planted at the site this year – really is marine conservation by people, for people!

As we look forward into 2020-21 and the start of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the UN Decade on Ocean Science, we hope that this year was the springboard needed to catalyse seagrass restoration at real scale across the UK as well as to move towards recognising the role that seagrasses play in supporting Sustainable Development.

We hope to report on similar restoration and conservation initiatives in the years to come. Let's hope this is just the start of the journey.

Best fishes for the year ahead!

Rich, Leanne, RJ and Ben.

  
Leanne Cullen-Ursworth



# OUR STRATEGY

Our strategy is rooted in our AIMS, which remain the same today as they did when we were founded in 2013:

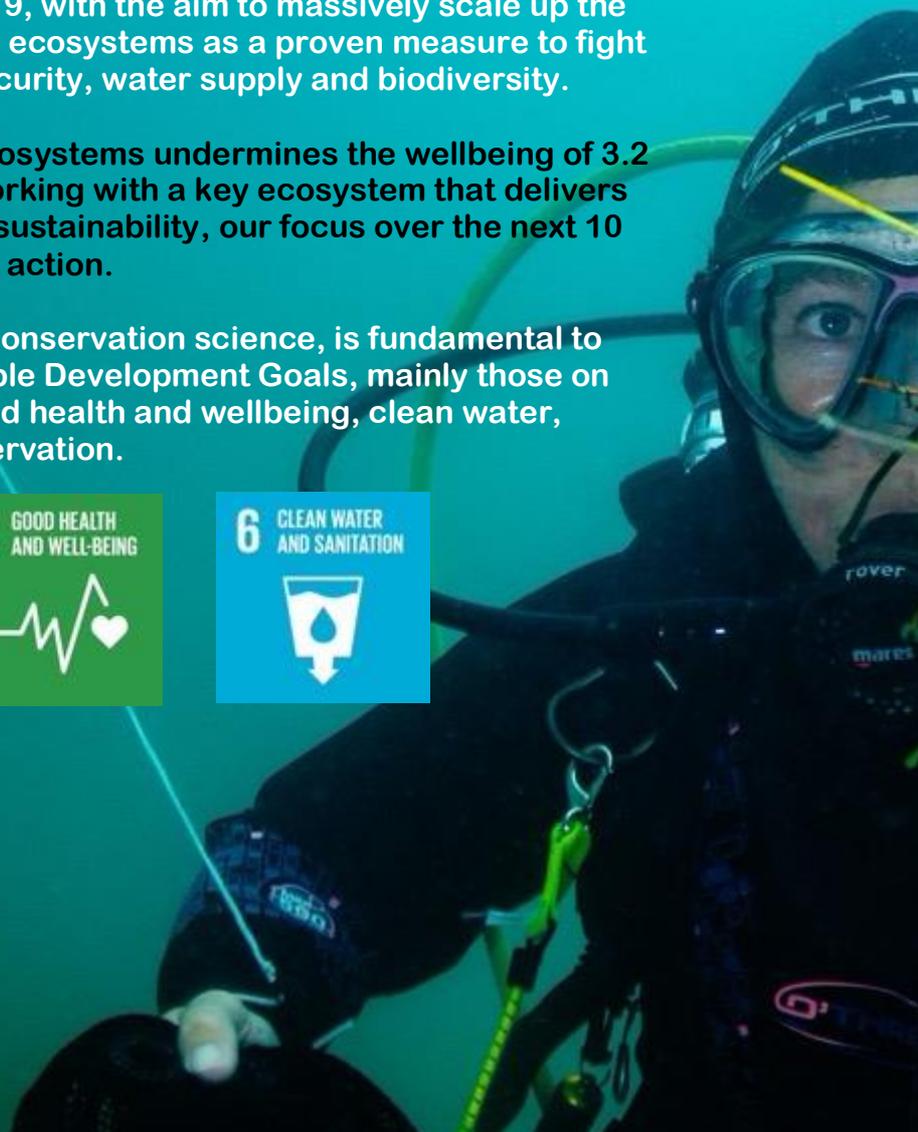
1. To educate the wider community on the presence and importance of seagrass ecosystems, the services they provide and current seagrass management issues.
2. To build the capacity of local stakeholders in the use of standardised scientific methodologies.
3. To promote and assist with long-term monitoring of seagrass condition.
4. To assist with scientific research and support conservation measures that helps facilitate long-term resilience of seagrass ecosystems.

However, whilst these remain our aims, our current 10 year strategy is explicitly aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular in answering the 'Call To Action' for a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration as well as that of the UN Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2021-2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration on 1 March 2019, with the aim to massively scale up the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems as a proven measure to fight the climate crisis and enhance food security, water supply and biodiversity.

The degradation of land and marine ecosystems undermines the wellbeing of 3.2 billion people globally. As scientists working with a key ecosystem that delivers numerous services essential to global sustainability, our focus over the next 10 years is to answer these global calls to action.

Ecosystem restoration, supported by conservation science, is fundamental to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, mainly those on poverty eradication, food security, good health and wellbeing, clean water, climate change, and biodiversity conservation.



# 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Perhaps the greatest strategic shift in focus for us over the next decade is a shift towards developing Partnerships for the Goals.

In 2019 we were thrilled to announce the first of what we hope will be a decade of positive partnerships as we seek to work with Sky Ocean Rescue, WWF UK and Swansea University on the UK's first ever full-scale seagrass restoration project.

Our plan for 2020 is to complete the first pilot stage of planting 2ha of *Zostera marina* seagrass in Dale, Pembrokeshire, Wales. If successful, this should prove that large scale restoration of seagrass meadows around the UK is possible.

If successful, then there is every reason to believe seagrass restoration can be scaled up.

## OUR GOALS

At Project Seagrass we are calling for:

**30km<sup>2</sup> of UK seagrass  
to be restored by  
2030.**

We believe this is achievable, but we will need strong partnerships between the public and private sectors to ensure this happens.

# OUR YEAR – A SNAPSHOT

Undoubtedly the highlight, and the main focus of our 2019-2020 year was Seagrass Ocean Rescue, a partnership with Sky Ocean Rescue, WWF UK and Swansea University to restore 2ha of seagrass in Dale, Pembrokeshire. This project was in addition to our usual activities guided by four areas of focus: Education, Influence, Research and Action.



## Education

- As part of Seagrass Ocean Rescue we conducted outreach and seedbag preparation workshops with 13 Primary Schools across the British Isles.

- We taught high school pupils in Stockholm, Sweden how seagrass contributes to Sustainable Development.

- We ran a #Bioblitz Photography Competition to encourage participation in our Citizen Science programme SeagrassSpotter.

- We launched a first translation of SeagrassSpotter into another language, Welsh.

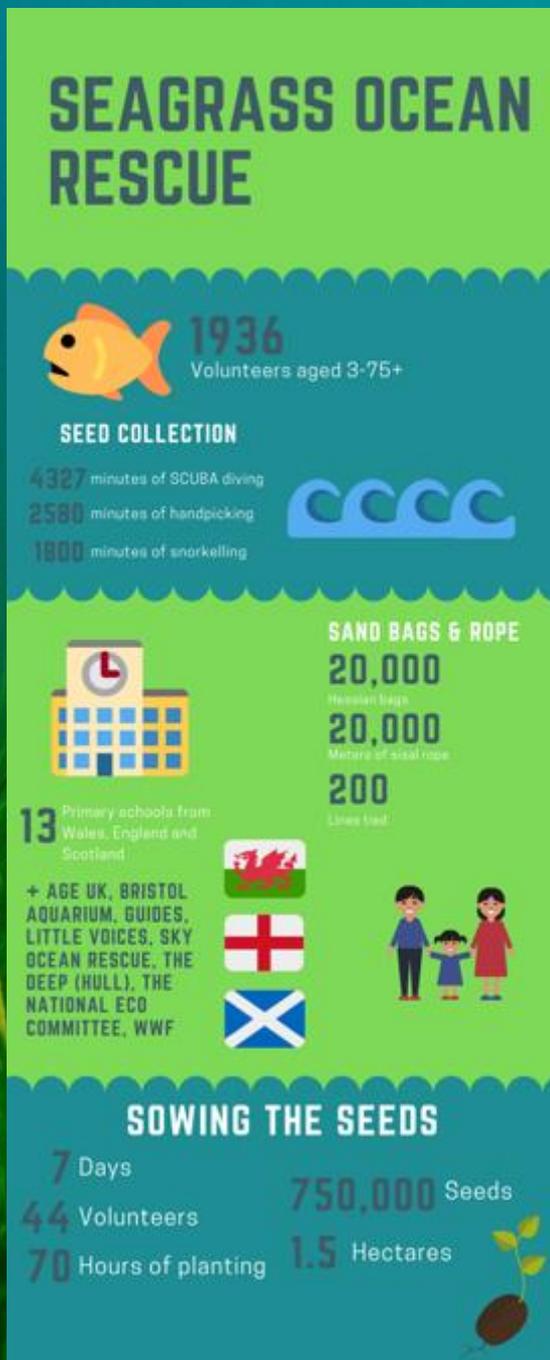
- We visited Sky HQ for an outreach day to promote Seagrass Ocean Rescue.

- We attended the Nature Of Scotland Shortlisting at the Scottish Parliament and Award Ceremony.

- We participated in Oceans Festival 2019 in Bristol.

- We participated in the Ullapool Marine Weekend.

- We offered a Professional Training Year (PTY) year for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row.





## Influence

- Seagrass Ocean Rescue research at Lindisfarne, England and Arran and Outer Hebrides, Scotland
- We judged the Ericsson Innovation Awards in collaboration with Nobel Week, a competition to design solutions to the problems our oceans face.
- We teamed up with Blacks Outdoors to show what its like to be a Marine Biologist for a day
- Seagrass Ocean Rescue seed picking filming with Sky TV and BBC Wales.
- Nature Of Scotland Awards Shortlisting
- Become Ally of Nature Based Solutions Initiative at Oxford University
- #ProtectMaldivesSeagrass Campaign
- Presentation at the UK REACH conference
- Mission Blue Hope Spot Designation
- Gail Ross MSP championed the contribution of seagrass meadows to global health and wellbeing for World Environment Day
- Living Seas Event at Scottish Parliament
- Seeds of Hope in WWF Action Magazine
- We ran our annual Project Seagrass campaigns for World Seagrass Day (March 1<sup>st</sup>), Seagrass Awareness Month (March) and our Advent Calendar

# OUR YEAR – A SNAPSHOT



## Research

- Investigated the micro-plastic build up within seagrass sediments.
- Contributed to a major global report *'Out of the Blue: The Value of Seagrasses to the Environment and to People'* led by UNEP.
- Helped rationalise and update the global seagrass distribution dataset.
- Revealed issues of Mosquito Net fisheries for seagrasses in the Western Indian Ocean
- Contributed to the Sea Scotland Conference 2019.
- Contributed to the Finisterre Ocean Mic Night in Edinburgh.
- Expanded our partnership with the Convention for Migratory Species (CMS) in Abu Dhabi through the commencement of a role in a new major project led by the CMS and UNEP *'IKI Seagrass Ecosystem Services Project: Conservation of biodiversity, seagrass ecosystems and their services – safeguarding food security and resilience in vulnerable coastal communities in a changing climate'*.
- Contributed to a process led by the Smithsonian Institute to develop a global observing system for seagrass.



## Action

- Won the Green Heart Hero Award 2020 for our innovative work with volunteers on our Dale seagrass project.
- Developed a partnership with Emitwise.
- Continued our commitment to the long-term monitoring of seagrass in Porthdinllaen, North Wales.
- Engaged with at least 1900 people directly about seagrass.
- Planted 750,000 seeds in Dale.
- Contributed to the establishment of World Seagrass Day.

# GOVERNANCE

## Reference and administrative detail

Project Seagrass is governed according to charity law by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are unpaid volunteers, whom also act as Directors of Project Seagrass according to charity law. The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

<b>Charity number:</b>	<b>England and Wales No. 1162824</b>	
	<b>Scotland SC025837</b>	
<b>Registered office:</b>	<b>Sustainable Places Research Institute Cardiff University 33 Park Place Cardiff CF10 3BA</b>	<b>(WALES)</b>
	<b>18/6 Millar Crescent Morningside Edinburgh EH10 5HW</b>	<b>(SCOTLAND)</b>
<b>Auditors:</b>	<b>Money Matters (Widnes) Ltd, 4 Whitworth Court Runcorn Cheshire WA7 1WA</b>	
<b>Bankers:</b>	<b>The Co-operative Bank 34 The Kingsway Swansea SA1 5LG</b>	
<b>Trustees:</b>	<b>The Trustees who served during the period from 1 April 2019 to the date of approval of this report were as follows:</b>	
	<b>Dr Richard K.F. Unsworth (Chair) Dr Leanne C. Cullen-Unsworth Miss Rebecca D. Cullen Mr Benjamin Jones</b>	
<b>Senior Executives:</b>	<b>Dr Richard J. Lilley Mr Benjamin L. Jones<sup>1</sup> Dr Richard K.F. Unsworth<sup>1</sup> Dr Leanne C. Cullen-Unsworth<sup>1</sup></b>	

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<sup>1</sup> All of our executives were unpaid for the period of 2019-20. As a small team we have fulfilled both oversight and executive roles. However, we recognise that this is not tenable, and an organisational priority is to implement an appropriate governance structure as we grow'

# Structure, Governance and Management

## Governing document

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO), incorporated on and registered as a charity on 24 July 2015 in England and Wales and 17 August 2016 in Scotland. It is governed by an Association Model Constitution, having been amended following approval by members at an EGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees, as defined by the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and the Charities Act 2011, who are also Directors under the Companies Act 2006 and are collectively referred to as “The Trustees”.

The need for a more involved and independent board of trustees has been identified by the Senior Executives. Not least the need to have trustees who are chosen for their individual qualifications, experience and skills to cover the gamut of those required for successful governance of the rapidly expanding organisation. The ambition for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 is to appoint 4 new trustees to the board and to elect a formal Chair. The view of the board at present (given the rapid growth of the organisation) is that from now on there should be between 4 and 12 trustees involved to provide adequate governance for an organisation of this size and ambition.

Trustees may serve two consecutive periods of four years. After serving these periods they must stand down for a minimum of two years before offering themselves for election again. The organisation advertises vacant trustee positions to the public. A

register of trustees’ interests is held and regularly updated by the charity.

## Trustee induction and management training

All new trustees are to be given a formal familiarisation with the organisations business, Charitable Board organisation and responsibilities by the Chairman and the four Senior Executives as part of an induction process. It is our intention to employ charity staff during the next financial year. Newly appointed staff will work to agreed terms of reference, will be subject to regular performance interviews and are to be given career training opportunities.

## Organisation

The Board of Trustees, which administers the Charity, meets regularly and on not less than four occasions per annum.

To set the pay and remuneration of the key management personnel (Executives) and staff in general, the Chairman will make a recommendation for approval by the Board of the Charity. This recommendation follows a meeting with the Directors. It is based on a review of annual performance against certain targets and what the organisation can afford to pay.

Volunteers are central to the successful operation of the Charity. A core group of regular volunteers make an invaluable contribution to the organisation and should be recognised here.

Various sub-committees are constituted as required. The senior Executives, who are ultimately responsible for the day-to-day administration and running of the Charity, act as the link with outside stakeholders. To facilitate effective

operations, the Senior Executives have delegated authority – within terms of delegation approved by the trustees – for operational matters. These include finance, employment and developing related activities.

### Strategic relationships

Insofar as it is complementary to its objects, the Charity is guided by both local, national and global policy. The Charity works in close partnership with several organisations, including Cardiff University, Swansea University, Natural Resources Wales, Nature Scot, Natural England, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government, Sky Zero and WWF UK, and internationally Stockholm University to help achieve common and strategic objectives in marine education, conservation, and restoration.

### Objectives and activities

At the heart of the operations are four pillars – Research, Education, Influence and Action all of which will guide all the charity’s activities over the next decade. At Project Seagrass we are also recognising the growing importance of the digital community (particularly in light of COVID-19) in communicating our marine conservation and education messages. We wish to take positive action to ensure we remains a global, outward facing organisation with a key focus on sustainable development and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The year was the first step along this new path and contained some notable achievements and successes. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 in the UK in March 2020, and the impact of the subsequent government measures to contain it, have had a dramatic effect on all elements of the Welsh, Scottish and wider UK economy. Restrictions on people’s

movement means that project delivery and community engagement has been particularly hard hit.

This situation is unprecedented in modern times. There is currently no certainty about what normality for society will be in the coming years let alone the route back to it. A new strategy requires a different organisational model which was being developed. Creating a realistic sustainable growth plan in these circumstances is extremely challenging.

### Achievements and performance

In the financial year much was achieved. Work began on a new strategic plan and new structures and procedures are being introduced for the Charity boards and committees.

As an organisation we have identified the need for more formal policies and procedures to be in place as we continue to grow. In particular the need to introduce a cashflow forecast, and risk register to guide our 3-year charity plan.

Our key achievements for the period 2019-2020 highlight just how far we’ve come as a charity in terms of our impact. However, with this growth comes additional responsibilities to ensure we are performing in line with our mission, vision and values.

### Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

If the last seven years has taught us anything at Project Seagrass, it’s that achieving our mission begins with how we build our team and how we work together. We believe; indeed, experience has taught us, that only by bringing together a diverse range of identities, experiences and perspectives can we tackle complex crises. It is only through celebrating and harnessing diversity of experience

that we will be able to work towards creating a future where seagrasses and society can truly prosper.

We evidenced our commitment to this when we organised the International Seagrass Biology Workshop in 2016. We included a Code of Conduct to ensure that our event was a safe space for all, no matter of their gender, gender identity, heritage, sexual orientation, or any other factor. It was the first and only event in the workshops 27-year history to do so.

Central to our ethos is a determination to 'live our values', and as we embark on this next chapter of our journey, we are committed to creating a work culture of belonging. A work environment where all team members are valued for who they are and given equal opportunity to grow and succeed, with no discrimination on the basis of their race, colour, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, or identification with any marginalised community in the countries where we work.

Diversity, equity and inclusion can look different in every country, and whilst we have worked to champion and celebrate our Welsh roots, we know we have work still do to if we wish to meet the ideals of the organisation we wish to become.

Project Seagrass is committed to taking clear, concerted steps to diversify our team:

- We will develop inclusive position descriptions that open doors for different types of backgrounds, experiences, and education, and that use language which welcomes a more diverse group of candidates.

- We will ensure our teams foster equity, inclusion, and belonging and that diverse perspectives are valued in decision-making.
- We will intentionally coach and mentor diverse talent.
- We will support the expansion of workplace groups to build community for underrepresented groups, and to elevate their voices within the organisation.

Whilst we acknowledge our team is currently small, we are expecting to grow our organisation rapidly, and therefore this commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion reflects our vision for the charity we wish to become.

Project Seagrass is committed to taking steps to be more inclusive in our work:

- We will ensure that our team adheres to our Code of Conduct for all events
- We will endeavour to advertise events and volunteer opportunities to all members of society.

We will seek to transform our online platforms to ensure that they use inclusive language and imagery, that is needed to foster a more diverse marine conservation community.

### **Voluntary help and gifts in kind**

The contribution of the Volunteers to the success of the organisation remains key both in financial and operational terms. Project Seagrass originated from the passion, drive and energies of the Senior Executives who have continued to work on a voluntary basis. Indeed, volunteers and volunteerism is in the DNA of the organisation. The estimated value of volunteer's efforts in the year in terms of voluntary hours worked is impossible to put a precise figure on

but would easily run into the tens of thousands of pounds. A total of £10,257.69 was donated to the charity from fundraising activities.

### Reserves Policy

The Board has identified a minimum reserve requirement equivalent to three months' operating costs, which will enable the charity to meet commitments as they fall due. At 31 March 2020, the organisation had total reserves of £24,931.21). However, within this balance are restricted funds of £10,663.11 relating to operational programmes. These restricted funds are not available for the general purposes of the charity. Unrestricted reserves are currently £14,279.10. Through regular review of financial performance, open and transparent dialogue with key stakeholders and seeking to identify additional core funding, the trustees aim to improve this position.

### Risk Management

The Board of Trustees monitors the significant risks to which the charity is exposed. A risk register is maintained by the Senior Executives and scrutinised by the Trustees quarterly. The main residual risks are:

1. Insufficient income generated – the employment of a full time Director should generate new income streams for the organisation, and this remains an area for us to focus on.
2. Sufficient fundraising cannot be secured – securing sufficient unrestricted funds to support the full costs of our conservation, education and restoration activities will be addressed in a range of ways through developing our supporter offer, forging new partnerships and demonstrating the value of our activities for corporate support.
3. Asset development – whilst we only have limited assets at present, we need to continue to invest in assets for autonomy and to develop our capacity. There is a need to upgrade our vessel and improve our online presence to meet the appetite for a stronger digital offer.

### Plans for the future

COVID-19 has emphasised how linked the wellbeing of our society is to the health of our natural environment. More than ever people have enjoyed their local green and blue spaces and have felt more connected to nature. The calls for a green recovery have also grown stronger, not least because we still have the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss to respond to.

Whilst there are economic and financial challenges to overcome, the appetite for change provides a strong platform for our Charity to play a role in helping people to understand the importance of our coastal and marine environments and to give them information on the actions that can be taken to protect and restore this resource for the future.

Recent events have also highlighted the inequalities which continue to exist in our society, including digital exclusion. As we develop our digital offer, we will use it as a way of engaging further with people who cannot visit our coastlines in person but wish to learn about our marine environment. We will use this as an opportunity to forge new partnerships to work with harder to reach groups in society.

### Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4, Charities Act 2011, to have due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity

Commission concerning public benefit.

As a dedicated team of seagrass scientists, we work to protect seagrass, and through seagrass, we support marine conservation more broadly. The charities main work is in promoting protection of coastal ecosystems and the promotion of sustainable marine resource use.

Each of our programs are aimed at improving the condition of the marine environment. A healthy marine environment will supply benefits to the public; these are often referred to as marine 'ecosystem services'.

The United Nations' Millennium Ecosystem Assessment recognized three types of ecosystem services called provision, regulating and cultural. Each of these is relevant to the marine environment.

Provisioning refers to society's needs for our seas to supply both the wild caught and farmed fish that are an important part of our diet.

Regulating is important for climate; seagrass is a significant contributor to carbon sequestration in the form of 'blue carbon'

Culturally, British seas and coasts are well regarded for recreation, ecotourism and appreciation of natural heritage. When the coastal ecosystem is healthy, it supplies more of these benefits.

Project Seagrass works not only to increase the extent of these benefits, but also to make them publicly available.

During 2019/20 the charity promoted interest and learning on the marine environment through its dedicated SEA (Seagrass Education & Awareness) outreach and education programme and inspired action at the

local level through delivery of its SAS (Seagrass Ambassador Scheme) volunteer and community engagement programme.

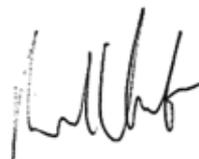
### Acknowledgements

The Trustees would like to again thank all our volunteers, members and supporters - individuals, charitable trusts and foundations, public bodies and corporate organisations who have supported our work. This includes Natural England, Emitwise, WWF UK and Sky Ocean Rescue. The recent COVID-19 crisis has reminded us how much loved the work of Project Seagrass is, the importance of its role within Wales and the role it has to play in the wider conservation practice and science community across the UK and further afield. We know that collaborative working and partnerships (informal and formal) will enable us to confidently face the challenges ahead with our loyal and dedicated team of trustees and volunteers.

### Approval of the Trustees' report

At the time of approving this report, the Trustees are aware of no relevant audit information of which the group and charity's auditors are unaware. The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken, as a Trustee, in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information, and to establish that the group and charitable charity's auditors are aware of that information.

The report was approved by the Board on ..... 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



**XX XXXXXX Chair**

# Achievements and Performance

Following its 2nd anniversary in 2015, Project Seagrass reviewed its success and also evaluated the most pressing threats to coastal seagrass meadows for the coming decade. This led to identification of four key areas where Project Seagrass should focus its efforts:

Education

Influence

Research

Action

These were presented on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at our 'Official Launch' in Cardiff.

This report presents the highlights and key achievement over the past year that work towards these aims, reflecting the breadth and success of Project Seagrass in protecting our coastal ecosystems.

## Key achievements in the period 2019/20

The period from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 marks 6 years since Project Seagrass was founded, 5 years since it became a registered charity in England and Wales and 3 years since it became a registered charity in Scotland.

Our Key achievements for this year are broken down below; first by area of focus, and then

chronologically by Quarter (Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4) for each area of focus. The Key achievements listed are just that and represent only part of our ongoing efforts to raise the profile of seagrass.

### *Key achievements: Education*

Q1 – To start the year we advertised our annual Professional Training Year 2019-2020 (PTY) opportunity. To date the PTY has been a fantastic way of enabling young biologists to gain experience in the sector.

In April, Ben teamed up with clothing retailer Blacks Outdoors to demonstrate what it's like to spend a day as a Marine Biologist. The video was released across their social media platforms in August and received over 2000 views.

In May, Jake Davies (our North Wales Seagrass Ambassador), created a video showcasing the diverse array of Marine Life that can be found in the Porthdinlaen seagrass meadow (available on YouTube).

In June we conducted our First Seagrass Ocean Rescue outreach session at Awel Y Mor Primary School, whilst in Scotland RJ presented the Seagrass Ocean Rescue project at the Sea Scotland 2019 Conference, and then at a Finisterre 'Ocean Mic' night at the Edinburgh Finisterre Store. We always hope our message reaches new audiences and we believe this selection emphasises our commitment to communicating seagrass science to all ocean stakeholders.



Q2 – We kicked off July by hosting an educational workshop with a team of marine biology students from the University of Mauritius. We introduced them to SeagrassSpotter and the Indo-Pacific Seagrass Network, in which we are a collaborator.

In August RJ once again visited Ullapool for the annual 'Marine Weekend' outreach event at the Harbour.

In September Issy (our intern) and Laura (a previous intern turned volunteer) conducted their own outreach activities at Oceans Fest UK which was held at Clifton High School in Bristol. Meanwhile, RJ attended the 'Scotland: The Big Picture' conference at Stirling University to learn about the current opportunities and challenges facing the 'rewilding' movement in Scotland.

Q3 – For Scotland's Climate Week 7-13 October students at Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh prepared hessian bags for seagrass seeds as part of our Seagrass Ocean Rescue preparations. The Biology

Department then set up their own 'Seagrass themed Marine Tank' including some of the fauna that are found in British seagrass meadow.



In Wales the team continued seed bag preparation in Wales with a number of participating schools.

In Sweden Ben attended a 'Making Science Matter' course in at Ekenäs Herrgård, to learn how we can better engage the public with our science. Later he used the skills he learnt on this course to educate high school students in Stockholm, Sweden about the value of seagrass for Sustainable Development.

In November we advertised a PhD at University of Edinburgh with a focus on the opportunities and challenges for Seagrass Restoration in Scotland.

### *Key achievements: Influence*

Q1 – March 2019 kicked off with a bang as we supported the Blue Marine Foundation and the Maldives Underwater Initiative in launching a social media campaign to raise awareness about the importance and value of seagrass in the Maldives. The campaign is

asking resorts across the country to pledge to protect a minimum of 80% of the seagrass around their island for the benefit of the environment, tourism, fisheries and the people who depend on them for jobs and income.



In April Benjamin was interviewed for 'Make The Ocean Great Again'; a platform for sharing the stories of people and projects that dedicate their efforts towards a positive future, with healthy and thriving oceans.

June was busy in Scotland, where for World Oceans Day RJ was invited to the Scottish Parliament for the Declaration of a Mission Blue Hope Spot we had assisted the campaign for, and our Species Champion Gail Ross MSP highlighted the importance of seagrass meadows in a debate to mark World Environment Day.

Q2 – In July, Ben presented his research at the 11<sup>th</sup> Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association Symposium at the University of Mauritius.

In early September thanks to the media coverage Seagrass Ocean Rescue received extensive coverage in the news! Working in partnership with WWF UK and Sky

Ocean Rescue enabled us to communicate our message like never before.

Q3 – Our species champion Gail Ross MSP was shortlisted at a Scottish Parliament reception for Nature of Scotland awards for her continued work to champion seagrass meadows in Scotland.

RJ presented at the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh on the opportunities for seagrass restoration in Scotland and we became an Ally of the Nature Based Solutions Initiative at Oxford University

In November, Ben and Richards research on Mosquito net fishing in seagrass made global news, with articles in New Scientist and other international media, multiple interviews across TV and radio.

In December, Ben was invited to judge and co-present the prestigious Ericsson Innovation Awards, which is held in collaboration with Nobel Week Dialogue. The year's theme was "Dive Deeper" and saw participants create innovative ideas for and with inspiration from our oceans. The awards ceremony took place at the iconic Nobel Prize Museum in Stockholm, Sweden.



Q4 – RJ sat on an expert panel for the Scottish Wildlife Trusts ‘Living Seas’ event at the Scottish Parliament where he discussed proposals for a Marine Fund to fund marine habitat restoration in Scotland.

We were also nominated for the Green Heart Hero Awards – which we won! Leanne and Richard were presented with the award at a reception in Westminster.



We set up a partnership with Emitwise to encourage companies to make their first steps towards achieving net-zero emissions.

We received another round of media coverage with notable highlights being a “Seeds of Hope” article in WWF Action Magazine and excellent coverage again both on the BBC, Sky and in the national press.



Finally, each year ends with both a celebration of World Seagrass Day on March 1<sup>st</sup> and Seagrass Awareness Month (March)

#### *Key achievements: Research*

Q1 – To inform the site selection for our Seagrass Ocean Rescue project it was essential that we collected evidence to inform decision making. To that end we set up the UK's first full-scale seagrass restoration trials in Dale

Q2 – Summer is a key time for marine citizen science participation and to bolster engagement this year we launched a SeagrassSpotter #Bioblitz. In July RJ visited both Lindisfarne and Arran for Seagrass Ocean Rescue research and mapping.

In August, we published “Sowing the Seeds of Seagrass Recovery Using Hessian Bags” in *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*, sharing our innovative new method for seagrass restoration with the academic field. This research has been viewed over 7,000 times and featured in Briefing Notes to the UK parliament.

In August RJ continued his research and mapping on Outer Hebrides with a particular focus on the Sound of Taransay.

Q3 – In the Autumn Richard was part of a published study that investigated the importance of seagrass to Green Turtles in Western Indian Ocean.

In November, Ben and Richard published new research documenting the impacts of mosquito nets that are used for fishing. They revealed that nets used in seagrass collect vast amounts of juvenile fish. The paper ranks in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric based on its impact.

Q4 – In the final quarter Richard and Ben contributed to a key UNEP report due for publication in 2020 called Out of the Blue: The value of seagrasses to the environment and to people.

### *Key achievements: Action*

Q1 – It was always going to be an active year, but to make sure they were ready for what was to come RJ and Richard ran the Edinburgh Marathon for Project Seagrass. It was a great way to raise awareness of Seagrass Ocean Rescue (an Atlantic Cod strapped to the head attracts attention) and to raise funds to support Project Seagrass activities.



As we look to expand our restoration activities into Scotland it is vital that we collect evidence on seagrass health and distribution to make an informed decision.

To this end RJ visited the newly formed Mission Blue Hope Spot to visit the community group Friends of the Sound of Jura. He went seagrass spotting in the Sound of Jura, Loch Sween and Linne Mhurich, engaging with local outdoor swimmers to tap into some local ecological knowledge.

Q2 – On 26<sup>th</sup> July we started picking our first seeds (in Cornwall) for Seagrass Ocean Rescue to officially commence. The first two weeks of August were then the main seed collection weeks at Porthdinllaen, Wales. We collected over 500,000 seeds from this site and conducted filming with both SKY TV and BBC Wales.

**Q3 – The team in Wales visited Sky HQ to get some seagrass seed bagging done!**

**Q4 – Seagrass seed planting commenced in Dale for Seagrass Ocean Rescue as well as at Coastlands Primary school in Dale.**

**We continued with our partnership with Natural England to conduct the Isle of Scilly Seagrass Monitoring Survey, and continued with our Seagrass-Watch Survey in Porthdinllaen.**

**We envisage a busy year ahead! Please follow our progress on social media via the hashtag [#SeagrassOceanRescue](#)**

**Let's hope that for our 2020-21 Report we can look back at the start of a successful Seagrass Ocean Rescue journey!**



## **Trustees’ Responsibilities in relation to the Financial Statements**

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom General Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

1. Select suitable account policies and then apply them consistently

2. Observe the methods and the principles in the Charity SORP
3. Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent and
4. Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue on that basis.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply the appropriate legislation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet)

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2019
Notes		£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>							
Donations	1a,b,c	10,257.69			1,099 140 (Paypal)		
Other trading activities	2	15.20			74 (spreadshirt)		
Grant Income	3		6,160			8,120.00	
Charitable activities		98.56	-				
<b>Total income</b>		<b>10,371.45</b>	<b>6,160</b>	<b>16531.45</b>			<b>9,219</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Costs of raising funds:	4	1,517.20		1,517.20	500		500
Conferences and Events	5	221.68		221.68	1362		1362
Charitable activities	6		6607.89	6607.89	1831	7504	9345
Governance / Other expenditure	7	823.47		823.47	172		172
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>2562.35</b>	<b>6607.89</b>	<b>9170.24</b>			<b>11,379</b>
<b>Net (expenditure) / income</b>		<b>7809.10</b>	<b>-447.89</b>	<b>7361,21</b>	<b>-2,765</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>-2,149</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>							
<b>Net movement in funds</b>							
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
<b>Total funds carried forward from previous year</b>		<b>6,470</b>	<b>11,111</b>	<b>17,570</b>			
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>14,279.10</b>	<b>10,663.11</b>	<b>24,931.21</b>	<b>6,470</b>	<b>11,111</b>	<b>17,570</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes form part of the financial statements.

## Notes

1. During the financial year we received the following donations.
  - a. We received a total of £3365.30 from unrestricted donations through PayPal from our website
  - b. We received a total of £2678.83 from Virgin Giving Fund, of which £2,377.75 was in relation to our Edinburgh Marathon fundraising event.
  - c. We received a very generous individual donation of £2000 from Robin McLeod and family.
2. We continued to receive income from our merchandise sales through online distributor SpreadShirt.de, for which tax is already deducted from payments to us.
3. We received project money for Seagrass Ocean Rescue and Natural England with regards to the annual seagrass surveys we conduct in the Isles of Scilly
4. £1517.20 was spent on materials for our welcome packs and outreach activities; specifically, on tote bags, postcards, stickers, kids journal prints and leaflets.
5. £221.68 was used to cover attendance and travel to Oceans Festival 2019 in Bristol
6. We spent £2258 on Seagrass Ocean Rescue materials and £4350 on Isle of Scilly seagrass survey.
7. £459.98 was the first payment towards the building a new website at ProjectSeagrass.org and £204.72 on liability insurance.

This statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognized in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) relating to small companies.

Approved by the board of trustees on **XX of XXX 2020** and signed on its behalf by:



Dr Richard K.F. Unsworth, Director and Chair of Trustees



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