



LEAGUE AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS

2019 Impact Report

Message from the Chairman, Tim Holmes



I am especially delighted to be able to share our annual report with you this year. I am truly proud of all that has been achieved and I am sure that you will be too. By all accounts and almost any measure that you can think of, the last 12 months of life at the League Against Cruel Sports has seen some of our most important work come to fruition; these months must go down as some of the most successful in our history – and certainly of the last 15 years.

It has not been an easy time in the charity sector. There has been much uncertainty and turbulence in the country at large. Despite this, and some lingering historic challenges that the organisation continues to deal with, the future for the League has never looked brighter. It is without question that the League continues to strengthen its prominence and reach within the animal welfare sector. Whilst it has not succeeded yet, due to the general election, our success in bringing forward the Animal (Sentencing) Bill and extensive interaction with 10 Downing Street speaks to this raised profile.

Please do spend some time reviewing the contents of this report. Within these pages you will see the breadth and depth of the fantastic work that has been achieved this year and be able to see clearly the potential for even greater successes that lie just around the corner. The potential of the last couple of years is beginning to bear fruit and turn into measurable and impactful achievement. There is a long way still to travel, but the future for the League, and most importantly for the welfare and protection of animals currently being abused in the name of 'sport', has never been more filled with hope and light. As we enter 2020, and like many other organisations across the country, we are expecting COVID-19 to impact on our operations and finances.

We will seek to mitigate our risks as far as we can, whilst still allowing us to meet our charitable objects.

Message from the CEO, Andy Knott MBE



This was the year the League really showed what it is capable of. Step change improvements to strategy, planning and resourcing were underpinned by a 20 per cent increase in our income, together with a significant reduction in costs. Combined with a strong people culture that continues to attract and retain top talent, we were able to deliver exceptional value for our supporters. This is evidenced by the real and tangible wins for animals across the spectrum of our work, increasingly recognised by the public and those in power.

Foremost amongst these are 'big ticket' items, such as the landmark commitment from the Conservative Party not to repeal the Hunting Act 2004, to hard won shooting bans on various high-profile estates. Be it in campaigns, operations or policy, the key to unlocking all these doors is winning hearts and minds, as well as arguments. In 2019 we did both.

The public mood is with animals and along with many others, we will aim to make 2020 the start of a new decade for them.

We will seek to both shape and capitalise on that mood, continuing to bring many more people with us, and focusing our efforts where they achieve the best effect.

“*...Be it in campaigns, operations or policy, the key to unlocking all these doors is winning hearts and minds, as well as arguments. In 2019 we did both...*”

STRATEGIC APPROACH

In January 2019, the Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team, attended a two-day strategic workshop to review the League's Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives.

Following these discussions, they were revised to better reflect our work and strategic direction for the charity. 2019 departmental plans were built with our working priorities as the main focus.

OUR VISION

A kinder society where persecuting animals for 'sport' is in the past.

OUR MISSION

Empowered by knowledge and driven by compassion, we protect animals from being persecuted in the name of 'sport'.

United, we aim to redefine what is acceptable and inspire change.

OUR WORKING PRIORITIES



End hunting with dogs



End shooting of animals for 'sport'



End fighting of animals for 'sport'



Win the hearts and minds of a broader audience

A LEGACY OF KINDNESS

These passionate supporters shared their love of animals by remembering the League in their will and defending wildlife against the cruelty of hunting, shooting and fighting. By leaving a legacy bequest, each one will be memorialised on the Tree of Life at our Baronsdown Wildlife Sanctuary, where they will inspire and influence future generations of animal advocates.

Lynda Andrews
Derek Anthony
Cecil Anthony
Stuart Bennett
Gordon Bird
Myrtle Booth
William Brown
Rita Burt
Jean Carloss
Josephine Chapman
Dorothy Clark
Joan Cope
Norma Crompton
Christine Curran
Margaret Curtis
Anthony Cutcher
Rita Fellows
Nowell Ford

Kathleen Foulds
Beryl Francis
Marguerite Fraser
Lillian Fright
Joyce Frost
John Hendy
Sally Clare Henneberg
Ann Hill
Thea Holley
Sheila Hubert
David Hudspith
Michael Jarrett
Jeffrey Jeffs
B Jonas
David Kemp
Clive Kingham
Eric Launder
Marian Mansell

Patricia Minshall
Ada Murray
Margaret Oakey
Charles Penny
Vera Phillips
Buddy Roberts
Valerie Rogers
Sidney Saunders
Pamela Shufflebotham
Valerie Siddall
Elizabeth Smith
Ruby Smith
Helen Stonham
Marion Tagg
Christina Warner
Margorie Waters
Joan Wicking



2019 AT A GLANCE (JAN–JUN)

JANUARY: No one's trophy

Starting the year as we intended to go on, a BBC journalist accompanied our professional Investigators whilst out monitoring the Devon and Somerset Staghounds hind hunt. Aired on the BBC Radio 4PM programme, this was the first time that the illegal hunting of a hind was broadcast on this channel. Reaching over 4.2 million listeners, we helped shine a light on this cruelty; demonstrating to the public that illegal hunting is still taking place.



FEBRUARY: Not born to fight

Instigated by a two-year investigation led by us, an international network of dog fighters was exposed in a major BBC report on the Radio 4 PM Programme and on BBC One News – reaching over five million viewers.

Our investigation into this network, led us to Scottish dog fighter Liam Patterson.

Working in partnership with the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, we provided analytical support that secured Patterson's conviction. Banned from keeping dogs for fifteen years, as well as being subject to a home curfew and the fulfilment of 300 hours of unpaid work, Patterson's sentence demonstrates that there is no place for dog fighting here in the UK.



Global dog fighting network exposed



MARCH: Welsh public land freed

In March, a ban on shooting pheasants on public land in Wales came into effect. This was the result of a three-year campaign by Animal Aid and us. Empowered by over 12,500 signatures that called on the Government to action the pledge to end shooting, this win is a true reflection of the compassion that Wales has for animals.



APRIL: Place your bet

With 1,000 horses in the racing industry being killed in the UK each year (British Horseracing Authority), we called on Aintree Racecourse and the British Horseracing Authority to introduce safety measures for the Grand National.

With the aim of educating a new audience and raising awareness of the cruelty of horse racing, we launched a hard-hitting film that highlighted the hideous truth that if injured, sadly horses are put down. The film was viewed by over 28,000 people on social media; helping to put the odds in the favour of animals.



MAY: When was shooting birds for 'sport' part of University life?

Building on the momentum from March, which saw the ban on shooting pheasants on Welsh public land, the University of Wales soon followed. In May, the University announced that bird shooting arrangements at Gregynog Hall would be suspended. With figures obtained from the University of Wales showing that 57,000 factory farmed pheasants have been released into the ground over the last five years, this suspension is a welcomed success.



JUNE: The voices of animals are heard in Parliament

With animal abuse only warranting a pitiful six-month custodial sentence, together with other leading animal charities, we called on the Government to increase sentencing to five years.

Leading the delegation together with Chris Sherwood CEO at the RSPCA, our united front to bring forward this legislation was accepted. A letter to the Prime Minister's Special Advisor on the Environment, Lord John Randal, was presented urging the Government to act as quickly as possible. The resulting legislation quickly reached the second reading in Parliament with cross party support, but it fell victim to Brexit before it could be passed. We are expecting the Bill to be passed in 2020.



2019 AT A GLANCE (JUL-DEC)

JULY: Picnic anyone?

Together with our supporters, we have been campaigning for the National Trust to stop licensing 'trail' hunting on its land, as 'trail' hunting is nothing more than a cover for animal cruelty. Campaigning across the country at National Trust picnics, we continued to build on the momentum gained in 2018, which saw a number of hunting licences suspended. As a result, only nine hunting licences were issued compared with 25 from the previous season.



AUGUST: Pulling the plug on Yorkshire Water

Days before the beginning of the grouse shooting season, together with Ban Bloodsports on Yorkshire's Moors, over 100 supporters rallied together at a demonstration that called for the ending of blood 'sports' on land owned by Yorkshire Water. This compassion was also echoed by 135,000 people signing a petition to the company urging them to end grouse shooting.

As a result of our campaigning efforts, Yorkshire Water confirmed in December that shooting will end once all current leases have lapsed.



SEPTEMBER: Give a voice to animals

For the first time in our history, the League launched a radio advert that was fronted by our patron, Bill Oddie, OBE. Supported by a digital campaign, we reached over three million people; the largest audience ever to see a League fundraising campaign. With 600 new supporters achieved from this campaign, we will enter 2020 stronger than ever.



OCTOBER: Reviving Scotland's grouse moors

With up to almost one fifth of Scottish land used for shooting hundreds of thousands of grouse in the space of four months every year, the Revive coalition is strongly building momentum for change. Aiming to reform Scotland's grouse moor, Chris Packham launched a report on the environmental damage currently created at a major political event. As a result, coalition members were invited to meet with the Scottish government's Environmental Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham. This encouraging dialogue is an indication that we are one step closer to reviving Scotland's grouse moors once and for all.



NOVEMBER: University of Reading ends 'game' bird shooting

The University of Reading has taken the decision to make this shooting season its last. Alongside raising awareness at the University's freshers fair, more than 8,000 people wrote to the Vice Chancellor to call for the removal of 'game' shooting rights. Following a full consultation that included the League, the pheasant shoot and other stakeholders, 'game' bird shooting finally has no place at the University of Reading.



DECEMBER: United Against Hunting

With 191 fox hunts in Great Britain today, we campaigned for securing and strengthening the Hunting Act 2004 at the General Election.

As a result, the Conservative Party's manifesto confirmed that 'no changes will be made to the Act'. By contrast, in every previous election manifesto since the law was passed in 2004, the party had promised to hold a vote on making the blood 'sport' legal again.

Although this year's manifesto pledge does not strengthen the Act, it nevertheless is a significant step for the party and for wildlife. It demonstrates that the momentum for change is building and highlights the importance of continuing to apply pressure in 2020.





GOAL ONE: END HUNTING WITH DOGS

Hunting with hounds was banned in 2004 but is still rife in the British countryside. The rise of smart camera phones and social media use by the public and hunt monitor groups means that the scale of the hunts' suspected illegal activities is coming increasingly under the spotlight – much more so than happened in the immediate aftermath of the ban.

Investigating illegal hunts

In Scotland our professional Investigators successfully filmed suspicious activity by hunts and footage was widely shown on Scottish TV. One instance of suspected illegal hunting was also witnessed by the Scottish Green Party MSP, Alison Johnstone, who we are working closely with on a Member's Bill on fox hunting and mountain hare killing in Scotland.

During October 2018, professional Investigators observed the Meynall and South Staffordshire Hunt, which resulted in footage of the hunt pursuing a fox during cub hunting season. An evidence package was passed over to Derbyshire Police who subsequently interviewed and charged six men from the hunt. A trial date was set for 25th November 2019 however, two weeks before the trial the Crown Prosecution Service did a deal with the defendants' legal team that meant only two of the men entered guilty pleas, whilst the other four had charges withdrawn citing "not being in the public interest" by the Crown Prosecution Service.

Creating Change

During the 2018 hunting season we secured over 750 media articles highlighting the Boxing Day Hunts. Our work was recognised as a regional finalist by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR).

A safe haven for our wildlife

Our League wildlife sanctuaries in Exmoor and Devon have once again saved persecuted animals both directly and indirectly from the hunts. On several occasions during the year, hunts have been forced to withdraw after the hunted animals found refuge on our land, which we either own outright or own the sporting rights.

Enough is enough

'Trail' hunting is not a genuine sport, but a cover for illegal hunting. Inspired by League activity, in March 2019, a landmark decision by Nottinghamshire County Council banned 'trail' hunting on its land. We welcomed the council's bold move and stepped up our campaign, calling on other councils across the UK to follow its lead.

We achieved a substantial victory in the number of 'trail' hunting licences issued by the National Trust. Thanks to our supporters campaigning across the country at National Trust picnics, we raised awareness of how 'trail' hunts are permitted to operate on their land. In 2018, 25 licences were issued but in 2019, only nine were issued – a 64 per cent reduction. The Portman Hunt licence at Kingston Lacy Estate was cancelled along with two hunts on Long Mynd estate in Shropshire.

You can read our full list of achievements on our website: www.league.org.uk

Political Persuasion

In November 2019, we received the very welcome news that the Labour manifesto had adopted all our suggested measures to strengthen the Hunting Act 2004. This was a momentous victory for all UK wildlife. Likewise, the Conservative manifesto made a commitment to secure the Act, a reversal of their prior position. The Conservative Party had included a free vote on the repeal of the Act in every previous manifesto since 2006. Together, we have influenced this decision. Your campaigning and our lobbying have resulted in a better outlook for our wildlife.

Achieving Justice

Two of our professional Investigators were brutally attacked in 2016, while filming a hunt. George Grant, the Belvoir Hunt terrier man, and his son Thomas Grant pleaded guilty at Leicester Crown Court in June 2019 to charges of grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm, theft of a video camera and criminal damage. Both received suspended custodial sentences, were ordered to perform 200 hours of unpaid work and pay £500 to both victims. But this wasn't enough, we believe in justice.

We began civil proceedings against the Belvoir Hunt to recover damages, which were then agreed out of court. Our two professional Investigators received a total of £50,000 in compensation. Together, we can send out a strong message to hunts around the UK. Assaulting anyone peacefully monitoring hunt activity is not acceptable.



2020 Priorities

1. In October 2020, support members to secure a motion to National Trust members at the AGM to end 'trail' hunting on their land
2. Successfully lobby the Scottish Government to strengthen the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002 in time for the next Scottish election in 2021
3. Lobby local authorities to end hunting on their land
4. Whilst we secured groundbreaking commitments from the Conservative Party during the 2019 General Election, we will continue to press for a strengthened Hunting Act 2004



GOAL TWO: END SHOOTING OF ANIMALS FOR 'SPORT'

35 million pheasants and partridges are bred on factory farms and released on shooting estates in the UK every year. 100,000 birds are shot every day during the shooting season.

Grouse Moor Reform

The Revive coalition for grouse moor reform in Scotland goes from strength to strength. Despite only being launched in November 2018, it has enormously raised the profile of the environmental issues surrounding grouse moors. A national conference was held in Perth, with over 250 attendees, and two huge fringe events at the Spring and Autumn Scottish National Party conferences contributed to the national coverage of the issue.

A haven for birds

In and around our sanctuaries, pheasants and red-legged partridge have escaped from the neighbouring shooting estates and live in relative safety on our land. We have also protected those species that are persecuted relentlessly by the shoots, such as foxes, badgers and birds of prey, and provided them with a place to breed and raise young. Footage and images from the League's wildlife sanctuaries have been used to support our campaigns.

Campaigning for change

Our polling with Survation revealed two-thirds of rural people in Wales do not believe 'game' bird shooting reflects countryside values. In March 2019, a ban on shooting pheasants on public land in Wales came into effect, a landmark decision by the largest Welsh Government body.

Natural Resources Wales pioneered a decision to no longer permit 'game' bird shooting in the Welsh national forest. The decision was a result of a three-year long campaign by us, our supporters and Animal Aid, which won the support of a government minister and civil servants.

Unfortunately, the University of Wales still allowed shooting on its land, but in May 2019, they suspended pheasant shooting following our targeted campaign. The University's 'game' bird shooting arrangements at Gregynog Hall, Powys, have not been renewed. We are still campaigning for the University to go the whole way by bringing pheasant shooting to a permanent end on its grounds and we will continue until this is achieved.

Following a yearlong campaign by us and Ban Bloodsports on Yorkshire's Moors (BBYM), we received the very welcoming news that Yorkshire Water would tighten up its licencing arrangements. Shooting will end on Yorkshire Water land once all current leases have lapsed. A joint demonstration with BBYM in Bradford city centre, just days before the 'Glorious Twelfth', the traditional start of the grouse shooting season, brought this to the media's attention. More than 135,000 people signed a petition to Yorkshire Water CEO to urge the company to clean up its act by ending grouse shooting.

Yorkshire Water is a very large utility company with operational control over a vast amount of land. Their decision to bring to an end to shooting on their land will have repercussions throughout the industry and beyond. This was a huge campaign win, achieved with the support of you, our supporters

We also achieved another campaign win, after the University of Reading said it was to end the shooting of pheasants on its land. The decision to end 'game' bird shooting was made following a consultation which was a direct result of our campaign launched last summer.

No one's trophy

We also continued our campaigning to expose trophy hunting at Woburn Abbey Deer Park which allows tourists from around the world to pay up to £25,000 to shoot and kill deer bred and kept at the Park. League campaigners and over 50 protesters, including local residents, exposed the truth of what goes on at Woburn Abbey Deer Park. Campaigners from local pressure group Bedfordshire Against Trophy Hunting (BATH) and the League launched a joint action calling for the deer park's owners to end trophy hunting.

The park forms part of the Duke of Bedford's Woburn Estate, which also includes the popular Woburn Safari Park and Woburn Abbey.

The protest drew a great deal of support from visitors to the Woburn Estate who were shocked to hear about the killings at a venue that presents itself as a family-friendly destination. We will continue working with BATH and the local residents until deer are no longer anyone's trophy.



2020 Priorities

1. Influence Scottish political manifestos to include policies that will reform grouse moors and lead towards the end of driven grouse shooting
2. End cage rearing in Wales by the time the Assembly elections happen in May 2021
3. End the transport of live birds and ready-to-hatch eggs into and out of the UK, focusing on Eurotunnel and Stena



GOAL THREE: END FIGHTING OF ANIMALS FOR 'SPORT'

An international network selling and transporting dogs to be used in dog fighting across the world – including to the UK – was exposed in a major BBC report on the Radio 4 PM Programme and BBC One News at Six in February. Based on initial information compiled over two years by the League, the BBC investigation revealed the deeply disturbing world of organised dog fighting.

Intelligence Gathering

Our research for the BBC investigation identified a particular dog fighting dealer, Ivaylo Nikolov, who was supplying fighting dogs to the UK. Our Intelligence Team identified Liam Patterson from Scotland as being involved in dog fighting. We collaborated with the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) and Police Scotland, which resulted in obtaining a warrant at his home address. Dog fighting equipment, three dogs, including one American Pit Bull Terrier and film footage of him encouraging dogs to fight were discovered. Sadly, the American Pit Bull Terrier was put to sleep.

Through our skilled investigative work, we discovered that Patterson had been encouraging the fighting of dogs at another person's address which we had already identified through our surveillance work. This individual's home address was also subject of a visit, during which an American Pit Bull Terrier was identified and surrendered over to the SSPCA.

Collaborating for change

Along with the RSPCA, we brought together a delegation of ten other animal welfare charities to visit Number 10 to lobby for the introduction of increased sentences for animal cruelty under the new Animal (Sentencing) Bill. The Bill reached the second reading in Parliament with cross party support before falling due to the calling of a general election. We ensured the Bill was revived and, having appeared in the Conservative Party manifesto at the top of the list of animal welfare pledges, we expect the Bill to be resubmitted in 2020.

Achieving Justice

Justice was achieved for man's best friend. Following our two-year investigation with the BBC, UK dog fighter, Liam Patterson, was convicted and banned from keeping dogs for fifteen years, as well as being subject to a community payback order. This means that Patterson will remain under supervision for two years, placed under a home curfew and will be fulfilling 300 hours of unpaid work. We say no dog is born to fight and this sends out a strong message to other UK dog fighters.

2020 Priorities

1. Present Animal (Sentencing) Bill to new Parliament
2. Compile a piece of work to investigate and determine the level of cruel 'sports' in the UK to raise awareness of its prevalence
3. Research and enrich intelligence on known dog and cock fighterson Eurotunnel and Stena





GOAL FOUR: WIN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF A BROADER AUDIENCE

Our supporters are at the heart of all we do. Without you our voice would not be as loud and determined. To make our voice even louder and to protect those who don't have a voice, we want to reach out to a broader audience, who can unite with us to inspire attitude change and redefine what is acceptable.

Inspiring attitude change

The Revive campaign has featured extensively in the Scottish media and we are the go-to campaign for its animal welfare, social justice and environmental approach to the issue of grouse moors. The Revive coalition is taking our message out to a whole new audience who are interested in the very popular issues of land reform, environmental degradation and animal welfare.

Educating the public

We released a critically acclaimed hard hitting horse racing film ahead of the Grand National following Ballyward being killed on the opening day of the controversial horse racing festival. The film showed an injured football player being shot dead after a match. Around 1,000 horses from the racing industry are killed in slaughterhouses in Britain each year, according to the British Horseracing Authority. Our hard-hitting campaign helped us reach a new audience raising awareness of our work.

On one of the hottest days last year, we launched a joint campaign with greyhound welfare organisation, Greyt Exploitations. We called for races to be cancelled as temperatures reached 39°C (102°F) in parts of the UK over the summer. Greyhounds were transported from their kennels, paraded and raced in extreme conditions; the opposite of the advice given to animal lovers caring for their own pets during heatwaves. Greyhounds stop racing at around three years old and many are put down as they are deemed to be no longer valuable. Working with other organisations we will continue to raise awareness of the truth behind this 'sport' until all greyhound racetracks are closed.

Growing our reach

The Devon and Somerset Stagounds were exposed hind hunting by the BBC Radio 4 PM programme after a journalist accompanied our professional Investigators monitoring their activity. This was the first time the suspected illegal hunting of hinds, which is still taking place in the West Country, was aired by the BBC. We reached over 4.2m listeners.

We reached an audience of nearly 6 million with a significant article in The Times showcasing the loopholes that are being exploited in stag hunting.

Reporting animal cruelty

Our supporter-funded Animal Crimewatch reporting service allows people from across the UK to report animal crimes. Last year we received 699 calls from members of the public who were concerned about animal cruelty. Suspected illegal fox hunting continues to be the number one animal welfare issue reported with 467 reports. We shared 283 intelligence reports with 36 different police forces across the UK and 160 were shared with other agencies such as law enforcement and the RSPCA.

Countryside Collaboration

We are proud to be members of Wildlife and Countryside LINK. A membership organisation of fifty-five wildlife and countryside organisations with a strong collective political voice on environmental, wildlife and animal welfare issues. Already some members of staff are now contributing to LINK through specific working groups such as wildlife crime, legal strategy and policy officers.



2020 Priorities

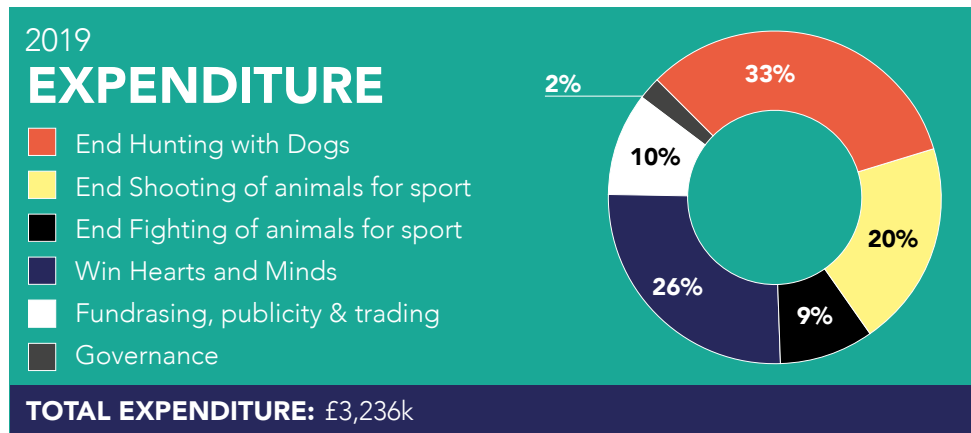
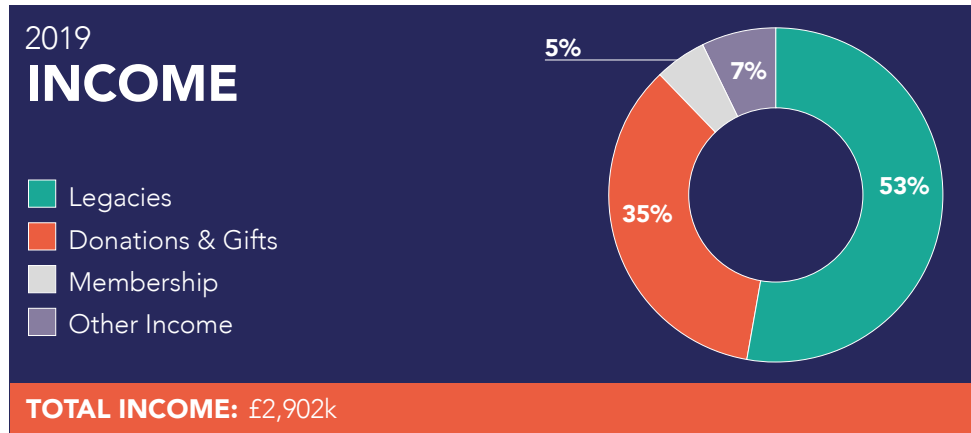
1. Build more and stronger relationships with like-minded organisations
2. Increase our reach through new fundraising campaigns
3. Representation of the League across the broad range of Wildlife and Countryside LINK working groups.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND RESERVES CHART

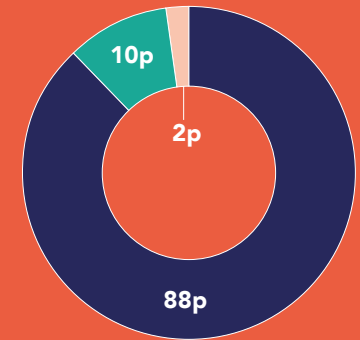
Building on the major business investments carried out in 2018, the Board agreed to continue the significant investment of reserves into achieving the group's charitable activities and developing fundraising opportunities in 2019; to ensure the League is a viable and long-term sustainable organisation on which to build our future growth ambitions. In line with Charity Commission guidance, we

continue to focus our financial resources on achieving our charitable objects. Overall the result for the year is total expenditure exceeding income by £334k; once more the League was able to deliver on its charitable activity programmes and operational projects at well below the agreed investment budget, and whilst maintaining its necessary level of reserves.



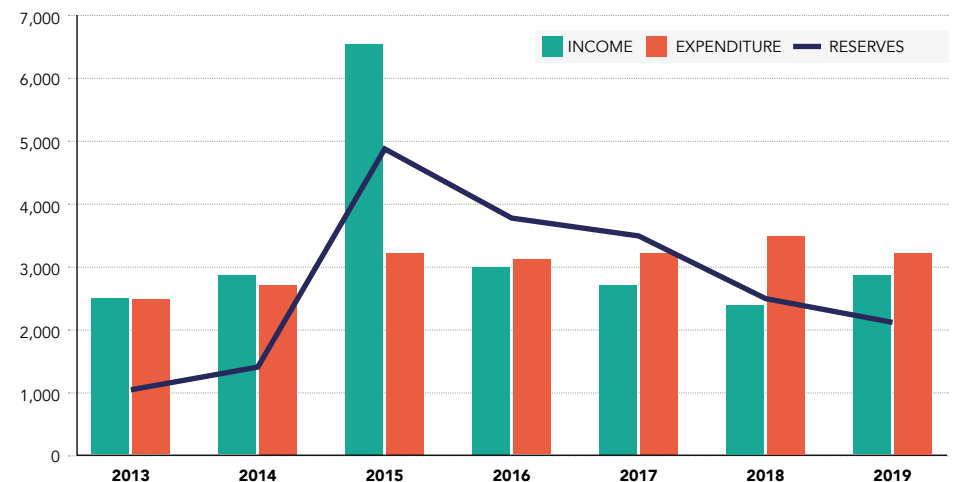
2019 PER £1 SPENT

- Charitable Objectives
- Fundraising
- Governance



Reserves are a key requirement to ensure the long-term viability of the charity. The Board of Trustees regularly monitors the level of retained reserves. Our reserves policy is based on a risk identification approach calculating an appropriate level of unrestricted reserves to cover our contractual commitments, working capital requirements, and to manage possible fluctuations in future income. Our Reserves Policy is detailed further in our 2019 Annual Report and Financial Statements on our website.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE & RESERVES £000



For more detailed information on the League's 2019 finances please refer to the 2019 Annual Report and Financial Statements available on our website



League Against Cruel Sports

New Sparling House
Holloway Hill
Godalming
GU7 1QZ

01483 524 250

supportercare@league.org.uk

www.league.org.uk

The League Against Cruel Sports. Registered charity in England and Wales (1095234) and Scotland (SC045533). Registered in England and Wales as a company, no. 04037610. Registered office: New Sparling House, Holloway Hill, Godalming, GU7 1QZ, United Kingdom.

League Against Cruel Sports (UK) Limited. Registered in England and Wales as a company, no. 02880406. Registered office: New Sparling House, Holloway Hill, Godalming, GU7 1QZ, United Kingdom.