



# Annual report

October 2021 – September 2022

Uniting farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers to create better food and land use systems for everyone





# Welcome

Welcome to the Landworkers' Alliance (LWA) annual report for the year October 2021 – September 2022. This report outlines the key activities carried out by the LWA during this period. Due to the huge amount of work being done by the coordinating group, staff teams, regional, branch, sectoral and working group organisers, members and supporters in farms, fields, forests and communities around the UK we cannot mention everything, but have done our best to represent the activities we've been working on, the pathways advanced and the key outcomes achieved over the year.

This has been another year peppered by extreme weather events and expressions of geopolitical instability and inequity. In the UK we saw destructive storms in the winter and spring, record breaking heat and deep drought in the summer, and are heading into a winter where many people will struggle to afford to heat their homes and cover their basic needs. The war in Ukraine, the scandals and betrayals of our government, and the cost of living crisis have all had an impact on all of our members' lives, land and communities, with price rises and supply chain issues still causing disruption.

These issues have brought food systems to the fore, making visible to the general public the issues which agroecology and food sovereignty campaigners and activists have been discussing for many years. The topic of the impacts of food production and distribution have been part of the national conversation as people consider the impact that their food choices have. Most of this reflection has been welcome, however we observe the polarising and reductionist ways the media presents these issues, and the attempted co-option of these ethical considerations by corporations in a flurry of greenwash.

For example, where some propose a simplistic, binary conflict between meat eaters and vegans, we advocate a more systemic and radical view. There is a choice for all of us, producers and consumers - and it is between agroecological, small scale community based systems which prioritise the health of soil, animals and ecologies, or industrialised, corporate controlled, monocultures who chase the

bottom line. This industrial model ends with ecological destruction, exploitation of people, and cruelty to animals. We are proud that the LWA encompasses a wide range of views and lived experiences, with our members including both vegan stock free horticulturists and pasture fed livestock farms. We believe we have enough of a shared vision to encompass differences of opinion and outlook. And we have enough of a powerful common goal to focus our attention on; the dangers of the corporate controlled food system. We can walk forward together in this, and can accommodate the different ways in which we walk. It is the diversity of our experiences, and the generosity with which we negotiate them, which creates the power and solidarity we need.

Similarly we question the false binary outlaid in the media and the movement between land for wildlife or land for food production. We have many inspiring examples of silvopasture, agroforestry and soil enriching techniques, as well as inspiration from the many indigenous communities across the world who produce food for their communities in a reciprocal and nourishing way, remembering all the time that humans are a part of nature rather than separate, or superior to it.

Following the publication of the National Food Strategy last year, the government brought out their response in June 2022. This long overdue Food Strategy White Paper was disappointing when it was finally published, and lacked both detailed



recommendations and the multi-departmental, holistic approach that the deepening food crisis demands. LWA is now focussing its efforts on collaborating with other, like-minded organisations to influence the Horticulture Strategy and Land Use Framework, two key opportunities opened up by the policy which are being developed over the next two years.

This year has given us all further deep insight into the instability of our food, farming and political systems, so we feel the need now, more than ever, to push forward the positive solutions created by our members through their hard work on the land everyday. We are continually inspired and nourished

by the work happening in fields, forests, gardens and communities across these islands, as our members and supporters work to create the changes that we want to see, and embody those principles and visions through the diverse ways which we work with the soil, the land and our society.

We draw inspiration and comfort from how our communities and membership work together through hardship, adversity and challenges. When challenges arise, such as Storm Eunice in February, ripping up trees and polytunnels up and down the country, we saw people coming together to support each other in its aftermath. We were happy to use our Solidarity Pot for our members





to support repairing storm damage , and experienced solid mutual aid as we received an increase in both donations and requests for this pot. We are also excited to see new pathways emerge in economic justice within the food system, as many of our members experiment with different pricing models such as sliding scales and solidarity shares in a potentially transformative movement for change.

This year has also seen people all over the world gather and organise together in resistance. We have seen a summer of industrial action here in the UK, with transport and postal service workers on the front

line for improving our working conditions, and the LWA stands in solidarity with those currently at the forefront organising for our collective wellbeing. For the first time, we have also seen significant successful union organising within the giants of the globalised corporate world, as Amazon, Starbucks and Google employees begin the process of organising to improve their conditions. And we are excited to see discussions emerge among our members about the need for a workers union to work on these issues in the fields, farms, and workplaces of our networks, and we look forward to seeing how the LWA can support this.

We have been carrying on building the new world in the shell of the old with our work on creating resilient local food systems; short supply chains and alternative trading models, campaigning and movement building, as well as in very welcome gatherings together to grow our networks and share knowledge in person and in common ground.

We have also seen and been part of many enriching overlaps between our aims as a union of farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers and others organising for justice; with connections across housing, anti-racism and access to land.

We have felt our movement intertwine with this wider one at key moments like COP26 where LWA hosted a hub of good food, workshops and community, as well as participating within the official conference as part of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples mechanism, and at the Land Skills Fair where we heard from many projects, including migrant support networks, a Stonehenge protection campaign, and we analysed the connections between racial justice and land justice. We also had opportunities for international solidarity this year by connecting with the Zapatistas, the Indian Farmers movement and the Kayapo in Brazil.

This year marks 10 years since the beginning of the LWA, and we are humbled and delighted to see how far we have come as a union, a community, and a movement, having reached goals and aims which initially seemed incredibly ambitious and hard to achieve. We now solidly have the seat at the table that we were seeking, as representatives

work and advocate within local, national and international decision making spaces, while we continue to be embedded in and enriching grassroots social movements and agroecological communities.

This movement is building, becoming stronger and reaching wider, and each shock and rupture is also an opportunity to rebuild things differently. Each crack in the existing system is a chance for a new seed to lodge in the concrete, to grow and flourish in a way that is healthy, regenerative and restorative for people, soil and society. We are grateful for the opportunities this year has brought us to come together in celebration and solidarity, in knowledge and skills exchange, in reflective, discursive and joyful spaces.

In these ways we resource ourselves, and build capacity into our lives, our gardens, our farms, our woodlands and our communities. This grows our

networked resilience to withstand and grow through the inevitable further shocks of the unstable and exploitative system we are currently under, and brings joy, solidarity and purpose to our lives and our movement.

Once again we look back on the year and are humbled by the skill, vision and commitment of our membership, encouraged by the growing social movement behind agroecology and food sovereignty, and committed to the pathways we all must follow in the coming years if we are to hold on to our hopes for a regenerative and equitable future.

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# Organisational Structure



**In our organisation structure we aim to:**  
**Create a strong and resilient organisational structure that can support the LWA to grow into a large and democratic grassroots union operating within a participatory social movement dynamic.**

This year we have been consolidating growth, trialling new internal organisational systems, and clarifying medium term strategy. After the significant growth of the last few years, we enter a phase of stabilisation and a process of realigning our structure and processes to fit

a larger, even more ambitious organisation. While still being responsive and flexible to new opportunities, we have been building our internal systems and processes in order to support part time staff working remotely, within a collaborative structure as opposed to a hierarchical system

with a pyramid structure. We have increased capacity within our operational team, and are consolidating and aligning the staff teams and projects within our strategic vision. Over the winter, the staff teams reviewed our five year development plan, updating targets and adapting for changes,

creating tweaks and updates to guide us until 2025.

The New Entrants, Merch, and Comms teams also worked on their specific strategic objectives, refining and prioritising aims and objectives based on the current context.

We have been doing further work on making visible and improving our organisational Living Systems, as a way to support a healthy organisation. We have made several upgrades to improve how information and feedback flow around the organisation. Charlotte Steel, Dee Butterly and Hannah Leigh Mackie, our Operations Coordinators are stewarding this ongoing work to develop an organisational structure which works more like an ecology than a hierarchy, where the power is dispersed and decision making is shared, where marginal perspectives are appreciated, and

where each element has many functions. We have continued working with Navigate, a grassroots facilitation collective, and will next be focusing on our Care and Support, and Conflict and Transformation systems.

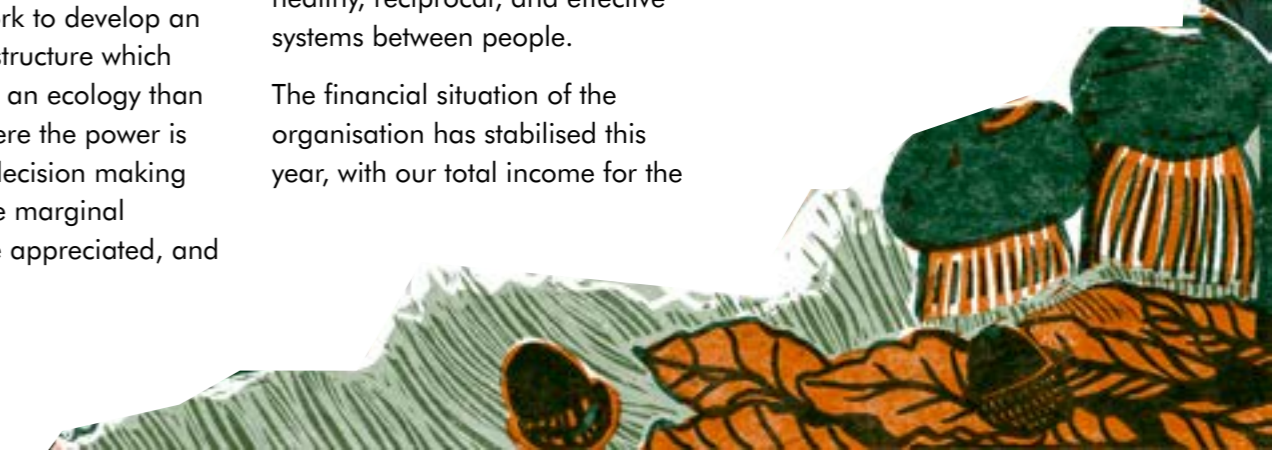
We sent a second cohort of members and staff to ULEX training centre in Spain, to take part in a bespoke course to boost our internal capacities in organising, facilitation and understanding movement ecology. This work brings another element to the prefigurative politics of LWA, as well as seeking to transform food farming and land uses systems, we are seeking to create healthy, reciprocal, and effective systems between people.

The financial situation of the organisation has stabilised this year, with our total income for the

year being £x .

Of this £x was self-generated income from events, sales, members, supporters and donations. Our Grant income came to £x, and our Kickstart regranting came to £158,161. Seeta Rajani and Alyce Biddle, our Finance and Fundraising Coordinators have been working on ways to consolidate our recent growth and seek out more longer term funding.

Last financial year, we accessed the Depart for Work and Pensions' 'Kickstart' program, enabling members to draw-down funding to create employment opportunities for young people on





universal credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment. 23 member businesses across England and Wales accessed the program, creating employment for 57 young people in forestry, horticulture, dairy and livestock. This year, we are finishing off this program and closing off the last of the re-granting.

We continued to offer brilliant merch for sale to our members and the wider public, with a twin aim of bringing in more self generated income to support our work, and as a way to spread the good word! Our online shop has now been live for over a year, retailing LWA branded apparel, promotional materials and gifts online. Over the year, the online shop took £x after tax and shipping with average takings of x. X items have been purchased and shipped, with the top selling items by volume being x. Roberta Emmott, our Sales and Merch coordinator has also provided merchandise and promotion at events throughout the year, including at the LWA hub at COP26, Groundswell festival, The Land Skills Fair and the Royal Welsh Show.

Our 2022 Calendar sold 5200 copies, which is a great amount, but approximately 1000 less than the previous year. Reflecting on this we feel the previous year's huge growth is likely to be the anomaly, as during most of the sales period, the country was in lockdown, and people were at home, engaging with our social media and supporting our response to the pandemic, whereas within the last year restrictions lifted and events and activities opened up again, and similar calendars also appeared on the market.

As always, we seek to be driven by and accountable to the Membership. The past year has been an important year in developing democratic systems that are suitable for the current size and scope of the LWA. October 2021 saw the first ever LWA Organisers' Assembly take place, supported by Natalia Szarek, our Membership Recruitment and Outreach coordinator. The Assembly was an opportunity to bring together regional and branch member organisers, as well as representatives from the Woodland sector, the LGBTQIA+ working group and the youth wing of LWA, FLAME. The 25 delegates from these internal member groups of the LWA met for two days, along with three representatives from the LWA UK Coordinating Group and six members of the LWA Membership staff team. Throughout the weekend, the



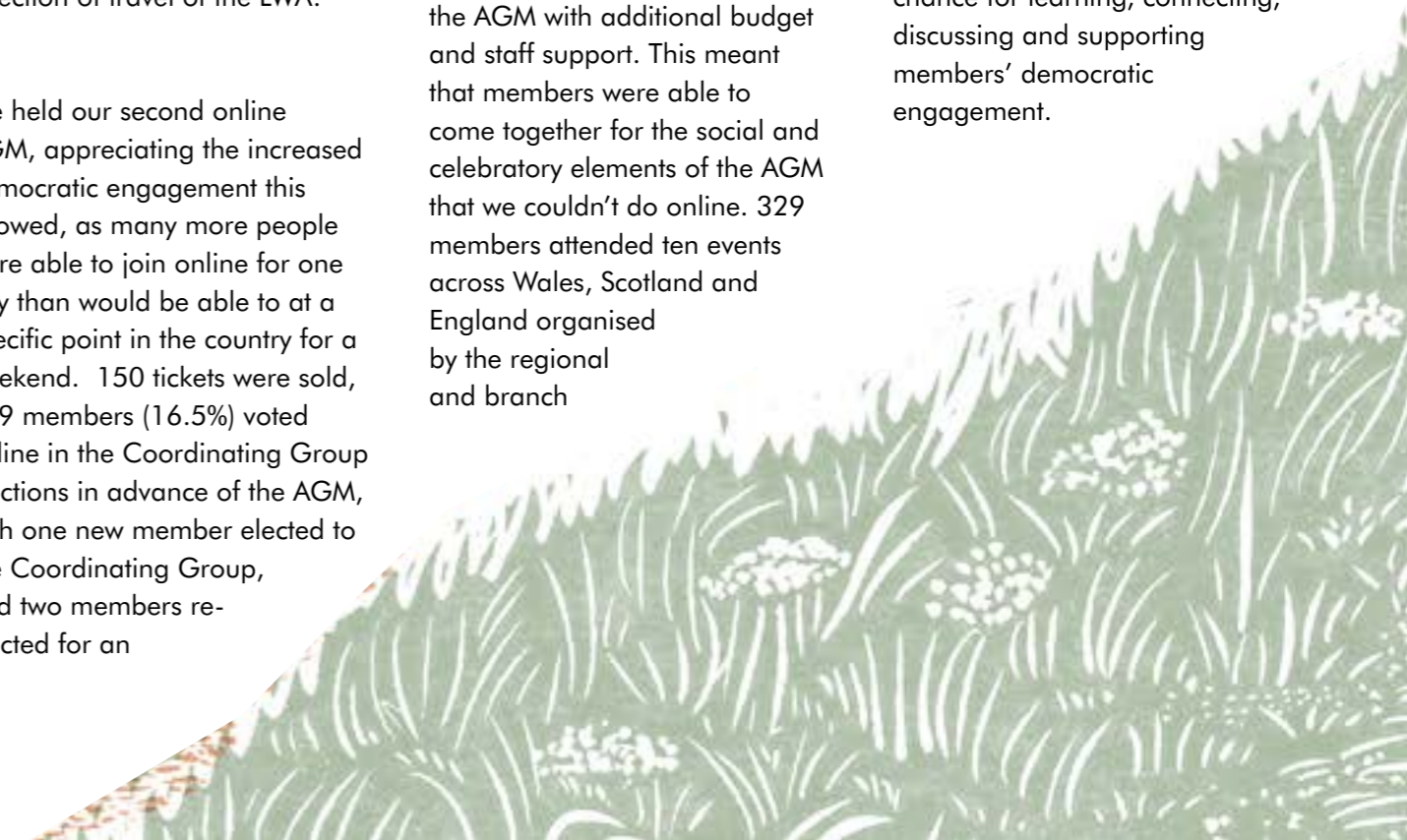
delegates discussed their work as member organisers within the LWA, how to strengthen our internal democracy and their perspectives on the vision and direction of travel of the LWA.

We held our second online AGM, appreciating the increased democratic engagement this allowed, as many more people were able to join online for one day than would be able to at a specific point in the country for a weekend. 150 tickets were sold, 309 members (16.5%) voted online in the Coordinating Group elections in advance of the AGM, with one new member elected to the Coordinating Group, and two members re-elected for an

additional three year term.

In addition to the online AGM, we supported LWA branches and regions to hold regional winter assemblies on the weekend of the AGM with additional budget and staff support. This meant that members were able to come together for the social and celebratory elements of the AGM that we couldn't do online. 329 members attended ten events across Wales, Scotland and England organised by the regional and branch

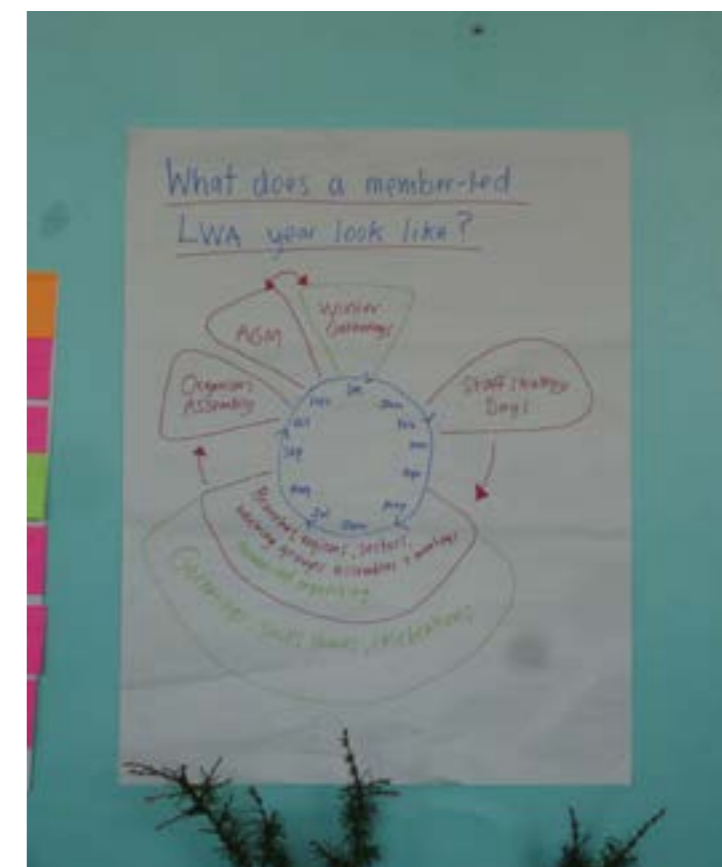
organising teams. This was much appreciated as we have missed the chance to gather as people in physical spaces, as the AGM has always offered a great mid winter chance for learning, connecting, discussing and supporting members' democratic engagement.





member dashboard via our website will make it easier for members to update their details and access services and information - watch this space.

Member-led organising is the heart and soul of the LWA, and the huge amount of love and work that LWA member organisers put into regions, branches, sectors and identity group organising is awe-inspiring. We have supported member organisers through online facilitation trainings and increased staff support, and we are working to improve our systems to support and skill up member organisers through a member organiser training programme and a handbook for member organisers.



We will be building on this model in 2022, with the second Organisers' Assembly in October 2022, organised by our Member Events Coordinator, Emmott Baddeley, an online AGM in December, and regional assemblies throughout the winter, all feeding into the Staff Team and UK Coordinating Group strategy days in early 2023.

Moving through the year, it became easier to gather, and so we reconnected as a social movement in person, and on the land, as members, organisers and staff gathered all over the country at farm visits, celebrations and summits, helping to build

community and organisational resilience. The Land Skills Fair was a great chance to do just this, and it was great to be back in a celebratory LWA space, full of fascinating workshops, chances to learn and discuss, chances to think politically away from the day to the day of the land, firesides, dancing and delicious lovingly made and grown food and drink.

The membership of the Landworkers Alliance has continued to grow, not only in terms of numbers but also in geography and types of landwork, as well as depth of engagement and member-driven organisation. The membership of

the Landworkers' Alliance has now grown to ### members.

- overall membership / supporters/ flame numbers.
- growth of above since last year
- any highlights of growth in specific sectors/branch/regions
- any significant changes/shifts in ages/land size/sector / geography

As part of our adjustment to much higher membership numbers, Lauren Simpson, our Membership Secretary, is developing a more functional membership database that will be integrated with our payment systems and website in an improved way. A more functional



# Social Networks and Solidarity

## We aim to:

1. Develop strong social networks and build relationships of solidarity and mutual aid between members and with other farmers and landworkers organisations who share our vision around the world, in particular through La Via Campesina.
2. Improve the quality of life for members.
3. Increase the resilience of agricultural and forestry systems by increasing communication and reducing isolation.

As part of LWA's strategy of building social networks, solidarity and member support, we've been developing several threads of membership support:

- Membership engagement and outreach across events, projects and gatherings
- Member-led organising through branches & regions, identity groups and sectors
- Member democracy through the Organisers' Assembly, Annual General Meeting and Regional Assemblies

Hundreds of LWA members - new and old - have participated in events, projects, activities and campaigns over the past year.

We've been continuing work on making the "membership journey" for members clearer and more accessible, so members know how to be an active member of the LWA, how to access information and support, and how to get more involved in the work of the LWA. This has included introducing new member zoom sessions, as well as running sessions on "how the LWA works" for members involved in LWA organising. We've engaged with members online through the first year of the LWA Film Club with 1264 tickets sold for 10 films

In Wales, this year has been

busy with events as usual with the Wales Organising Team leading the organisation of a busy Spring gathering near Lampeter at Holden Dairy Farm as well as an Autumn gathering at Braich Goch near Machynlleth. In between we were delighted to be at the Royal Welsh show at Builth Wells for four days with a stall in the Countryside Stewardship Area, where we reached out to members, gained new ones and talked to people unfamiliar with food sovereignty and agroecology, an important part of growing the movement. There have also been farm tours across Wales, where networking and sharing of ideas and inspiration have been key. LWA Wales also contributed sessions to the annual Wales Real Food and Farming Conference covering the topics of Field scale vegetable production and cooperative working.

There has been a particular focus on ensuring that our membership engagement work takes into account the different contexts in the devolved nations. This year we recruited Amber Wheeler, a new Welsh speaking Membership Engagement Coordinator for

Wales. She is working with the volunteer Organising Team to support and reach out to the membership and engage members in the democratic processes of the LWA, as well as recruit more members across Wales. We are introducing a Welsh Language policy and are on a transition to fully bi-lingual resources being available for members in Wales. All Wales newsletters are now bi-lingual, the website is being

updated, policy documents have been translated and there is now a new logo and simplified Welsh name for LWA - Gweithwyr y Tir. (add logo) Look out for our new bi-lingual merchandise.

The Wales Organising Team is continuing to coordinate member organising in Wales. We now have four regional WhatsApp groups for members, West, North, Mid and South. They are proving a really engaging and useful mechanism for members to share information and reach out to each other. We also have a new Welsh language

member WhatsApp group for members in Wales who prefer to communicate in Welsh.

The Scotland membership is growing, and has been increasingly active, supported by our Scotland Membership Engagement Coordinator Clem Sandison. In December, members organised two Winter Gatherings, one in the North at Knockfarrel Produce, and one in Perthshire at Tomnah'a Market Garden involving practical workshops, discussion, local food feasts and music.

Then in late May, over 80 people came together for a joyful Scotland Summer Gathering at Blackhaugh





Community Farm, with nine skillshare workshops, woodfired sourdough pizza, ceilidh, and workshops on organising & campaigning. We also supported five BPOC families with transport to attend from Glasgow, as part of a programme to support refugee women to develop their farming skills.

The Scotland Forestry sector group is in development, with a whatsapp group and plans for an Autumn 2022 gathering. The Scotland membership are having discussions about what branch and regional organising could look like in the Scotland

context, and are organising training for Scottish member organisers. In England, the regional organising teams for the North, East Anglia, Midlands, Southwest and Southeast and London moved from strength to strength with farm tours, celebrations and local meet ups throughout the year, supported by our England Membership Engagement Coordinator Robyn Minogue. Each region held a winter gathering on the weekend of the 2021 AGM, bringing together over 200 members for food, music and good chat about the year



past and the year ahead. The member Organising Teams from each region also started to meet quarterly all together on zoom to share reflections on regional organising and swap ideas and learnings. The LWA Forestry and Woodland sector has increased membership engagement, mobilisation, and regional, sub-sector and identity group representation, establishing more momentum and feeling of social and member-led movement building. The first ever and much postponed Woodland Gathering

finally took place in May 2022, at which over 60 LWA woodland members came together to meet, organise and celebrate our woodland culture. At the Gathering, the Forestry & Woodland Sector formed a Steering Group to act as a sounding board and member input for work being done on sector issues by LWA staff. More woodland members are getting involved in regional and branch organising, are forming working groups on sector issues, and are driving conversations about gendered experiences in

landwork. A regional woodland gathering has taken place in North Wales and more are being planned. Training events in sector skills are being organised, and members are being supported to shape policy proposals around the Forestry sector. The Land Skills Fair hosted a Woody Area packed to the brim with talks, demonstrations, workshops and fireside singing.

The Land Skills Fair, led by Land Skills Fair Coordinators Brigitte Rowan and Bella Thompson also saw nearly 200 members

attending sessions hosted by the member-led groups of the LWA, including regional and branch meet-ups, a queer landworker crafting session, and youth visioning sessions. The fair was full to the brim of demonstrations, workshops, music, art, poetry, and lots of celebration, All of the delicious food and drink served on site was organic, local and supporting small producers, and the entire festival ran on solar power.

Out On The Land (OOTL), the LGBTQIA+ group of the







LWA, has been busy on the Cultivating Justice project, with support from Ez North, the OOTL Cultivating Justice Coordinator. This has included producing a series of zines, podcasts and workshops in partnership with Land In Our Names and Farmerama which weaves together interviews, conversations, music and reflections from Black people, people of colour, trans people, queer people and women, on their relationships with land, growing and identity.

The group has also been devoting a lot of energy to building their internal systems and strategy and planning meet-ups for LGBTQIA+ landworkers.

As our work and conversations around land and climate justice necessarily expand and intersect with issues of racial justice, our members have identified the urgent need for gentle, nourishing spaces for Black people and people of colour (BPOC) to replenish, meet with others and build community.

We collaborated with LWA member, author and grower Claire Ratinon to organise a series of restorative, rural

retreats for BPOC growers and landworkers throughout the year. We also developed and released an instagram infographic outlining why these spaces of safety and solidarity are important and are a crucial part of mobilising towards social justice.

FLAME, the new youth wing of the LWA, has been growing, mobilising in full force for the COP26 summit, supporting young people to access skills and networks to enter landwork, and acting as a hub of information, advocacy, support and friendship for young people in the food and land sovereignty movement. Flame have run visioning sessions, skill shares, meet-ups, farm visits, workshops and their own venue at Land Skills Fair. They are working with Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, SOS-UK ( Students Organising for Sustainability) and FLAME on a joint youth project on agroecology which showcases the stories of young people involved in food, land, farming and climate.

### International Solidarity

We have also been engaging with international solidarity, connecting our struggles and visions for Land Justice with the global context. LWA

was one of the organisations working alongside the Zapatistas delegation to support their visit to the UK in 2021, as part of their 'Journey for Life'. LWA members and staff co-hosted encounters with the delegation in England,

Scotland and Wales in which landworkers spoke about agroecology and the food and land sovereignty movement in the UK. This year we built relationships with the Kayapo communities in the Brazilian Amazon through a study and solidarity trip. Following on

from this, we are seeking to import 4 tons of Brazil Nuts directly from them. The income from the sales of these nuts will go directly to their traditional tribal communities to support their survival in ways decided by their own autonomous community structures.



# Training and Exchange

## We aim to:

1. Increase the skills and knowledge of our members in agroecological farming, growing, forestry and land management; running financially sustainable land-based businesses; and organising as a union and social movement.
2. Fill the gaps for practical training and mentoring in agroecological farming and land management.
3. Build low-cost and reciprocal models for training and exchange based on the knowledge base of our membership network.

This year saw training, knowledge and skills exchanges all over the country, all through the year, from farmer to farmer workshops at regional gatherings, to a hub at Cop26 in Glasgow offering free workshops, talks and discussions as part of the People's Summit.

## Land Skills Fair

The Land Skills Fair, created in collaboration with LION, Flame and the Rewild project saw a huge exchange of skills and learning opportunities, with 130 workshops offered, and a diversity of topics including technicalities of commercial flower growing, social movement theories of change, nettle cordage and grassland management. We discussed the centrality of social and racial justice to agroecology, had spaces for technical discussions and introductory sessions to welcome newcomers to the movement.



## Seed Sovereignty

In January through March 2022, we delivered a series of Agroecology knowledge exchange events funded by the Scottish Government, with a focus on low input livestock and horticulture. Also in Scotland, in August we started a Pastured Poultry Feed Group for farmers to share knowledge about regenerative systems and tackle the rising costs of feed for small to medium scale producers. The group is exploring ways to collectively source organic Scottish-grown poultry feed and will run until March 2023.

## Seed Sovereignty

In October 2021 we launched the Seed Exchange programme, in collaboration with Gaia Foundation. Recognising the value of sharing experiences and knowledge with

organisations that are on a similar journey to us in building food and seed sovereignty, we coordinated a series of virtual exchanges with projects in the USA to support the grassroots re-emergence of seed and grain sovereignty in the UK. We delivered an online seed conference in Autumn 2021. The Landworkers' Alliance hosted speakers from La Via Campesina, with representatives from farmers unions in Romania and India. The speakers shared stories and strategies of the past two decades from their farmers unions and networks organising across the globe in response to the concentration of seed ownership, seed enclosures and the loss of agrobiodiversity.

trainers. We've worked with several providers, spanning online and in-person sessions in London, Bristol and Manchester. Feedback from participants has indicated that these sessions have been valuable, and we're currently working on how to make them a regular part of the LWA calendar. Many thanks to all trainers and participants involved.

## Train the trainer

Recognising the need to build training capacity, we've piloted different approaches to supporting landworkers in becoming effective





We also ran online and in person trainings for our members across the year on political lobbying, agroecology principles, and webinars about aspects of food sovereignty.

## New Entrants

The New entrant team streamlined their strategy also, combining work on policy with building the necessary training infrastructure to support the necessary skills and knowledge capacity.

We have clarified the aims of the new entrants team, specifically as:

### Aims

1. To support new entrants- particularly those from disadvantaged/underrepresented communities - in making land based work an accessible and financially viable career, working to address the barriers they face; such as access to land, finance, training and support.

2. To help build accessible models of training and knowledge exchange for new entrants, identifying gaps in provision and working with partner organisations to fill these gaps

3. To develop a network of support for new entrants; signposting opportunities, linking with partners, and highlighting pathways for support and progression.

We are working with our membership and co-ordinating group to identify broader training needs of our membership, and the strategy and funding that will enable these needs to be met.

## On-farm traineeships

In partnership with the Soil Association and the Organic Growers Alliance, we've launched a jointly

endorsed curriculum for on-farm traineeships in horticulture. By clearly setting out the knowledge and skills that we think learners should develop during their traineeship, we aim to reduce the planning burden on hosts, enabling them to feel confident that they've taught their trainees all they need to know. For trainees, we hope that giving them the headlines of what to expect will empower them to take more ownership of their own learning. Further, if a grower advertises that they will be following this curriculum, potential trainees have

some assurance of the quality of the traineeship. We hope to work on similar curriculums for other sectors in the future.

We're also working on a set of standards for running on-farm traineeships and farmstart traineeships, to provide guidance on what hosts and trainees can expect during a traineeship. These will be released as part of a revamp of Future Farmers II, a guide to running on-farm traineeships, later this year.



We continue to discuss issues such as trainee pay with our members and partner organisations, as well as investigating funding models that could offer alternative solutions. We understand that trainee pay remains an accessibility issue for both hosts and trainees, and are committed to ensuring that there is sufficient diversity in learning pathways to accommodate all learners.

2022 has been the second year of funded trainee networks in the south west of England and in Wales. Over 20 trainees based at farms across Wales - in Gwynedd, Powys, Ceredigion, Swansea and Cardiff have attended farm visits, webinars, LWA events and specialist training days on first aid and tractor driving. Many thanks to all the sites who've hosted us and trainers on our webinars; also to the trainees for such lively approaches to soil testing, different ways to use seaweed, and

owl box watching. The network is part of Resilient Green Spaces, a £1.27m partnership project being led by Social Farms & Gardens to pilot alternative re-localised food systems using communities and their green spaces as the driving force for change across Wales until June 2023. This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government, and is led by Rhian Williams, our Cymru Traineeship Network Coordinator.

In the South West of England, we have had 35 trainees take part in the second year of the agroecology traineeship programme, led by Lucy Saville, our Traineeship Network Coordinator. The trainees participated in brilliant training sessions led by farms and growers that got into the

details on topics like rotation and cover cropping, agroforestry, farm economics and seed sovereignty. \*pics of farm visits here) We are grateful for the excellent tuition provided by the Apricot Centre, Abbey Home Farm, the Gaia Foundation, Trill Farm Garden and others. This project has been funded by LUSH and we are looking at how to best support trainees and host farms in future years.

Through the programme, in addition to the content of their learning, trainees have also developed their own mutual support networks, had an introduction to broader LWA structures, and further opportunities for work and training. It was particularly heartening to host a trainee space at this year's Land Skills Fair, where trainees from different cohorts and regions were able to share their experiences of different stages of the journey, and experience a thorough introduction to the political and celebratory side of our movement!

## Farmstart

We continued to develop the farmstart network, which is held by Hatty Richards, our Accredited Training and Farmstart Project Coordinator. We are working with new organisations interested in starting Farmstarts (Farm incubator projects) and welcoming LESS (Lancaster Farmstart) and Barefoot Kitchen (Middlesborough) onto the steering group. We held winter and summer gatherings for the network and also worked on developing more

resources and guidelines to support developing farmstart organisations.

We continued to feed into DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs)'s co-design process for New Entrant support. There were two successful applications from the network to deliver the pilot; one in the Southwest (led by Shared Assets) and another in the Southeast (led by LWA). This project will include five months of training and mentoring. Though it

does not constitute a comprehensive support package, if successful, there would be considerable benefit for the new entrants taking part, and a legacy of resources which can be used within the network.

## Accredited training

In December 2021 we took the tough decision to stop working on a new L3 accredited training program for on-farm training in agroecology. This decision was based on a number

of factors, including the government decision to put a moratorium on the registration of new L3 courses, making accessing drawdown funding extremely difficult. Instead, we decided to help consolidate and build on existing training, working with The Accredited Training Advisory panel and a wider network to help fill gaps and develop existing training, along with exploring how to make accredited training more accessible.



# Media and Advocacy

## We aim to:

1. Improve the public's understanding of the social, environmental and economic benefits created by agroecological farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers as well as the challenges they face.
2. Raise the public profile of agroecology and food sovereignty as solutions to social, economic and environmental crises.
3. Improve our communication channels and increase the reach of our media.

This year, we have increased our reach in terms of campaign communications and press liaison with the work of Yali Banton-Heath, our Campaigns Communications Coordinator and our Press Officer Joanna Blundell. We have received coverage in online press including in The Guardian, Farmers Weekly, Farmers Guardian, Farming UK,

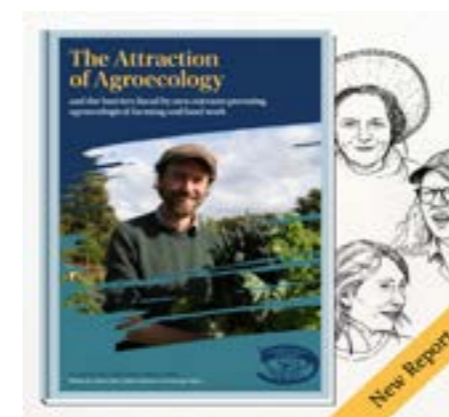
Yorkshire Examiner and Wicked Leeks, as well as on broadcast media on Sky News, BBC News, BBC Gloucestershire, and Farming Today. We also collaborated with Shado Mag to create a knowledge page about food sovereignty on their website. We are currently building and refining a database of media resources including photos,

video, staff spokespeople, member storytellers and case studies to enable us to increase the impact of our media work in the future.



## Podcasts

In October and November 2021 we launched into podcasts, releasing our 'COP26 Climate Justice' podcast series in conversation with partners from La Via Campesina and those on the ground at COP26 in Glasgow. This podcast series brought to light the necessity of including the topics of food, farming and land-use in our work and visions towards climate justice. We followed this with the launch of our LWA podcast - 'The Landworkers' Radio', held by Georgie Styles, our Podcast producer. This is a monthly podcast exploring the answers to your food, farming, fibre and forestry questions. It is made by the movement, for the movement and so encourages our membership and listeners to send in any burning questions to feature on the podcast next year. Questions featured on the podcast so far include; What is the role of grassroots organising in food system transformation? How do we get access to land? Are we facing a grain crisis? How does food sovereignty relate to social justice and anti-oppression? Exploring these answers through song, poetry, music, interview and conversation we capture the voices of our membership and the wider food, farming and climate justice movement in the hope of encouraging the sharing of knowledge, inspiring collaboration and building solidarity.



## Social Media

Our following on social media has continued to grow, with more than 50,000 followers across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. As well as keeping people updated on LWA work and campaigns, our Media and Comms Coordinator Steph Wetherall has been working hard to try to centre member voices on our social channels, re-introducing member takeovers on Instagram on a monthly basis and posting more about our regional and sector events. We have also been experimenting with using more short video content through Reels, which can help capture the feel of events and quickly communicate key information.

We have also helped launch the new LWA shop Instagram (@landworkers\_shop) and a new Land Skills Fair account (@landskillsfair) to help manage parts of the LWA's work that will benefit most from their own comms channels.

## Website

We have updated key areas on our website, including developing the campaigns section to include latest policy positions and featured campaigns, creating a press page which lists our spokespeople and recent coverage, and updating the important section about 'How we Organise'. We are continuing our work to translate our website fully into Welsh.

We have also been working hard to

put all LWA events on the calendar on our website to make sure there is one place where people can find information about all our events.

## Publications

We have published several reports including a Business Planning Guide and The Attraction of Agroecology: Benefits and Opportunities of New Entrants into Ecological Land Work as well as numerous responses to Government announcements including to the Delinking and Lump Sum Exit Scheme, concerns over food security and the crisis in Ukraine, and the Gene-Technology Bill.

We have worked with a graphic designer to create a house style and aesthetic toolkit and generate some templates for future publications to give them more visual coherence.

We are also working on a book to mark our ten year anniversary, which is due for completion in Spring 2023 and led by Sally Lai, our Sales and Merchandise Coordinator. We hope it will be a diverse, powerful and beautiful contextualisation of the movement. It will bring together voices from across the membership and beyond to reflect on what it means to work the land. The book will give voice to the people who work the land and celebrate what is achievable through collective action and solidarity building. It will be both an account of the Landworkers' Alliance's work over the last ten years and a rallying cry for others to join us in our collective endeavour towards land justice and food sovereignty.

# Campaigns and Lobbying

## We aim to:

1. Increase the numbers of farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers in the UK.
2. Increase the political and policy level understanding of the issues our members face and the solutions they represent.
3. Improve the sovereignty, resilience and sustainability of our food and land-use systems.
4. Increase peoples' access to local, healthy and affordable food, fuel and fibre.

The LWA has an active campaigns team actively working on both the policy and grassroots level to bring about change in our food, farming, forestry and land-use systems. Our work continues to develop and grow with an increasing number of projects that are allowing us to



expand the reach and breadth of our campaigns work. Over the past year we have been able to improve our campaigns and advocacy work thanks to new research produced by the Agroecology Research Collaboration, led by Kate Briton and Tara Wight, which has allowed us to bolster our claims and policy recommendations with robust evidence, and through the support of our campaigns communications team, who have helped to develop strategic social media campaigns, petitions, documents and press releases to expand the reach and impact of our policy and advocacy work.

## COP26

In November 2021, decision-makers and activists from all over the world gathered in Glasgow for COP26. LWA was an active participant in both the official summit and in grassroots mobilisations. We engaged with events in the official Blue Zone as part of the official UNFCCC Farmers' Constituency, and we hosted and supported the engagement of delegates from allied La Via Campesina organisations from Puerto Rico, Canada, Germany, Spain and France; strengthening connections with our international colleagues in the movement. Roz Corbett, our COP 26 coordinator, was an active member of the COP26 Coalition for Climate Justice, and helped to organise their People's Summit alongside many other mobilisations throughout the two weeks, including organising the Farmers, Foresters and Landworkers' Bloc for the main Day of Action march through the city. The LWA hosted an agroecology and food sovereignty hub at Civic House in Glasgow, putting on a series of workshops and discussions on key issues relating to our work, as well as offering a nourishing and restorative space with delicious locally sourced and organic food and collective evening feasts.

## International Work with La Via Campesina

Last year, Dee Woods (LWA Coordinating Group) was nominated to represent La Via Campesina as the Western Europe Focal Point on the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM) for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security. They have since participated in several policy working groups, including the Advisory Group and Women and Gender Diversities. On 18th July 2022, the President of the UN General Assembly and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) co-convened a



High-level Special Event at the UN headquarters in New York entitled "Time to Act Together: Coordinating Policy Responses to the Global Food Crisis", where Dee represented CSIPM. As a member of

the Gender and Women's Working Group of the CSIPM Dee participated in both online and in-person



negotiations in Rome on the UN Voluntary Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition



during which they made a powerful intervention on the Right to Food.

With the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) Migrant Workers' Working Group, LWA's Catherine McAndrew has also been working alongside the National Federation of the Agricultural Sector (FNSEA) in Morocco and the Agricultural Workers Union - Andalusian Workers' Union (SOC-SAT) in Spain when there continue to be strikes and disputes in enterprises that supply British supermarkets. With the support of the ECVC Working Group, our work here managed

to secure the intervention of British supermarkets in a case of union busting in Morocco.

In April Catherine also participated in two fact finding visits to Spain - to intensive berry plantations in Huelva and newly established plantations in Galicia. The visit to Huelva found severe violations in environmental



and labour regulations and extremely poor living conditions for workers whose production is linked to supermarkets throughout Northern Europe, as well as allegations of land grabbing by agribusiness by Galician dairy farmers. This work with ECVC aims to both support workers within the conventional supply chain while also taking the fight directly to an agroindustrial system which depends on the super exploitation of both land and people.

## Guiding the Agricultural Transition

Throughout the year we have been lobbying policymakers to promote fair market conditions and support

mechanisms which benefit the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers in the UK. In Wales, Scotland and England we have been working with policymakers to help shape new post-Brexit farming support schemes, advocating for a reformed subsidy system which moves away from area-based payments, to a system that instead supports landowners, tenant farmers and community farms of all sizes to adopt agroecological farming practices.

In Wales, our Cymru Policy and Campaigns Coordinator Holly Tomlinson, has been working with members to develop LWA's policy positions on subsidy reform, which will feed into the co-design process of the Welsh Government's Sustainable Farming Scheme, and the forthcoming Wales Agriculture Bill, which is expected to enter Senedd in Autumn 2022. Together with allies, Holly has been advocating on behalf of small-scale agroecological farmers and foresters, and has also been working on a WWF Cymru funded project showcasing agroecological farming case studies as examples of the type of agriculture we believe the Sustainable Farming Scheme should be supporting.

A huge win in Wales has been the announcement of several new agricultural grants including the Horticulture Development Scheme, Horticulture Start-Up Grants and the Organic Conversion Scheme. Unlike previous grants, these schemes haven't had minimum hectare requirements for eligibility, and the money could be spent on second-hand equipment.

These were both key points we had advocated for in order to make them more accessible and relevant to small-scale farmers.

In Scotland, Tara Wight, our Scotland Policy and Campaigns Coordinator has been working with our Scottish membership base and staff to feed into policy surrounding agricultural subsidy reform in Scotland. Positions have been developed through the member-led process which launched the Scottish Policy Manifesto.

In England, Jyoti Fernandes is actively engaging with DEFRA as a key stakeholder and as part of the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) working group and the wider Future Farming programme, advocating for policies like provision of capital grants and more funding for agroecological research and development. This work involves building relationships with political parties and decision-makers at a local, regional and national level to keep the ambition of ELMS high, and building relationships with civil servants in departments relevant to our work.

In response to DEFRA's apparent failure to keep public engagement on farms within the list of public goods that ELMS will reward, we worked with the Country Trust and National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs to publish and circulate a policy brief: "The case for including payments for public engagement in the Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS)." We submitted this

brief to DEFRA, and also launched an online action to encourage members in England to reach out to their MPs urging them to push for payments for public engagement.

Our project "Your Future Farming" was funded by DEFRA under the The Future Farming Resilience Programme has provided practical tools and inspiration for conventional farmers to transition to agroecology. The YFF team, Jenny Nelson, Alice Taherzade, Bella Thompson and Bryher Bloor, supported over 700 farmers through the provision of one-to-one advice, a transition toolkit, webinars, farm visits and peer support networks. For the LWA this was a real opportunity to reach out and support Basic Payment System recipients in England and help them prepare their businesses to remain viable as their payments transition to being based around more environmentally friendly farming practices and local markets.

On a UK policy level we have also been challenging new trade agreements and speaking out against deals including the India-UK and Brazil-UK trade deals which continue to undermine farming livelihoods and production standards in both the UK and other countries.

To campaign against industrialised farming systems, and following on from relationship building with the Indian Farmers Protests last year, we mobilised against the export of Paraquat, a toxic herbicide produced by Syngenta. This is banned on these islands due to the serious risks it poses to human health and the environment, yet is exported to other countries with less stringent laws, putting farmers at dangerous risk of exposure, long-term health problems and fatal poisoning.

We ran a letter writing campaign against this, and The LWA Northern branch ran a lively demo in Huddersfield, at Syngenta's headquarters.





Over the course of the past year, the LWA has also opened up conversations about the impact of technology and corporate control on farmers; including cultured meat, robotics and gene-editing. In December we published a response to the Soil Association's report 'AgroEcoTech: How can Technology Accelerate a Transition to Agroecology?' calling for greater consideration and understanding of the social and political impacts of technologies in our agroecological farming systems, proposing new criteria for assessing the impact of such technologies. In June we joined allies to voice our concerns about the Gene Technology Bill, calling for amendments to the Bill which would require GM foods to be labelled as such, and for measures to better protect our members and non-GM farmers from cross-contamination. We will continue to promote a nuanced conversation around these new

technologies to ensure they either work for the common good, or aren't introduced at all.

## Horticulture

In October 2021, LWA completed Phase 1 of its Horticulture Test and Trial, "Growing the Goods", which worked with growers of all scales to co-design a system for rewarding growers for the public goods they deliver. This included developing and testing a range of payment mechanisms that would work for growers and a Public Goods Actions Catalogue to inform growers about which actions to include in their Land Management Plans. We were pleased that DEFRA liked our Land Management Plan template enough to use it in the full Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) pilot. We were then

invited to develop a proposal for an extension to the Growing the Goods, which was awarded funding in August 2022. This will enable us to further develop the Growing the Goods Catalogue as well as develop some SFI Standards that are specific to horticulture. We will then test the whole system with growers in five areas of England, including Bristol, Cumbria, Kent, Cambridge and Lincolnshire. DEFRA has also made a commitment to creating a horticulture standard by 2024; this is something we consider a huge success.

Rebecca Laughton, our Horticulture Campaign Coordinator, has also remained active in the Fruit and Vegetable Alliance, and attends the thrice yearly Edible Horticulture Roundtable to advocate for small and medium scale agroecological growers. Activity in this area has stepped up a gear since the Government Food Strategy announced that a "world beating horticulture strategy" will be developed over the next year. We are working hard to build the evidence to make the case that agroecological horticulture selling through short supply chains can provide solutions to many of the challenges affecting the conventional horticulture sector at present.

Work has also begun in building stronger links between our horticultural members and Sustainable Food Places network, by highlighting case studies of "Food Zones Supply Systems" already in operation. We have also been continuing our work, alongside partners Sustain and

Shared Assets, in the Fringe Farming project, a two year project working with peri-urban growers in Glasgow, Sheffield, London, Bristol and Cardiff. LWA's role has been to facilitate a Peri-Urban Practitioners' Forum as a way of enabling peer-to-peer learning between peri-urban growers. These have been popular and a new series of workshops was launched at the Land Skills Fair in July 2022, which will run until February 2023. Two peri-urban study tours for DEFRA civil servants, in London and Manchester, have provoked much enthusiasm for the concept of Fringe Farming, and we have also made a strong case for better government support for peri-urban farming at a parliamentary round table meeting in Westminster in June 2022, which attracted eight MPs and Peers.

## Woodlands and Forestry

On behalf of LWA's woodland sector, Woodland Sector Coordinator Olly Craigan, and Forestry and Land-Use Policy Coordinator Oli Rodker have been advocating for policies which would support a sustainable forestry sector across the devolved nations. They have been doing this by promoting the LWA's Forestry Manifesto, as well our 2021 report "The Promise of Agroforestry." As part of this broader woodland and forestry campaign work, LWA Woody Branch members organised an action in Grangemouth port in Scotland during COP26 to highlight the need for fewer timber imports and more investment in domestic timber production.

## Supporting New Entrants into Farming and Land Work

Across all nations we are working hard to enable new entrants to access the land, training and capital needed to start new land-based enterprises. Holly Tomlinson, who has now taken on the role of New Entrants Policy Coordinator, and our Scotland Policy and Campaigns Coordinator Tara Wight, together submitted a response to the Scottish Government's criticisms of the New Entrant Capital Grants scheme. In England, we have been critical of the poorly designed Lump Sum Exit Scheme, advocating instead for a better system for supporting new farmers through DEFRA's New Entrant Support Scheme.





In August we published our report “The Attraction of Agroecology: and the barriers faced by new entrants wanting to pursue agroecological farming and land work”. This report was based on interviews with 16 different new entrants farmers, foresters and landworkers, highlighting the appeal of working in agroecology, as well as the barriers that new entrants face to entering the sector. The report outlined detailed

when trying to access publicly owned land to establish community focussed farms. In addition to policy proposals, the project is also establishing a peer to peer learning for local authorities who want to empower communities with land access and facilitate the transfer of land into community ownership or management. This is part of the broader Resilient Green Spaces Project .

existing county farms, and have been featured extensively on local radio, worked with County Councillors across Gloucestershire and supported local people to engage in the Council decision making spaces around it. We also ran a mini-series of training and movement-building sessions called ‘Ploughing paperwork and seeding solutions’, offering learning around writing business plans, leveraging in funding, and negotiating the planning system.

## Workers’ Rights

Catherine McAndrew, our Migrant Worker’s Solidarity Campaign Coordinator, and Jyoti Fernandes have been building a workstream within LWA to improve the working conditions for migrant labour in the UK farming sector. Together they have been coordinating a research project on the drivers of poor working conditions for migrant agricultural workers in the conventional horticultural sector with the New Economics Foundation, Focus on Labour

Exploitation and the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and Sustain. The project will examine the economics of the supermarket supply chain (specifically how the value generated by the sale of soft fruit at the supermarket is shared out between the supermarket, the farm, and the worker), and conduct interviews with agricultural workers which combined will form the basis for campaigning for better working conditions over the coming year.

recommendations for more holistic government policies to support new entrants into land work, and we hope that it will influence future phases of DEFRA’s New Entrant Support Scheme.

In Wales, we have been working with Shared Assets on a project exploring ways to remove the barriers faced by communities and new entrants

In Gloucestershire, our Activating Land Justice Mobiliser Anya Whiteside has been using a place-based approach to promote land justice by building networks, hosting workshops for young people to take first steps towards land work, contributing to the Gloucester Food & Farming strategy and leading on a motion to stop the sale of County Farms. We are campaigning to get the council to commit to maintaining



## Food Justice and Local Food Systems

Across Wales, Scotland and England we have been active in processes and campaigns to support the implementation of Right to Food legislation through Food Bills in order to reduce the negative impacts of current and future policy on food insecurity. In her role as Cymru Policy and Campaigns Coordinator, Holly Tomlinson has been working with Cynghair Polisi Bwyd Cymru/Food Policy Alliance Cymru to ensure the Wales Food Bill delivers an ambitious programme to address multiple challenges to Wales’s Food System through systemic, rather than piecemeal, changes.

In Scotland, Tara Wight and Miranda Geelhoed joined with the Scottish Food Coalition to mobilise for a Scottish Day of Action in front of the Scottish Parliament, successfully adding amendments to the Good Food Nation Bill and illustrating the connections to agroecological farming.

We have also continued our work promoting resilient local supply chains through our “Vocal for Local” campaign, especially as a part of World Localisation Day in June 2022 when we produced a series of

informative social media posts linking global supply chains to the cost of living crisis and rising food insecurity, and advocating for shorter supply chains as the answer to building resilience in our food system. The Vocal for Local campaign promotes the many benefits of local food systems, and a key focus for us this year has been ensuring more support for local food systems is provided for in the Government’s National Food

short supply chains. We hosted a free conference on ‘Building Better Food Systems’, bringing together food and farming businesses, policy makers, researchers, and social justice movements to look at how to realise the full potential of local and resilient food systems. This work was led by Bryher Bloor, our Resilient Local Food Systems Conference Organiser, and Tony Little, our Resilient Local Food Systems Project Coordinator.



Strategy for England, particularly highlighting the opportunity that public procurement presents for making healthy local food more accessible to children and young people.

Working in partnership with COACH, we have continued our work promoting and supporting

Producers, processors, distributors, academics, policy-makers and food justice activists gathered together over two days to work on how to increase the power and spread of short supply chains.

In Wales, Peter Samson, our Food Hubs Coordinator has been

working on boosting local food systems collaboration, including helping to establish five new food hubs with local community groups across the country. This work has been in partnership with Open Food Network, Development Trusts Association Wales and Social Farms and Gardens through the Welsh Government's Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. We have participated in networking initiatives from the Welsh Grain Lab to the Abattoir network, organised farm visits to promote farmer to farmer knowledge exchange, and created guidance documents for members, such as our

publication, "Business Planning Guide for Ecological Farm and Forestry Businesses"

## Building the UK Food Sovereignty Movement

Jo Kamal, our new Food Sovereignty Movement Building Coordinator, and Dee Woods in their capacity as Food Justice Policy Coordinator have been working hard to revitalise the UK Food Sovereignty Movement under its new name 'Food in Our Hands'.

As part of this, over summer they organised a series of webinars, talks, and social media posts aimed at improving public understanding of the right to food and food sovereignty. This culminated in the People's Food Summit which was held in September at the Wilderness Centre in Oxfordshire, where producers, activists, researchers, allies and eaters gathered to develop the vision and strategies of the UK food sovereignty movement in the first national gathering since 2012, which has created brilliant connections, plans and steps forward.

The activities and achievements of the LWA are the result of the skills, passion and commitment of many hundreds of people and wouldn't be possible without them.

We thank all our members for their incredible work this year.

We thank the increasing numbers of supporters and donors who contribute time and money to our vision.

And we thank the foundations, charitable trusts and grant making organisations that have funded our work this year, including:

- Thirty Percy Percy
- Network for Social Change
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
- Friends Provident
- Joseph Rowntree
- LUSH
- Pebble Trust
- Gaia Foundation
- Roddick Foundation
- Be the Earth Foundation
- A-Team Foundation
- Farming the Future
- WWF-Cymru
- EnRAW -
- ORFC

