



Annual report

October 2023 – September 2024

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





WELCOME

Welcome to the Landworkers' Alliance Annual Report 2023 - 2024!

This past year has presented some huge challenges for landworkers across the UK and globally, but it has also been a year of growth, hope and solidarity within our movement. We're delighted to look back on another chapter with you all.

Back in October 2023, we were in the wake of farmers protests that had swept through Europe and brought to the surface a mix of grievances, emotions and demands which had been simmering away in the farming sector for decades. One issue united everyone though; the chronic undervaluing of farmers and farming livelihoods.

Here in the UK, despite important changes being won in some areas of farming and land-use policy, we are still having to struggle to pursue dignified and secure livelihoods. A lack of adequate government support, coupled with the impacts of the climate crisis - which manifested as an extremely wet start to the growing season followed by one of the three worst harvests since the turn of the millennium - have left many of our members struggling to keep their jobs and farms afloat.

But despite the odds, our members have continued to work hard to produce food, fuel, fibre and other products from the land for their communities, to tend to lands and habitats with great diligence and care, to raise their voices bravely and share their stories from the heart, and to offer support, skills and knowledge, weaving webs of solidarity with other landworkers both near and far.

It's no wonder that with all the care, energy and dedication our

organising in Northern Ireland beginning to take root.

After four long years of meeting online, in February 2024 we held our first in-person AGM since 2019. Combined with our Winter Gathering, this important event in our democratic calendar was a beautiful and much-needed opportunity to come together and share stories, hopes and strategies for the year ahead. As a staff team we listened to the needs and ideas of members, and have



membership brings, the number of LWA Members continues to increase year on year. We now have over 2,400 landworker members across all four nations of the UK, with membership numbers in Scotland and Wales burgeoning, and member-

strived to centre these in our work throughout the year.

Representing the needs and interests of our members on a policy level can be an uphill battle, but with the election of a new Labour government



in July, we seized the fresh opportunity to campaign for real change. In the run up to the election we were vocal in our demand for a bigger farming budget in all four UK nations, for more support packages for new entrants and for an ambitious Horticulture Strategy for England.

But we know that we cannot do this important work alone. Our commitment to working with and supporting the growth of the agroecology and food sovereignty movement has meant that we've continued to partner with other organisations and groups, hosting joint events, collaborating on publications and policy papers and working together to leverage funding.

We continue to deepen our understanding of agroecology and food sovereignty, and have developed political training materials for our members, used our communication channels to raise awareness about political and social aspects of agroecology, and worked with journalists, audio producers and the media to amplify our messages beyond our membership.

Internally, the LWA continues to evolve as an organisation, exploring new ways of working horizontally, and embedding politics of anti-oppression, anti-racism and care. Over the past year we have welcomed and onboarded dozens

of passionate, dedicated and inspiring new Staff, Coordinating Group members and Member Organisers who have brought with them new ideas, perspectives and energy.

Globally, this year has been marked by war, genocide and climate catastrophe, and as an organisation committed to global justice we stand in solidarity with farmers across the world who continue to face violence, forced displacement and dispossession of their lands. For this reason, for the past year we have been strengthening our alliances with La Via Campesina organisations across the globe; in Palestine, in Latin America and in Europe. We have also represented UK landworkers on an international

level at COP28 and the UN Committee on World Food Security negotiations.

Our journey is a long one, and our global struggle perseveres against all odds. This is why we continue to centre joy, hope and creativity within our movement. Although there was no Land Skills Fair this year, we have come together in numerous regional, sector and identity group gatherings, to sing, dance and share food. We've celebrated another successful year for the LWA Calendar and the LWA Film Club, and released a new podcast series and various short films, platforming the artists who help us to envision the kind of future we want.

Here's to another year of hope, struggle and living with the land.

Viva La Via Campesina!



Image Credit: Emma Reith, from our 2025 calendar

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

We aim to:

Create a strong, resilient and dynamic organisational structure that can support the LWA to grow into a large and democratic grassroots union, grounded in anti-oppression and participatory decision-making.

This year much has happened to improve our internal systems and processes to meet the needs of our larger member-led, horizontally structured organisation. Staff, Member Organisers, and Coordinating Group members have worked together on bettering financial, HR, and democratic mechanisms.

Member Statistics

Our member and supporter numbers continue to grow steadily, with 255 new landworking members and 93 new supporters joining this year.

Coordinating Group

Each year the LWA Membership elect a board of directors - the LWA Coordinating Group (CG) - who take care of the organisation's health and oversee its overall strategic direction. This year, we welcomed Col Gordon, Ronja Schlumberger, Susanna Waters, and Dionysis 'Dennis' Touliatos to

the CG. The election was the LWA's first competitive election using the online platform OPA vote and the Scottish Single Transferable Vote system. In total, 324 votes were cast, representing 13% of the membership at the time.

The CG continued to meet quarterly throughout the year with the support of staff who provide important updates on the financial and strategic context of the organisation. CG members have continued to participate in regular working groups with staff, which hold responsibility for discussing in more detail finance and fundraising, HR, democracy and governance, and other important arising issues.

In the 2024-2025 LWA election process two members of the CG are standing for re-election at the end of their current term, and we say goodbye to CG members Charlotte

Steel, Ruth Hancock, and Gerald Miles – all of whom have served on the board of directors for many years, thanks to them for their efforts!

Member-Led Groups

The membership of the LWA self-organises through member-led groups. These groups are made up of LWA members who share a marginalised identity (e.g. BPOC), a geographic region, or a landworking sector (e.g. forestry). Each group typically has an organising team made up of members working on a voluntary basis, supported by staff time and budget from the LWA.

The Member-led groups are currently:

Regional branches

Scotland, Cymru (Wales), and Northern Ireland, and the Southeast, Southwest, Midlands, East Anglia, and North regions of England.

Landworking sectors

Forestry Sector

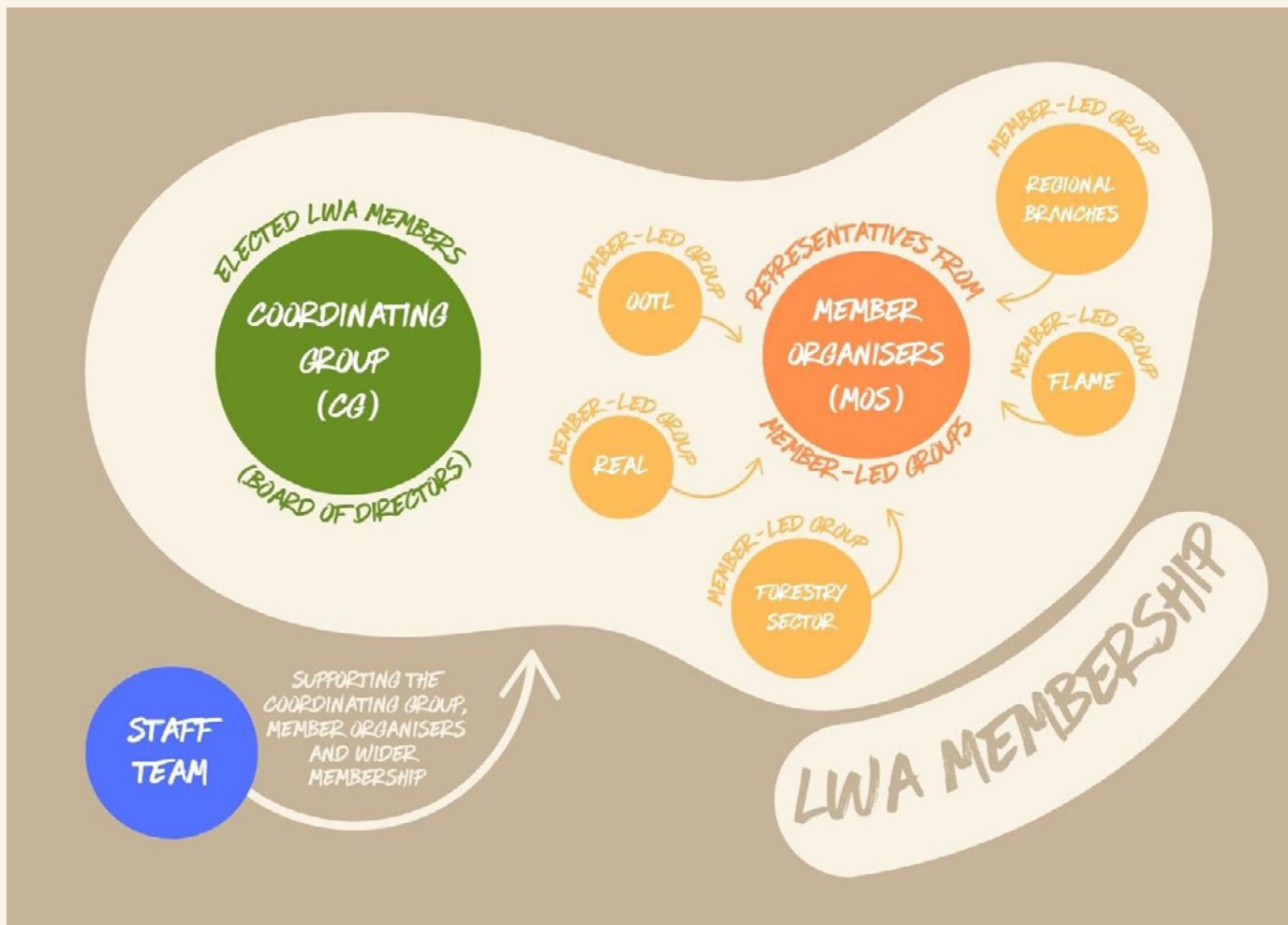
Identity Groups

Out On The Land / 'OOTL'
(LGBTQIA landworkers)

Racial Equity Abolition, and Liberation / 'REAL' (Black and People of Colour landworkers)

Food, Land, Agriculture: a Movement for Equality / 'FLAME'
(Youth Landworkers: aged 18-30)

Women and Diverse Genders in Forestry and Landwork



Staff Development Work

This year much has been done to develop the systems and processes that support LWA staff to thrive in our horizontal structure, working from home across the UK from Glasgow across to Pembrokeshire, from Edinburgh down to Cornwall.

We met together as a whole staff body in April, in beautiful Hebden Bridge, where we discussed how we can work more effectively with regard to decision making, accountability, collaboration and information flow. The team spent time exploring the structure of the staff teams and drafted criteria for how best to collaborate. We also began to learn the merits of Sociocracy as a governance system for decentralised ways of working. A working group was established to continue evaluating this for use in our

staff team in the coming years. Finally, we discussed the next stages of the Racial Justice strategy work and how best to embody the results of this into our jobs and workstreams [see pull out box on Racial Justice].

In the spring and summer we engaged in a complete review of our HR policies and terms of employment. With the help of People's Support Co-op we have updated our suite of policies and ratified a number of enhanced benefits for staff, ensuring that we do our best to create a working environment that upholds the LWA's vision of a fair, dignified, and safe livelihood for all.

Furthermore, we undertook a review of our financial systems and processes. We have now updated and refined many of these to meet the

challenges of a larger organisation with multiple sources of income, member groups and projects.

In September 2024 the Operations Team said goodbye to Elli Folkesson (Governance Officer) who handed back the role to Dee Butterly, returning after a year of parental leave; and we have enjoyed working together as a full team of Nancy Langfeldt (HR Coordinator and Finance Administrator), Anaëlle Bouabdelli (Finance Manager), Hannah Leigh Mackie (People Care and Processes) and Alyce Biddle (Fundraising Coordinator).

Finance Report

A presentation of the year's finances will be given at the online AGM in February 2025 and members will receive a copy of the report via

email. All LWA previous annual accounts are available publicly at Companies House.

Governance

The LWA has continued work on our internal democratic systems so that we continue to be an organisation led by landworkers, even as we grow in size and develop an increasingly professionalised skillset around member engagement, campaigning, training provision, communications, and operational work.

A key part of this work is being held by the Democracy and Governance Working Group, which is made up of members of the Coordinating Group (Col Gordon, Ronja Schlumberger, and Roz Corbett), a Member Organiser (Sasha Georgiades), staff from the Membership Team (Clem

Membership Statistics
(October 2022 - September 2023)

Total Landworker Members	2445
Total Supporters	651
Total FLAME Members (including Supporters)	185
New members joined this year	255
New supporters this year	93

Sandison, Cam Jarvis, and Natalia Szarek) and staff from the Operations Team (Hannah Leigh Mackie and Dee Butterly).

This Working Group has been developing a proposal for having a LWA General Assembly, where delegates from the membership representing key Member-led groups will have decision making power to steer the work of the LWA.

The Democracy and Governance Working Group is also working alongside the Membership Team to develop ways in which LWA members can feed into the writing of our next five year strategy. The Membership Team will be rolling out a workshop at each regional assembly in early 2025 in order to harvest and explore the things that are the most important to LWA members.

Racial Justice Strategy

In order to build the power of our movement, we need to address questions of power and justice in the work we do. According to our theory of change, we need to understand and heal the impacts of all forms of oppression in order to build a powerful agroecological movement.

To this end, we have continued our work around racial justice, following the completion of the Racial Justice Learning History which reviewed experiences of race across the organisation.

The key themes which emerged through interviews with members, staff and movement collaborators, will be used as a foundation for our work going forward.

Key themes: 1) The wider historical and political context 2) The LWA’s stance on racial justice 3) Resourcing racial justice 4) The presence of BPOC in the LWA and landwork 5) Who does the work of racial justice and 6) Emotions in the mix.

A steering group, made up of members of REAL and Black and racialised LWA members and staff, and held by Yassine Senghor from Confronting Change, will be meeting monthly until spring 2025 to guide the development of a holistic Racial Justice Strategy.

A huge thank you to all of the participants and interviewees of the process so far.

SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOLIDARITY

We aim to:

1. Develop strong social networks and build relationships of solidarity and mutual aid between members.
2. Improve the quality of life for members.
3. Increase the resilience of agricultural and forestry systems by increasing communication and reducing isolation.

The LWA aims to be member led and member driven. A big part of that is supporting members to self-organise and take part in wider LWA solidarity building and networking activities. It's been a really hard year for a lot of LWA members and people are being pulled in lots of directions to try to do landwork and make the world a better place. In this context it's both challenging but crucial to support grassroots organising within our membership.

The LWA's work of building social networks and solidarity is largely done through the Membership Team's support of member self-organising and engagement. The vision driving the social networks and solidarity work is an engaged and organised membership who take action on the things they care about, give and receive solidarity

to support each other's work, and build a thriving landworker movement.

Over the past year, the Membership Team has implemented, improved and consolidated member organising systems, as well as increased engagement in the democracy and governance work. Through this work it's been important for them to strike a balance between supporting the member-led groups to be as self-sufficient as possible (reducing reliance on a central staff team and therefore grant funding) with providing the needed level of support and recognising that unpaid organising isn't always sustainable or accessible for everyone. Member Organisers play a crucial role in the LWA, so it's a priority to support the work that they do.

There are dedicated staff members for the organising teams for

Scotland (Clem Sandison), Cymru (Lisa Mundle) and England (Cam Jarvis), and support for the other groups is held by the Membership Engagement and Democracy Coordinator Natalia Szarek, and the Member Organising Coordinator Camille El-Maawiy. Lauren Simpson, the Membership Secretary, manages the member database, joining process and other administrative systems alongside supporting the Coordinating Group. Staff support the organising teams by acting as a link to wider LWA, training and resources, advice and mentorship, and some additional organising capacity.

Democratic Calendar

In February 2024 we held our first in person AGM and Winter Gathering in four years. With high numbers of new members attending AGMs, it was a great opportunity for landworkers to connect with others. We supported get-togethers



- a Youth FLAME field trip to Swn y Coed in West Carmarthenshire in Wales to learn permaculture techniques
- a large Summer Gathering in South Wales
- a Scotland Summer Gathering at Tombreck Farm in Perthshire, bringing together folk seeking access to land to share practical skills, learn songs, and enjoy great food and music
- a collaborative event at Organic North in Manchester hosted by OOTL, Land in Our Names and Farmerama Radio.

for regions, sectors and identity groups, and an 'Open Spaces' process, which let people suggest or vote for additional workshop sessions. The chosen sessions were 'Climate Justice; Palestine Justice,' 'Community & Urban Landworkers,' 'Co-Composting Revolution!' and a discussion on 'No Farmers. No Food'.

We also held a workshop at the AGM about 'Who Holds Power in the LWA?', exploring how the future General Assembly model will increase membership voice and leadership in the organisation. Another popular session was the Campaigns overview, giving members an opportunity to hear about the amazing current and planned work across the Campaigns Team.

The 2023 Organisers' Assembly took place in Shropshire, bringing together 29 Member Organisers alongside Coordinating Group members and Membership Team staff to have big conversations on membership engagement, democracy, grassroots organising and movement building. It was the

third ever Organisers' Assembly, and it was fantastic to see how member organisers gained clarity and confidence in their role within LWA, and to witness the skill-sharing, celebration and problem solving that happens when they come together.

Gatherings and Events

As with every year, there have been lots of gatherings where members get together to share experiences and skills, find ways to support each other, and boost morale with food, drinks and celebrations.

Thanks to the amazing work of the member organisers, there have been countless regional get togethers, including:

- a collaborative event with Better Food Traders in Southwest England exploring sustainable veg box schemes
- a partnership event with the Community Food Growers Network in Southeast England focusing on 'Resourcing Solidarity'
- a big Forestry Sector 'Woody Gathering' in Scotland

Improving Membership Systems and Support

There has been important work going on behind the scenes to make sure that we are functioning well as a staff team, and that we have the systems and practices in place to support the membership effectively. During the past year we've recruited Camille El-Maawiy, Cam Jarvis and Lisa Mundle into the Membership Team, all of whom were LWA Members or Member Organisers before joining the staff team.

Years of development work has finally resulted in the establishment of a membership database thanks to developer Oliver Bettany, enabling members to update their own details through a member dashboard on our website, and opening the door to developing a much-requested membership map. We're also building up our ability to support organising teams to allocate funds to pay Member Organisers for discrete tasks, something we hope will increase the accessibility of LWA organising, and strengthen the resilience of member-led teams, with less

reliance on core staff capacity

We've been developing a training programme for key organising skills that we deliver online every other month, and we've improved our onboarding so that new organisers can find their feet a bit faster.

Improved comms channels with the membership means that we can circulate opportunities for funding, training, and resources to our members more effectively. Events organised by member groups have a strong skill-sharing element, creating spaces for members to learn from each other.

Cross-Organisational Collaboration

Across LWA we have been developing partnerships and collaborations with projects sharing our aims and values. This has included formalised organisational partnerships based on shared funding, resources and projects (e.g. the Community Food Growers

Network, Nature Friendly Farming Network, Sustain, Farmerama, Land In Our Names, Students for Sustainability UK) as well as partnerships via member-led events and trainings (e.g. the Scottish



Crofting Federation, Better Food Traders, Coco Collective).

In Scotland, our Agroecology partnership of six organisations has

produced peer-to-peer learning opportunities, members speaking at a lobbying event at the Scottish Parliament, and the creation of online training resources.

In Wales, the LWA supported the programming of the Wales Real Food and Farming Conference (WRFFC) through the role of then staff member Amber Wheeler and her position on the steering group. Highlights included the LWA led session 'Is it possible to run a financially as well as ecologically sustainable horticulture business in Wales' and a practical soil testing session.

International Solidarity and Organising

In February 2024 the LWA International Solidarity Working Group was revived, with several members expressing an interest in joining the group. The working group has since met once a month to discuss matters relating to the European Coordination of Via

How Farming Can Cool The Planet

"It's been really great to meet like-minded people during the How Farming Can Cool The Planet project. I've met people who I might not ordinarily come into contact with but share many of the same values. The knowledge sharing aspect of the project has been insightful."
Lawrence Weston, FLAME member

The How Farming Can Cool the Planet project, which was funded by Farming the Future, is a collaboration between The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC), Students Organising for Sustainability UK (SOS-UK) and FLAME (the youth branch of the LWA) and involves young people from a diverse range of backgrounds. The project brought together students, young farmers and members of FLAME to exchange views and ideas. The aim of the project was to engage young people in the food and farming movement through their existing passion to tackle the climate crisis. Delegates attended Groundswell Regenerative Agriculture Festival together in July 2024 to celebrate the cross-pollination happening across different parts of the young farming movement. It was great to see young farmers, students and food campaigners come together to share learning on food, farming and climate.



Image Credit: Clem Sandison

Campesina (ECVC) and La Via Campesina (LVC), but has also had a specific focus on developing connections with the LVC member organisation in Palestine; the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC).

Following a member-led workshop at the LWA's 2024 AGM in February, a proposal was put forward for a Palestine Solidarity Twinning Project which would build grassroots links between LWA members here in the UK and farmers in Palestine. In July, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by LWA and UAWC,

and a pilot phase is underway at the time of writing.

In line with our wider internationalism campaigning work, we continue to send delegates

to international ECVC and LVC gatherings and assemblies, and in November 2023 LWA Member Organiser Edwin Brooks and then staff member Jo Kamal travelled to Colombia to represent LWA at the La Via Campesina 8th International Conference.

Looking Forward

Over the coming year, we'll be continuing to support member organising. This will include looking at how we support member organisers in terms of skill-sharing and resources, dedicated staff capacity, and rolling out models for paying member organisers. The

Membership Team is also playing a key role in ensuring membership engagement is considered in the upcoming five year strategy rewrite, as well as the establishment of the LWA General Assembly.

It is an ongoing goal of the Membership Team to establish a staff role specifically focused on Membership Support and Services. We've been developing a job description to figure out how to make this role as effective and sustainable as possible, and are planning to recruit in early 2025.

We are also working on strengthening the level of care and support that LWA members can expect when attending an LWA event. This includes improving organisation-wide practices around safer spaces, intersectionality and accessibility, and improving our awareness of how to care for event attendees and organisers who might need extra support.



TRAINING AND EXCHANGE

We aim to:

1. 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. 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. Develop a network of support for new entrants; signposting opportunities, linking with partners, and highlighting pathways for support and progression.

Our New Entrant and Training Team has continued to work with landworkers, training organisations, national governments and international partners to develop a variety of forms of training and support that are needed by new entrant landworkers.

Supporting Work-Based Training

Over the past year we have undertaken substantial work to understand the legal implications of unpaid work-based training on farms and land-based enterprises. The outcome of this investigative work is that the informal work-

based traineeship model is no longer being upheld by LWA as a secure and acceptable way of providing training for new entrants. While this news exacerbates the chronic lack of opportunities in work-based training for new agroecological farmers and growers, it nevertheless limits the scope for worker exploitation. We worked with solicitors and Solidarity Across Land Trades (SALT) to produce a detailed document outlining legal information regarding national minimum wage requirements, and hosted workshops for members.

With the now more urgent need

for work-based entry level training opportunities in mind, we stepped up our work exploring options which offer pay and protections to the learner, whilst also being affordable for farms who offer training. In September 2024, a document was finalised outlining the opportunities available for farms, and another is being written outlining the rights of trainees.

The New Entrant and Training team explored how the government funded apprenticeship model could be used to teach agroecological growing/farming in Scotland, England and Wales and worked with The Organic Growers Alliance

(OGA) and others to create a survey for farmers in relation to apprenticeships.

In England, Chloe Broadfield (New Entrant Training Coordinator) and Hatty Richards (New Entrant Project Development Coordinator) began exploring working with Plumpton College in South East England to roll out their L3 Organic Crop Technician apprenticeship nationally next year. Plumpton is pioneering an approach to teaching this standard using organic practices which, despite the urgency presented by the climate crisis, is not the approach taken by other mainstream colleges. The course would in part be taught online, with in-person training delivered outside of the season. In Wales, Chloe established a relationship with Coleg Cambria, who are keen to work with our members across Wales to deliver apprenticeships with an agroecological focus. The team also hosted an info sharing 'train the trainer' webinar for members to inform them of the options and begin to establish links with the college.

In September 2024, we joined a trailblazer group led by The Apricot Centre in South West England focused on creating a new apprenticeship standard in agroecological farming. This will continue next year and presents a promising opportunity to create a curriculum which teaches organic and sustainable methods while also including government funded training. We advocated for changes in the crop technician apprenticeship as part of the review of the standard which was led by The Institute for Agriculture and

Horticulture (TIAH) and were told that references to chemical sprays are to be removed.

In Scotland, Clem Sandison (Scottish Membership Engagement Coordinator) worked with members in January 2024 to co-design a training programme building on the Scotland Growers Training Network that ran in 2023. Since funding wasn't forthcoming, we scaled back to run a series of one-day workshops hosted by different market gardens (May - Oct 2024) on topics including propagation, protected cropping, irrigation, crop planning and agroforestry. Focus groups were organised to feed into an independent report (commissioned by Lantra Scotland) to evaluate the Scotland Growers training from 2023 and provide recommendations for future development.

In 2025, the team plans to continue to work with colleges and training providers to increase the coverage of apprenticeships and other accredited courses.

Political Education

Our New Entrants and Training team also continued work with Emma Cardwell from Lancaster University to develop a module exploring the political and social dimensions of agroecology. This was included in the Apricot Centre's Level 4 in Regenerative Agriculture. They continued the peer review process amongst LWA staff members and others to make sure that the content encompasses the perspectives and knowledge of LWA and the wider movement. A suite of films for the unit showcasing different member stories was also completed with the help of our

long-time collaborators Black Bark Films.. Hatty and Chloe organised a session with BPOC landworkers/ people involved in land justice, to get feedback on the session content and delivery style. Next year the team will continue these trials in different settings, and produce training materials and guidance on teaching the module.

Developing Access to Land Opportunities

Significant progress was made in our partnership with TIAH, Shared Assets, CSA Network UK and Tamar Grow Local to develop an England wide land matching service with regional hubs. Tamar Grow Local continued to run SW Landmatch with support from LWA. TIAH focussed on developing a national platform, while LWA and others focussed on future regional hubs, accountability work with landholders and exploring how to ensure the service meets the needs of those who are more often marginalised from accessing land. The partnership also explored future governance, finance and fundraising to support the development of a second regional hub next year.

Network Building and Exchange

We continued to lead development of The Agroecological Learning Collective (TALC), a collective of agroecological trainers, mentors, centres of learning and demonstration farms that work together to share and deliver the skills and knowledge needed for a regenerative future. TALC aims to facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the sector, building regional, national and international links between

teachers and learners, stimulating the development of new courses and promoting agroecology as a career. The TALC steering group had a launch event for the website in February 2024 and worked on strategic planning and governance. We received funding from Farming the Future to establish the initiative and recruited a Project Worker, Ian Rappel, to further the aims and objectives established through consultations with members and the wider movement.

In 2025, we will continue work on fulfilling our objectives to be the central hub for agroecological learning and to bring together those involved in training to work collaboratively. We also plan to research options for TALC to be an apprenticeship training provider and/or awarding body. We will be applying to Esmée Fairbairn for funding to enable our development.

In October 2023, as part of the LWA's role coordinating the UK Farmstart Network, Hatty Richards represented LWA and the network at a multi-stakeholder European conference. Representatives

from Tamar Grow Local, Kindling Trust and Defra also attended. A network member attended a knowledge sharing event in the Basque Country and produced a report sharing key learnings. A consortium of European organisations, including LWA, applied for additional Erasmus+ funding to expand on our work together.

New Entrant Policy on Training and Education

Although our research led us to conclude that apprenticeships are an opportunity to bridge the gap between the dearth of work based training opportunities and the urgent need for a new generation of agroecological farmers, there are a number of barriers associated with this model. Though these vary by nation, the difficulty small farmers and growers (working with very small margins) face paying even the reduced apprenticeship minimum wage is common across all of them.

We also began discussion with the Department for Education

(DfE) to explore the possibility of LWA becoming a flexi job apprenticeship agency to help reduce the administrative burden on farms and the need for them to employ learners/workers all year round.

The LWA took part in a consultation hosted by The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) to advocate for the Growth and Skills Levy to be used to enable more direct support for small farmers. We responded to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's Inquiry into Education and Careers in Land Based Sectors and the Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales' Call for Evidence on careers and training for land workers. In these, we emphasised the need for financial support for farms to take on paid apprentices and for conventional agricultural training colleges to include organic farming as standard. We highlighted other barriers including access to land and the limited opportunities for well paid entry level work.



Image Credit: Clem Sandison

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, our Communications Team - made up of Abel Pearson (Communications Coordinator) and Yali Banton-Heath (Campaigns Communications Coordinator) - continued to wield the power of media and communications for movement-building, for serving our membership and for generating momentum behind our campaigns work. We've also worked hard to centre our members' voices, particularly those underrepresented or marginalised, in our communications.

Member Stories

There is no better reflection of who the LWA are than the voices and stories of our members, and the work they are doing out in the fields, woodlands, packing

sheds, on the sea and in the towns and cities across the UK. So in 2024, we began publishing a new series of 'Landtalkers' features,



profiling LWA members and their work. Through interviews with our Communications Team, members have shared what they do and why they do it, often contextualising their work in broader stories of land or food justice and the agroecological movement. We've published them as written features on our blog, and collaborations with professional photographers like Heather Birnie have helped to bring those stories to life. Their voices have helped to

highlight the lived experience of the many challenges, barriers, joys and opportunities of landworkers across the movement.

Member Communications

Our weekly member and supporter newsletter, which reaches 2,826 recipients, continues to be our main communication channel to our members. It provides a regular update on goings on at the LWA and in the movement around the world, and serves as a bulletin for upcoming events, job opportunities, funding streams, items and information that might be of interest to our members. WhatsApp groups for our regional sectoral and identity-based groups are also effective ways of directly reaching out to members.

Our monthly non-member

newsletter, which reaches 6,653 recipients is a helpful bitesize summary of our latest news, usually grounded in the turning of the seasons! Newsletters from our regional and identity groups also support our members by providing important news, updates, regional events and opportunities.

Publications

During the past year we have published numerous reports, publications and guides, including Horticulture Across Four Nations, Agroecology and Planning Reform and How to Host a Farm Visit on Your Market Garden, among others.

The Communications Team has worked hard to create engaging comms which share key findings of our research in an accessible format, and to disseminate the publications to the right audiences; including to members, policymakers and the press. A key success was the publication of our Manifesto for Food, Farming and Forestry which received press coverage on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today, and which was used to create numerous social media posts that explained our top asks for a new government ahead of the 2024 General Election.



Podcast

In January 2024, we launched a new series of our grassroots food, farming and climate justice podcast, The Landworkers' Radio: 'Of Sweat and Soil'. The 4-part series, produced by Georgie Styles, celebrates 10 years of resistance and resilience, sharing the voices from our membership here in the UK and globally with La Via Campesina and tracing our story from our roots in resistance, to union organising and solidarity building.



Image Credit: Abel Pearson

Press Coverage

Despite not having a dedicated Press Officer, our Communications Team has worked alongside staff members to develop press releases, respond to media enquiries and help draft articles for both national and local press. Over the past year LWA members and staff have been active as spokespeople on broadcast media outlets including Farmerama, Sky News, BBC Farming Today and BBC Alba, as well as in online news sites and print press such as The Times, Wicked Leeks, Edie and Farming UK.

Social Media

Social media is a powerful tool for the LWA, for highlighting our campaigns, celebrating regional and national events, reaching potential new members, attracting supporters and communicating our members' stories in compelling, visual ways.

We have seen continued growth on our social media channels and we now have close to 33,000 followers on Instagram, close to 13,000 followers on X (formerly Twitter) and over 16,000 followers

on Facebook. Instagram remains our most successful and engaged platform, and with the combination of high-quality professional photography, video reels and eye-catching graphics, some of our more popular posts have reached over 30,000 accounts each. This year our Communications Team has been working to improve the quality and reach of our social media campaigns by working with professional photographers and filmmakers such as Blackbark Films

Our website continues to evolve, and with the support of



web developer Ben Moat, our Communications Team has been working to improve the functionality and user experience of the website, to be as best a reflection of what is alive in the LWA at the time. We've redesigned and consolidated the structure on the site this year, in the hope that it is as useful and informative as possible.

In 2025, our Communications Team has set a strategic course for our media and communications, centred around the theme 'Re-rooting Agroecology' - the first stages of which we plan to launch in January 2025. In the face of greenwashing and corporate co-option, we hope to reclaim the meaning and integrity of agroecology - as a global, grassroots movement through powerful

storytelling and impactful media campaigns.

Sales and Merchandise

This year, our Sales and Merchandising team - Emma Groves (Calendar Coordinator) and Sally Lai (Sales & Merchandising Coordinator)

have worked hard to re-focus on our key aims: extending the reach and raising awareness of the LWA, generating unrestricted income, celebrating the culture and creativity of the landwork movement, and communicating LWA values.

A YEAR ON THE LAND



The Landworkers' Alliance Calendar 2025



Our 2024 fundraising calendar, Land of Plenty, sold 3623 copies. This was the last calendar working with artist Rosanna Morris on the imagery. Our thanks and gratitude go to Rosanna for her collaboration over the last six years.

In conjunction with the Working Group, our Calendar Coordinator Emma Groves, identified a new artist to work with on our 2025 calendar.



Emma Reith, a Cornwall-based printmaker, was selected and commissioned to create 12 images for the 2025 calendar.

The team continues to support internal and external events with a merch presence. This year we have had stalls at the Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC) and the LWA AGM. Event stock is also now held regionally by regional coordinators and Member Organisers to facilitate the availability of merchandise at regional events.

This year we have also diversified representation of the membership within our work. This has included stocking FLAME zines and OOTL clothing, including recipes from members in the 2025 calendar and promoting artwork by members in our print sale.

Our first online print sale was organised to highlight the culture and creativity of landwork and to give a platform to artist-landworkers. 18 artists took part and 78 works were sold over the period of a month.

LWA Film Club

In season three of our online monthly film club, we hosted 10 film screenings, with a total of 1606 tickets sold. Our most popular screening was Jumana Mana's Foragers, which sold 299 tickets and raised £2644.23 for UAWC's Stop Gaza Starvation Fundraiser. Other popular films included Six Inches of Soil, The Nettle Dress and Wild Relatives.



Image Credit: Heather Birnie

Member Stories: Jo Poulton

THIS POLICY IDEA GIVES FARMERS HOPE
How one member's financial plight sparked
a national campaign for a Basic Income for
Farmers.

"THE BASIC INCOME 4 FARMERS CAMPAIGN WOULDN'T
EXIST WITHOUT THE LANDWORKERS' ALLIANCE" JO
POULTON

Just four years ago, Jo was working a desk job, producing children's television in Bristol. The pandemic changed the course of her working life. Observing the fragility of the global food system at times of crises, she suddenly found herself drawn to a completely different career; but Jo couldn't see a clear route for how she was going to make being a seasonal grower work financially – "The lack of paid traineeships was a really big barrier for me – the financial struggle overshadowed the whole positive learning experience that I had. So I thought, okay, how can we slightly reconfigure the current system to enable people who have the passion and the want to get into growing, the ability to do so."

And the idea for a Basic Income for Farmers was born.

Between first speaking to Jo at the Land Skills Fair in 2023, and when we sat down to chat with her in June 2024, the seed of an idea had exploded into a national campaign with international media coverage. New agri-environment scheme proposals and farmer protests have drawn the plight of farmers into the spotlight and provided the perfect timing to moot the idea of a Basic Income for Farmers.

A Basic Income for Farmers would provide a basic safety net of income to all farmers, food producers and agricultural workers, no questions asked. We can certainly see how it could support our members to thrive for the long term as farmers and growers.

"WE HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT A BETTER WORLD IS POSSIBLE AND I THINK THIS IS A
REALLY TANGIBLE STEP TOWARDS THAT BETTER WORLD."



Read Jo's story and the 'Sowing the Seeds of Stability'
report using this code.

HARM AND HEALING ON THE LAND with cee-cee manrique of Hyphae Mushrooms

"YEAH WE CAN HAVE A 'CAN-DO' ATTITUDE, BUT WHEN THE BASELINE IS 'THE COUNTRYSIDE ISN'T FOR YOU', IT'S DEFINITELY NOT ENOUGH."
CEE-CEE MANRIQUE

In April 2024, we went to visit LWA member and QTBP OC* mushroom farmer cee-cee manrique, at the successful farm they run with their partner Emma, in North Pembrokeshire, Wales. Through struggles with chronic illness, weather, rural racism and financial difficulties, they have built a successful land-based business, feeding local people and stewarding land with care and love – fulfilling the very promise of agroecology.

cee-cee challenges the idea that all you need to succeed in agroecological farming is a 'can-do' attitude. A 'can-do' attitude is not much use if you can't afford or access land, says cee-cee, challenging a pervading idea amongst some landowners in the agroecological community that 'if I can do it anyone can', often neglecting to mention or acknowledge the layers of privilege – financial, material and historical – that underpin their success.

"WE HAVE ACCESS TO LAND, WHICH FEELS LIKE A MIRACLE PEOPLE LIKE US USUALLY DON'T." CEE-CEE MANRIQUE

cee-cee is clearly someone who lives in the beauty and hopefulness of the land, and finds solidarity, encouragement and support in the Landworkers' Alliance, Land In Our Names (LION) and in campaigns for access to land, financial equity and fair pay for agricultural workers; they have a vision for more beauty, more joy and more BPOC people on the land, and why a 'no-strings-attached' transferral of wealth, and adequate material support might help us realise that promise of agroecology for all landworkers, not just the privileged few.



Image Credit: Heather Birnie

Read cee-cee's full story & find out more about the issues they highlight



*Queer-Trans, Person of Colour

Member Stories: Bec Briar

FROM SOIL TO SOIL

Weaving high-welfare textiles with shepherd and wool-spinner Bec Briar



"IT'S QUITE A LEAP TO GIVE UP ANY FORM OF SORT OF, STEADY INCOME AND GO SIT IN A FIELD WITH A BUNCH OF SHEEP AND TRUST THAT IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY"

says Bec Briar from her rented workshop on the edge of Exmoor in Devon, where she weaves scarves and blankets by hand, teaches workshops in heritage skills like wool-spinning, weaving and natural dyeing using fleeces and plants from the farm, and raises 61 (at the time of interview) primitive and heritage sheep, bred for their wool quality – Shetland and Icelandics, as well as rare breed Portlands and Exmoor Horns.

Welfare is central to Bec's work, not only for her sheep and the land they live on, but also for workers in the textile industry around the world. She is exploring ways to help people make better decisions about where their clothes come from, and promote localised, regenerative textiles, that provide for local farmers' livelihoods, made of the land; "I can turn grass into beautiful handwoven textiles." She wants to offer long-lasting, high-quality and truly sustainable, locally-produced clothing that comes from the soil and will go back to the soil when it wears out – with no microplastics, little embedded carbon and no abuses of human rights. She feels supported in her work by membership of the LWA;

"THERE'S A MOSAIC OF ALL THESE DIFFERENT WAYS OF ACCESSING THIS LIFESTYLE, AND THE LWA FEELS LIKE IT REPRESENTS THEM. I DON'T FEEL LIKE I HAVE A VOICE OR QUITE KNOW ENOUGH TO CAMPAIGN, BUT BEING A (LWA) MEMBER MEANS I CAN SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN WORK THAT'S HAPPENING FOR WORKERS, AND PARTICULARLY LANDWORKERS AROUND THE WORLD"



Image Credits: Bec Briar

CAMPAIGNS AND LOBBYING

We aim to:

- 1. Advocate for our members' interests across all sectors on a UK level, as well as in England, Wales and Scotland and Northern Ireland**
- 2. Campaign for more sustainable and agroecological land-use systems and farming practices**
- 3. Build and support the UK food sovereignty movement**
- 4. Stand and act in solidarity with peasant struggles across the globe.**

The LWA has an active Campaigns and Policy Team who work at both a policy and grassroots level to advocate for our members interests and bring about change in our food, farming, forestry, and land-use systems.

Guiding the Agricultural Transition

In Autumn 2023 we published our Manifesto for Food, Farming and Forestry in time for dissemination at the Labour Party Conference. The manifesto was a direct response to a cost-of-living crisis which exposed the vulnerabilities of global supply chains, but which saw supermarket profits continue to rise while communities and farmers alike struggled to afford food and basic goods. The document outlined our key proposals for a better food, farming and land-use

system in England, and has guided our lobbying efforts throughout 2024.

In response to the farmers protests which unfolded across Europe and the rest of the globe in summer 2024, in August we launched a UK Parliament Petition calling on the government to double the agriculture budget for all four UK nations to support a just transition to agroecology. Unfortunately this petition was closed early due to the snap general election.

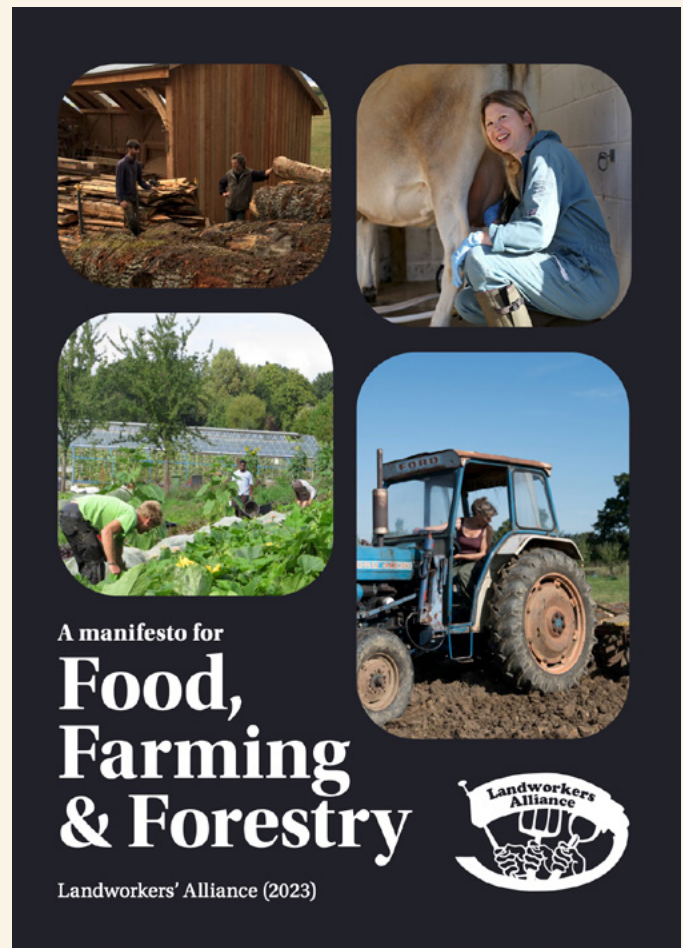
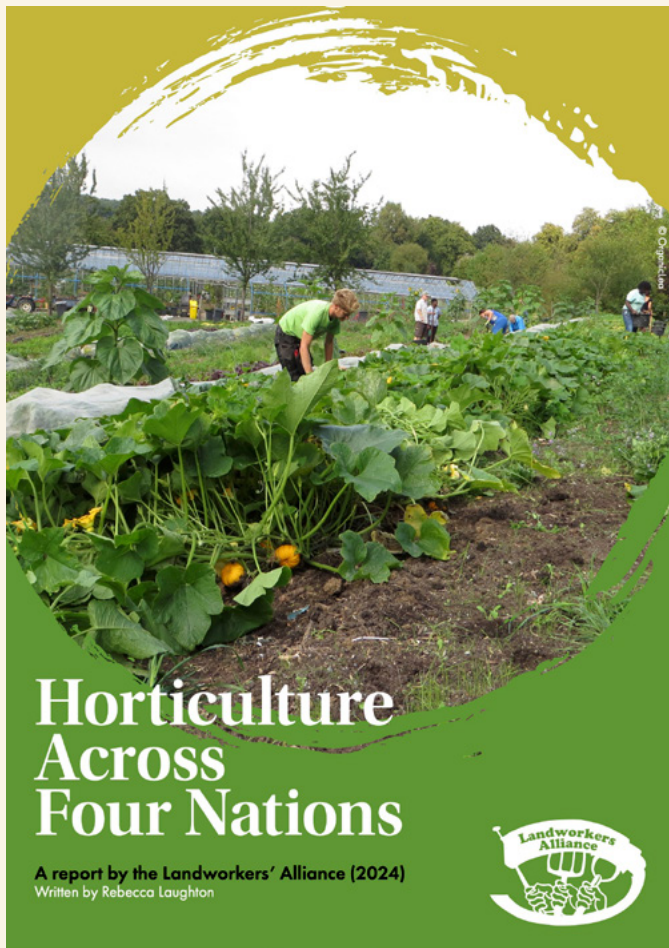
England

In England, Jyoti Fernandes has continued her ongoing engagement with the ELMS group, pushing for more support packages for market gardens, small-scale farms, public engagement and agrobiodiversity. In a monumental campaign success, in May 2024

we had confirmation from Defra that eligibility for the SFI schemes would extend to farms under 5ha. This is something that the LWA has been pushing for almost a decade. Educational payments were also added to schemes as well as improved options for whole farm management and organic conversion.

Scotland

In Scotland, Tara Wight has been focusing efforts on the Agriculture and Rural Communities Bill, which passed into law in July. In February, LWA Scotland held a demonstration outside the Scottish Parliament in collaboration with allied organisations, calling for more support for small farms and crofts. The event was covered by national news, and was attended by several civil servants and MSPs.



As a result of Tara's lobbying efforts, LWA and allied organisations managed to get some amendments in, including the addition of pigs and poultry to the list of sectors that can receive support, as well as some references to support for small-scale farming.

Wales

In Wales, following significant engagement with our Wales members, Holly Tomlinson submitted LWA Cymru's response to the Sustainable Farming Scheme. In April we held the first Wales Member Policy Committee workshop, which has since been instrumental in shaping policy priorities for Wales, and engaging with the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Huw Irranca-Davies.

Although the SFS has been a

priority, Holly has also fed into new planning guidance in Powys, inputted into the Wales Net-Zero 2035 'How can Wales Feed Itself?' workstream, and spoken at several important events including the Royal Welsh Show, and the Farmers' Union of Wales' event on food security, where she has been advocating for investment in short supply chains and more fruit and veg production in Wales.

Northern Ireland

In September 2024 Holly Tomlinson visited Northern Ireland and met with the DAERA Minister Andrew Muir to discuss the needs of small-scale horticulture and new entrants.

Horticulture Campaign

Throughout the past year Rebecca Laughton has led our horticulture

campaign from strength to strength. In October 2023 we published our pamphlet entitled 'A Market Garden Renaissance' which made the case for a food zones approach to sourcing agroecological fruit and veg in the UK. Then, in January 2024 at the Oxford Real Farming Conference we launched our landmark report 'Horticulture Across Four Nations'. Since then we have created several other resources to support membership engagement in the campaign, including a "How to Host a Farm Visit" guide, a briefing pack for members, as well as four policy pamphlets for each UK nation.

The 'Growing the Goods' ELMS test and trial concluded in July 2024, after a busy year working on the final phase of the project.

The trial worked with 12 field-scale vegetable growing tenants to explore how ELMS can be made more accessible to them, including co-designing 6 SFI actions for short term tenants.

Other areas of work in advocating for increased agroecological fruit and veg production include; Rebecca and Dee Woods sitting on Sustain's 'Bridging the Gap' advisory group; Dee co-producing and facilitating the Right to Grow Summit in London in April; Rebecca pitching a policy idea for subsidising organic veg for school meals at the launch of "Gamechangers for a New Green Deal" report in the House of Commons in March, and Holly Tomlinson joining a Welsh Government Horticulture Planning Working group advocating for easier planning process for infrastructure and workers' dwellings on small-scale horticulture.

We have also been working with allied organisations in the former

Fruit and Vegetable Alliance to begin dialogue with the new Defra minister Steve Reed, compiling a policy briefing on the need for a joined-up cross-departmental approach to UK horticulture.

ORFC

At the Oxford Real Farming Conference in January 2024 we hosted our own room and organised 8 sessions on subjects ranging from changing narratives around the cost of living crisis, to agrobiodiversity and 'sea sovereignty'; most of which were at full capacity. Several LWA staff and members of Youth FLAME seized the opportunity to meet in-person with then Farming Minister, Mark Spencer, to discuss the needs of new entrants and what needs to be done to support a new generation of landworkers into farming.

Resilient Local Food Systems

In January we received further funding for the continuation of the Resilient Local Food Systems

project. Throughout 2024 the RLFS team have been working on Local Food Plan - a three-phase collaborative project with Sustain, the Sustainable Food Trust, the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission and Pasture for Life looking at what actions need to be taken to substantially grow the local food sector in the UK. After coordinating a series of 43 interviews with stakeholders from all aspects of the local food sector, The RLFS Project Team bid farewell to Bryher Bloor in April, but Peter Samsom was soon joined by Bella Thompson, who has helped to see through the final stages of Phase 1 of the project.

'Growing the Local Food Sector: A snapshot of barriers and solutions' was published in June, and Phase 2 of the project is well underway at the time of writing, with multiple online workshops being held to identify priorities for various food producing sectors. The findings from these workshops will feed into the final Growth Action Plan.

Member Engagement in Campaigns

In order to enable greater membership engagement in LWA campaigns work, the Membership Team and Campaigns Team have been meeting once a month to exchange updates, calls to action, and ideas for member mobilisations. In April we launched our LWA Campaign Toolkit; an interactive platform which includes resources and actions for members to get involved in.

The run-up to the general election was identified as a key opportunity to get members reaching out to candidates and engaging with their MPs. In June we set up an online letter-writing action for members to write to party leaders with the LWA manifesto and key asks, and over 1,000 emails were sent. We followed this with an online political training workshop for members, a detailed Hustings Toolkit, and a guide for contacting your MP.

In July 2024 we welcomed Jeni Taygeta to the team as our new Mobilisations Coordinator. Jeni will be responsible for facilitating membership engagement in campaigns, supporting member-led mobilisations and organising a large food and farming demonstration in spring 2025.



Land and Planning

In Scotland, Tara Wight has been sowing the seeds for grassroots land justice movement in Scotland. In LWA organised a rally on the ground of Taymouth Estate to protest corporate land grabbing in Scotland, and throughout autumn 2024 Tara has been working with The Scottish Crofting Federation to organise community events and educational workshops on the subject of land reform.

In England, in light of Labour's commitment to reform planning policy, in summer 2024 LWA and the Ecological Land Cooperative convened a cross-organisational planning reform group, which involved about 10 organisations working on planning, agroecological land-use and low-impact development. In September we published our briefing paper 'Agroecology and

Planning Reform', and submitted a response to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation, as well as drafting template answers which we then circulated with our membership so that they could respond to the consultation themselves.

In Wales, significant progress has been made on campaigning to make the planning system better for new entrants into agroecology. Holly continued to advocate for planning changes which would enable small-scale horticulture farms to secure rural enterprise dwellings and allow permitted development rights for essential infrastructure on farms below 5 ha. Following the publication of research on planning barriers for small-scale horticulture, which LWA fed into last year, she secured a place for LWA on a Welsh Government working group on

tackling these barriers and has ensured LWA member voices have been heard.

Solidarity with Migrant Landworkers

Our Solidarity with Migrant Landworkers campaign - lead by Catherine McAndrew - has gone from strength to strength since the publication of our 'Debt, Migration and Exploitation' report in July 2023. In May 2024 we released a joint statement calling for supermarkets to adopt the Employer Pays Principle and cover the upfront costs of migrant workers coming to work on UK farms. As a direct result of this, Catherine took part in a meeting involving major supermarkets, seasonal worker recruiters, conventional berry growers, and civil society organisations. The meeting agreed a formula for supermarkets to meet these costs, and a pilot for 200

workers recruited in this manner is being agreed with a recruitment agency. The position the LWA straddles between farmers and workers has been useful in bridging big gaps in opinion between the two groups.

In September 2024 we received a funding extension to continue Catherine's work advocating for the rights of migrant seasonal landworkers. This second phase of the project is a collaboration with the Worker Support Centre, focusing on mobilising both farm workers and food justice activists and holding supermarkets to account for conditions in their supply chain.

International Policy and Campaigns

Our Food Justice Policy Coordinator Dee Woods has been participating in European and global food forums and processes on public policies, land, food sovereignty and the right to food. This included the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), and Nyéléni ECA. Dee also renewed her mandate as Western Europe Focal Point on the Coordination Committee of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism



(CSIPM) and coordinated the Equity Working Group for the Reducing Inequalities for Food Security and Nutrition negotiations.

In November 2023 Jyoti attended COP28 to take part in fringe events, and following the boycott of La Via Campesina of the official Blue Zone in light of global government inaction on the situation in Gaza in November 2023. In March 2024, Dee and our Scotland Campaigns Coordinator

Tara Wight participated in The Land Deal Politics Initiative International Conference on Global Land Grabbing Land Grabbing conference in Colombia, deepening LWA's connections with Latin America and Caribbean La Via Campesina regions.

2024 also saw the successful completion of the Solidarity Trade Company's Kayapó Brazil nuts initiative. The nuts were disseminated at events and festivals across the UK alongside informative talks and resources - as well as via wholesale Hodmedods sales - and all 6 tonnes were sold.

Research

Landworkers' Alliance has continued to lead on the Agroecology Research Collaboration (ARC), building relationships between academics and agroecological practitioners to ensure a two-way flow of research knowledge between researchers and practitioners. ARC has been actively involved in Agricultural



Universities Council UK Forum, attended conferences and guided MSc students to research topics we have identified as priorities.

Our biggest project in 2023/24 was Experts in Your Field (EiYF), funded by the Young Foundations' Community Knowledge Fund and coordinated by Dr. Isobel Talks. This enabled 40 farmers, growers and foresters to engage in research topics of their choosing and culminated in a research journal and the 'Cultivating Wisdom' conference. Participants engaged in research ranging from bioindicator monitoring and soil analysis, to dendrochronology and mushroom cultivation on different media. The 'Cultivating Wisdom' conference was co-hosted with the Organic Research Centre and the Association of Applied Biologists. It brought together over 100 farmer researchers and academics for two days in Manchester from 21st - 22nd October 2024, and demonstrated that there is a real appetite for farmer-led research.



The Lipman-Miliband Trust



CYMRU



THANK YOU

The activities and achievements of the LWA are the result of the skills, passions and commitment of hundreds of people. What you read in these pages would not be possible without them.

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

The Agroecology Fund

DEFRA

ECVC

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Ethical Consumer

European Commission

Farming the Future

Highlands & Islands Climate Hub

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

The Lipmand-Miliband Trust

The Movements Trust

The Mulberry Trust

Network for Social Change

ORFC

Rothschild Foundation

RSPB Cymru

Thirty Percy

Transformational Governance Collective

The Trellis Foundation

Scottish Farm Land Trust

Scottish Government/Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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Heather Birnie

Bottom left: Clem Sandison

Bottom right: Clem Sandison

Join us! Our strength is in our numbers. If you are a landworker in the UK please consider becoming a Member, or if you are not engaged in land-based work but wish to support the movement, we invite you to join us as a Supporter. You can do so on our website: www.landworkersalliance.org.uk

Connect with us online:

Facebook: [@landworkersalliance](https://www.facebook.com/landworkersalliance)

Twitter: [@LandworkersUK](https://twitter.com/LandworkersUK)

Instagram: [@landworkersalliance](https://www.instagram.com/landworkersalliance) and [@landworkers_shop](https://www.instagram.com/landworkers_shop)

Email: info@landworkersalliance.org.uk

Also see: www.viacampesina.org

