

What we do

Our work is in pursuit of a world where everyone can enjoy a healthy environment and a fair share of the planet's resources. We are committed to working for change that will protect the environment and benefit communities both in Scotland and around the world. We hope to reflect the values we wish to see in the wider world through a commitment to democracy, equality and solidarity. We endeavour to work with communities in our campaigning for real, meaningful change.

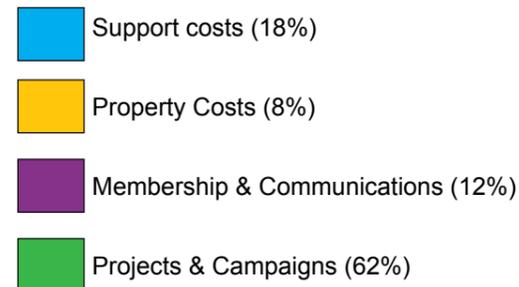
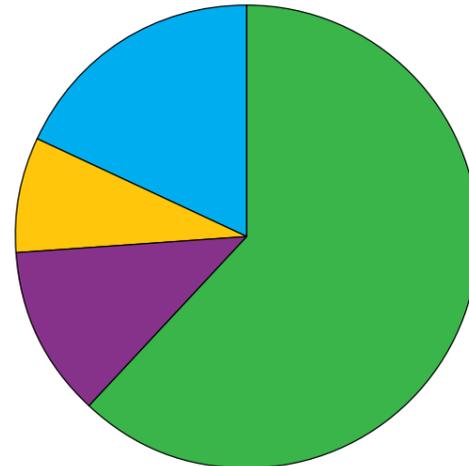
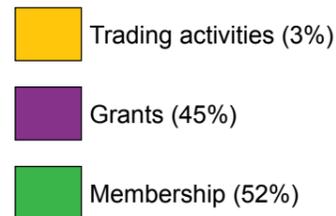
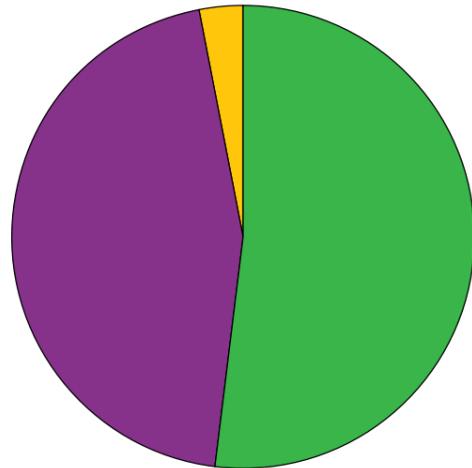
How we do it

The fight against climate change is the core thread that runs through all our work. We are opposed to fracking and other unconventional fossil fuels and we are calling for public institutions to get their money out of those companies profiting from changing the climate. We're campaigning to cut air pollution by getting people out of their cars and on to public transport, or walking and cycling. By ensuring many more communities are owning and benefitting from renewables, we bring power to the people and cut carbon emissions. Together this work fits under our new Fossil Free Scotland campaign.

Our finances at a glance

Total income:
£496,652

Total expenditure:
£416,253



Thanks to everyone who supported our work in 2015

- All of our members and other donors
- Players of the People's Postcode Lottery
- The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- EuropeAid
- The Scottish Government

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Annual Review 2015



A year of climate action



Paris Climate Talks

Ahead of the United Nations climate negotiations in Paris we worked closely with our partners in Stop Climate Chaos Scotland to organise Scotland's Climate March in Edinburgh. This was a very successful event attracting broad interest from across politics and the media, with an attendance of over 7,000.

Despite the brutal terrorist attacks in the weeks before the talks, we went ahead with our plans and brought 50 activists from Edinburgh to Paris to join in the closing weekend of action. At the 'People Power Now' Assembly, our busload joined up with thousands of other FoE supporters from around the world to demand climate justice, taking part in an evening of inspirational workshops, speeches and discussions allowing the FoE network to connect like never before. On Saturday, as negotiations continued beyond the official end of the COP, FoES took part in the creation of a unique geo-location message, with activists spreading out across Paris to spell out 'Climate Justice Peace' on an online map. We then joined thousands of others at the Eiffel Tower in an action marking the 'red lines' our planet can't cross, commemorating victims of climate change and pledging our commitment to keep fighting for climate justice.

As we anticipated, the Paris Agreement failed to deliver a just framework for urgent action to tackle the climate crisis and the needs of those most vulnerable to its impacts. Fossil fuels are not even mentioned in the text and the timescales for reducing emissions are worryingly vague and distant. Nor is there any obligation on developed countries to provide climate finance beyond 2025.

Crucially, however, the Paris deal recognises the need to keep warming below 1.5C, and while it contains no roadmap for how we get there, we can use this iconic number to put pressure on the Scottish Government for more urgent action to tackle emissions.

Community Power

We were delighted when Scotland met its target for community and locally-owned energy five years early in October. This is an important milestone for our campaign but it did not mean our job was done. FoES were instrumental in the subsequent successful call for this target to be increased. The SNP manifesto included a pledge to double community energy to 1GW by 2020 and 2GW by 2030.

We have worked hard to promote Scotland's approach, building strong relationships with partners at home and across Europe. We also helped deliver the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme Conference bringing together experts and those interested in starting their own project.

While Scotland's overall progress in renewable energy continues to break records, community ownership has taken a hit from hugely regressive Westminster decisions. We supported the Edinburgh Community Solar scheme, which just managed to secure investment before the changes took place and will go live in September.

The funding for the three years of the Community Power campaign concluded in April 2016. We have secured support for a follow up case study report looking at great examples of shared ownership projects in Scotland.

Finance

Our finance work focused on two distinct areas – banking reform and supporting local divestment campaigns. Our 'Banking for the Common Good' report, written by researcher Gemma Bone, demonstrated that Scotland's banking system is "unsafe and unfit for purpose" and that new "safe, sustainable, stakeholder" banks are needed, linked together through a government-owned network. We worked closely with partners to produce these proposals and continue to promote them.

We have been working tirelessly to support local divestment campaigns both big and small. We revealed in September that Scottish Local Government Pension Funds held an astonishing £1.7billion in fossil fuel companies. Since these figures have been brought to light, new groups have formed in the Lothians, Forth Valley and Strathclyde

calling for this public money to go fossil free. FoES have also been challenging MSPs to clean up their Scottish Parliament pension fund, which has £2 million in fossil fuels and no ethical policy. It's been encouraging to see more and more institutions get out of fossil fuels, including the Church of Scotland recently deciding to withdraw investments from companies involved in tar sands and coal.

Fracking / UCG

Our fight against unconventional fossil fuels has remained high profile throughout the year. In October, Scottish Ministers added Underground Coal Gasification to the risky onshore gas techniques currently prohibited by moratorium, and announced a programme of research to inform their eventual decision on shale gas fracking and coalbed methane.

We have been working with affected communities and our colleagues in the environment sector to feed into the Government-commissioned Public Health Impact Assessment and studies on economics, seismic activity, decommissioning, and climate impacts of allowing fracking to go ahead.

While a decision on shale gas and CBM is unlikely before spring 2017, pressure on the Scottish Government to act sooner is growing, with the Parliament recently voting to ban fracking. The vote, which is non-binding on the Government, was backed by Labour, Greens and Liberal Democrats, with only Conservatives voting against. While the First Minister has spoken of her deep scepticism towards fracking, SNP members abstained, unwilling to undermine the ongoing moratorium or vote against a ban.

We hope that an early decision against underground coal gasification would signal a clear direction of travel from the Scottish Government, and will



be pushing for this over the summer, working with our international partners to publish a major report outlining the risks of this highly experimental technology.

Air Pollution

The last year saw a 'traffic jam' of air pollution headlines as we helped make dirty air in Scotland into a political issue. The New Year saw our annual revelation of Scotland's most polluted streets and the Government's own statistics on transport show fewer people using public transport than a decade ago.

The long-awaited Cleaner Air For Scotland strategy was launched in November, which signals some steps in the right direction but is severely lacking in measures to get the most polluting traffic off our roads. Our air pollution campaigner Emilia is now representing Scottish Environment Link on the Governance Group tasked with taking it forward. The SNP manifesto includes a commitment to put into place Scotland's first Low Emission Zone by 2018, giving Cleaner Air for Scotland a well-needed extra push.

During the year we helped residents in Corstorphine stop a proposal for a new supermarket and car park that would have brought more traffic on to Scotland's most polluted street. We also joined thousands at Pedal on Parliament to call for far greater investment in and support for active travel. The latest research shows that almost 40,000 lives are cut short by air pollution in the UK each year so we'll be keeping the pressure on the Scottish Government to shift its transport spending and focus to cleaner, greener ways of travelling.

Access to Environmental Justice

Throughout the year we have continued to press for compliance with the access to justice requirements of the Aarhus Convention and campaign for a specialist court or tribunal to hear important environmental cases. In December we welcomed the Scottish Government moving to broaden the scope of Protective Expense Orders, which limit the liability of a person or NGO making a public interest environmental challenge by way of judicial review. The amended rules of court are more in line with the Aarhus Convention, but much more needs to be done to make justice in environmental cases truly accessible.

That's why we are pushing for a specialist environmental court and an equal right of appeal in certain planning cases. We have made our case to the Scottish Government consultation on options for delivering environmental justice, and will continue to push for these through coming planning legislation.