

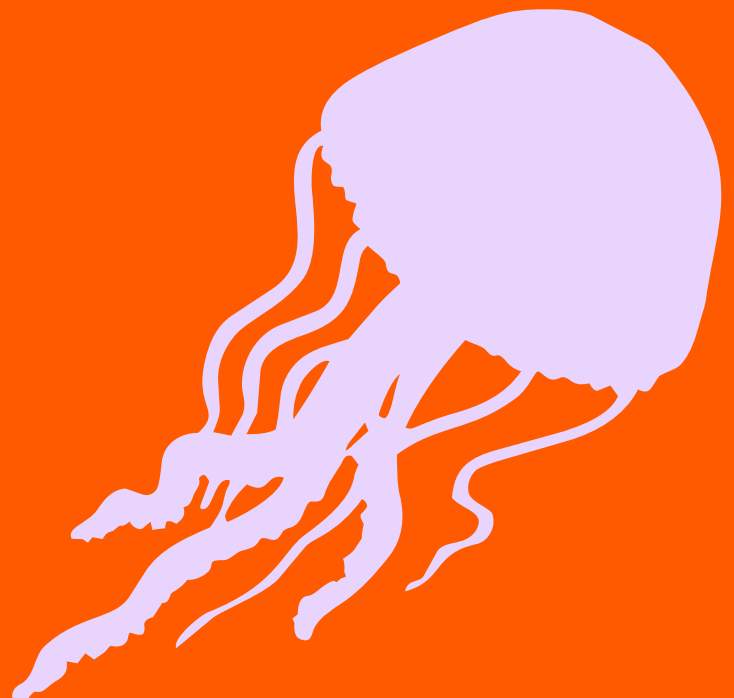


sea-changers

**IMPACT
REPORT
2025**

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-FOUNDERS

2025 was a pivotal year for marine conservation. High-profile commitments such as new marine protected area pledges, the EU's Ocean Pact, and David Attenborough's Oceans helped to keep both marine solutions and crises firmly in the public and political spotlight. The challenge to Britain's ban on commercial fishing for sand eels in the North Sea was dismissed in an international court - another win for ocean protection.

However, significant challenges remain. Sustainable Development Goal 14, Life Below Water is still off track, and the UK continues to fall short of its own targets for achieving a healthy marine environment. Against this complex backdrop, Sea-Changers' unique role in funding communities to take action for the ocean feels more important than ever.

In 2025, our team managed a diverse portfolio of grant programmes across the UK, including the launch of our new Step Up Fund and our school Eco Refill Shops programme, funded by Ecosurety. Over the year, we allocated funding to almost 100 community-led projects, investing over £260,000 in marine conservation, education and innovation.

Increased awareness of Sea-Changers has led to a welcome rise in demand for our funding. This growth brings increased operating costs and whilst we remain committed to making our grant programmes as visible and accessible as possible, our team needs to carefully assess applications to make sure funding reaches projects with the greatest potential for impact.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're excited to continue growing both our income and our impact, by supporting more inspiring, innovative marine conservation projects across the UK, and working with partners who share our ambition for healthy seas and coastal communities.

Thank you for supporting Sea-Changers, and for helping to protect our seas and oceans. We couldn't do any of this without you.



Helen & Rachel

Helen Webb & Rachel Lopata
Co-Founders

STORY SO FAR...

OUR VISION

Since giving out our very first grant in 2012, we have been supporting communities around the UK to conserve, protect and restore their precious coastal and marine habitats and species. Our vision is a future where the UK's seas and shores are clean and healthy and marine species and habitats are protected.

Through our various grants, we aim to:

- ☀️ Harness people's love for the sea, inspiring them to contribute positively to its sustainability.
- 🦀 Enable everyone who cares about the marine environment to make a difference.
- ☀️ Support diverse, grassroots and community led marine conservation all around the British Isles.



Sea-Changers' grants are unique in UK marine conservation. We provide a place for small, local and grassroots organisations to seek funding for their marine conservation activities, based on the priorities that they identify. This is a bottom-up (rather than top-down) approach to encourage community engagement, and has proven, year on year, to have wide ranging social, economic and environmental impacts.

WE'RE ON A MISSION

To empower local communities and organisations that care about the marine environment, to identify and proceed with conservation projects that make a difference to its future.

We achieve this with the support of our amazing corporate partners, funders, donors and volunteers who collectively help us in our mission.

500+
PROJECTS
FUNDED
SINCE 2012

2025 FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS



8 new coastal water fountains were allocated grants

17 projects were allocated funding through our Spring Main Grants, totalling just over £36,000

14 school based Eco Refill Shops funded by Ecosurety

16 projects were allocated funding through our Autumn Main Grants, totalling almost £36,000

27 projects were allocated funding through our Small Grants programme, totalling almost £13,000



15 Innovation Fund projects were allocated just over £83,000

10 Scottish Learning Fund projects were allocated just over £6,000

3 Step Up Fund projects were allocated a collective total of £50,000



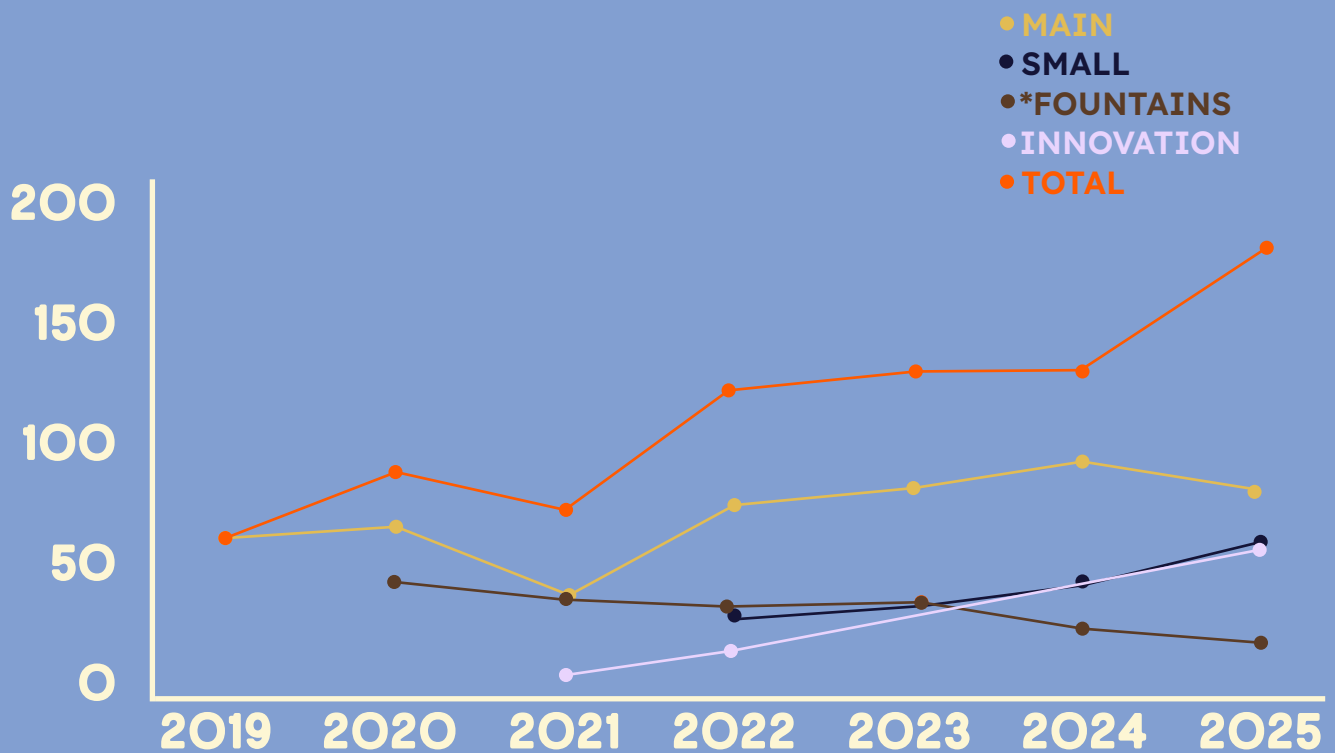
*Figures represent grant decisions made in 2025. Some grants allocated in 2024 were paid in 2025, and some allocated in 2025 will be paid in 2026.

DEMAND FOR OUR GRANTS CONTINUES TO GROW

Applications increased by a third in 2025.

Awareness of Sea-Changers and our grants programmes continues to grow. Rising demand for our grants reflects an increasing number of people inspired to take action for their coastal and marine environments. Main Grant application numbers remained steady compared to previous years, with the growth in demand driven by Small Grant applications and the Innovation Fund.

Grant applications over the last five years:



*Bunzl Coastal Fountain Fund applications have reduced marginally as we have developed guidance to help applicants better understand what permissions and funding is required to install and maintain their refill station. As a result we have a more effective award process and sites that were allocated grants in 2025 were installed much more quickly than in earlier years.

FUNDS AND GRANTS CYCLE

Our varied grants programme runs throughout the year, helping to connect business funders and philanthropists with the grassroots coastal projects, communities and innovation that they care about the most.

OUR GRANT PROGRAMMES

FUNDS	IMPACT	2025 DEADLINE	GOOD TO KNOW
Small Grants	27 grants allocated in 2025	Always open	Up to £500
Scottish Learning Fund	Share learning and good practice across Scotland	Always open	Up to £750
Main Fund	33 grants allocated in 2025	Twice a year. End of March and September	Up to £2,500
Innovation	15 new ideas / pilot projects for marine conservation in the UK	End of February	Up to £10k every year from 2025 (it was every other year)
Coastal Fountains	8 new fountains funded in 2025, bringing the total to almost 50	End of April	£2,500 to cover hardware costs of fountains
Step Up Fund	3 projects were allocated larger grants to help them boost their reach and impact	Invitation only - first round 2025	Designed to help previous Sea-Changers grant recipients step up their development and impact
Eco Refill Shops in Schools	14 schools funded to set up a pupil-led Eco-Refill shop	Ran in May 2025	Partnership launched in 2025 with Ecosurety

OUR IMPACT IS DIVERSE AND SO ARE THE OUTCOMES



The Alba Explorers team coastal litter picking.



Sharing the wonders of coastal life with children.

“Something I learned in these sessions is that we can care for our planet by not littering and being nice to the animals”
Ruby, Year 6

Scotland

Alba Explorers - Young Coastal Guardians

Coastal conservation engagement sessions for local school children in Angus and Dundee.

Outcome:

- 80 school children engaged over 14 sessions. Activities include; beach clean-ups, litter picking, and marine life analysis.
- 75 large bags of litter removed.

Conservation Detection Dogs

Training conservation detection dogs to help detect invasive marine species.

Outcome:

- 2 dogs trained to rapidly detect Carpet Sea Squirt, to aid in mitigating their environmental impact.
- Completed Odour Recognition Training and are progressing well in Scent Discrimination Trials, leading to operational readiness.
- Other species being assessed for detection e.g. Slipper limpet.

“We’ve been doing extensive training since April. There is a lot of equipment involved, and without Sea-Changers’ funding, I would not have been able to put all the equipment together.”



A Conservation Detection Dog loving their training.

OUR IMPACT IS DIVERSE AND SO ARE THE OUTCOMES

Wales

Celtic Deep Conservation CIC - Sharkademy

UK's only shark research residency for early career conservationists.

Outcome:

- 18 attendees in Pembrokeshire, learning about UK shark and marine life through hands-on marine conservation activities.
- Over 50 attendees across 3 years from a wide variety of backgrounds, including students and volunteers.

“The support we received from Sea-Changers was pivotal in getting this programme off the ground.”



Sharkademy attendees out at sea.



Sharkademy quadrant surveying a beach.

South East England

Nautical Archaeology Society Sub-Aqua Club, (NAS SAC) - Project Portunus

5 year project to gather quality citizen science data at sub tidal sites to inform a greater understanding of the underwater habitats and species, providing a baseline to measure change.

Year 1: The Underwater Survey of the Marine Habitats of Langstone and Chichester Harbours.

Outcome:

- 17 citizens trained on Underwater Surveying, 5 trained on Survey Reporting.
- 29 dive surveys completed (at 17 different sites) plus 38 intertidal surveys (at 11 different sites).

Project Portunus will continue surveying through to 2028, utilising the skills and equipment provided.



Capturing underwater data in Langstone and Chichester Harbours.



Underwater findings in Langstone and Chichester Harbours.

OUR IMPACT IS DIVERSE AND SO ARE THE OUTCOMES

North West England

Cumbria Wildlife Trust - One Irish Sea Virtual Reality

Immersive sub-surface marine experience via VR headsets.

Outcome: 641 people experienced life below water, virtually, with the VR experience at several regional events, including the Irish Sea Day.

One memorable moment with an older resident in a coastal village who had lived near the sea all their life but had “never seen under the surface.” After using the headset, they said, “I had no idea it was so full of life – it makes you want to look after it better.”



Experiencing our underwater world by VR.



Sharing the wonders of the sea.



Discovering a skate egg case.
©sghaywood/Shark Trust.

South West England

Shark Trust - Shark and Skate Eggcase ID: Community Verification Platform

Developing a Shark and Skate Eggcase Community Verification Platform to identify skate egg cases, greatly enhancing citizen science input to The Shark Trust's Great Eggcase Hunt.

Outcome:

- The Community Verification Platform (CVP) has been developed and undergoing internal testing.
- Real world testing starts early 2026.
- Platform on track to deliver early, and greatly streamline the record approval process.

MAKING AN IMPACT TOGETHER

SEA CHANGE WINE is a purpose-driven wine brand with ocean conservation at its heart. Founded on the belief that great wine should not come at the expense of the planet, Sea Change Wine donates a portion of every bottle sold to support marine conservation globally.

A valued corporate partner since 2019, Sea Change Wine has shown how a values-led business can help to create lasting impact for our seas. Their long-term commitment has already contributed more than £200,000 in funding to Sea-Changers, helping to fund community-led action to protect the UK's shores and marine life.

Each year, their team takes the time to visit one or two of the projects they support through Sea-Changers, seeing first-hand how their business impact translates into ocean impact. These visits help to strengthen our partnership, through collective learning and understanding. This year we were delighted to visit the **Sussex Dolphin Project** together.

Learn more about Sea Change Wine
www.seachangewine.com

“We wanted to support a charity directly protecting the UK’s coastline. Sea-Changers is focused on practical solutions and that’s exactly what we were looking for.” Simon Rolfe, Director, Sea Change Wine



NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR 2025

With a shared mission to reduce plastic pollution and waste, we launched a partnership with Ecosurety in 2025, to support Pupils Profit Eco Refill Shops in schools across England, Scotland and Wales. Under this new scheme, children will follow the highly successful enterprise training designed by Pupils Profit - to plan, launch and run their Eco Refill businesses, selling refills of hand wash, body wash, washing up liquid, and laundry liquids to the wider school.

✧ 9 schools across England and Wales have launched their shop in 2025.

✧ 461 plastic containers have been saved from waste.

✧ 135 pupils trained and running their Eco Refill shops.

✧ 5 more schools will launch their shops in 2026.



Trellech Primary School / Pupils Profit ECO Refill Shop

“We’ve made our school more aware of plastic waste.” Participating pupil.

NEW FUND FOR 2025

THE STEP UP FUND is an invitation-only grant programme designed to boost the impact and reach of projects that have previously received funding from Sea-Changers.

The Fund is aimed at organisations with significant potential to grow, replicate their work, or scale up their activities. Rather than an open application process, we work closely with selected projects to develop bespoke proposals that will enable transformational growth - going far beyond what can be achieved with our standard Main Grants, which are capped at £2,500.

Step Up Fund projects may receive between £15,000 and £25,000.

Congratulations to the following projects who have been successful in winning this year's funding - we are tremendously excited to see the fantastic work we know they will be doing.

Seaful Seaful

A UK charity dedicated to reconnecting people to the ocean and waterways for mental health benefits and stewardship. Step Up funding will help Seaful bring together their projects into a cohesive journey from ocean connection to empowered stewardship, strengthen community partnerships, and develop a resilient volunteer network.

Operation Seabird

Originally launched as a police-led initiative, Operation Seabird is now a Community Interest Company (CIC) focused on tackling wildlife disturbance and crime through education and stewardship. Step Up funding will help strengthen their brand identity, governance, and sustainability, enabling them to cultivate a professional event presence, and shared resources for their growing network of custodians across the UK.

Hastings Kelp Project

A pioneering community-led initiative focused on restoring and protecting vital marine ecosystems. With Step Up funding, they will establish a modular marine research lab in Hastings, conduct diving-based ecological surveys, and deliver ambitious community and educational outreach. Their goal is to create a scalable blueprint for kelp forest recovery and oyster reef regeneration that can be replicated nationally.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

WHAT THIS YEAR'S GRANTS MEAN TO OUR RECIPIENTS

"I've always had criticism of our funding system in the UK where you've got to be in big teams, to get big grants. Yet some of what we want to do, especially for training students, doesn't cost much at all. Those pockets of money are non-existent unless you go to a charity like Sea-Changers. So, as a result, I wouldn't be where I am now if it wasn't for Sea-Changers."

Darren Gröcke, Professor & Director, SIBL, Durham University

"Sea-Changers has been able to really come in and add value to the work that we have done, particularly around environmental training events, getting expert speakers in and training the trainer."

Paul Renfro, Programme Manager, Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum.

"This Sea-Changers fund has enabled us to really get going with this! It's been a big step forward; it aligned with us like no other fund did, so we're super grateful. It's really given us that big stepping stone."

Terrie Sawyer, Director at Moray Ocean Community CIC

"We've absolutely loved being part of the Sea-Changers' programme – it's been inspiring, supportive, and brilliantly run from start to finish. The team's passion and dedication to marine conservation really shines through. Thank you for everything you do to help grassroots projects thrive."

Hastings Kelp Project

IMPACT WHERE IT MATTERS MOST

Bridging the gap between funders and grassroots projects

We help funders and corporate partners reach hyper local, grassroots projects that align with their purpose, or business values and mission. We take care of the application assessment and the evaluation process, reducing the risk to the funder whilst offering valuable marine conversation expertise to guide their investment.

Funders can face an overwhelming number of options and limited capacity to scope out every marine project. Sea-Changers act as a specialist filter. We channel support to diverse, credible grassroots projects while keeping decision-making simple and removing the headache of micro-level impact evaluation for a corporate partner or funder.

For grassroots projects, Sea-Changers is often the very first and/or the only available source of external funding. Communities often do not have the resources, the confidence, the financial track record or the eligibility (e.g. as a registered charity) to apply directly to national funders or big corporations.

These projects are mostly volunteer-led, and have the support of coastal communities that love and want to steward their local beaches and marine life. That's where the magic happens, and where our partners' funding can have the biggest impact!

It's a WIN WIN!

“Offering funds for specialists like Sea-Changers to make these kinds of grants is a valuable approach for the Foundation. We could not find or make the informed decisions that they make about which projects to support.”
Elaine Gibb
Partnerships and Learning Manager,
William Grant Foundation

OUR 2026 AMBITION

1. SCALE UP TO MEET DEMAND

We want to consolidate our growth and continue to meet demand.

In 2025 we grew our income considerably. Total grant applications were also higher than ever and our income growth allowed us to fund more projects. Whilst the pace of growth might slow, we hope to maintain the momentum.

2. EMPOWER MORE DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Continue to support and empower community and grassroots projects to lead marine protection and conservation in their local areas. We want to reach even more places and people that are under-represented amongst our grant applicants and recipients.

3. BECOME MORE RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

We want to make sure that Sea-Changers' grants are available for communities long into the future. As a Founder-led and volunteer-run charity, we are focused on developing a strategy for the future that is less reliant on a small number of key individuals, so our focus is on income growth to allow us to sustain a small paid team in the future. The start of this new model is planned in 2026.

4. DRIVE INNOVATION

Build on our support for innovation with a further round of our Innovation Fund. The challenges facing the marine environment and its creatures demand creative solutions and a route to test out new ideas. At the community level, we are determined to play our part. The appetite for this fund in 2025 proves that there is no shortage of creative thinking happening to the benefit of marine ecosystems and species.

5. SUPPORT KEY PROJECTS TO SCALE AND REPLICATE

We ran our first Step Up Fund in 2025 and will be seeking the funds to offer more of this kind of support in 2026. Amongst our many small grant recipients we want to give additional and much larger grants to aid those that have the ambition and skill to extend their impact.

6. MAXIMISE THE IMPACT THAT OUR GRANTS HAVE ON THE UK'S MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Establishing an expert Marine Advisory Group to guide decision making within Sea-Changers, sharing their knowledge and experience to ensure our team and Board of Trustees are up to date with the latest issues and solutions in marine conservation.



Sea-Changers volunteers at The Ocean Advocate Summit


AND WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

We have an amazing group of business partners who support our grant programmes, and an amazing team of volunteers who make everything happen!

WILLIAM GRANT
FOUNDATION



SEA
CHANGE
WINE

 ECOSURETY

Flotilla
FOUNDATION




HEBRIDEAN
ISLAND CRUISES

LIONTRUST
FOUNDATION



 ARCmarine®

Our volunteer teams include: Social media, Grants Administration, Grants Assessors, Trustees and Strategic Communications.

We're proud to help maritime, B Corps and other purpose-driven businesses to have a positive impact on the UK's marine environment. If you are a business or volunteer interested in partnering with us, get in touch! info@sea-changers.org.uk.

This report was co-created with our 1% for the Planet business partner Sea of Purpose www.seaofpurpose.com with creative support from Kels George www.kelsgeorge.com.



sea-changers

**THANK YOU FOR
SUPPORTING
SEA-CHANGERS!**