

Marine Environmental Monitoring



Plate 1 Common dolphin photo credited to D Passmore

Report author: -Matthew Westfield
Contributing authors: -
R Penrose
E Beattie
R Deaville

2022 Welsh Marine Mammal Strandings Report

1st January 2022 – 31st December 2022

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1. Executive summary

One hundred and thirty cetaceans were reported to Marine Environmental Monitoring (MEM) as part of the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme during 2022. This is a 15% decrease from 2021 and 27% decrease from 2020. As with previous years the harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) remains the most reported cetacean (n=68). This was then followed by the Atlantic short beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) (n=44). This was a decrease in numbers reported for both species from 2021.

During 2022 we had four different species of cetacean reported to MEM compared to seven in 2021. Along with the harbour porpoise and the common dolphin we also had reported Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) (n=1), and bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) (n=2). There were also fifteen that were indeterminate. This number was made up of three listed as cetacean, two as dolphin, and ten as Short-beaked common dolphin/striped dolphin (indeterminate).

Two common dolphins and one porpoise were reported as live stranding during 2022.

Twenty-one cetaceans were collected for examination in 2022. This was made up of twelve harbour porpoises and nine common dolphins.

In 2022 we had an increase of 6 seals being reported to MEM from the previous year (n=158). Most of the reports being the Atlantic grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) (n=148). The rest was made up of harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*) (n=2). The remaining eight were indeterminate.

We only had one marine turtle in Welsh waters reported to MEM in 2022. This was a live leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), which was recorded as being sighted at sea.

2. Introduction

In April of 2021 Marine Environmental Monitoring (MEM) was awarded a new ten-year contract as part of the new Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP) contract (ME6042) awarded to the Institute of Zoology (IoZ) / Zoological Society London (ZSL) by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The contract will run April 2021-March 2031. The project is co-funded by the Welsh Government (WG) and DEFRA. MEM is responsible for providing the Welsh arm of the CSIP contract as a sub-contractor (see [Fig 1](#)).

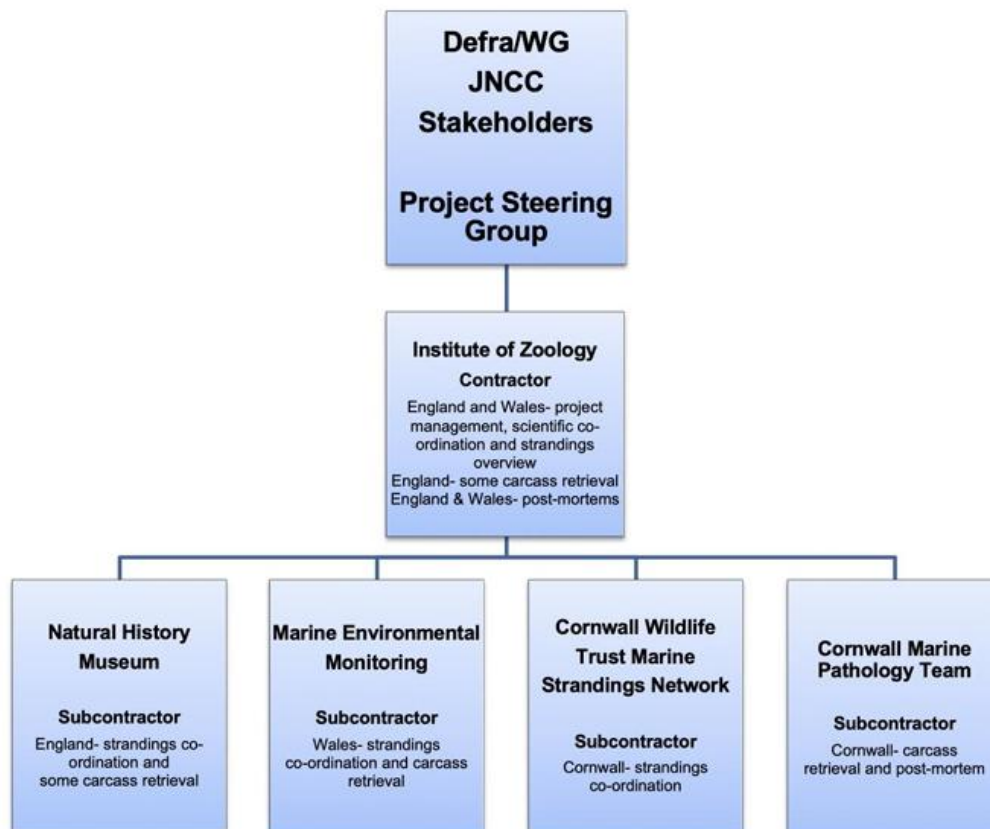


Figure 1 Operational Structure of CSIP

The project objectives under the new contract which Marine Environmental Monitoring have a responsibility for are:

- To collect/collate, analyse and report data on all cetacean strandings around the coast of Wales.
- To provide a subset of the stranded cetaceans in Wales to the project so that post-mortem examinations can be carried out.
- Help maintain the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP) database, which brings together accurate and geo-referenced data on both strandings and post-mortem examination.
- To establish, improve and maintain relationships with regional volunteer networks, local authorities and other stakeholders who may support the achievement of project objectives within Wales.
- To make information on strandings, unusual occurrences and post-mortem examination results available to the Welsh Government through regular contact.

- To consider innovative ways to support efficiency and capacity of the programme within the project budget, to then present ideas and ways of streamlining the project (e.g. the expansion of the volunteer network, use of a reporting app).
- Maintain the programme of science and academic excellence through collaboration with relevant stakeholders, promotion of the programme and independent publishing.

3. Project approach

3.1. Collection of data.

A single contact number for the whole of the UK has been maintained. The UK number is a free-phone number **0800 6520333** with a stepped menu system takes the caller through whether the stranding is alive or dead and then directs them to the correct organisation and strandings co-ordinator for the appropriate country.

For Wales the caller is asked to leave a message on the answer phone reporting the animal's species, location, approximate size and state of decomposition. They are also asked to leave contact information. Once the call is finished the strandings co-ordinator automatically receives notification of the report on their mobile phone. The strandings co-ordinator will then either message the caller asking for any photographs and further info or call them for the information.

To help with the identification of the species, sex and state of decomposition all calls are now asked to provide any photographs that they might have of the animal. These photographs are kept and maintained by MEM in a searchable database and can be provided to further help the project.

A network of volunteers has been maintained who can be contacted by the Strandings Co-ordinator to confirm the stranding, assess its condition and collect further data (see [section 15](#))

All data is then entered into the CSIP database.

3.2. Recovery, transportation and storage.

Due to the time it takes to get to parts of the Welsh coastline MEM rely on a network of volunteers to help confirm location, secure the animal for later collection and where appropriate to collect the animal ([section 15](#)). These volunteers are made up of individuals, groups and organisations that have some understanding of cetaceans and marine turtles. Once details of the animal have been confirmed the stranding co-ordinator will look to collect the animal the same day to prevent any further decay or scavenger damage.

MEM have various methods for transporting the animals depending on its size. Smaller cetaceans are transported inside the vehicle either in a specially designed tray or inside cadaver bags to prevent any contamination within the vehicle. Larger cetaceans are transported inside a specially designed trailer that has a stainless-steel base designed to prevent any leakage.

As part of the new contract, it has been agreed that where possible the animals will not be frozen, and instead kept fresh. To aid this, one of our chest freezers has been converted into a fridge. This enables us to store the animal for several days before we arrange transport to

London Zoo. A further chest freezer is still maintained for any animal that can't be transported in a reasonable time, and to keep any samples in.

Any reported animal that isn't collected as part of the project is then notified to the local council or landowner (when known), so they can arrange safe disposal.

3.3. Engagement and education

Marine Environmental Monitoring will always look to engage with the public and the various groups and organisations that operate around the Welsh coastline to educate them to the work of CSIP. To aid in this we have updated our website www.strandings.com and also created a new Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Marine.Environmental.Monitoring> to advertise the ongoing work of CSIP and MEM.

MEM will always look to support any request to attend any group meetings to discuss the ongoing work of CSIP and MEM around the Welsh coast. To support this, we have created several presentations along with maintaining other educational material to support learning. We will also look to support other groups and organisations that carry out educational work about our seas around the Welsh coastline, by either providing literature or attending events.

Marine Environmental Monitoring regularly reaches out to the various councils around the Welsh coastline to advise on the project and its progress. Each council is asked to pass any reports of strandings they receive to MEM by either the free phone number 0800 652 0333 or by emailing us at info@strandings.com. Any council within Wales can contact MEM for free advice on cetaceans, seals, marine turtles and shark strandings and their safe disposal.

4. Covid

In the early part of 2020 a severe acute respiratory syndrome Coronavirus (SARS Covid-19) entered the UK. Levels of infection became so high 'lockdowns' were implemented in countries to restrict the movement of people and thus hopefully to restrict the spread of the virus. These lockdowns and restrictions continued into 2021. By 2022 all restrictions had been lifted but Covid remained a concern.

Throughout 2022 Marine Environmental Monitoring returned to normal operating except for the use of volunteers, which we still restricted. The use of face masks also remained to prevent the spread of the disease.

5. Results and findings

5.1. Overview

During 2022 a total of 130 cetaceans were reported to MEM along with 158 seals ([Table 1](#)). Out of the 130 cetaceans reported we were able to identify 115 of them to species. The remaining 15 we were unable to identify the species. This was due to either state of decomposition, or lack of photographs.

There is a small population of harbour seals (common seal) along the north coast of Wales. We also occasionally see harbour seals along the south coast that are believed to have come from Cornwall and Devon coast. Although the numbers are small, we will be including them in all future reports so to better understand the population within Wales.

We had 158 seals reported to us in 2022([Table 1](#)). Of those 148 were grey seals and two harbour seals. A further 8 were unidentifiable due to the state of decomposition or lack of photos.

Table 1 Total reports for 2022

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Bottlnose dolphin								1				1	2
Harbour porpoise	2	2	3	3	5	6	7	12	4	10	9	5	68
Risso's dolphin										1			1
Common dolphin	4	12	1	1	2	3	4	5	1		8	3	44
Common/stripped dolphin (indeterminate)		2		1	1		1	1		2	2		10
Cetacean (indeterminate)		1			1							1	3
Dolphin (indeterminate)					1					1			2
Total cetaceans	6	17	4	5	10	9	12	19	5	14	19	10	130
Harbour seal							1	1					2
Grey seal	3	4	3	5	5	4	4	4	15	73	23	5	148
Seal (indeterminate)	2	1	1	1	1				1		1		8
Total seals	5	5	4	6	6	4	5	5	16	73	24	5	158
Total animals	11	22	8	11	16	13	17	24	21	87	43	15	288

We see a huge spike of mortality in seals between September and November ([table 1](#)). This is also around the time that the grey seals give birth to their pups. Many of the stranded grey seals we see reported around this time are pups. From the beginning of September to end of October 57 of the reported seals were pups, with a further 9 being reported in November.

5.2. Live strandings

Of the 130 cetaceans we had reported in 2022, 3 were listed as live stranding. This was made up of two short beaked common dolphins and one harbour porpoise.

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Common Dolphin											1	1	2
Harbour porpoise								1					1
Total live strandings								1			1	1	3

Table 2 Live strandings

5.3. Animals sent for post-mortem examination

During 2022, 22 cetaceans were collected for post-mortem examination. This only equates to 12% of the total cetaceans but it is up on the previous year. This increase is in part due to the lifting of restrictions of COVID (see [section 4](#)). We also sent two harbour seals for post-mortem examination.

Table 3 Animals sent for post-mortem

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Common dolphin		5			1	1		1			1	1	10
Harbour porpoise				1	3		3	2			2	1	12
Harbour seal							1	1					2
Total sent for post-mortem examination		5		1	4	1	4	4			3	2	24

The results for the post-mortem examinations can be found in [section \(Table 9\)](#).

6. Mass stranding event

One stranding events involving two animals found in close temporal and spatial proximity (mass stranding events or MSEs) were reported to MEM during 2022. This was on Llanrhystud beach, Ceredigion, on the 1st July 2022 and involved two harbour porpoises (SW2022/462). Unfortunately, due to state of decomposition no further examination could be carried out.

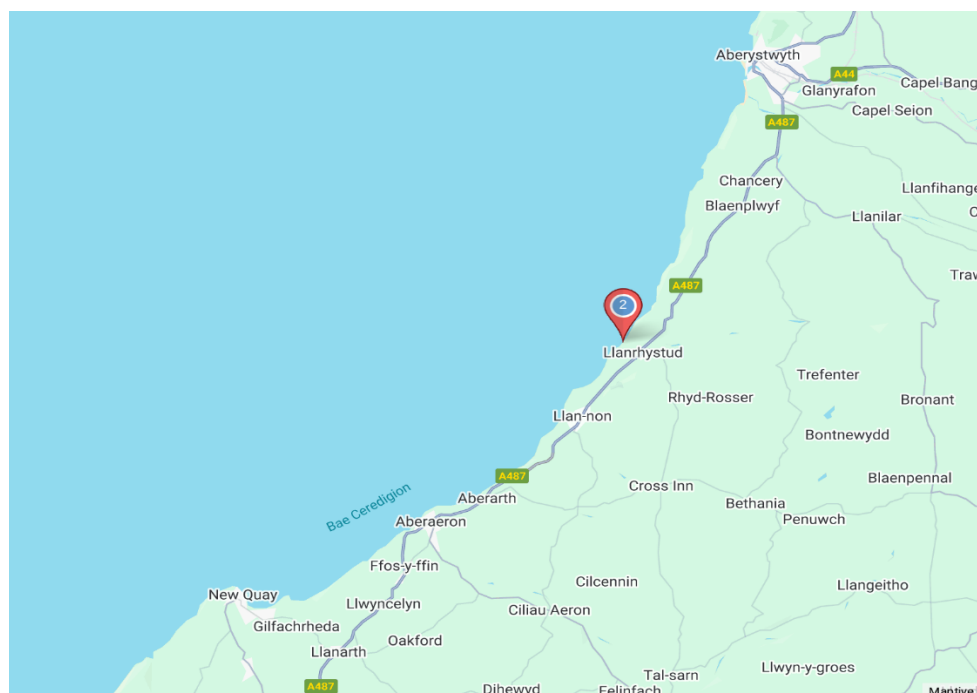


Figure 2 Mass strandings events 2022

7. Summary of strandings

7.1. Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)

Although there is a large resident population of bottlenose dolphins off the Welsh coast, strandings of this species are relatively unusual. Bottlenose dolphins in UK waters are large robust animals often measuring over three metres in length, these animals have a substantial mass of muscle. It may be possible, that once dead, these large animals become negatively buoyant only returning to the surface once gasses from decomposition counteract this effect. This may explain why so few bottlenose dolphins are found stranded dead in a fresh condition compared to decomposed carcasses.

Bottlenose dolphins are a feature of the relevant Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) on the Welsh coast and are a priority species within the CSIP, it is for this reason that any reports of bottlenose dolphins are investigated fully.

Two bottlenose dolphins were reported in 2022. The first was reported on the 3rd August 2022. This was on Criccieth beach, Gwynedd and was in an advanced state of decomposition (**SW2022/505**). The second was on Treath Llyndan, Rhosolyn, Anglesey and was reported on the 20th December 2022 (**SW2022/724**) (see [plate 2](#)).

Table 4 10-year data on bottlenose dolphin strandings

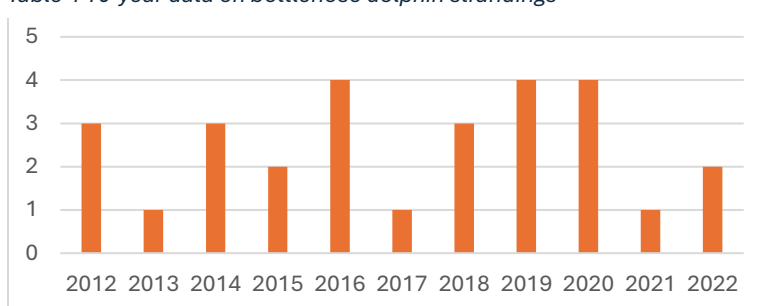


Plate 2 Bottlenose dolphin (SW2022/724)

7.2. Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*)

The harbour porpoise is one of the most common cetaceans in the waters around the Welsh coastline but faces many challenges and as a result they are consistently the most frequently reported stranded cetacean on the Welsh coast. In 2022 this remained the same with 68 being reported to MEM. This is twelve less than the previous year and continues the decline that we have been seeing since 2017 ([Table 5](#)).



Plate 3 Harbour porpoise (SW2022/705)

The map below shows the distribution of the reported strandings around the Welsh coastline ([Fig 3](#)) and shows that they are distributed around the whole Welsh coastline.

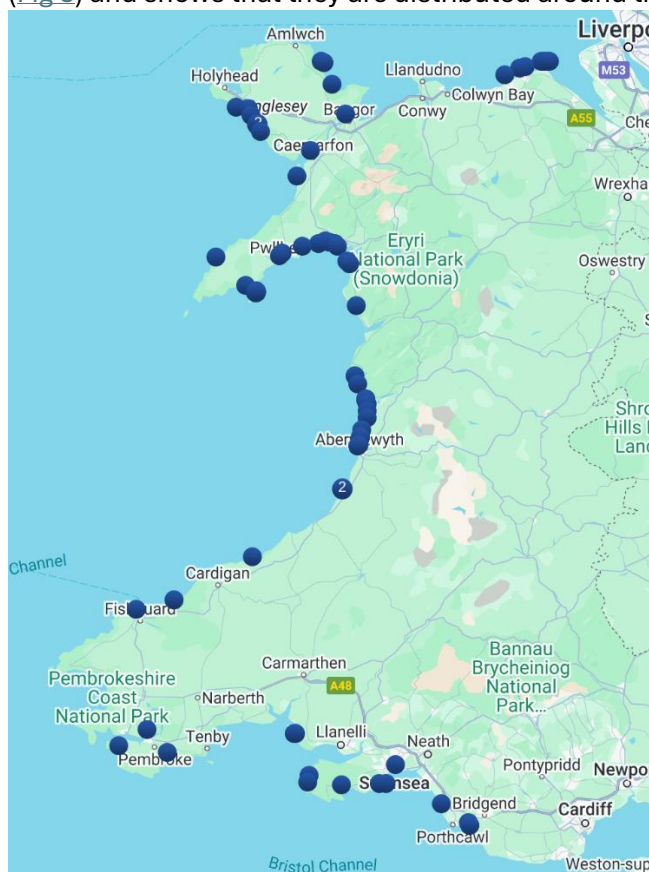
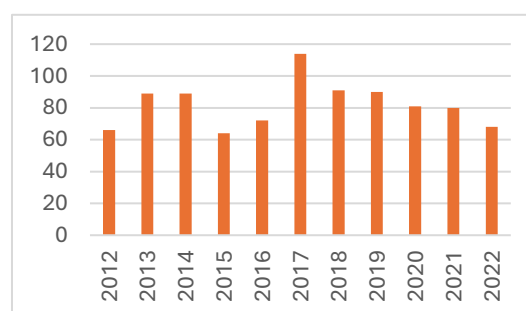


Figure 3 Location of harbour porpoise strandings 2022

Table 5 10-year data on harbour porpoise strandings



Twelve porpoises were collected throughout the year and made available for post-mortem examination in 2022 (see [Table 3](#)). The results of those post-mortem examinations are in [section 10](#) (see [table 9](#)).

7.3. Short beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*)

The reports of common dolphin had been increasing over the last ten years with large jumps in numbers in 2019 and 2020 (table 6). In 2021 we had 50 reported and now In 2022 we have had 44 reports of common dolphins stranded on the Welsh coast. This is down another 12% on the previous year and 35% since the peak in 2020.



Plate 4 Common dolphin (SW2022/661)

During 2022 we had a short beaked common dolphin reported to us dead at sea and brought ashore by Natural Resources Wales (NRW). This was SW2022/511 which was collected and made available for a post-mortem examination.

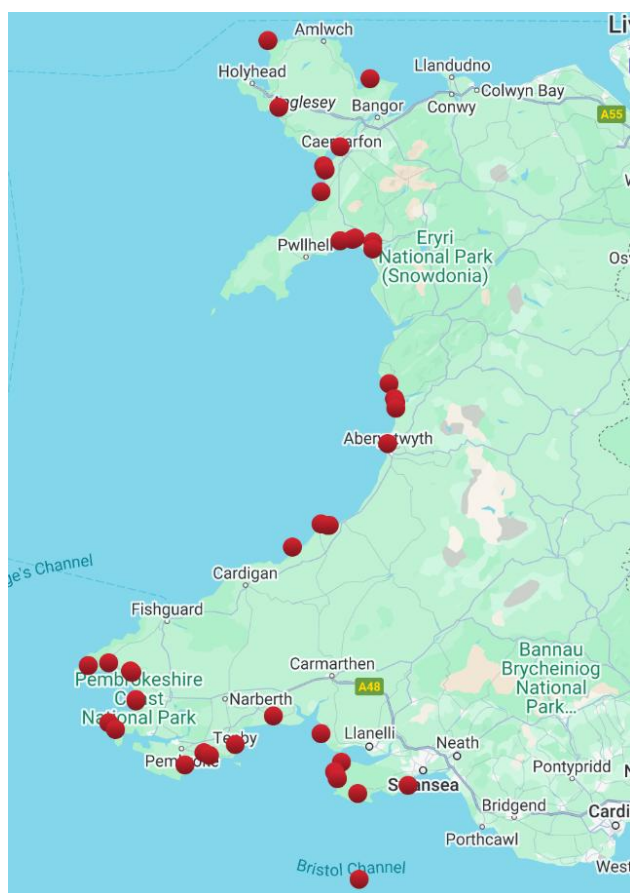


Figure 4 Location of common dolphin stranding 2022

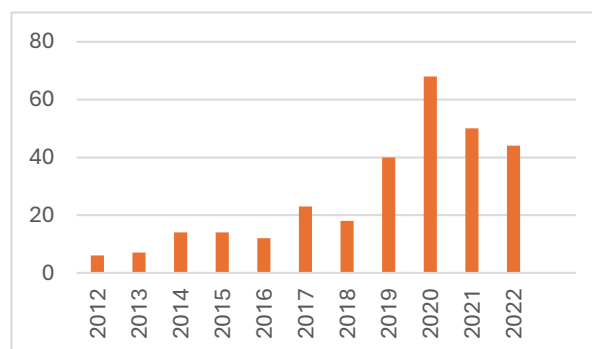


Table 6 10-year data on common dolphin strandings

7.4. Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*)

There is a family pod of Risso's that can be regularly seen around the Isle of Anglesey and along the North coast of Wales. For this reason, most years we will see one or two being reported to MEM as stranding around the Northwest coast of Wales.

In 2022 we had one Risso's dolphin reported to MEM. This was reported on the 6th October 2022 and was seen on Aberffraw beach, Anglesey (**SW2022/590**). This animal was in an advanced state of decomposition, so no further examination was carried out ([plate 5](#)).



Plate 5 Risso dolphin (SW2022/590)

7.5. Atlantic grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)

There is a large grey seal population that seems to be doing very well in Wales. You can find grey seals on almost the whole coastline. As a result, the numbers of reported grey seal mortality we get reported around the coast is the highest of any single species of animal.

In 2022 MEM received 148 reports of grey seals. This is 3 higher than the previous year and the second highest in the last ten years ([table 7](#)). The high mortality in 2017 was caused by several large storms across the pupping season, in particular storm 'Ophelia' which hit in October killing many of the pups. We are still seeing a high mortality rate during the pupping season which in 2022 ran from September to mid-November. The grey seal population is doing well around the Welsh coast which is resulting in a greater number of pups being born each year resulting in high mortality rates.



Plate 6 Grey seal (SS2022/248). Photo credited to G Richards

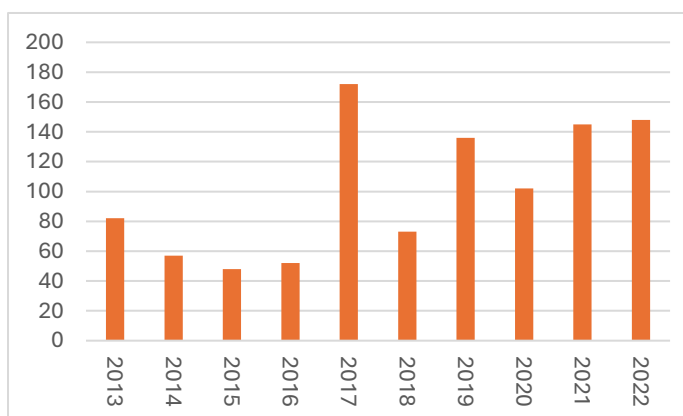


Table 7 10-year data on grey seal strandings

7.6. Harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*)

We had two harbour seals (common seal) reported to MEM in 2022. Both were pups with one being reported on the 27th July 2022 on Tywyn beach, Gwynedd (**SS2022/310**). The second was reported on the 14th August 2022 on Prestatyn beach, Denbighshire (**SS2022/336**). This was a pup that had been found on the south coast in Carmarthenshire. Both of these pups were collected and made available for post-mortem examination.



Plate 7 Harbour seal (SS2022/310).
Photo credited to L Johnson

7.7. Marine turtles

Marine Environmental Monitoring is responsible for the management of the British Isles & Republic of Ireland 'TURTLE' Database which keeps records of all marine turtle sightings and strandings. This report only covers those that relate to Wales. The full turtle report can be found by following this link (<https://strandings.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/2022-Turtle-Stranding-Report.pdf>) or by going to either www.strandings.com or www.ukturtles.online.

There was only one report of a turtle around the Welsh coast to MEM in 2022. This was a live leatherback turtle that was seen swimming in the Swansea area on 29th July 2022 (**T2022/10**).

8. Unusual occurrences

8.1. Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*)

On the 29th April, Marine Environmental Monitoring received a call about a tope shark that had washed ashore. The shark was 1.52m long and fresh. Although Tope isn't currently within the programme, it was decided to collect the animal and make it available for post-mortem examination.



Plate 8 Tope shark

8.2. Mass stranding of starry smooth hounds (*Mustelus asterias*)

On the 2nd July we received a number of calls to a mass stranding of starry smooth hounds on Llandudno beach, Conwy. On attending we found over 60 starry smooth hound sharks spread along approximately 100m section of the beach. Although smooth hounds aren't part of the project two were collected and made available for post-mortem examination.



Plate 9 Starry smooth hound

9. Bottlenose dolphin kills

During 2022 six of the 12 harbour porpoises were found to have been killed by bottlenose dolphins ([Table 9](#)). This is equal to the highest number we have had in the last ten years ([Table 8](#)). This number isn't as high as historic numbers when there was greater funding to examine harbour porpoises but is a good indication that bottlenose dolphin attacks are still one of the greatest challengers to porpoises around the Welsh coast. No other species was shown to have been killed by a bottlenose dolphin around the Welsh coast.

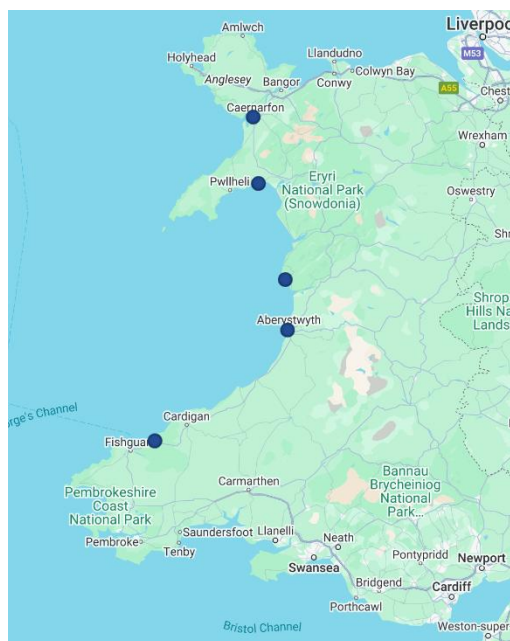
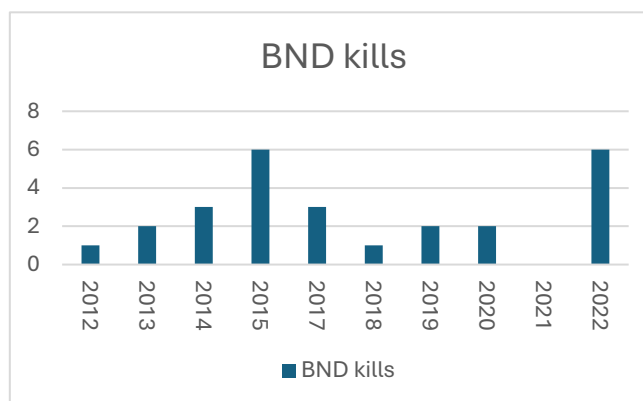


Figure 5 Map of bottlenose dolphin kills

Table 8 Bottlenose dolphin kills



10. Causes of death

Twenty-four animals were collected during 2022 for examination within the project. This is above the required twenty for Wales, but was agreed as the project could accommodate the extra.

The provisional cause of death is given in the table below ([table 9](#)).

All animals underwent a full post-mortem examination at the Zoological Society of London (ZSL).

Table 9 Causes of death

Reference	Species (common)	Location	Local Authority	Cause of Death
SW2022/92	Short-beaked common dolphin	Aberystwyth Beach	Ceredigion	live stranding (weaning animal)
SW2022/95	Short-beaked common dolphin	Tywyn Beach	Gwynedd	generalised bacterial infection, congestive heart failure
SW2022/130	Short-beaked common dolphin	Ynyslas	Ceredigion	live stranding (pending histopathology)
SW2022/133	Short-beaked common dolphin	Aberdesach Beach	Gwynedd	not established
SW2022/170	Short-beaked common dolphin	Llangrannog	Ceredigion	pending
SW2022/315	Harbour porpoise	Caernarfon	Gwynedd	physical trauma bottlenose dolphin attack
SW2022/341	Harbour porpoise	Aberystwyth Beach	Ceredigion	physical trauma blunt force
SW2022/351	Harbour porpoise	Swansea marine beach	Swansea	intrauterine foetal mortality/aborting
SW2022/367	Short-beaked common dolphin	Tenby South Beach	Pembrokeshire	pending
SW2022/371	Harbour porpoise	Aberystwyth South Beach	Ceredigion	physical trauma bottlenose dolphin attack
SW2022/401	Short-beaked common dolphin	Rhossili Beach	Swansea	live stranding (pending histopathology)
SW2022/463	Harbour porpoise	Tywyn Beach	Gwynedd	physical trauma bottlenose dolphin attack
SW2022/467	Harbour porpoise	Newport Pembrokeshire	Pembrokeshire	physical trauma bottlenose dolphin attack
SW2022/489	Harbour porpoise	Newport Sands Beach	Pembrokeshire	physical trauma bottlenose dolphin attack
SS2022/310	Common seal	Towyn Beach	Gwynedd	pending
SW2022/510	Harbour porpoise	Fishguard/ goodwick harb	Pembrokeshire	parasitism pulmonary and fundic stomach
SW2022/511	Short-beaked common dolphin	at sea	Pembrokeshire	stillbirth
SS2022/336	Common seal	Prestatyn	Denbighshire	pending
SW2022/544	Harbour porpoise	Criccieth Beach	Gwynedd	parasitism cardiac stomach and pulmonary
SW2022/658	Harbour porpoise	Criccieth	Gwynedd	physical trauma bottlenose dolphin attack
SW2022/661	Short-beaked common dolphin	Harlech	Gwynedd	non-suppurative meningitis peri-ventriculitis and choroiditis
SW2022/702	Harbour porpoise	Carach Bay	Ceredigion	starvation/hypothermia
SW2022/709	Harbour porpoise	Moelfre	Anglesey	physical trauma bycatch (pending histopathology)
SW2022/734	Short-beaked common dolphin	Llandona Red Wharf Bay	Anglesey	pending

11. Maps

Marine Environmental Monitoring has invested in new mapping software which allows public access to an interactive map. By following the [map link](https://public.maptive.com/maps/ee32c31ca78e434ea2f8bf78ca87c324), you can see the locations of all the individual strandings around the Welsh coastline and by clicking on the tags see information about each stranding. This year we have added photos for all animals that were sent for post-mortem examination and other key species like bottlenose dolphins. These images can be viewed by clicking on the tab for the animal.

Map link:

<https://public.maptive.com/maps/ee32c31ca78e434ea2f8bf78ca87c324>

12. Strandings by county

The below set of maps and data show the locations of all the reported 2022 strandings within Wales by county. This information has been included to allow those that manage the beaches around Wales to understand types and numbers that stranded during 2022 so they can better plan for the coming years. The numbers are only the animals that have been reported to MEM and most likely do not represent the total numbers of animals that strand on the coastline each year. If a coastal county isn't included, it is due to there being no reports within 2022. The maps legend can be found at the end of this section ([Fig 18](#)).

12.1. Gwynedd

Gwynedd	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	1
Harbour porpoise	21
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	11
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	6
Harbour seal	1
Grey seal	39
Seal (indeterminate)	3
Total	82

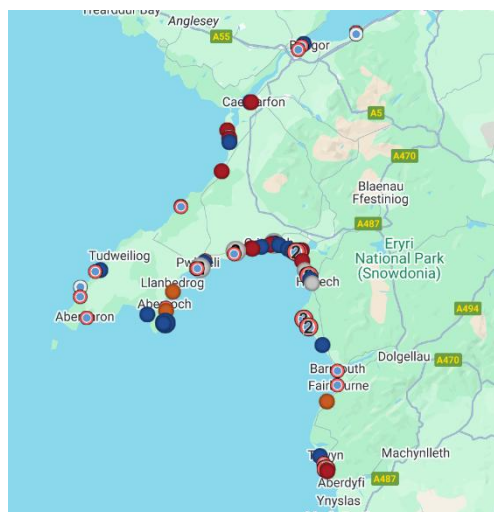


Figure 6 Map of strandings in Gwynedd

12.2. Pembrokeshire



Figure 7 Map of strandings in Pembrokeshire

Pembrokeshire	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	6
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	13
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	44
Seal (indeterminate)	2
Total	65

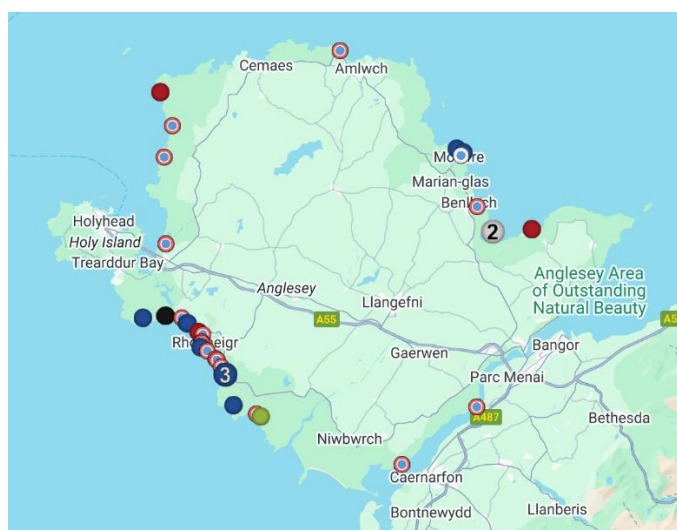
12.3. Ceredigion

Ceredigion	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	13
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	8
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	1
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	12
Seal (indeterminate)	2
Total	36



Figure 8 Map of strandings in Ceredigion

12.4. Isle of Anglesey



Isle of Anglesey	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	1
Harbour porpoise	9
Risso's dolphin	1
Common dolphin	3
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	20
Seal (indeterminate)	1
Total	35

Figure 9 Map of strandings in Isle of Anglesey

12.5. Swansea

Swansea	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	6
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	7
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	3
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	12
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	28

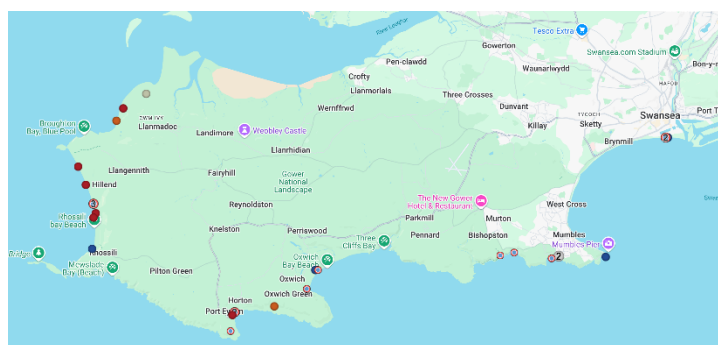


Figure 10 Map of strandings in Swansea

12.6. Flintshire

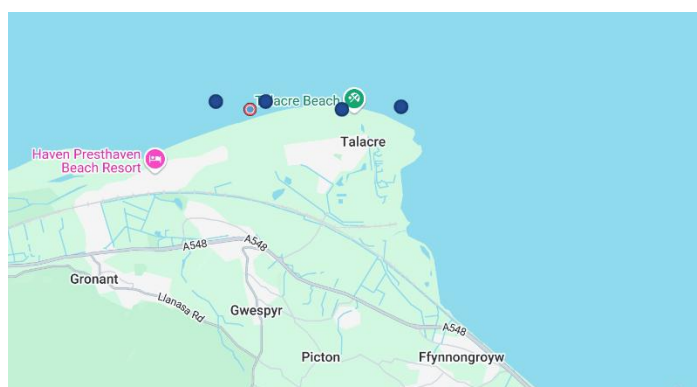


Figure 11 Map of strandings in Flintshire

Flintshire	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	4
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	1
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	5

12.7. Conwy

Conwy	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	1
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	7
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	8

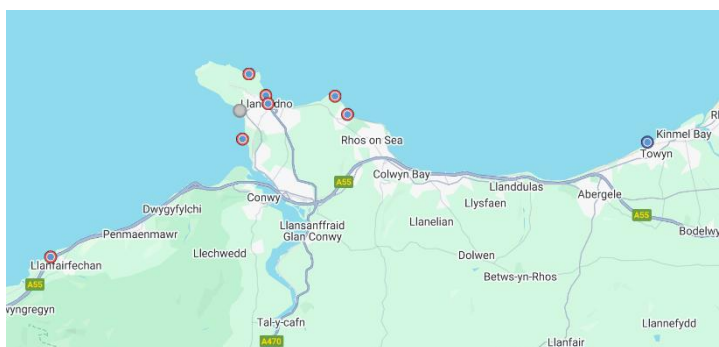


Figure 12 Map of strandings in Conwy

12.8. Carmarthenshire

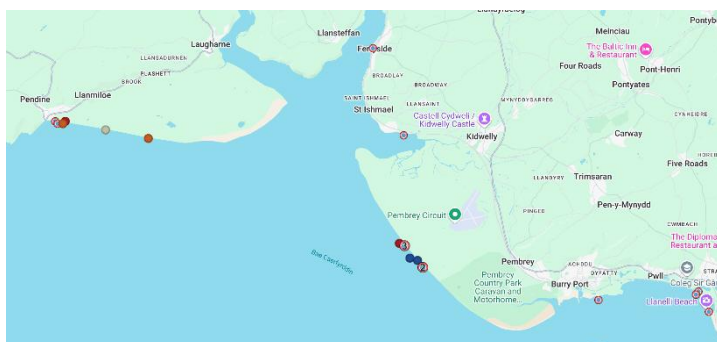


Figure 13 Map of strandings in Carmarthenshire

Carmarthenshire	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	2
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	2
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	3
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	11
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	18

12.9. Bridgend

Bridgend	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	1
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	1
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	2

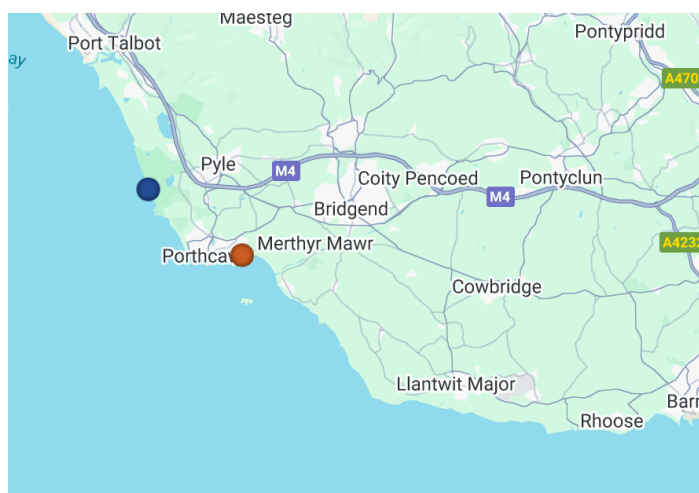


Figure 14 Map of strandings in Bridgend

12.10. Denbighshire

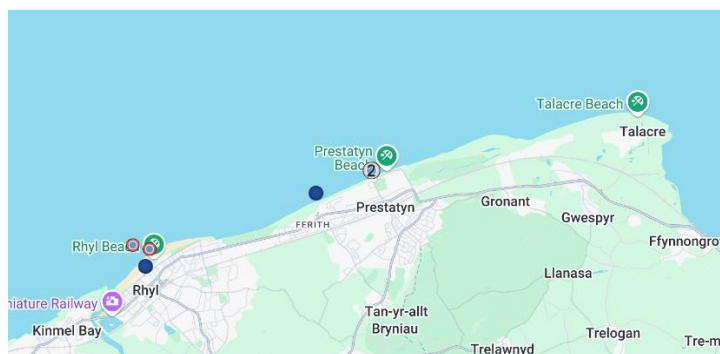


Figure 15 Map of strandings in Denbighshire

Denbighshire	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	3
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	
Harbour seal	1
Grey seal	2
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	6

12.11. Vale of Glamorgan

Vale of Glamorgan	Amount
Bottlenose dolphin	
Harbour porpoise	3
Risso's dolphin	
Common dolphin	
Striped dolphin	
Cetacean (indeterminate)	
Harbour seal	
Grey seal	
Seal (indeterminate)	
Total	3

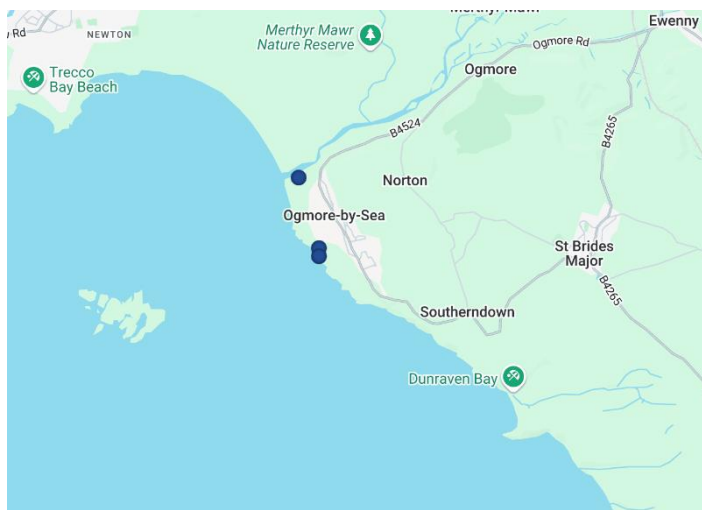


Figure 17 Map of strandings in Vale of Glamorgan

Figure 18 Map legend

	Bottlenose dolphin
	Cetacean (indeterminate s...
	Common seal
	Dolphin (indeterminate sp...
	Grey seal
	Harbour porpoise
	Risso's dolphin
	Seal (indeterminate species)
	Short-beaked common do...
	Short-beaked common do...

13. Public engagement

The new look website seems to encourage greater engagement with the public reporting sightings through the website (www.strandings.com). During 2022 we posted articles on our new Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Marine.Environmental.Monitoring> 9 times. These articles reached over 450 people and was shared 15 times. Hopefully this engagement will carry on increasing through 2023.

Due to the ongoing covid restrictions in Wales, it was still difficult to carry out any face-to-face talks with public groups in 2022. The team at ZSL and MEM was able to carryout an in person dissections for Bangor University 2022.

During 2022 we managed to get some press interest in some of the strandings resulting in articles being printed in Wales online and other local news outlets. All articles did generate interest engagement in the project.

14. Collaboration work

In 2022 MEM carried on it's working with the Angel shark project to help provide collection and storage of stranded Angel sharks around the Welsh coast. In 2022 we also started working more closely with the North Wales Seal Research Organisation who are doing fantastic work around the study of seals in North Wales as well as educating the public around seals and other marine wildlife. During 2022 we were also able to build stronger ties to the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR), who's volunteers do great work.

15. Volunteers

Due to the time it can take to get to some of the strandings, and to try and prevent unnecessary journeys, we rely on various volunteers located around the Welsh coastline. These volunteers can confirm location and species, secure them to prevent them from being washed away by incoming tides, take measurements and photos, and in some cases collect the animals on behalf of the project.

The volunteers we currently have are made up of likeminded individuals who all have an interest in the marine life around Wales. Some are from professional organisations such as the North Wales Wildlife Trust and Natural Resource Wales (NRW), others are members of the public who have an active interest in marine life.

During 2022 with the lifting of COVID restrictions we were able to engage better with our volunteers who were able to confirm and secure several animals for the project.

16. List of Scientific names

Table 10 Table of scientific names

Common name	Scientific name
Bottlenose dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
Harbour porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>
Risso's dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>
Common dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>
Striped dolphin	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>
Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>
Grey seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>
Tope shark	<i>Galeorhinus galeus</i>
Starry smooth hound	<i>Mustelus Asterias</i>
Leatherback turtle	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>
Kemp's riddley turtle	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>

17. Equipment

During 2022 we have invested in several bits of equipment to help in the retrieval of animals. This includes new specialist drag stretchers, which make it possible to recover larger animals without the need to lift.

18. Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge, the team at NRW including Charles Lindenbaum, Ceri Morris & Holly Self, who's professional help is always appreciated. Ellie West & Keith Hogben of the RSPCA who have supported us during the challenges of dealing with sick and injured animals. Dr Sarah Perry & her team at the Cardigan Bay Marine Wildlife Centre who regularly help identify and secure animals. Gem Simmons of the North Wales Seal Research Organisation whose dedication to the protection of marine wildlife is an inspiration. Nia Haf Jones at the North Wales Wildlife Trust who despite the weather has also been there to help recover animals and give support to the project. The volunteers and staff with the British Divers Marine Life Rescue who carry out rescues up and down the UK coast. The various councils around the Welsh coast whose teams support the project and pass on reports to us. Milford Haven Coastguard, Holyhead Coastguard plus the many auxiliary coastguards around the coast for their professional support to the project. Lin Gander, Emma Beattie, Terry Leadbetter, Sal Shipley, Madison Bowden Parry for their support with the project and help in retrieving animal. the Strandings Network volunteers within Wales, too numerous to mention for their help confirming, reporting and securing animals for collection. Welsh Government & Defra for providing funds and guidance towards the project. We would also like to say a special thankyou to Rod Penrose for his continued support of the project.