

Thu 13/08/2020 17:31

Dear Colleagues

### **Future FSC**

It was good to see so many of you on the zoom yesterday and for those who missed it here is the link to the recording

<https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/f2b0c57e-83d0-4cce-becf-9e5dd3ff7ae9?channelId=3791cf71-eebb-45fc-bc6f-a3374192d32b>

I have received a couple of queries from the letters which were distributed yesterday which I will try to address here:

There is a reference in the letter to a proposal of “outsourcing of teaching staff”. In the paper presented to trustees in July I talked about taking advice on a ‘lifeboat’ and alternative corporate structures. We are still discussing this with professional advisors but to be clear, we will still exist as a charity with education at our core but as proposed in the original paper, may have subsidiary elements that would give benefits to the FSC which could help strengthen our financial position. We are still working our way through these structural issues and will be aiming to present proposals to the Board of Trustees once the consultation has concluded.

There was a request for clarity on whether you can put yourself forward as a rep even if you are on furlough. The short answer is yes, furloughed staff can be staff representatives, they would just take the role on whilst on furlough.

### **Back to School**

With the PM waking up to the importance of education, media and political focus has concentrated on schools as learners start to return to the classroom. The Covid Operational Planning Team (C-OPT) continue their work of tracking the complex differences and similarities across the four nations as guidance gets updated. It’s rather like playing Twister. The dial keeps spinning and we are trying to lay our hands on the latest information that FSC really want to know about (the curriculum, day trips, residential and the use of outdoor spaces) which is often scattered across several government documents. At the time of writing, we are waiting for Northern Ireland to publish their plans for all pupils to come back at the start of term, Scotland’s new guidance does not mention trips or residential specifically, English guidance currently allows educational day visits in the autumn term, but not residential and Wales lifted their total ban on educational visits on Tuesday – but as with England, the advice is still against residential.

### **Local Lockdowns**

These are likely to remain a feature of our national life for the foreseeable future. Being locally directed, those in charge on the ground will have a range of measures to choose from, so it is likely that each lockdown will be unique. Fortunately, Stay With Us has not been too badly impacted so far with people from lockdown areas being able to travel for their break as long as they continued to stay in their family group. The C-OPT have been working to prepare customer responses and alternative offers so that we are as ready as we can be for further disruption.

## **Stay with Us (becomes Stay with Me)**

Stay with Us bookings continue to roll in with some centres filling up fast, but others remain fairly quiet. Please do keep spreading the word so that we can keep this income stream coming in at a time when Staycations are booming. Hostel Team Leaders have been doing a great job as the hospitality guidance is every bit as complex and changeable as that for schools. And now for some nice news. Elwyn at Rhyd-y-creuau checked in a guest who had brought her school there a few years ago on a GCSE geography trip. This time she received a marriage proposal on top of Tryfan. She said yes. Perhaps the marketing team can add 'Ideal Place to Propose' to the list of attractions.

## **This week's nominees**

Holly Dillon. The centre-based training programme for [FSC BioLinks](#) came to a sudden halt in March and Holly was extremely organised and efficient in dealing with the cancellations. Since then she has made a great success of the [FSC Virtual Meetup](#) series of online talks, with 30+ sessions delivered and over 4,000 attendees engaged (not including those that have viewed the sessions on YouTube afterwards). My thanks go to Holly and the team who have made it happen, and many others across FSC who have swiftly adapted what we offer to ensure that our name is still out there.

Helen Robertson. Described as "the only constant in an ever-changing situation". Helen has been leading the Covid OPT since before lockdown. "Regardless of whatever she is having to cope with herself, she always maintains her composure and replies to every query (however absurd!) with a calm, reassuring, considered, confident, and concise reply". Well done and thank you Helen.

Finally I believe there is a rumour abroad that we are selling Malham and Orierton – perhaps coming from Sam mentioning selling property at those centres the other day. There are no proposals to 'sell' these centres at present.

Keep well and stay safe

Mark