

Thu 19/11/2020 15:48

Dear Colleagues,

As we look towards Christmas and the various government administrations try to coordinate their Covid measures, one could be forgiven for feeling that this pandemic inspired environment is never going to change. As the commentators talk about the implications of loosening the grip at Christmas needing to be balanced by tightening up elsewhere it seems to support that perspective. But the vaccines are coming. In our planning we anticipated them having a real impact from April/ May and that would seem to be about right looking at the various announcements. That means getting ourselves into shape to receive some of our most loyal and determined customers from early Spring onwards. We also need to do all we can to persuade those who might be a little reticent, so look out for the marketing activity that will be encouraging visits to all of our centres when the conditions are right.

Group Operations Managers

The new GOMs will be starting work on Monday: Andy Taylor (East), Nick Laphorn (West) and Alex MacFie (North). As you would expect, all of the candidates were of a very high calibre. I know that you will all support the new GOMs as they start their roles in what are the most challenging times that we have ever faced.

The PM's 10 Point Green Industrial Revolution

The plan [unveiled on Wednesday](#) had been rather heavily trailed so there wasn't much that was new by the time the announcement was made. As is all too common, much of the £12bn mentioned has been previously announced so that only £4bn is actually thought to be new money. Untangling the new from the old isn't easy. The 10 point plan mentions 250,000 green jobs but whether these are in addition to the 2 million (below) isn't clear, but what comes across above and beyond the obvious areas of interest for an environmental charity is the focus on the creation of green jobs that encompasses both conservation type jobs as well as those that will be needed to drive the technological innovations to deliver significant carbon reductions. FSC will continue to align ourselves to make the most of these opportunities.

Green Jobs Taskforce

The task force has been set up to support the aim of having 2 million green jobs by 2030 and to determine the training and skills needed to make this transition happen. The list of those on the taskforce, which can be seen [here in the notes to editors](#) at the end of the press release, does at least contain some people with an environmental background.

Royal Society of Biology Science at Home Festival

FSC were asked to be part of the RSB's first ever online science festival. Science at Home is taking place over the weekend of 21st – 22nd November 2020, and will include the launch of a new area of the RSB website showcasing partner content including that from FSC. Our contribution has been brilliantly pulled together by Jo Harris working closely with several FSC team members from across the organisation. The homepage for the festival is [here](#).

Natural England People and Nature Study

The People and Nature Survey for England gathers information every month on people's experiences and views about the natural environment. It not only cover qualitative data on the number and type of visits that people make, but also how it makes them feel and their attitude to nature as a result. There was a consultation a few years ago on whether to stop the survey, but FSC was one of the organisations that argued to continue collecting such information and the survey continues to provide a mine of useful data. Trend data from the last few months has highlighted the importance

of accessing green space for exercise and as a way to meet up with friends and family. Since April a third of adults reported that they have spent more time noticing nature / wildlife. In September, almost half the adult population reported spending more time outside than before COVID-19 with the importance of urban green space in particular being highlighted. However, a fifth of adults had not spent any time in green and natural spaces in the previous 14 days and 10% of adults in England had not visited any green and natural space in the previous month. Staying at home to stop coronavirus spreading and government restrictions was the top reason reported for not spending time in nature. For the full stats please click [here](#).

FSC Closure over Christmas

FSC will be breaking up for Christmas on Friday 18th December and reopening on Monday 4th January. I know that there may be a few exceptions where staff might be needed to work during the festive period, but these will be managed at a centre level. All other staff are required to take annual leave.

If you do not have enough annual leave remaining, then please contact your line manager in the first instance who will liaise with HR. Therefore, unless HR hear otherwise, they will process these two weeks as annual leave for payroll purposes. Since 1 April 2020, some staff have accrued additional leave as they have been working. We are allowing this additional leave to be carried over to 2021. If you have any annual leave remaining once you have booked the above, then please ensure this is also booked and used prior to the end of 2020. Unless you have obtained prior written agreement with your manager there will be no annual leave allowances carried over to 2021.

Voluntary Redundancy

Can I remind those who might be interested that today is the deadline for VR applications.

C-OPT Guidance

The Covid Operational Planning Team have produced handy at-a-glance tables for each country based on the current guidance. The team have picked out the things that are most relevant to FSC operations and have also mapped out what these mean depending on the layer or tier that each country or region may move into. These have all been shared with managers but you can find them [here](#) on the intranet where you can scroll down to find the guidance for England, Scotland and Wales.

Special Mention

This week's special mention is for people whose names we won't know, and for someone who should be better known: the vaccine volunteers and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762). A writer and explorer Lady Mary travelled to the court of the Ottoman Empire where she took a great interest in the local custom of an early form of smallpox vaccination administered by elderly women at inoculation parties. Badly scarred by smallpox herself and having lost a brother to the disease, her son was the first English person to be inoculated. She then championed inoculation with the British Court, ideas which were then taken up by notables such as the then Princess of Wales and Catherine the Great. Edward Jenner no doubt deserves his statue in Gloucester Cathedral with its fine view over the gift shop, but a generation earlier Lady Mary had paved the way in the face of all the usual resistance to change, science and clever women with ideas.

Keep safe and stay well

Mark