

Thu 19/08/2021 13:53

Dear Colleagues,

I had the opportunity to see many of the ETLs at Preston Montford this week. It was good to join them and great to hear their often frank and forthright views about their experiences over the last 18 months or so. We also had an opportunity to discuss the activation of centres during June and July and the tensions associated, and the trends that we need to consider for the future. I took plenty of notes and I will be ensuring that their thoughts are injected into our SLT planning.




### **Guidance update**

This week in England we kicked off with the welcome change in guidance. Those who have been fully vaccinated no longer have to self-isolate if pinged, which was already the case in Wales and Scotland. This should help ease staffing pressures a little. News headlines on Wednesday that schools were being advised to do more outdoor learning turned out to be a line from an appendix of a new Contingency Framework document, rather than a wholesale policy initiative. However the framework means that we will be updating the plans we have in place to manage any local outbreaks at centres. The C-OPT are currently working through the details.

### **Success in round two of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund**

FSC will be delivering community training and resources as part of a £1.2M project secured from the fund by Trees for Cities. The project is to increase tree cover in areas of high social deprivation in often forgotten coastal urban areas that risk being left further behind. FSC has been awarded c.£150k to distribute publications and deliver the training about trees to 5,600 people in Bexhill on Sea, Brighton & Hove, Great Yarmouth, Hull, Portsmouth, Ramsgate and Stockton. The project starts this autumn but it will be delivered mostly in 2022. We will be working with youth clubs, colleges and community groups to reach people aged 16-24 and those with less experience of studying trees. Many of these areas don't have an FSC centre nearby, so it's a good way to extend our reach into new communities.

### **A Staff Rep is needed**

With the departure of Kay Oxley, Di Warren at Flatford is the only staff rep on the Finance & Administration Committee. We are therefore looking for a volunteer to share the role with Di. The F&A Committee meets usually four times a year, with one staff rep at each meeting, so the time commitment for each rep will probably be two meetings a year, plus the time required to read the papers. Information about what this involves can be found on the FSC intranet ( [here](#)). Information on the role of the committee can be found in the [Trustees](#) section of the intranet; minutes and papers from past meetings can be found  [here](#). Staff Reps play such an important role so if this is of interest please complete the  [Interest Form](#) and return it to Susan Appleyard ([s.appleyard@field-studies-council.org](mailto:s.appleyard@field-studies-council.org)) as soon as possible – or contact Susan if you have any questions. This is a great opportunity and helps provide a better overall understanding of what goes on in these committee meetings and the decision making process.

### **Welcome to this year's Higher Education Placements**

It's great to welcome 21 new HEPs to FSC. They are currently at Millport for training before heading to their centres. Last year was a difficult year for many higher education students, but in fact 100% of our HEPs reported that they felt their time with FSC had increased their employability, their confidence and helped them determine the route they wanted to pursue after graduation. All of them said they would recommend the experience to others, so we are looking to continue the success of last year's programme. I know that HEPs rapidly become valued team members as they get stuck into all sorts of work at centres, especially at a time when we are likely to be really busy. I hope that our HEPs really enjoy their time with us and make the most of their experience.

**Young Darwin Scholarship Programme**

FSC's Darwin Scholars are back after the disappointment of us having to cancel last year's programme. This year sees a much expanded offer for 75 young people and two different age groups at a number of FSC centres. We are planning an All Staff Talk that will include a look at our Youth Work and Youth Council in the near future.

**Special Mentions**

Last week when I mentioned Dale Fort I should of course have said thank you to the staff at Orierton who have also gone above and beyond to enable the operations at Dale Fort to be so successful. Working as one to help each other and plug the gaps has been the key to success both at Dale and across the FSC. Thank you to all of you who have stepped into the breach.

Stay safe and keep well

Mark