

Thu 11/11/2021 09:45

Dear Colleagues,

It's not often that this part of the world is the lead news story, but Owen Patterson's decision to step down as MP for North Shropshire (and it appears Radox and Lynn's Country Foods too) means I will have all the excitement of a by-election to look forward to, lucky me!

COP26


I had the opportunity over the weekend to meet with the new Secretary of State for Education and some his team in Glasgow. It was heartening to see climate change, sustainability and biodiversity featuring prominently in the department's agenda and good to be seen as part of the solution to their problem. We will be keeping close to this and doing all that we can to positively influence their decision making. The fact that we were invited shows that constantly engaging the department and getting FSC's name in front of them does pay off.

The key elements of the [DfE's new plan](#) includes putting world-leading climate change education in place by 2023, a plan to encourage children to improve and record the biodiversity of their local school and then upload the information to a new virtual National Education Park, and they have pinched our idea about Climate Change Ambassadors and morphed it into a Climate Leaders Award. They will be building on these ideas over the next 6 months before publishing a full strategy. I welcome the clear link made between connection to nature, the skills developed and the mention of the importance of this for future study and careers. It's a line that we have used repeatedly with DfE in our lobbying work.

Business Managers' Meeting

On Monday and Tuesday thirty five of us got together at Preston Montford. It was an opportunity to take stock and prepare for the coming year. Despite the environmental impact and other implications, I felt that we needed to come together to meet, share our experiences and take the opportunity to review our policies and processes ready for 2022 and beyond. It was a busy programme designed to cover a lot of ground; from ensuring that we had a common understanding of the current position of our charity to examining what works and what doesn't. Many of you had submitted your ideas on this ahead of the meeting and those were also put in the melting pot. From my perspective it allowed us, albeit briefly, to identify gaps in knowledge, weakness in process and anomalies in policy and provided a great opportunity to meet, share ideas and experiences, and importantly break down any barriers or misconceptions that might exist. Thank you to Arran and the team for hosting us so well.

FSC Carbon and Nature Plan

One of the big themes running through the above meeting was our response to the climate emergency. Please remember to take a look and comment on the easier to read version of the document  [Carbon and Nature Plan for Staff Feedback Exercise.pdf](#). You have until the 26th November.

Natural History Live talks with Biolinks

Talks for 2022 have been launched and include the usual dazzling array of subjects to brighten up the darker evenings. They are free to all including FSC staff. So why not book and learn more about earthworms (of course) but also seahorses, bee-flies and soldier flies. For those of a more technical turn of mind there is a talk on ecosystem services and also monitoring endangered species of beetle using pheromone lures. You can see the full range of courses running from Jan to May and [book here via Eventbrite](#).

Content for the Catch Up

I've said it several times, but it's worth reminding you all that if there is any news that you would like shared across the FSC whether it's about what is happening at your centre or in your team then please send it in by 1pm on Wednesday. The same goes for nominations for special mentions.

Stay safe and keep well

Mark