

Thu 14/12/2023 08:54


Dear Colleagues,

The Board of Trustees meeting starts shortly and afterwards Chair of the Board Pete Higgins will be letting you all know about any staff cost of living award.

### **80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the results are in...**

The official anniversary date was on Sunday and having gone through the archives I'm pleased to say that we have welcomed more than 1,975,600 residential visitors and 1,745,400 day visitors over the last 80 years. This doesn't include those who have engaged with us online or through publications. It's actually an underestimate because unfortunately the very first annual reports talk of "lots" of visitors and centres "being full" but frustratingly don't give us the totals. Andy Cawthray would despair.

It's highly likely that we will welcome our 2 millionth visitor to one of our centres next year. Looking at next year's bookings, we are currently about 3,000 learners short of that milestone.

 [The story](#) has generated some media interest and opportunities for more radio interviews and talking of which, I'd also like to thank Ellen Monaghan our Biodiversity Learning Development Officer who volunteered at short notice to talk about wildlife friendly gardening on Radio Shropshire to be broadcast shortly.

### **Taking a Stand at the British Ecological Society Annual Meeting**

This week trustee Rob Marrs, Helen Robertson, Clare Rooney and Anna Lewis have been flying our flag at this year's BES event held in Belfast over several days. Field Studies Council sponsored the Welcome Reception which gave Rob an opportunity to talk about our work. The focus of the event is to draw attention to our biodiversity courses, publications and our centres as places for ecologists to come and study. Pictured are Anna and Clare at the stand which shortly afterwards became very busy.



## **Departures**

### **Farewell to Philip**

Philip Turvil our Eco Business Director will be departing next week, and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank him for all that he has done for our charity during his three years with us. Philip's impact has been considerable; from managing the transition from the lottery funded Biolinks to self-sustaining Biodiversity and giving real impetus to our fundraising efforts, setting up our Youth Council and growing the Young Darwin Scholarship, his legacy is there for all to see and, of course, who can forget him persuading Chris Packham to endorse our publications. You have all our best wishes for the future Philip and do keep in touch.

### **Sara Seivewright**

Our Head of Human Resources Sara Seivewright will be leaving us later this week after eight years with the Field Studies Council. She has helped steer us through a great deal of change during that time. She was also instrumental in establishing and then chairing our EDI working group, acting as our Safeguarding lead, and launching the Westfield Rewards scheme and our Investors in People programme. On your behalf I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all that she has achieved during her time with us and wish her well on her next endeavour.

### **Thank you for all your hard work**

We have come through another challenging year and due to the hard work of all, bookings have held up well for next year too. None of it has been particularly easy, but in looking back over the last 80 years Field Studies Council has faced many a crisis and come through them all. Sometimes in the early years we only just came through them, but the charity is still here and that is quite an achievement so thank you all.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and I'll see you in the New Year.

Mark