

Thu 11/01/2024 08:30

Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year to you all

Adventures Away from Home

Just before Christmas we had some good news. We have been awarded grant funding of almost £60K for [Adventures Away from Home](#). It will enable us to deliver residential and day activity for disadvantaged young people in the first few months of 2024. Securing external funding is never easy so thank you to the many people involved in this successful outcome.

Signs of Spring- now on TV

The [Signs of Spring](#) project, in partnership with the Royal Society of Biology, launched on Friday. It's all about asking people to keep their eyes open for 10 specific signs of spring and record their findings. The survey is open to all and the live map, which displays responses of people around the country, is already being populated.

I'm really pleased to say that the project has caught the interest of the media with Amy Bandaranayake stepping up to do some Radio interviews on BBC Radio Wales and the Midlands later this week, and a piece for the One Show is being filmed this morning at Epping for broadcast on BBC1 tonight from 7pm. That's a really big coup for us so thank to all who scrambled to make it happen. We'll also be sending out posters to promote Signs of Spring to visitors in centres and would also appreciate any sharing of social media posts to maximise participation and the impact of the project.

Business Plan 2024

At the Board of Trustees meeting just before Christmas, the new Business Plan for 2024 was signed off. So if you are interested in the Charity's direction of travel and plans for the coming year (and I hope that you would be) You can [see it here](#) along side our other key documents including long and short versions of the 10 Year Plan and 5 Year Strategy, and some video clips on several areas of work.

In the Moodle

Colleagues from Digital, Biodiversity and Digital Hub are setting up a 'Moodle Steering Group'. This will be used to discuss proposed system upgrades, plugins and use, along with discussing and formalising procedures. They have just had their first meeting but if anyone else from the organisation feels they have a stake in using Moodle and would like to be part of this steering group, please let Dan Asaw from the Biodiversity team know.

Our Non-Exam Assessment Tutorials (NEAT)

These are aimed at students and provide a 'how to' guide for completing the non-exam assessment for A Level Geography. The series of tutorials are presented as short, on demand videos of 15-20 minutes duration mapped to the stages of the route to enquiry. NEAT can be purchased for £12 for one year's access to all the modules. More information can be found on the [webpage](#) and education staff can view NEAT resources through Moodle. Amy Bandaranayake is the main contact for any issues, and I'd like to thank her and Ian Tester for all the work that they have put into this project.

Welcomes and Congratulations

Sian Walding joins Head Office as a Biodiversity Course Coordinator and Sara Cleary joins Juniper Hall as a Lead Housekeeper.

There are also some promotions to celebrate:

Oliver Rogers at Juniper Hall and Sarah Walker at Margam have both been promoted to Senior Tutor.

Amanda Gisby at Margam has been promoted to Education Team Leader and Megan Crisell at Juniper Hall was promoted to Senior Administrator.

And congratulations to Mihaela Nistor in the Finance Team who has passed her AAT Level 2 in Accounting with 93%.

Best wishes and I look forward to seeing you all in 2024

Mark