

Thu 24/05/2024 09:44

Dear Colleagues,

City Nature Challenge 25-28 April 2025

I'd like to invite you to join residents in over 650 cities on all 7 continents across the world in an epic, global mission to record as much wildlife as possible. In 2024 over 2.4 million observations were made of over 65,000 species by almost 83,000 people across the world. Every year, this friendly and fun competition sees cities and regions competing against each other to see which one can gather the most observations of nature and find the most different species.

In the UK many city regions now take part, even if you are not in a city your observations will count toward the global project. You can see the 2025 [UK locations](#) and leaderboard and [global](#) observations.



Field Studies Council is one of the organising groups of the [London](#) event. Find out more about City Nature Challenge Global [website](#).

Taking part is easy. Simply download the [iNaturalist](#) app to your smartphone or tablet and use it to upload photos of any wildlife you see. You don't have to be a wildlife expert, as the app will give you some handy suggestions of what it thinks you've seen. An online community of scientists and wildlife enthusiasts will then verify your sighting. It's a great way to learn more about the wildlife around you, and best of all, the records you submit can help inform local and national conservation work.

Re-boot and Raise

Thank you very much to everyone who took part in this fun virtual challenge. As promised here are the final results. Our grand final total raised is... £6,091! That includes donations, Gift Aid, and entry costs.

Our prize winners were:

- **Top fundraiser:** Neil Chapman (Rivervale, £1,500)
- **Most miles:** Martin Christie (The Trustee Traipsers, Trampers and Trotters, 302.4m)
- **Top swimmer:** Becky Langman (Slapton Ley, 12.37m)
- **Top walker:** Tim Burt (Field Studies Council Supporters, 189.6m)
- **Best update:** Abigail Hudson (Youth Panel, South American camelid, photo right we think it's a llama?)



Big Give: Green Match Fund

This exciting fundraising campaign is now live! We have one week to raise £5,000 for our Grants for Schools programme, with every donation up to this amount matched by The Big Give Trust. Donations must be made [via our campaign page](#) by noon on Tuesday 29th April.

We'd really appreciate everyone's help in getting the word out. You'll find posts about it on our social media platforms for easy sharing, and Gemma and David are happy to chat with anyone who'd like more information. We raised 10% of the target in the first four hours; please help us keep the momentum going so we can unlock all the match funding.


Oli Wilson interviews Tim Farron

As promised, the [YouTube video](#) of Tim Farron's interview with Education Support Assistant Oli Wilson has been uploaded. Thanks to Oli and to everyone at Castle Head for making the most of Tim's recent visit to the Centre. Tim has succeeded in rejuvenating the All Party Parliamentary Group for Outdoor Learning which will officially launch in May.

Customer Feedback

We collect and then act upon customer feedback and the Quarter 1 stats provide a wealth of useful data. But what has struck me is the big picture: we so often meet or exceed the expectations of our customers across all aspects of their experience with us from booking through to their departure. None of that happens by accident so well done. I'm aware that not everyone sees all the data so I've picked out just two of the many positive comments made this time around. *"Tutors were absolutely amazing with staff and students and their knowledge of the area was impeccable! We all greatly enjoyed our time and I'm looking forward to returning in the future!"* and *"All of the staff we encountered were enthusiastic and welcoming. Food was very good indeed and portion sizes were generous".*

Staff Handbook

An updated version of the Staff Handbook is now available. We have taken on board your feedback and as a result have separated it out into an overarching  [Staff Handbook Contents.pdf](#) that contains links to the individual sections. Changes include a new Neonatal Care Leave Policy in Section 13; and the recently launched new Section 33: Electric Vehicle (EV) Scheme Policy; as well as the usual update to the appendix which summarises the changes that have been made. As the Handbook applies to all Field Studies Council employees, I strongly encourage all staff to remind yourselves of the contents.

Running Reminder!

Thanks to everyone who has sponsored Sam's London Marathon fundraiser - the event is this Sunday (27th), Sam starts around 10.30am, so keep an eye on your television and look out for updates on our social media accounts during the day. At the time of writing, Sam has hit 83% of his fundraising target - you can [sponsor Sam directly here](#) if you wish.

Welcome to Field Studies Council

Karl Christmas has joined the team at Preston Montford as Casual Hospitality and Catering Assistant.

Beth Langley has joined the team at Head Office as Marketing Officer.

Ali Porter has joined the team at Flatford Mill as Lead Housekeeper.

Previous catch ups can be [found here](#).

Best Regards

Mark