

Thu 28/05/26

Dear Colleagues,

It's half term in a lot of places this week so it's a slightly shorter catch up than usual.

Young Darwins

We've had a good response to the Young Darwin Scholarship, and I'd like to thank Regional Senior Tutor Ana Forbes for stepping up to do an interview on BBC Radio Shropshire early on Bank Holiday Monday. She did a great job of explaining just where such a scholarship can lead.

Pulse Survey Closes Soon

The deadline to complete the Staff Pulse Survey is fast approaching. We're pleased to see that 37% of you have already responded – so thank you. You can take part using the link in the email sent on 18th May, or by scanning one of the QR codes displayed in workplaces.

The survey closes at **12pm on Friday 5th June** – don't miss your chance to have your say.

Farewell

In this catch up we say goodbye to two long serving members of staff who have clocked up over 55 years of service between them.

Dr Bek Farley-Brown, Head of Publications is leaving after over 25 years. Bek's expertise has seen our hugely popular fold out charts and guides cater for young children through to expert biological recorders and all levels in between. She brought to her role an understanding of the academic world combined with a strong desire to engage all ages and abilities with nature. She was instrumental in extending our reach beyond centres and in our large-scale citizen science projects. During Covid, her hard work saw sales soar as people across the country started to appreciate their daily lockdown walk, nature and gardens in a new way. The charts have become firm favourites, finding their way into the homes of members of the Royal family and a complete set is kept in Chris Packham's car boot.

Nick Laphorn leaves Field Studies Council after 30 years this week to work with Empower, an Alternative Education Provider in the Quantocks. After starting as a Centre Assistant, then Tutor, Nick has worked as Head of Centre at Amersham, Juniper Hall, and Nettlecombe Court, as well as a term as President of the Geographical Association, before becoming Head of Education and Operations (South). Nick has worked with many colleagues and led many teams over his career with Field Studies Council, always with a great humour and a sense of fun.

Thank you to both Nick and Bek for your dedication to Field Studies Council.

Nick's many friends were quite ready, willing and able to supply photos of Nick, often in fancy dress or with a range of headgear. Bek's likewise could provide similar photos from past staff conferences. But I've opted for these slightly more formal and probably more fitting images from a Buckingham Palace Garden Party and last summer's Royal visit. We wish them both well.



Welcome Back to Field Studies Council

There are no new starters this week, but Izaak Chalcraft has returned to Castle Head as Casual Hospitality and Catering Assistant.

Best regards

Mark