

# **Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company**

Old Station Building, Station Road, Arnside, Cumbria LA5 0HG

Company Number 6363720

e-mail: [info@bitterncountrysidecic.org.uk](mailto:info@bitterncountrysidecic.org.uk)



## **Chairman's Report April 2024**

Welcome to all our shareholders.

Our Business Plan for 2022-2026 highlighted 3 categories we are addressing.

- 1: Protect and Restore Nature,
- 2: Build a waste free world and
- 3: Fix our Climate.

These three are all interconnected and working towards one of the aims will have benefits for the other 2.

In order to enable everyone to take their part in protecting and restoring Nature, people need to know about and enjoy the Flora and Fauna of our area. The Wildlife Atlases which were written to facilitate this, continue to sell well. Unfortunately costs of reprinting are rising and we have had to increase the price of each booklet to £3.00 from April 1st. We are grateful to the RSPB for continuing to sell them in the shop.

I would like to take time to say how pleased we are that Arnside have set up a Sustainable Arnside Group. We wish them success in their endeavours. They are looking at setting up a repair club. In addition our local primary schools are taking on board that we need to re-use school uniform not just buy new and throw the old away. It may be that we can help with the start up of this and other initiatives.

As far as Fix our Climate, we need to continue to encourage the use of heat pumps and improvements in insulation. We are delighted that Wildlife Oasis have taken the opportunity of a new car park to install a ground source heat pump. They are also looking to upgrade the second hand solar panel system which we gave them.

2023 was the year that the AONB turned into a National Landscape. As well as a new logo there are lots of new opportunities and challenges. We will do all we can to help. We now have to remember we are the ASNL!!!!

The Sustainable Schools' Project has left a lasting legacy and we will be building on this over the next 2 years. We have just received a grant of £12,000 to work with the

ASNL unit and our local schools and community organisations with an emphasis on Climate and Wildlife.

Work is well underway on the Arnside/Silverdale National Landscape Nature Recovery Strategy. Some of our shareholders are working with the ASNL team and other volunteers to bring this about. One of the projects is a 5 year initiative to study the flora of the ASNL in a more scientific manner. To do this 56 of our special species will be studied as will 20 small areas, much like the Butterfly transects that Butterfly Conservation has run so successfully for so many years. If you want to know more please ask Lynne Farrell, Helen Rawlinson or myself.

Financially we remain on a sound footing and we have managed to further many of our aims. We always welcome suggestions from our shareholders as to further possible initiatives.

Our Directors have continued to work hard and I want to thank them for all that they have done over the past year. As I said at the last AGM we need to move forward and find some new Directors. I am delighted to say that Caroline Howard, who has worked very closely with us on the Sustainable Schools programme has agreed to stand as a Director and if elected will take over as Chair. Seventeen years ago Ian Henderson the Manager of the AONB unit and David Askew their Finance Officer set up the BCCIC. It will be great to once again have one of the ASNL team back on the Board. Ray who has proved a tower of strength over the past 3 years as Finance Director has come to the end of his term and will be retiring. We give him our thanks for all he has done. I will be taking over from him as Finance Director. Thanks to Ken for all his work as Secretary. He will be continuing for the next year. Val Stevens is coming to the end of her term but is happy to stand for re-election. If anyone else is interested in becoming a director please let one of us know.

Thanks are also due to Lucy and everyone at the ASNL office and also at the Landscape Trust. Thank you too to all our shareholders for making our work possible over the years. Without your share capital and support none of this would have been possible. Finally can I wish you all continued health and all the best in the coming months.

Ann Kitchen (Chair)