

# **Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company**

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BCCIC

## **Chairman's Report April 2022**

Welcome to all our shareholders. The Corona virus, Covid-19, has affected us all greatly in the past months. Our spring 2021 AGM was moved to September 2021.

We have finalised our Business Plan for 2022-2026 and we will be looking at our activities in the light of three categories, 1: Protect and Restore Nature, 2: Build a waste free world and 3: Fix our Climate.

We have made a start by updating our energy saving booklets. The first to be redone was Factsheet 4 and Fact sheets 1 to 3 have been updated and are available on the web. Fact sheet 6 is on reducing Plastic Waste and we decided to print it as well as have a pdf on the web. We have worked with Silverdale WI thanks to Val Stevens to produce this. It is now out and we hope you will take copies to pass on to friends and neighbours. We need to reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible. The last on heat pumps is still awaiting the detail of the new government grant scheme.

Other things which have happened since our last AGM are:

The solar PV initiative still continues to reduce the carbon footprint of the area. In addition with the huge increases in energy costs they are also helping to reduce costs. Silverdale Primary School won a major eco refit and additional panels were put on their roof as well as LED lighting throughout.

The Parish Signboard project we started with Arnside Parish Council is bearing fruit under the aegis of the AONB. Each parish is being offered help with the design and production of a series of parish information boards. Warton is the only parish who has not as yet taken advantage of a grant.

The Silverdale District Woodbank is thriving and continues to help local wood owners to manage their woodlands in exchange for the surplus wood. I feel strongly that this is an initiative that is worth supporting for

many reasons. It enables waste wood to be used. Many of the members have young families and collecting wood brings them out into the countryside. They all understand the importance of burning seasoned dry wood and their communal wood stores enable them to achieve this. The last few storms have meant that there is a lot of wood that needs to be removed.

The Wildlife Atlases are now back on sale in the shop, and selling well. The AONB Landscape Trust also sell the Atlases through their new web shop.

The BCCIC continues to support the work of the AONB team in many other ways.

We have got a grant of £15,000 to work with them on a sustainable Schools Programme. More of this in the talk later.

Financially we remain on a sound footing and we have managed to further many of our aims. New shareholders have joined us and we have also had donations from present shareholders. We always welcome suggestions from our shareholders as to further possible initiatives.

After a good many years Mike Smith is retiring from his post as Company Secretary. We are immensely grateful for all the work he has put in over the years. We will be looking for a new Company Secretary who need not be a director. However we have vacancies for directors. We would like to hear from anyone who is interested. They could be co-opted any time in the coming year and stand for election at the next AGM. We have decided to amend the Articles and memoranda so that directors do not need to hold £100 of shares. This requirement, which seemed sensible when we set up the company, would seem to dissuade those who are willing to give freely of their time but for whom cash is in short supply. We hope you will vote for this amendment.

Thanks are due to all our board and especially Mike, our secretary, Ray, our Finance Director and also Lucy, Caroline and everyone else at the AONB office and our friends at the Landscape Trust. Thank you too to all our shareholders for making our work possible over the years. Without your share capital none of this would have been possible. Finally can I wish you all continued health and all the best in the coming months.