

# **Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company**

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## **Chairman's Report March 2017**

Welcome to all our shareholders old and new.

The solar PV initiative is still bearing fruit. The solar panels from the Leeds Childrens Holiday Centre were donated to the Lakeland Trust for Natural Sciences who run Wildlife Oasis on the A6. We allocated £1000 of the money returned to us from LCHC to allow them to be removed and reinstalled at their new home. Unfortunately there is now no tariff from the government but at least it will enable the centre to reduce its carbon footprint and lower its running costs. The Solar panels at Silverdale Primary School and the AONB offices are continuing to generate, Silverdale has had its panels for 3 years now and has generated 10,278 kWh. The AONB has had their panels for 2 winters and a summer and has generated 3938 kWh.

Four schools in our area did not have any help through the solar PV scheme and we are in the early stages of seeing if we can help them to lower their energy costs and footprint in other ways. This may be through helping them to install LED lighting.

Our Parish Signboard project is bearing fruit with the help of the AONB. Each parish is being offered help with the design and production of a series of parish information boards. Arnside's has been finalised and Storth and Beetham are in the early design stages. We have offered to help towards the production costs.

The Silverdale District Woodbank are thriving and continue 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 wood to be used. Many of the members have young families and collecting wood brings them out into the countryside. I am also keen that countryside skills such as tree management are encouraged and to that end we have helped them with the costs of a course on dead tree removal.

The atlases continue to sell well at the RSPB cafe. We donate 50p from each sale to the RSPB funds. We have sold 360 since the last AGM, roughly one a day although the summer is by far the best time. (last year it was 364).

I am a member of the AONB Executive Committee of the AONB and the BCCIC can continue to support the work of the AONB team in many other ways.

We have lately been providing food for the bird feeders at the AONB office. These provide a great deal of pleasure to visitors and locals alike.

The Arnside/Silverdale AONB Red Squirrel Strategy is working well. The RSPB have agreed to join with all the other landowners in the area to support this strategy.

We always welcome suggestions from our shareholders as to further possible initiatives. We also have vacancies for directors and would love to hear from anyone who would be willing to serve.

Financially we remain on a sound footing and we have managed to further many of our aims.

Our web site is run by the AONB unit with Barbara and Mike Redman doing the web work while Mike Smith provides the input. If you have any ideas for other things that could go on the site please let us know. Also if you would like to get involved in this side of our work we would love to hear from you.

Thanks are due to all our board and especially Mike, our secretary, David, our Treasurer and also Barbara and everyone at the AONB offices at the AONB office.

Ann Kitchen