

Dear Shareholders,

I am splitting this into 2 parts. The first telling of things that happened up to Sept 2013, the date of the end of our financial year. The second bringing you up to date.

In the year Oct 2012 to Sept 2013 the BCCIC was very busy. We had stalls at the Apple day, the Landscape Trust Warton weekend, the LT Silverdale coffee morning and other events in the AONB. Thanks to all of you who helped or visited.

We finally admitted defeat in our efforts to trial wind power. The firm we had bought the small turbine from never delivered and even after going to the small claims court we were unsuccessful in getting our money back. We were very fortunate however in being allowed to reallocate the grant we had been awarded to help in the production of our Guides and Atlases rather than to hand it back. The income produced from these guides has initially been used to cover the loss from the Wind Turbine project.

We have sold over £2,000 of Atlas/guides to the end of the financial year. We now know which sell well and have sold at least 200 of each of the original 6 titles. The RSPB have been very helpful in selling the booklets and we made a profit selling there as well as raising over £130 for their funds.

As far as the Solar Panel scheme is concerned we helped Leeds Children's Holiday centre in Silverdale to purchase solar panels in December 2012 and they have been working well for them. They have reduced their electricity bill and produced an income for both them and us. In June 2013 Storth School decided to purchase the remaining 85% of their tariff from us. This meant that we could look around to help another school. The Solar PV lighting and batteries we provided to the AONB are up and running in the Warehouse in Station Yard.

We also welcomed 7 new shareholders.

So what has happened since the end of the financial year.

We have been working together with Silverdale School to put Solar PV panels on their roof. They have been installed.

We have offered a grant to the AONB office so they too can have solar PV panels on the roof of the station building and we are just awaiting a final decision from Lancaster City Council to see if that can go ahead.

We have had displays at various AONB, Arnside Natural History Society and Landscape Trust events.

We have been commissioned to produce a directory of woodland advisors, contractors, woodfuel and wood products funded by the Morecambe Bay Nature Improvement Area Partnership. We hope that this will be out by the end of March.

We have also started a trial project to encourage people to move from open fires to woodburning stoves. We have a lot of wood in the area but it is four times more efficient to burn it in a stove. Thanks to a few shareholders who offered their winter fuel allowance for this purpose we are able to offer a few small grants and/or interest-free loans to someone in the AONB who wants to make the change but hasn't yet saved up enough to do it. We have prioritised those with small children, using storage heaters and/or open fires to heat their homes. Our first grant/loan was given in January to a delightful family in Silverdale with 2 small boys and a damp house heated by storage heaters which they found hard to afford. They are now the proud possessors of a lovely woodburning stove which heats the whole house and is almost free to run as the father is a conservation volunteer in his spare time, he is self-employed, and has also joined the Silverdale and District Wood Bank. We would like to be able to roll this out to more such families over the summer and would love to hear from anyone who feels that they could pledge their 2014 winter fuel allowance for such a good cause.

Our eleventh Guide which is on Butterflies is available and we are in the process of finalising three more, two on mammals and one on the rocks and soils of the AONB. Our sales have now reached £2,900 and are still going well. We have sold 1700 atlases to date and have the same number still in stock. This should provide money for our running costs. I would like to thank the RSPB cafe staff who sell them for us in return for a share of the profits to RSPB funds.

Our bank balance is still healthy.

I would like to thank the Board and the staff of the AONB unit for all their help and encouragement over the past year.

The Board would like to send you all thanks for your support and look forward to another successful year.

Ann