

# **Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company**

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

Company Number 6363720

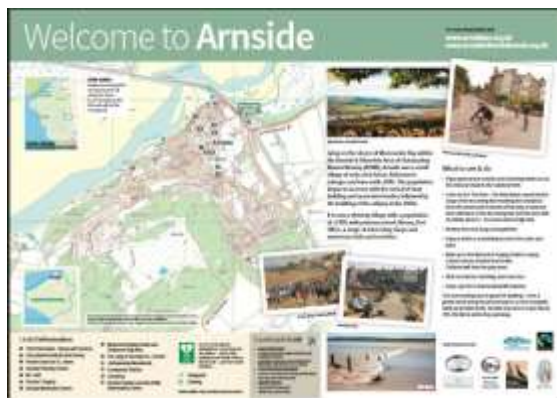
e-mail: [bitterncic@arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk](mailto:bitterncic@arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk)



## **Newsletter to Shareholders December 2016**

The Directors thought that you, as a shareholder, would like an update on the activities of the Company during the last year.

In July the Company agreed to donate £500 towards new Information Boards to be sited in each of the five parishes. The Boards would be produced by the AONB unit. This is an illustration of what the board for Arnsdale will look like.



### *Leeds Children's Holiday Centre PV Initiative*

Earlier in the year, the charity that runs the Leeds Children's Holiday Centre (LCHC) in Silverdale decided that they could no longer afford the running costs of the centre due to cuts in their local authority funding. In September the site was sold to Holgate's Caravan Parks.

We are very sorry to see the Centre close. Over the many years it has been on the site it has provided holidays and respite for countless numbers of disadvantaged children. We wish them well in the future caring for those who need help. Although

details are not yet clear, it seems likely that the buildings will be demolished and the site developed for static caravans.

As the purchasers had no interest in the PV panels, LCHC have therefore repaid their remaining share of the tariff to the company and donated the panels to Lakeland Wildlife Oasis (LWO). The panels are currently on the roof at Wildlife Oasis awaiting wiring and connection to the grid by a qualified electrician. We have offered to donate up to £1,000 to allow this to go ahead. Unfortunately there will be no feed in tariff for them as they have been removed from the original site.

LWO is a registered charity under the name of The Lakeland Trust for Natural Sciences. The aim of the Trust is both educational and the conservation of endangered species. This includes fundraising for *in situ* projects in the wild and participating in captive 'ark' populations. Many of the endangered species at the zoo are on international breeding programmes and they work with other zoos up and down the country to manage these animals.

### *Schools Energy Saving Initiative*

Out of the six primary schools in the AONB, four have not been helped by us to lower their carbon footprint. The Board are looking at ways in which we can do so. One avenue which we are exploring with Archbishop Hutton School in Warton is for us to pay to replace energy guzzling

fluorescent tubes with low energy LED tubes in one of their classrooms. Carnforth High School has just done so throughout the school and estimates their new lighting which is brighter than before will cost around 70% less to run. If the Warton scheme goes ahead and is successful we will hope to offer it to the other schools in the AONB. Any other ideas would be welcomed by the board.

The Arnside and Silverdale Red Squirrel Initiative has had a successful year so far with around 550 Greys culled mostly by volunteer trapping, mainly west of the railway line. This does not include numbers culled by the shooting estates which is likely to at least double this number. The Initiative had been able to clear areas of Greys early in the year as evidenced by nil sightings and lack of activity at the traps. After August, trapping becomes ineffective as so much natural food is available. During this autumn it became obvious that Greys had reinvaded previously cleared areas and that it will be a continuing battle before they are successful at getting Reds back into the area. The moral of the story is that squirrels will always reinvade where

their numbers are very low, but this applies equally to Reds as well as Greys. This is why Westmorland Red Squirrels has been successful in maintaining and increasing the number of Reds further north in the Lake District. Following the talk by Bob Cartwright at the AGM in March, the Company offered £1000 of support to the cause and it is anticipated that this will be taken up when trapping starts in the New Year. The aim will be to create a Grey cleared corridor through to Levens where we have had a Red sighting in the summer.

### *Land Purchase*

In October an opportunity arose for the Landscape Trust to purchase a 4 acre field at Waterslack, Silverdale. It was considered that if managed sympathetically, the field would have considerable value for wildlife. The Company offered to donate £1,000 towards the possible purchase of the site if it were able to make a successful bid at the auction. Unfortunately the field together with adjoining farm buildings and a paddock were sold as a lot at a price well beyond the £44,000 maximum the Trust could afford.