



**VINE Conference, Lancaster University 1st -
3rd April 2008**

**SUMMARY OF ENTRIES RECORDED ON THE FEEDBACK
FORMS**

Message given to delegates at the last session of the Conference: “We would like to ensure that any future conferences we organise are as relevant to you as possible. To help us do this we need your opinion. Please take a few minutes to fill in this form so that we can tailor future events. Thank you.”

Response: Many thanks to everyone who filled out a feedback form. 35 forms were received. All responses received have been entered. The numbers entered under the ‘faces’ are the number of delegates who noted that score against each item. Delegates were invited to add brief comments relevant to opinions entered under the ‘faces’ if relevant. Comments in the latter half of the form have as far as possible been allocated to the appropriate section but the original entry location is noted. The large number of responses in the later sections have been grouped into common themes to help assimilation!

This feedback has already been sent to the Vine Steering Group for consideration. It will be further discussed at the ‘Three Year Review’ meeting to be held this summer. Many thanks to you all.

John Bacon, VINE Chairman. 10 April 2008.

(NB. Not all forms had all sections filled in - so the number of entries in each section vary).

Admin before the conference

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
27	5	2	-	-
○ + Excellent. - 1				

Admin during the conference






Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
25	10	-	-	-
○ Excellently done - many thanks to all of you				
○ All excellent and welcoming				

Ramblin' Vine events on Tuesday 1st April

(NB. Many of the walkers did not attend the final session of the Conference so did not fill in a feedback form)






- Missed the walk - very sorry I did.

a) Clougha:

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
4	-	1	-	-






- I hope we don't need to use the word 'ramblin'!

b) Arn:

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
2	4	-	-	-

- Weather uncooperative.

Lancaster University Venue

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
2	14	12	6	1

- A conference like this would be better away from a University environment
- Unpleasant environment; unsatisfactory meeting places.
- Post-modern madness!
- Very spread-out difficult orientation.
- Campus itself very depressing - but great location within Britain for transport and landscape.
- Poor venue - but I understand it was best value for money.

Venue comments entered under 'Worst thing about the Conference':






- The architecture at Lancaster University
- University environment
- The University environment - but in a paradoxical way this may have been timely in providing a realistic, societal backdrop to our deliberations.
- It is an alienating venue
- Large windowless lecture theatre.
- The venue
- Externals - the Uni campus.
- Traffic keeping you awake at night.
- M6
- Lancaster Uni!
- Campus.
- Location.

Meals and Refreshments

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
16	15	2	1	-

- + **Excellent.** - 1
- Please supply water as well as juice. (Reply: Uni had been instructed to - sorry if we missed this).
- Good food , well produced
- Excellent and ethos worth having.
- Tuesday supper very solid!
- First night's meal was diabolical! Less margarine in the cooking would make a huge difference.
- Interesting food option on first night - hotpot and pickled onions! (Originally entered under 'Worst thing').

Presentations overall






Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
17	15	1	1	

- + **Excellent.** - 1
- Exceptional, all very different. All brilliantly stimulating. Very, very hard to follow!
- Thought provoking stuff and occasionally inspirational.
- Need to ensure at least one female speaker next time - a lot of unexamined male bias on science/aesthetic divide.
- Talks should be shorter to allow space for more speakers. (Originally entered under 'Further comments').
- Intense afternoon of great presentations - needed time in between for reflection.
- Variable - some absolutely excellent (Rodwell, McIntosh)
- Slightly depressing start but overall excellent.

Speaker comments entered under 'Best thing about the Conference':

- Quality of the speakers and their presentations; space in between
- Brilliant speakers who really understood dialectic and debate and do not project a meta-narrative; others who took a much more singular view. We must all get out there and think for ourselves but act towards common goals.
- Speakers.
- Variety of speakers and styles; photographic presentation.
- Very high calibre of speakers and subsequent talks and panel discussions.
- Broad spectrum of topics covered by the speakers from world views to practical conservation; great audience; seeing passion and people light-up.
- John Rodwell's and Adrian Phillips address.
- John Rodwell's presentation
- John Rodwell.
- Good to see senior people opening up to the deep issues.

Workshops overall






Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
9	15	7	1	1

- Dreadful, inappropriate, fixed seat venue.
- Needed more structure possibly - but free thinking!
- Needed longer time slot to be satisfactory
- Not enough time in the workshops.
- SpeyGrian - thought provoking.
- Did we need the Workshops?
- Needed more than 1 hour - perhaps 2 hours.

Workshop comments entered under 'Worst thing about the Conference':

- More workshop time would be very useful.
 - Workshop.
 - Too short time in workshops or debates in small groups.
 - Large smelly room with fixed row seats for the workshop. I wanted to go to four workshops
 - Workshop didn't really work - a 'knowledge café'; discussion from 'open space' would be more productive.
 - Workshop - derelict technology.
-

Ramblin Vine presentation Thursday morning

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
12	21	-	-	-

- Could have used more intro of Vine concept at start to the discussion.
 - Vine needs to be clearer about its aims and possible outcomes (for the rambles) in medium to long term.
 - Very good - especially as I had not been on them.
 - Ramblin' Vine expedition (Originally entered under 'Best Things').
 - Incorporate the rambles into the body of the Conference. (Originally entered under 'Any recommendations').
-

Would you like to be involved with local rambling Vine events in your area?






- Will engage re Natural England sign up to the project.

(If yes, please give your contact email address or telephone number. Please print:

- james.archer@nationaltrust.org.uk
- Roger.cartwright@btconnect.com
- adrianp@wcpa.demon.co.uk (Adrian Phillips Tel: 01386 882094)
- Lisa.schneidau@somersetwildlife.org (Tel: 07814 168953)
- Tom.burditt@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.org.uk
- Bark.person@virgin.net (Tel: 01364 653903)
- Val.cooper@naturalengland.org.uk
- pat@green-mantle.co.uk (Tel: 01761 413638)

- Sean.cooch@naturalengland.org.uk
- S.harding@schumachercollege.org.uk
- Tony.devos@naturalengland.org.uk (Tel: 0191 2293332)
- jimbolangley@hotmail.com (Tel: 07813 727414) In Snowdonia.
- jomugford@woodlandtrust.org.uk
- rowan@island2000.org.uk (Will send link to Isle of Wight walking festival).
- kdale@ennvirocentre.co.uk
- miles@milesking.demon.co.uk
- Charlotte.moreton@grazinganimalsproject.org.uk
- susan@teeltale.co.uk
- fwashbrook@mansfield.gov.uk (Tel: 01623 463510)
- REPLY: THANK YOU. WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS.

Panel session (Thursday morning)

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
				
15	9	1	-	-

- + Excellent. - 1

- Excellent, enthralling.
- Excellent.
- Better to take bundle of questions/comments between panel responses.
- Excellent to have JL-J pick up on alarming problem of agencies squashing our passion.
- Some great wisdom as well as some waffling!

Best things about the conference?

Personal:

- I have been inspired to paint again. Thank you!

Networking:

- The freedom one had to talk about feelings
- Encountering other people with different views and experiences of nature
- Meeting people
- Challenging discussions, social time and ramble.
- Meeting so many lively, in-touch people to share so much.
- Sharing and connections
- Listening to different perspectives/ideas; socialising with such supportive people.
- Everything - very inspirational. Thank you. Story telling and readings were an excellent contribution
- Open / different / testing personal held views.
- Sharing of minds; interesting discussions; a feeling of pragmatism - not just rhetoric.
- Sharing experience with old and new friends.
- Talk to like-minded and different bods with strong motivation.
- Networking - we were a superbly well-bonded group. There were no factions present.

- Very interesting to listen to other peoples opinions on the ethics with nature, as this is rarely discussed on a day to day basis.
- Opportunity to meet others involved in environmental work at the sharp end.
- Inspirational speakers; meeting like-minded people; getting back to the values I already hold; a refreshing change from the day job. Wish I had made time for the full 3 days. (Second sentence originally entered under 'Worst thing'!).

Speakers: see earlier under 'Presentations overall'.

Multiple themes:

- Its provided me with space, place opportunities to reflect on what I do/ don't do and to reassess my motivations. I have enjoyed meeting people - walking, talking, sitting and listening.
- Mix of people for free ranging discussion; sense of history/heritage of the nature conservation culture; theme that pulled together the opposing/dual strains of n.c.walk - balancing science/aesthetics/feelings/ethics.
- Walks, people, topics, talks, space and time to think and discuss, food, experts/knowledge.
- Time allowed for chatting / networking; speakers on the first day very thought provoking.
- The structure/timing which allowed lots of space for us all to meet and discuss and laugh; the wisdom of and humour of many of the speakers, chairs and many people at the Conference.
- Artistic presentation, thought provoking reading, periods of silence, completely new perspectives, debate.
- Food and relaxed pace.
- Interplay of stimulating presentations and space for processing/informal discussion.
- The space in between the talks and sessions (meals, breaks, etc).
- See also under earlier sections).

Worst things?

Venue - see earlier list under 'Lancaster University Venue'.

Workshops - see earlier list under 'Workshops overall'.

Programming issues:

- No woman speakers! (Reply - Sorry. We were aware of this omission and knew we would be in trouble!).
- Woman speakers! (Originally entered in 'Any recommendations')
- Need more gaps to discuss subject; walks in the middle to allow this.
- Too much indoor session.
- Academic language and conventions; long winded waffling by a few individuals.
- Venue, formality of rooms, no outside seminars.
- Until the panel session the general feeling was slightly negative, focussing on issues we are all aware of (e.g. climate change) rather than how to enthuse people and colleagues. I have however learnt a lot and have some ideas for future works.
- No explicit connections with whether this wonder and passion makes us better and more compassionate people.

Other:

- Not enough participants

- (See also under earlier sections).

Any recommendations?

Links to other organisations:

- Links with BANC
- Use ECOS to disseminate results - including posters! (Meaning Pen's cartoons, I think?).
- Clarify relationship to BANC.
- Write up the Conference for ECOS.
- Vine should be aimed at Heads of Organisations, councillors and general public in addition to professionals as I feel they would benefit as well. For example specific workshops / seminars for volunteers, ward councillors and planners.
- Awareness of wider discussions on nature and culture
- Vine needs to contact CABE for further ideas about green spaces. Some lack of clarity about whether Vine is about supporting individuals within organisations who are constrained in expressing their inspiration, or, is more outward looking? (Last sentence originally entered under 'Worst things').
- Link with other organisations that question green thinking; create partnerships that get Vine message into other peoples organisations agendas.
- Apply pressure to central government to take nature seriously.
- Beware of reinventing the wheel - others are doing many of the things you are considering.
- Explore relationship with BANC/ECOS. (Originally entered under 'Any further comments').

Future events:

a) Subject matter.

- Important to continue providing a meeting place that is warmly supportive of people involved in n.c. management - and involves enough grist from others who perhaps do not share perceptions that most do here.
- Vine to help/show/teach/share techniques of adaptability to climate change using the examples, experience and resources of the indigenous peoples left (who know about adaptability).
- Look at structure of a conventional conference - is this the best way to explore Vine aims? Please hold events in venues in tune with Vine values. - Dartington?
- Explore need for next conference 2 yrs on; theme that will help Natural England and other agencies take up Vine as a forum. (Originally entered under 'Any further comments')
- A conference of multi-professionals / nature conservation professionals / educators / community workers.
- Have some events with wider participation; bring together academics and practitioners more.
- Clearer focus.
- Involve some speakers / contributors from outside nature conservation - philosopher like Mary Midgley, or writers like Elaine Morgan, or Sue Clifford's Angela King from Common Ground; and we need to get farmers and growers involved.
- I would like to see a wider discussion around current value subjects i.e. ecosystems services.

b) Venues, timing, structure.

- Have a conference in middle of country in 2009 and get more widely advertised.
- Please more workshop sessions and interactive sessions and perhaps an outdoor conference.

- How about a Vine 'real ale' for next conference.
- Forest or island conference - outside!
- Walks on Wed am or Thurs pm.
- Have an event in summer - held outdoors
- More gatherings - walks a good idea.
- Review Vine conference economics.
- c) Vine Project issues:
 - Scope for membership of Vine without participating in blog (Reply: Yes you can - contact Sophie: sophie@vineproject.org.uk The discussion group is an optional extra only if you sign up for it).
 - I would like to help or contribute to VINE's efforts in some way (LS)
 - What's the carbon offsetting - one of the wetlands in the region. (Reply: yes).

Any further comments?

Complimentary comments:

- I have enjoyed the Conference
- I loved it and am very grateful for it.
- A very successful event.
- Thank you.
- More 'feeling' please.
- I really enjoyed the whole experience.
- Please keep Vine going!! I / we need you!
- Thanks to all the organisers for all the hard work! It has been a fab experience.
- Yes, more Vine events please - local events?
- Thanks for the inspiration to share.
- Excellent, stimulating couple of days. Thanks to all who made it happen.
- Keep on going!
- Spend more time - walking conference.

Other:

- I still disagree with Stephan's view that it is qualitative stuff and science that is to blame - I think it is alienation, insecurity and lust for power and money. (Originally entered under 'Worst things').

Please leave this form on the VINE Conference Office table at the end of the conference, or, post to Sophie Lake, Greenlands Cottages, 57 Corfe Road, Stoborough, Wareham. Dorset. BH20 5AE.

Thank you again for taking the time to fill in this form.

10th April 2008.