



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
for FY 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013; (with update to October 2013).

OVER-VIEW:

A year in which VINE continued to use its limited finances to deliver and further develop its core resources. Our website has been well used and our discussion forum continues to provide a valued exchange of views on topical issues. Our ever lengthening list of thought provoking 'VINE Seeds' continue to receive many commendations as the thinking persons guide to maintaining the inner spirit. The Executive Group came together for a weekend at Dovetail to agree how and where VINE would direct its energies and resources during 2013/14. Decisions were implemented throughout the rest of the period. Member's consensus views on government consultations continued to be submitted as appropriate. Proposals and planning for a VINE workshop for nature conservationists on the topic of 'global population and consumption' were developed.

FINANCE:

Reference is made to the Treasurers report and audited accounts. VINE remained solvent throughout the period having undertaken regular reviews to keep costs to a minimum. Because of this we have maintained and further developed our core resources. Activities involving direct expenditure (such as gatherings and workshops) depend on self funding or successful funding bids from grant giving bodies.

WEBSITE:

Thanks are due to Sophie Lake for managing and updating this resource.

- New website pages were added as required and web pages updated periodically.
- Web stats have been presented by Pat Vincent to the EG at intervals; these showed an encouraging level of usage.
- Twitter links were added thanks to Peter Phillipson and Sophie Lake.
- The website has continued to be efficiently hosted by Darkhouse Multi Media using 100% renewable electricity supplied by Good Energy, continuing to help VINE to meet its '10/10' carbon reduction commitments.

DISCUSSION GROUP:

This forum was managed by Sophie Lake and Bill Grayson.

- Spells of intense activity have occurred on a wide range of topics. Very occasionally it has been quiet! The discussion on 'global population and consumption' issues was probably the most intense leading to a proposal to try to convene a 2 day VINE workshop in spring 2014.
- The Members 'Voluntary Code of Conduct' guidance for discussions on the forum appeared to be working well with no notable excesses being referred!

VINE 'SEEDS':

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has". Margaret Mead.

- Tim Kemp and Peter Phillipson's 'VINE Seeds' initiative has continued with writing of further 'guided reflections' intended to be thought provoking, stimulating and challenging.
- Further Seeds were added during the year by Tim. Thank you Tim.
- The list of Seeds is now:
 - **Seed No 1 - Hero's journey.** *"Intelligent fear is the root of true courage"* Ronald Higgins.
 - **Seed No 2 - Social proof.** *"The moral development of a civilisation is measured by the breadth of its sense of community"* Anatol Rapaport, cited in Thomas Homer-Dixon, 'The Ingenuity Gap' (2000).
 - **Seed No 3 - Dreambeds.** *"The Earth was small, light blue and so touchingly alone ...our home that must be defended like a holy relic"*. Aleksei Leonov, Russian cosmonaut on seeing the Earth from space.
 - **Seed No 4 - The elephant in the room.** *Assumptions are the termites of relationships.* Henry Winkler.
 - **Seed No 5 - Breaking habits - applying new behaviours.** *"When you are through changing you are through"* Bruce Barton. *"The only man I know who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew each time he sees me. The rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them."* George Bernard Shaw.
 - **Seed No 6 - Triangles.** A Christmas party special ... with deeper meaning!
 - **Seed No 7 – Pacha Mama.** The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth.
 - **Seed No 8 – Naikan.** "To see yourself with your own eyes".
 - **Seed No 9 - Looking Forward by Looking Back.**
 - **Seed No 10 - Imagination and Understanding.** "Something swatable landed on my arm..."
 - **Seed No 11 – Who's your Dada?** "Who are the people that you turn to for inspiration?"
 - **Seed No 12 - Fast Track.** Somebody once said, 'The faster we move, the less we feel'.
 - **Seed No 13 - Growth and Austerity. Or, why put yourself between a rock and a hard place in the first place?**
 - **Seed No 14 – Flash fiction.** 'Fish leapas if trying to drown themselves in air'.
 - **Seed No 15 – Ardal.** 'You don't look do you?'

LIASION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:

- A Newsletter was produced and widely circulated in September 2012.
- In February 2013 VINE signed up to the global 'Ecocide 2020 Campaign'. Ecocide is described as: *the extensive damage to, destruction of or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the*

inhabitants of that territory has been or will be severely diminished. As part of our commitment we keep members updated on Ecocide topics and activities.

- Links have been established with the Population Matters organisation as a result of the ‘global population’ forum discussions and in order to feed back developments on their global activities.
- The Executive Group Members and VINE Members provided formal and informal links to many organisations.
- VINE continues to submit member’s consensus views on periodic consultations:
 - A 2011/12 submission on the National Planning Policy framework elicited a response from the Minister in spring 2013 confirming that one of the 3 objectives for the framework was to ‘protect and enhance our natural and historic environment’.
 - A submission was made in May 2013 about England’s Educational Framework Document consultation for the future national curriculum. This urged reinstatement into the curriculum of ‘care for the environment and climate change’ for key stages 1-3.
 - Currently views are being collected on Defra’s ‘biodiversity offsetting’ consultation.

EXECUTIVE GROUP (EG) MEETINGS and OTHER EVENTS:

Full meeting/event record/reports can be found on the website at:

www.vineproject.org.uk/notes_of_meetings.html

- The 2011/12 AGM/Executive meetings were held on 10th – 12th August 2012 at the Dovedale Centre. Apart from regular business topics presented and discussed included: ‘Nurturing the nature champions’; the National Trust’s Closer to Nature Programme and ‘50 things to do before you are eleven and three quarters’; Futerra’s Branding Biodiversity – the new nature message. We also saw Stephan Harding’s DVD ‘Animate earth – science intuition and Gaia’ which eloquently articulates the case for a more intuitive holistic approach to living on and connecting with the earth. A very stimulating event which sent us away committed to continuing to provide VINE’s resources and ‘holding the space’ for members discussions.
- An Executive Committee meeting was held by telephone conference on 8th March 2013. In addition to routine business agenda items other topics included: PIRC’s Common Cause for Nature research and the ‘Naturalist’s in residence’ initiative.
- An Executive Committee meeting was held by telephone conference on 22nd May 2013. The main topics were to consider holding a VINE workshop on the topic of global population and consumption; and to agree a shopping list for VINE projects requiring funding.
- Members have been invited to the 2012/13 AGM which has been set for 3rd October by telephone conference. This will be followed by an Executive Committee meeting.

For further information and resources please see the Vine website: www.vineproject.org.uk
