



**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**  
**for FY 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014; (with update to October 2014).**

**OVER-VIEW:**

*The activity level of VINE during this period can best be described as 'just ticking over', with the discussion forum, twitter and web site being are main focus during these times of financial constraints. Our website has been well used and our discussion forum continues to provide a valued exchange of views on topical issues. Member's consensus views on a government consultation about 'Biodiversity Offsetting' were submitted. Plans for a VINE workshop for nature conservationists on the topic of 'global population and consumption', to follow up the extensive forum discussions, did not secure enough prospective attendees to make it financially viable.*

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**MEMBERS:**

Vine currently has 227 Members listed. 198 of them are linked to the discussion forum either by email or through the website.

**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 statistics are reviewed periodically. They show we had nearly 6000 unique visitors with most visiting the 'contacts' and 'forum' pages.

**TWITTER:**

- Twitter has been moderated thanks to Peter Phillipson and Sophie Lake. We have 355 followers and there have been 2254 tweets since it was set up in 2012.
- 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 to whom thanks are given.

- 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 of all time.
- 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’ continue to be available on the website as ‘guided reflections’ intended to be thought provoking, stimulating and challenging.

- One further Seed was added during the year by Tim. Thank you Tim for that very topical review of climate change by the Little Pigs! Well worth reading if you missed it!
- 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 leap .....as if trying to drown themselves in air’.
  - **Seed No 15 – Ardal.** ‘You don’t look do you?’
  - **Seed No 16 – The Fourth Little Pig.** ‘Something is wrong’. A conversation between the Little Pigs on the subject of climate change and our lack of effective action!

#### 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. We have been able to maintain our core resources but have not taken on other events or activities. An application to the NatureSave Trust for funding to help run our ‘population and consumption

workshop' was unsuccessful when they decided not to fund a topic that had a global rather than a UK remit. The accounts can be viewed on the VINE Website at:

[http://vineproject.org.uk/project\\_documents.html](http://vineproject.org.uk/project_documents.html) under AGM 2014 documents

#### **LIASION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:**

- Having signed up in February 2013 VINE to the global 'Ecocide 2020 Campaign' we have kept members updated on Ecocide topics and activities. [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*].
- The Executive Group Members and VINE Members provided formal and informal links to many organisations.
- A refreshingly new 'Invitation to join VINE' was written in October 2013 by Adam Cormack our Wildlife Trust Representative. This was widely circulated and made available on our website.
- VINE continues to submit member's consensus views on periodic consultations: Members views were collected on Defra's 'biodiversity offsetting' consultation. A 'VINE Response' to the 45 questions was submitted in November 2013. This differentiated between 'designated' wildlife sites where BO was not supported, from lower quality wildlife sites where BO might have a role. A copy of the response can be found at: [http://www.vineproject.org.uk/project\\_documents.html](http://www.vineproject.org.uk/project_documents.html) under 'Biodiversity offsetting consultation 2014'.

#### **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](http://www.vineproject.org.uk/notes_of_meetings.html)

- Executive Committee meetings were held by telephone conferences on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013 and 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.
- The 2012/2013 AGM and an Executive Committee meeting were held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013.
- Members have been invited to the 2013/14 AGM which has been set for 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 by telephone conference. This will be followed by an Executive Committee meeting.

This Report can be viewed on the VINE website at:

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For further information and resources please see the Vine website: [www.vineproject.org.uk](http://www.vineproject.org.uk)

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