



**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**  
**for FY 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.**

**OVER-VIEW:**

*VINE celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday at the end of this period. A very enjoyable get together and fund raising nature conservation work party to mark the occasion was held on the Copriding Heath, part of the Arnside Reserve in Cumbria in October 2015. On this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Executive Committee decided it would be timely to consult with Members to obtain their views on whether VINE still had a role and if so what should be the focus for VINE in its 2<sup>nd</sup> decade? First indications are that Members wish us to continue much as we have been. Results are to be fully reviewed at the May 2016 AGM and Executive Committee meetings. Other facilities provided during this period were the website, twitter site and the discussion forum where many environmental and nature conservation issues were aired.*

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**MEMBERS:**

VINE currently has 274 Members listed. 214 of them are linked to the discussion forum either by email or through the website.

**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. The Arnside 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday event in October also doubled as a fundraising event thanks to the generosity of Bill Grayson, other organisers and attendees. This added £800 to our bank account. A small donation was made towards the costs of the trial of Monsanto later in 2016 and the Executive Committee is to discuss making further small donations to nature conservation or environmental organisations. 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 2016 documents.

**WEBSITE:**

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

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

**TWITTER:**

- The VINE twitter account has been run by Peter Phillipson and Sophie Lake. We have 478 followers and there have been 3360 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!
- Members were periodically reminded of VINE's 'Voluntary Code of Conduct' guidance for discussions on the forum.

#### **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.

[http://www.vineproject.org.uk/vine\\_seeds.html](http://www.vineproject.org.uk/vine_seeds.html)

#### **LIASION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS and CAMPAIGNS:**

- VINE continued to submit member's consensus views on environmentally related consultations: [http://www.vineproject.org.uk/project\\_documents.html](http://www.vineproject.org.uk/project_documents.html). This policy is being reviewed at the next Executive Committee meeting as a result of questions being raised in connection with the BREXIT referendum.
  - VINE continues to pass on information from several national and international campaign groups and to support their activities where appropriate. These include the British Association of Nature Conservationists (BANC), Ecocide 20 Campaign, 10/10 Campaign, 38 Degrees, Population Matters, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Electoral Reform Society and Avaaz.
- The Executive Group Members and VINE Members provided formal and informal links to many other organisations.

#### **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)

- The 2014/2015 AGM and an Executive Committee meeting were held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015.
- Members have been invited to the 2015/16 AGM which has been set for 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016 by telephone conference. The AGM will be followed by an Executive Committee meeting.
- Another work party has been scheduled on 22<sup>nd</sup> June working to control Himalayan Balsam along the banks of the Cadnam River in the New Forest, Hampshire.

The meeting notes can be viewed on the VINE website at:

[http://vineproject.org.uk/project\\_documents.html](http://vineproject.org.uk/project_documents.html) under AGM 2016 documents.

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