

TCWT Chairman's report to members March 2018

Without being prescriptive here are a few topics for us to consider and debate at this our third members' AGM; our debate should be as wide ranging and "provocative" as members see fit to make it with the aim of improving our performance but in my view growing user and member participation is a major objective.

Composition of the Trust (TCWT). Feedback leads us to believe that overall the Trust works well. The mix of skills and contributions available to us is wide and one of our strengths. Two points worthy of consideration are:

- Firstly trust members and volunteers are of a certain age and gender and hence have time available. This is to some extent inevitable given they are all unpaid volunteers and much of the weekly work is physical in nature but they do bring experience. Our success in attracting younger active participants has been limited and should continue but, over time, we can be positive as because as we "lose" Trustees/volunteers other committed residents will wholly or partially retire and be in a position to replace them provided we involve and prime them. Members are therefore asked to canvass friends and neighbours to take an interest in the woodland with the long term view of recruiting support.
- Secondly, to echo Charles' message over the past years, the composition of trustees, members and indeed volunteers, does not truly reflect our society gender wise, ethnically nor in age distribution. We again call on members efforts to help redress this imbalance.

Trust Constitution. No changes are proposed at present. Our aims and objectives are well understood and the balance of volunteers/members/trustees seems about right. Do members agree?

Finance. Our aim of financial sustainability has been achieved at least for the foreseeable future thanks to generous donations, grants and the structure of growth arrangements. Some of our funding entails long term obligations to ensure adequate woodland maintenance so while our accounts show concomitant reserves we still need to raise funds annually to cover running costs and asset replacement; hence our plans for the plant sale, coffee morning and grant applications.

PR and Marketing. Here our Secretary carries a disproportionate work load. In terms of recruitment and work load perhaps some of these tasks which are none physical but nevertheless vital may enable us to recruit further volunteers with additional skill sets; as much of this work is desk/computer based in the main and can be carried out to suit personal circumstances. Again members are asked to consider possible contributors.

As a specific example we plan a new lottery/100 club initiative which will require relevant management/computer/finance skills to set up and run for a small number of hours per month.

Greater involvement of woodland users. This observation addresses an untapped resource that could possibly contribute to several of the points raised above. Since moving into the village I have become a daily (mainly morning) dog walking user of the woodland. I regularly see and meet other users numbering say at least 10 per day plus others. Many if not most recognise they are benefitting from the woodland but do not contribute on a regular basis if at all. I suggest an objective from us all should be to persuade more regular wood users to contribute more and the proposed lottery/100 club could be one way of achieving this. Also, a small number of users are funded dog walkers and we have a growing number of users from residents of villages other than Tarvin. They are of course welcome but could again perhaps be convinced to contribute?

Much food for thought so we look forward to hearing member views and indeed positive criticisms.

Stuart Exell