

## **ANNUAL REPORT - LINCOLN CONSERVATION GROUP**

### **April 2010 to March 2011**



### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Summary of recent activities of the Lincoln Conservation Group**

The Lincoln Conservation Group is 16 years old and continues to provide a diverse and interesting programme of wildlife conservation tasks throughout the year. This year, we have been able to purchase more new tools with a Lincolnshire County Council grant, including more saws, loppers, spades and a new grass rake. We were also contacted by Mr Sam Wharden of Red Dog Films, a local community interest company, who kindly offered financial support for our activities. Sam has contributed funds for transport costs and funded the food for one of our working weekends away, for which we are very grateful.

The number of social events seemed to be down on recent years, but we held another well attended Christmas party and we have had more residential weekend tasks in recent months which make for good social events as well.

#### **Lincoln Conservation Group Committee, April 2011**

Co-Chair	Jude White and Julian Bartrup
Task Programme organiser	Richard Davidson
Treasurer	John Turner
Secretary	Nicola Farr
Publicity	Shirley Devlin
Website	Julian Bartrup
Tools Officer	John Chudzicki

#### **TASK REPORT (Richard)**

A good year continuing the work of the last. The average attendance last summer (May to August inclusive) was 12, an increase on previous years, whilst for the winter (September to April) the average was 13. Once again the cold spell over the winter from December through to January resulted in a cancelled task on the 5th of December at Fiskerton Fen. Apart from the road conditions which made it unsafe to travel it would not have been possible to do the actual work planting a hedge as the ground was completely frozen. The summer programme included old favourites such as dry stone walling at Rauceby Warren and green hay scattering at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe but also new activities such as making and putting up Dormouse nest boxes and doing a botanical survey of limestone loving plants at Ancaster Valley nature reserve. We also joined in with a summer fair on the South Common in Lincoln. The winter programme went well and included ongoing work from previous years at Thurlby Wood, Whisby Nature Park and Scotgrove Wood. The work at the latter has the potential to assist an embryonic colony of Brown Hairstreak butterflies as the scrub we cut back was threatening to shade out Blackthorn being used by them for egg laying. A new task for us was layering Lime coppice at Goslings Corner Wood to assist its spread, something we will hopefully continue with over the next

two or three winters. We also had two enjoyable away weekends, in Norfolk where we carried out hedge laying for Lord Melchett, the former chair of Greenpeace, on his own farming estate and on the North York Moors where we once again assisted with a Butterfly Conservation project to reintroduce Duke of Burgundy butterflies to Dalby Forest near Pickering. All in all, another good year.

Richard Davidson

## **PUBLICITY**

### ▪ **Website (Julian)**

Our main information tool and source of volunteers continues to be the Group's website ([www.lincolnconservationgroup.org.uk](http://www.lincolnconservationgroup.org.uk)). The site has been kept up to date with brief reports and photos from as many workdays as possible, keeping volunteers informed of what we have been up to as well as allowing potential new volunteers to see what sort of work we do. There is also a larger collection of photos on the LCG Picasa website, accessible by invitation only.

The site contains links to all the sites we have worked on, pdf copies of the latest workday programme and a member's handbook detailing everything new volunteers might need to know about the Group. For leaders of workdays, there is also a selection of risk assessment templates for commonly visited sites.

The layout of the site is kept quite basic, but if anyone has any suggestions for new pages to add, or visual improvements, please contact Julian

The website and associated e-mail address ([lincolnconservationgroup@googlemail.com](mailto:lincolnconservationgroup@googlemail.com)) are a major route by which new volunteers find us. New volunteers are asked if they would like their email address added to our googlegroups email list, which ensures they receive emails about arrangements for forthcoming tasks and other events of interest. There are currently 143 addresses on the list. List members are able to log on to change various settings such as shown name, how emails are received and to remove themselves from the list if so desired. In theory, googlegroups can act as a social networking site, although we don't tend to use it in that way. There has been a suggestion of setting up an LCG Facebook site, although personally, I'll restrict my social networking to a nice nature reserve site (or pub)!

We also continue with other forms of publicity.

### ▪ **Leaflet – VOLE (Shirley)**

We publish three leaflets a year with details of volunteer workdays (tasks) and basic joining information – January-April, May-August, and September-January. (This leaflet overlaps the next one as people are busy at Christmas and might not find a copy of the new one in time.)

We still use the VOLE name (Voluntary Opportunities for Lincoln's Environment) and graphic for the leaflet, even though it now only includes LCG tasks. It used to include several organisations offering volunteering opportunities but that stopped some time ago. However, the VOLE name is known and recognised (indeed, many people refer to our Group as VOLE!) so it seems sensible to retain it.

We have 300 copies printed and we send a pdf of the leaflet to Hartsholme Country Park and they print their own copies. Distribution includes: libraries in and around Lincoln; the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust shop; Whisby Nature Park; Lincoln Arboretum; Lincolnshire County Council; InfoLinks, North Hykeham; Lincoln tourist information office; University of Lincoln. We welcome distribution ideas from Group members.

VOLE is also posted to those volunteers who don't have internet access to the website.

I have considered finding further outlets such as tourist information centres in other towns or supermarket notice boards, but on the whole we always seem to have enough volunteers. Some new members are recruited from the volunteer centres; however most tend to find us via the website these days.

- **Local Media**

A version of VOLE is usually sent to the Lincolnshire Echo and BBC Radio Lincolnshire.

- **Posters**

We have colourful A3 and A4 posters, combining text and photos. In the past these have been taken by volunteers to various workplaces, local post offices, etc. Again, if Group members can put up a poster, please let us know.

- **Display – Lincoln Central Library**

Lincoln Central Library has a display board on a pillar near the community/armchair area of the library. It is a reasonable size but lacks the space to use props, which often attracted attention when the display was in the foyer – plants, work gloves, wellie boots, etc. However, it is still free and we had a display for two weeks in January, to coincide with the issue of the January-April leaflet, and people looking for something new to do in a new year. We try to make it colourful and informative, with descriptions of what we do and where, a list of current tasks, and photos.

We have also distributed leaflets at the Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival held in July; had displays at the Lincoln Central Library in conjunction with a climate change exhibition and recently at Lincoln University.

**Annual Accounts for the Lincoln Conservation Group, April 2010 to March 2011  
(John)**

ACCOUNTS FOR 2010/2011		CREDIT	DEBIT	BALANCE
	Balance Brought Forward			309.28
08/04/10	Donation (Lincs Wildlife trust)	105.00		414.28
23/04/10	Printing		28.00	386.28
29/04/10	Donation	1.40		387.68
29/04/10	Donation	160.00		547.68
11/06/10	Printing		5.00	542.68
30/06/10	Interest	.02		542.70
21/07/10	Donation	50.00		592.70
13/09/10	Stationary		15.87	576.83
24/09/10	First Aid Course		10.00	566.83
06/10/10	Donation	50.00		616.83
06/10/10	Tools		27.50	589.33
06/10/10	Printing		28.00	561.33
05/11/10	BTCV and Insurance		220.63	340.70
03/12/10	Rucksack		39.99	300.71
31/12/10	Interest	0.02		300.73
06/01/11	Printing		28.00	272.73
09/01/11	Donation(Thurlby Wood)	80.00		352.73
25/01/11	Flask		8.00	344.73
15/02/11	Donation(Red Dog)	150.00		494.73
24/02/11	Donation(LCC)	494.71		989.44
01/03/11	Tools		659.61	329.83
21/03/11	Donation (LCC)	140.00		469.83
24/03/11	Donation (LTNC)	70.00		539.83
29/03/10	Expenses (Jude).		3.90	535.93
29/03/11	Allotment		51.90	484.03
	Balance Carried Forward			484.03

Group funds are generated predominantly by paid tasks where we receive payment from the organisation we are working for at a nominal fee of £5 per volunteer per day. Other income sources include fund raising events such as car boot sales and other random donations.

# LINCOLN CONSERVATION GROUP

## CONSTITUTION

1. The group shall be called Lincoln Conservation Group.
2. The aims of the group are:
  - To promote practical nature conservation through volunteers for the benefit of Lincolnshire's environment and the public.
  - To educate the volunteers in the principles and practice of conservation.
3. To fulfill these aims:
  - a) The group will undertake practical conservation work.
  - b) The group may undertake other activities, in furtherance of its aims or for the benefit of the group, from time to time as the members see fit.
  - c) Money shall be raised when required, for example through occasional paid tasks/workdays and other fundraising activities as agreed by the members.
4. The area served is principally the greater Lincoln area but projects and activities may be undertaken elsewhere as seen fit by the members.
5. The organisation shall affiliate to BTCV, and shall observe the conditions of association.
6. Membership shall be open to anyone interested in taking an active part in the work of the group, either directly by volunteering or by giving support in other ways, but those under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
7. The group shall hold regular meetings (at least bimonthly) to discuss its policy and administration. All members shall be invited to these meetings, and each member will have one vote.
8. The business of the group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will include: chairperson, secretary, treasurer, task organiser, publicity officer, tools officer. These officers shall be in charge of the day-to-day running of the group, but shall be answerable to meetings of members.
9. Accounts shall be kept by the treasurer, reported at the regular meetings and approved for each financial year at the AGM.
10. The organisation shall maintain insurance for volunteers on its projects, and for injuries to third parties and damage to property.
11. If, by general consent of its members, the organisation ceases to exist, all assets shall be offered to other local conservation groups or, failing that, to a conservation-based charity, as agreed by the members at the time of dissolving the group.
12. This constitution shall only be altered by consent of a majority of the members of the organisation.