



Friends of Dubwath Silver Meadows

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PATRON: **Lord Inglewood**

Chairman's Report to the AGM 2021

- Silver Meadows continues to fulfil its function of slowing the floodwaters of Bassenthwaite Lake, providing a biodiverse habitat and involving the community in maintaining a local asset.
- It is still seen as a convenient and safe place that is accessible to people of all abilities and which offers some wildlife interest.
- During the last year it has proved increasingly popular with locals and staycationing visitors during the various periods of lockdown and release as a place for exercise and one of the few attractions which has remained open.
- You will see from our accounts from Alastair that we are in reasonable shape and continue to cover our costs with a small reserve for repairs and maintenance.
- We now have 117 families and individuals registered as "Friends", our highest number since our group was formed in 2010, and we thank them for their generosity, along with other sponsors and donors. The collecting box at the bird feeders has been a good source of contribution since we have not managed to have the events in order to collect subscriptions but we do ask those of you who have not paid in the last twelve months to make a contribution directly into the account as in the AGM agenda notes. We need your continuous support.
- Peter Macqueen managed to do some, socially distanced because he was alone, moth counts and will tell us about them at our meeting. We were not able to have our Dawn Chorus but birds were counted, however, on two separate occasions and we had 36 species identified which is down on last year (43) but we are confident that is not due to a lack of birds but of observer numbers.
- As you will have seen, we began work on the Celtic shelter but have had to stop due to the restrictions. We hope to be able to start again now in the summer and have that complete before the winter storms and floods.
- The Norse Shelter needs some work and that is starting this Spring. It has suffered somewhat from the attention of a new type of visitor who seem to like putting their names on everything and drinking cans of ale. If they took the cans home with them it wouldn't be so bad. The site continues to be maintained thanks to our volunteers and the ongoing support of the Environment Agency but there are some issues with the boardwalk and gates which will need some outside help which we will seek grant funding for.
- Alastair has done a great job in revamping our website and email link so that we can build on that base and if there is anyone who would like to help with that, please come forward and join us.
- The present Committee have indicated that they agree to stand for another year and would welcome new members and new ideas. I would like to thank them for their continued commitment and support, and also the bird feeding team for their dedication in going out in all weathers.
- The challenge for us will be to fix the things that need doing in a reasonable timescale. It is not for lack of funds or enthusiasm but the sheer inertia caused by the restrictions that we have for all the right reasons. Hopefully we can look forward to a productive summer and spend some time enjoying our reserve.
- Thank you.
- Rick Petecki.