

Newsletter  
January 2012  
Issue 4

# Friends of the Wilderness Centre - News

Friends of the  
Wilderness  
Centre:  
constituted as a  
non-registered  
small charity in  
January 2011

E-Mail:  
[friendsofthewilderness@  
gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthewilderness@gmail.com)

Trevor Roach,  
Friends Secretary  
Phone:  
07990 757365  
Mail:  
Lineside Cottage  
Baptist Way  
Ruardean Hill  
Glos  
GL17 9AR

## The Latest News on the Future of the Wilderness and Plump Hill Environmental Centres. January 2012

### Outcome of Negotiations with Gloucestershire County Council held before Christmas.

The Trust Steering Group negotiating team of Baroness Royall, Brian Bennett and Trevor Roach met with the Leader of the County Council, Cllr. Mark Hawthorne and other officers on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011.

The Trust Steering Group were hoping to persuade the Council to allow a Charitable Trust to run the Wilderness and Plump Hill Centres on a lease with a manageable rent. However, the Council position remained unchanged, in that they were intent on selling both centres in order to raise capital to contribute to the Councils budget challenge.

However, the Council was persuaded that the trust was a viable option for continued use of the two centres and they proposed that a Wilderness Centre Trust be given first option to purchase the two centres before they are placed on the open market in April 2012. The Council have also agree to offer a discount on the market value if a trust can raise the purchase price and thereby ensure the continued existence of the environmental education work.

So, the news is neither good nor bad! With hope and determination the centres can still be saved. The Trust Steering Group and the Friends have decided that every effort should be made to raise the purchase price before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, although this will be an almighty task in the time available.

Whilst the purchase price has not yet been agreed with the County we feel that it is sensible to set a provisional fundraising target of £1million.

**Once again the call for support goes out to all who wish to see the work of the centres continue – please read on:**

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[friendsofthewilderness@  
gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthewilderness@gmail.com)

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Friends Secretary  
Phone:  
07990 757365  
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GL17 9AR

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[http://www.friendsofthe  
wildernesscentre.org](http://www.friendsofthewildernesscentre.org)

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## We have a number of challenges:

1. Produce a prospectus for use in fund raising, identifying what we are intending to purchase and how we will run a thriving environmental education service, illustrating our plans to grow and improve the centre within a five year business plan.
2. Identify potential funders: benefactors, sponsors, grant providers and partners.
3. Make formal approaches to potential funders and make formal applications for grants.
4. Establish a registered Wilderness Trust with charitable status and identify candidates for appointment to the board of trustees - up until now the majority of the campaigning has been done by the Friends of the Wilderness Centre and their officers, which is a non-registered charitable organisation. The negotiating has been done by the Trust Steering Group. The Friends of the Wilderness Centre will continue in the future as a volunteer wing of any new trust.

## How you can help.

1. Join the Friends Fund Raising Group if you have the skills, ideas and time to spare over the next three months to help with the tasks mentioned above.
2. Give us your suggestions if you have any thoughts on sponsorship or if there are any personal contacts and introductions you can set up with potential funders.
3. We need to establish a charitable trust with an energetic board of trustees. Please contact us if you have a personal desire to become a founder member of the board or if you wish to provide a nomination for consideration.

Please contact the Friends Secretary – Trevor Roach if you wish to help in any way. e-mail [friendsofthewildernesscentre@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthewildernesscentre@gmail.com) or telephone 07990 757365

## It's all still to play for!

**We have put together a business plan that will see the Centre grow and improve as a resource for schools and community groups over the next five years.**

**We have gained provisional backing from a number of local businesses and big corporations to help us run the centre.**

**We must now sell our vision to those who have the resources to help us get started.**

Visit our website: <http://www.friendsofthewildernesscentre.org>

Please feel free to circulate this newsletter amongst interested parties.