

THE WATER CONSERVATION TRUST



Charity Update

Registered Charity 1007648, c/o HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, London, WC2R 2PN



Summer 2020

COVID-19 – the Water Conservation Trust’s response: Roger North, Chairman of the Trustees sets out the issues and Trustees’ responses



Trustees met via Zoom on 5 May 2020 to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Trust’s programmes and beneficiaries. Schools and universities, in their respective Programmes are struggling, as are many smaller projects. This is what we agreed:

Assurances have been given to current beneficiaries that support would continue and that the need for delays in implementation and adaptation was understood and was acceptable. This particularly affected our Schools Programme in London, where water fountains were being installed at Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School, and Hugh Myddelton Primary School, where the lifespan of reusable water bottles was being researched. The sponsored school visits to the Museum of Water and Steam at Kew have been put on hold. The Trust and the Museum continue to search for other water sector sponsors.

University partners running our Bursary Programme have been contacted to say that they can assume that we will continue to award Bursaries to Masters students in 2020-21 and that the £1,000 reserved for dissertation support could instead be used to alleviate financial hardship. All universities are working hard to deliver a first-class result.

Professor John Tellam (MSc Hydrology, University of Birmingham) puts this in context:

Many, many thanks for the support again next year! It is very much appreciated. The funding is always a great help, but will be even more so next year given the financial pressures some of the students will be under.

Yes, we have reorganised all the projects to be without field or lab work this summer, and all will be supervised remotely via Skype, Zoom or email - probably a combination. Exams for this year have been cancelled, but the students will be undertaking a largish assessment (the development of a groundwater contamination remediation plan) in their place that should enable us to assess the remaining unexamined modules reasonably well. We are expecting lower numbers from overseas next year of course, as most PGT courses will be I imagine.

The proposed expansion of the Bursary Programme in 2020-21 was, however, put on hold. The reason for this is the uncertainty surrounding the Trust’s investments. Dividends cover about 50% of the Trust’s expenditure and there has been action to suspend dividend payments by some companies to improve liquidity. Matters have eased recently, with some assurances from our Fund Managers that dividends will be sustained. Also, capital markets have recovered from the April-May low point but the wider economic uncertainties going through 2020 and into 2021 are difficult to forecast.

Some 25% of our expenditure is covered by Gift Aid contributions from currently 45 Company Members. This is crucial to our medium-term planning. Trustees would like to think that it is feasible to double this number. Anyone wishing to augment this number please do get in touch with a Trustee (see Page 2).

Company giving has also been affected following the cancellation of two formal Lunches. In fact, both the annual Magical Taxi Tour organised by the Hackney Carriage Drivers and the Big Curry Lunch organised by the Lord Mayor in support of ABF: The Soldier’s Charity have also been cancelled. We still hope to organise the Sponsored Charity Walk in October 2020.



Our first Charity Walk – Warwick Avenue to Tower Bridge in 2011

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THE WATER CONSERVATION TRUST

In addition to Chairman Roger North there are seven Trustees. The Trust is administered by its Hon Secretary, Christine Duthie. All Trustees are Members of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators and four are Past Masters. The Trustees are:



Colin Drummond

Colin Drummond is a strong supporter of our Universities Programme which was initiated in his year as Master. Since retiring as a bin man he has worked to improve student access at Oxford and is Chair of the University of Plymouth.



Rob Casey

Rob Casey runs the Trust's Schools Programme. He is a governor of Hugh Myddelton Primary School which plays a prominent part in Trust successes. He organises the Annual Water Walks and secures sponsorship from Thames Water.



Peter Hall

Past Master Peter Hall is the Hon Treasurer. He prepares the financial accounts and Charity Updates. He runs the Company's Universities Programme and shares the formal relationship with the Charity Commission with Christine Duthie.



David Johnstone

David Johnstone is an established wastewater expert. He has active links with universities. His knowledge of issues, sensitivities and protocols in the universities' arena is important in the management of the Universities Programme.



Carolyn Roberts

Professor Carolyn Roberts has active links with universities and with environmental organisations. Her research and consultancy experience have been invaluable in developing the Trust's vision for the future and strategy.



Trevor Harrington

Trevor Harrington manages the Company's relationship with Maidstone Sea cadets and assists with monitoring and evaluating the London-based universities in the Programme.



Mike Williamson

Past Master Mike Williamson brings a broad perspective to the Trust's operations. He is currently revitalising the Company's Pupils Prizes Scheme which offers Company Members the chance to award prizes for projects in their local schools.

Christine Duthie: Hon Secretary



Christine, Court Assistant, has been the Trust's Hon Secretary since 2016. She has a background in Human Resources and International Project Management and has an active interest in the Stock Market.

The Water Conservation Trust is the charity arm of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators. Independent of the Company, it is regulated by the Charity Commission.

What the Trust is for:

The objectives set out in its Trust Deed include:

- (1) the relief of poverty;**
- (2) the advancement of education;**
- (3) the promotion of research;**
- (4) the making of donations to registered charities.**

How the Trust is managed:

Trustees are appointed by the Master Water Conservator.

Trustees meet formally four times a year where funding and compliance decisions are taken. In between meetings there are delegated powers to deal with short notice proposals, a process which is overseen by Chairman, the Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer.

Trustees administer Company Programmes as well as applications to the Trust from individuals and other charities, which are assessed for compliance with its objectives, substance and affordability.

Funding comes mainly through the Membership (past and present), sponsored charity walks and donations from other charities.



The 2016 Water Walk – New River Head to Lambeth, stopping in Aldermanbury for the WCWC Blue Plaque

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Student EATS Swansea University

In November 2019, the Trust approved a grant for the Student EATS Programme to Swansea University. Teifion Maddocks (Sustainability Officer) reports: "The Tyfu Tawe (Grow Swansea) project is going well. The reclaimed railway sleeper raised beds have provided a resource for engaging students and staff on growing vegetables and fruit on campus. So far, we have grown broad bean, garlic and strawberry through the winter months and have created an impressive bug hotel from reclaimed wooden pallets and bamboo.



'Bug Hotel'

We have also held a seed swap on campus and taught staff and students how to upcycle plastic bottles into self-watering plant pots. We had a full schedule of activities planned, including growing in the raised beds and installation of the polytunnel, but understandably this has had to be curtailed, with the campuses closing for the remainder of the academic year. Some more crops were planted before the lockdown and we hope that students will be able to enjoy the harvest in the autumn.



The Team

We were very excited and grateful to receive confirmation of the grant and support from The Water Conservation Trust. With their support, we were able push ahead with saving the polytunnel prior to its demolition for a new research facility. In November we coordinated with the University Projects team, to carefully dismantle the existing polytunnel and stored it safely. Unfortunately, we won't be able to make arrangements for the re-siting, fixing down and assembly of the polytunnel until the lockdown restrictions are lifted, but will do as soon as we are able.

The funds granted by The Water Conservation Trust will now go towards the fixing down, re-sheeting and if funds allow installation of a rain water harvesting system on the tunnel. We are currently working with our University Projects officer to scope out the work and prepare for obtaining quotes.

Based on the success of this Singleton Campus growing project we are looking at the possibility of creating a growing project at our other site on the Eastern approach to Swansea.

The Students Union Conservation and Tree Societies have been very engaged with the project and have also been busy planting trees on and off campus under their own steam with support from the University Sustainability team.

Support to this Programme encourages young people to get involved with horticulture and to learn new skills."

Trustees have supported the Student EATS Programme for several years and have announced that it will support the Programme in 2021. Applications from student bodies will be assessed in November 2020.

2020 Water Walk

For several years, Trustee Rob Casey has organised and led the Trust's sponsored Annual Water Walks centred on the New River and water features in central London. The plan for 2020 was for a six to eight miles circular walk focusing on the Thames in west London. The pandemic has created uncertainty about the precise rules for participants but plans are going ahead on the basis of social distancing.

Sponsorship is through the Virgin Money Giving website or direct with the Trust's Treasurer. This Walk is important as it is the Trust's only fund-raising activity and Rob and his colleagues are supported by Thames Water. Last year the Walk along the River Chess raised over £3,000, which supported schools' projects.



Rob Casey, 'at home' on the New River

This year's event is planned for the beginning of October and details will be sent out in August.

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Keeping in touch

Very much part of our mainstream interest, **Thomas Fudge's** dissertation *Decentralised Sanitation and Energy Facilities for Developing Regions* won the Water Conservators' Best Dissertation Prize in 2016.

During his MSc year, Tom created a company to implement the dissertation findings: WASE – of which he is CEO. WASE's mission is to ensure access to sustainable wastewater and organic waste treatment. In so doing, it is unlocking power by accelerating the wastewater treatment process, thereby transforming wastewater into renewable energy and clean water - demonstrating the performance of decentralised wastewater solutions.

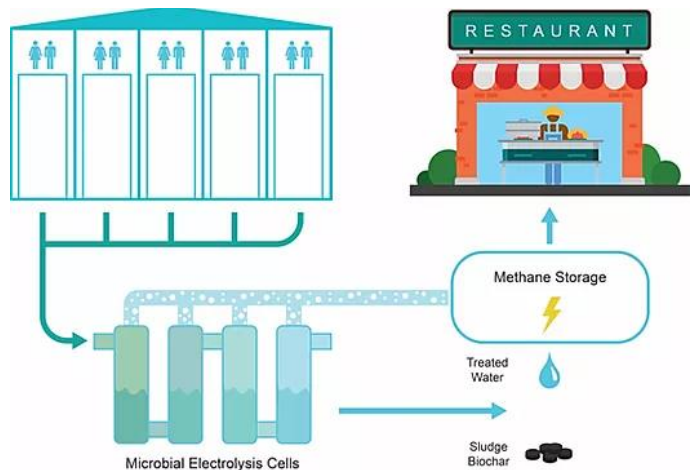


Since winning the Prize, Tom has continued to study for a PhD at Brunel University and has grown WASE from an idea into a team of eight, currently working on projects in Kenya and Tanzania to provide decentralised wastewater treatment, as well as working with Forest Road Brewery in London to provide a state of the art waste treatment system. Together the team at WASE is dedicated to evolving wastewater treatment from a financially draining model to a flourishing system that adds value, enabling communities to grow.

Over 600 million people in India do not have access to latrines, causing disastrous consequences for social, economic, and health outcomes. Billions of dollars are spent each year trying to treat waterborne illnesses that are caused by open defecation. Inadequate access to toilets is particularly disadvantageous for women, who experience a unique set of challenges. WASE is working with SHRI (Sanitation and Health Rights in India) who operate in Bihar and Jharkhand, two north Indian states – two of the poorest in India. Over 110 million of the 135 million people living in Bihar and Jharkhand defecate in the open, crippling health, social, and economic outcomes.



WASE is developing a community biogas sanitation system that treats wastewater onsite in two days, reducing the size of the system and the risk of water contamination compared with anaerobic digesters. The system produces methane that can be used to generate electricity to power a water purification system to provide clean drinking water to the communities.



<https://www.wase.co.uk/>

Associate Membership of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators.

Trustees fully support the Company initiative to offer Associate Freeman membership for young people coupled with career mentoring and advice from experienced Company Members.

Trustees have agreed to finance the first-year Associate fees for university students who have previously benefited from support from the Trust. The Trust will also advise and administer applications. If you are interested, please get in touch with a Trustee.

The **Mister Gees Foundation**, based in Essex, has supported four Bursary students at Cambridge (Sidney Sussex) and Queen Mary University London. Trustees are very grateful to Douglas Green for thinking of us.

Previous *Charity Updates* are available at <http://www.waterconservators.org/charity-updates>

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