

Cambridge Conservation Forum Vision

Connecting conservation practitioners and researchers based in and around Cambridge

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Setting the scene

Cambridge Conservation Forum is a network of conservation practitioners and researchers based in and around Cambridge. It was set up in 2000 to create opportunities for synergies and joint activities and currently has 47 member organisations which include international and national conservation organisations and university departments as well as numerous individuals who are friends of the forum.

In our tenth year, we decided to revisit the vision and purpose of the forum by inviting representatives of all of the member organisations to canvas opinions in their organisations and by holding a session for 130 people at the annual symposium. The full write up of each group's ideas from the symposium is available separately and will be used as a source of ideas and direction to guide the future of CCF.

The aim was to establish a new shared vision for CCF to inform which activities CCF should focus its efforts on in the future. We listened and recorded everyone's views and ideas about what CCF should be all about and found out what they think CCF should stand for and what people feel about being part of CCF.

Vision in a few words

Both consultation sessions gave a very positive endorsement of CCF in its current form as a forum to link conservation organisations in the Cambridge area by providing an open, dynamic platform for exchanging knowledge and developing solutions to current and emerging conservation issues.

In particular people valued the inclusive, non-hierarchical nature of the way everyone can participate on an equal basis and supported the current mechanisms for sharing and collaborating such as the newsletter, website, themed occasional and a non-themed annual symposium, discussion events and social evenings. The 'wordle' on the first page shows what people who attended the symposium session feel and would like to feel about CCF, the bigger the word, the more people in the groups said and recorded that word.

Implementing the vision

In addition to continuing current activities and ethos, a number of complementary activities have been suggested to broaden or deepen participation and engagement with:

- Better use of technology: - e.g. A CCF facebook group
- Broaden remit – link with educational institutions to raise awareness of CCF with future conservationists; government policy makers; business
- Increase public profile – outreach e.g. via university careers fair, conservation fair taking over market stalls in the evening, Cambridge Science Festival, new poster
- Mentoring – discuss with Cambridge Conservation Initiative

- CCF introduction as part of induction of new staff in member organisations – same materials could be given to University careers people
- Collective ethical action and sharing good practice e.g. The Guardian 10:10 initiative; sharing how to reduce carbon footprints of our organisations; how to make our organisations' grounds more wildlife friendly; carbon offsetting
- Training – potential for shared courses and sharing expertise beyond conservation
- Local activity - guided visits, voluntary practical conservation work, more social events e.g. a winter social event, possibly a dinner