

**European Conservation Action Network  
EuCAN Community Interest Company**



*Registered Company no. 7513162*

**Annual Report March 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 – February 28<sup>th</sup> 2018**

**Contact details:** Nigel Spring (Director)  
346, Mundens Lane,  
Alweston,  
Sherborne,  
Dorset DT9 5HU  
01963 23559  
Email: [nigelspring@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nigelspring@yahoo.co.uk)

**Registration number:** Registered Company no. 7513162

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**EuCAN CIC Directors**

Nigel Spring is a former teacher who established and was for sixteen years Director of The Kingcombe Centre, an environmental study centre in west Dorset, and The Kingcombe Trust, the charity which owned it until 2010. Since leaving The Kingcombe Centre in 2004, he has worked with Butterfly Conservation as site manager and volunteer coordinator for their Dorset reserves and on the education part of Butterfly Conservation's main website, and in 2007 established EuCAN through The Kingcombe Trust with three consecutive tranches of EU Leonardo da Vinci funding to take groups of volunteers and trainees to partner countries in Europe. He is now Chair of the Dorset branch of Butterfly Conservation .

Stephen Bennett has been involved with EuCAN since 2008 and has worked in conservation with groups of people in recovery from mental illness for Butterfly Conservation and the RSPB and Re-Think in Weymouth. He now lives in Devon with his wife and child. With his brother Graham, he is responsible for the eucan.org.uk website. Steve retired as a Director as minuted at the Directors' meeting of April 16<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Gwilym Wren recently retired from Natural England, having worked for many years in various roles using his skills and training as a Land Agent. His last post was as their Senior Planning Adviser in the south and southwest of England. He co-led the EuCAN conservation visit to western Poland in 2009 and organised the return visit by our Polish partner, ETNA, to Dorset in 2011. He is involved in several European sustainable agriculture and forestry initiatives and in March 2016 organised a Sustainable Forestry Conference through Forum Synergies based in Milverton, Somerset and has since attended conferences in Serbia, Ukraine and Estonia.

Karen Aylward works for Natural England - until 2014 as a Land Management Lead Adviser on the Three Moors team, covering Exmoor, Dartmoor and Bodmin, having worked in the uplands for 12 years

predominately with local commoners associations to agree agri-environment schemes on common land. She is now based in Oxfordshire. Her interests include the use of native ponies in conservation grazing, especially on wet pastures. Karen used to work closely with Butterfly Conservation on the very successful Two Moors Threatened Butterfly Project - a landscape scale scheme working on sites for High Brown, Marsh and Heath Fritillary on Exmoor and Dartmoor. She took part in EuCAN visits to La Brenne in central France and to Aggtelek National Park in Hungary in 2009. Karen retired as a Director as minuted at the Directors' meeting of April 16<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Joe Middleton is a conservation land management specialist, naturalist and ecologist. UK based - currently working as Site Manager for The Woodland Trust managing 35 woodlands across the South West of the UK. He studies and teaches wildlife ecology, specialising in butterflies and woodlands, and runs wildlife engagement activities at UK events and festivals. His voluntary roles include - Director for EUCAN, and Independent Advisor on the committee of the Bristol Nature Network. He joined EUCAN in 2010 on a trip to Hungary and has been involved with us ever since.

### **Directors Meetings**

Directors' meetings were held on the following dates: 6.3.17, 4.4.17, 5.6.17, AGM 1.7.2017, 18.9.17, 11.12.17 and 29.1.18.

AGM and Residential weekend Daneway Banks, Gloucestershire 30.6. to 2.7.17.

Our 2017 annual get-together was held at The Daneway Inn in Gloucestershire over the weekend of June 30<sup>th</sup> – July 2<sup>nd</sup> this year. It is a very informal (basic) campsite in the grounds of the pub beside the disused Severn-Thames canal, surrounded by woodland and the Daneway Banks and Siccaridge Woods Reserves managed by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. It was a perfect time to be there as it is a site of the recent successful re-introduction of the Large Blue butterfly and we managed to see a good number of these beautiful creatures on the wing, including at least one egg-laying on marjoram, *Origanum vulgare*. Twenty-one people camped, another 9 stayed in local B&B's and several EuCANers who live nearby joined us over the weekend including 3 who work with the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and are responsible for the reserves at Daneway. Adam Taylor who is Land Manager for the GWT and Alan Sunnall who is the ranger for the local reserves took us for a guided tour of the Daneway Banks Reserve.

The pub provided us with both evening meals (delicious food and a super welcome) and we catered for ourselves for the other meals.

A report on the weekend and the link to some of the photos taken is on the EuCAN website.

### **Annual Report**

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#### Introduction/background.

- EuCAN Community Interest Company grew out of a Leonardo da Vinci (European Union Lifelong Learning Programme) funded project which began in 2007 through the west Dorset charity The

Kingcombe Trust. The aim of this was to bring together peoples from different countries of the EU to work together on conservation projects – practical habitat management and biodiversity surveying – and to involve as many people as possible from the local communities.

- Between 2007 and 2011, over 300 volunteers visited 11 partner organisations on 23 different two-week placements, and an active network has grown with regular communication via email, an effective website and opportunities for people to join in reunion, dissemination and training weekends where we put their new skills to good use on local nature reserves.
- In 2010, The Kingcombe Trust was dissolved and all its assets transferred to another charity, so in February 2011 we established EuCAN as an independent Community Interest (not-for-profit) Company (CIC) to enable us to be involved in community conservation projects in the UK as well as abroad, and to work on our training and sustainable agriculture activities more effectively. We aim to set up conservation projects as financially viable enterprises and feel that the CIC model best enables us to do this. During the past year, our seventh as a CIC, we have run several projects based in Dorset and Somerset and have undertaken a number of conservation contracts. We now have three local groups linked to the main company. We have also undertaken a number of initiatives with partner groups in the EU.
- The original project through The Kingcombe Trust had a sum of money allocated for dissemination, training and reunions which was transferred to the Dorset Wildlife Trust in 2010; the company has organised the activities funded by this budget since then, as well as carrying out its own fundraising activities. The last remaining funds were spent during 2013.

#### Dissemination activities.

- We continue to maintain the EuCAN website which enables our network of members, trainees and former participants to keep in touch with our activities – [www.eucan.org.uk](http://www.eucan.org.uk) . The overall management of the website is carried out by one of the EuCAN directors, Steve Bennett, and his brother Graham, but the content management system now in place enables others to contribute to the website independently. The website is in the process of being refreshed.
- We continue to use the database of former participants to enable us to maintain contact with them with their news being transferred to the website and promotion of job opportunities, training courses, our holidays, conservation placements and reunions being achieved through emailing and advertising on the website.
- We continue to recruit new contacts through our website and other links and to disseminate information about opportunities with us and other environmental organisations.
- Social media: as well as email and the EuCAN website, we are now using Facebook and Twitter more effectively, with Gwil Wren sending notices round through Facebook and Jess Neumann responsible for Twitter.

#### EuCAN CIC Local Groups

- EuCAN DMV (Dorset Midweek Volunteers) joined EuCAN in July 2012, the former BTCV Dorset group having been wound up. The EuCAN.dmv group has worked every Wednesday and occasionally other weekdays and generally attracts between 8 and 25 people each week. The group is run by volunteers who report back to the EuCAN Directors and manage their own bank account. The group generally charges clients £200 per day for their services and makes a quarterly payment of 10% of the income into the CIC main account to cover administration cost, accountancy and insurance. The group now has more orders for work than days available, though the recent cuts in funding for Natural England and the loss of income from the South Dorset Ridgeway Landscape Partnership (ended Sept 2018) may well affect the group in the coming year. A report from the DMV AGM is attached below.
- Minibus: in March 2013 EuCAN DMV took delivery of a 2007 plate minibus purchased from Dorset Vehicle Rentals with a £10,000 grant from NE. It has been used every week at least once for the Midweek Volunteers tasks and also for the Cerne Abbas Landscape Project on Thursdays and on other occasions when a minibus is an advantage. It has proved to be an invaluable asset. Each user of

the vehicle puts £70 into a dedicated account per day's use which is saved for maintenance costs of the vehicle and for the purchase of a newer minibus. In October 2017, the Midweek Volunteer group purchased a 2014 plate Transit minibus. The older vehicle was passed on to the EuCAN Somerset volunteers to enable them to attract more participants for whom transport is a problem. After a year, we will consider whether the use of the older vehicle has covered the costs of tax and insurance, and then make a decision whether or not to sell it.

- Milverton Conservation Volunteer group was formed in 2013 by Gwilym Wren and Trevor Phelps as a local EuCAN CIC group, with a start-up grant of £850 from Somerset County Council Health and Wellbeing Fund to buy tools. The group has run a programme of one day a month practical conservation works since the beginning of winter 2013. The annual report of the group's activities is attached below.
- EuCAN Somerset Volunteers: in February 2014 the former Somerset TCV group based in Yeovil was wound up and, as had happened with the Dorset BTCV group in similar circumstances, the volunteers opted to join EuCAN as a local group. Unlike the Dorset Midweek Volunteers, there has been no one person available to run this group. In the three years or so since their inception, the volunteers have been involved regular tasks on Tuesdays most weeks. See report below.

### Links with European partners

- Oostvaardersplassen, Holland. A group of 16 visited a number of different national parks and nature reserves in Holland in early May 2017 based in a campsite outside the town of Lelystad (a new city on a new polder developed since the late 60's) and close to the Oostvaardersplassen 'rewilding' project. We managed to visit four National Parks, all very different from each other, and were able to see a tremendous variety of wildlife, particularly birds (117 species) many of them migrants on their way north to their breeding quarters. It was a very thought-provoking trip raising many issues relating to land management and the integration of human activities with large-scale nature conservation.
- Taxat-Senat: we were approached with a proposal for collaboration by Arnaud Jagoda who joined one of our first Brenne visits in the early days of Leonardo da Vinci funding, who now lives in Taxat-Senat, a small village close to the river Allier in Burgundy. A small group of six visited the village in early August 2017 to explore the area and discuss with the mayor of the commune the opportunities for environmental enhancement work. The proposal was that at least one EuCAN group should visit the village in winter 2017/18 to work with the local community, but there was no further communication with the potential French partners so nothing resulted from the trial visit.
- Croatia: Trevor Phelps and others again attended the bird ringing camp in Croatia in September 2017 which had been publicised through the EuCAN CIC website. This is run by the Croatian NGO BIOM and recruitment for it is independent of EuCAN.
- Serbia: Gwil Wren and Trevor Phelps travelled to Serbia in October 2017 to prepare for a study tour to Vojvodina Province in April 2018 in collaboration with the Institute for Nature Conservation in Novi Sad. A report about this visit is on the EuCAN website: <http://www.eucan.org.uk/newsitem/exploratory-visit-to-serbia/20/>
- France: La Brenne: we continued to maintain our connections with our partners in La Brenne, with a group of 10 visiting to carry out practical conservation management in November 2017. We worked for 5 days, enjoyed excellent food, wine and hospitality and saw some wonderful birds (not to forget the Red Admirals still on the wing). Our work included clearing tree heather and other scrub from the land round Ricot lake, opening up more of the marlpits close to Les Essarts to improve the habitat for Pond Tortoises and dragonflies, clearing bushes and trees to make a corridor between two Alcon Blue habitats at Étang La Touche, cutting more ash trees round the edges of the meadow at La Touche to increase the area for the Snakeshead Fritillaries to flower in, and clearing decades of bramble and thorn growth from one of the fields at Picardon just up from the Maison de la Nature at the Chérine Reserve.
- Estonia: the planned visit to Estonia did not take place as the hosts had insufficient funding to subsidise our costs. It is hoped that we can set up a visit for the summer of 2018.

- Romania: the planned visit to the haycamp in Transylvania did not take place as the camp was not properly publicised by the organisers this year. We plan to send a group in 2018.

### Training

- Brushcutter training – One of our contractors, Amos Higgins, undertook a brushcutter operator's course on 1.3.17 leading to a Lantra ticket.
- We held a successful and well-received one-day Emergency 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Training course in the Church Room in Puddletown in June 2017 with 9 delegates, 4 from the DMV, two from Natural England's Undercliff team, one from Butterfly Conservation (Dorset branch) and two from the EuCAN Somerset group. As last year, the trainer was Paul Bilke and again everyone was extremely complimentary about his knowledge and technique.
- Chainsaw refresher courses – five operators received LANTRA refresher courses – Tom Newton and Nigel Spring in December, Amos Higgins, Ben Lipton and Nick Howell in February 2018. The contractors paid for their courses, EuCAN paid for the VAT element as a contribution.

### Membership of EuCAN CIC

- Membership now stands at just over 150. Participants in our activities abroad are now asked to become members (other than the volunteer tasks). A membership form can be downloaded from the EuCAN CIC website. The membership fee is still a one-off fee of £10 (£5 for unwaged).

### Fundraising

- We have now finished the sixth and final tranche of money from The Patsy Wood Trust for our Cerne Valley Community Landscape Project and the PWT has now been wound up. We are very grateful to the PWT for their generosity towards this very successful project. In winter 2015 we established a project for young people in Sherborne with mental health and other problems, with the PWT granting us another £4300 to carry out practical conservation work with groups of pupils from The Gryphon School in Sherborne. Two group of pupils worked with us during the winter of 2015/16 but since then there has been no follow up. As a result we arranged with the Patsy Wood Trust for the unused funds to be added to our Cerne Valley Project coffers. We are hoping to be able to fund this project through the Reaching Communities strand of the Big Lottery Fund.
- During the winter of 2016/17, we received a gift of £5000 to pay for follow-up brushcutting visits by our contractors to the sites in the Cerne Valley where we had cleared scrub so that the regrowth could be controlled each year. We have opened up a lot of downland habitat since the Cerne project started in 2012 and the job of cutting the scrub regrowth has become more and more time-consuming and expensive.
- EuCAN CIC raised £1631 to help to fund the roof tiles for Attila Sarig's LifeSchool project in Gyimes, Transylvania. Attila's target has now been reached and the funds have been transferred.

### Projects

- Community Juicing Project: with the original grant in 2012 of £2,650 from Dorset County Council's 'Dorset Social Care Innovation Fund' for our Community Juicing Project, we purchased equipment and have funded fruit picking days for groups of people with learning disabilities and in recovery from mental illness. The juicing season in 2017 was nearly a record one and we managed to produce 3270 75cl bottles for sale back to the owners of the orchards and for retail in local shops, giving us a profit of £1220. We also took our juicing equipment into the Studio School for Rural Studies at Kingston Maurward College and worked with the students there for two days.
- Log sales: the logging enterprise we embarked on in the spring of 2017 buying in cordwood from local woods and cutting and splitting them for sale slightly more than covered its costs. The open sided barn in Holwell we used is no longer available. In the winter of 2017/18, we took on a contract to thin out the woodland at Nether Cerne using our contractors and local volunteers including the Cerne Valley group; this has involved taking out and logging over 150 cubic metres of Ash, Beech and Lawson's Cypress. The logs have been split and

stored in a rented barn close by and will be sold during the autumn and winter of 2018/19. The volume has been estimated at 200 cubic metres. A large quantity of unsplit logs remain in the wood to be collected in the summer of 2019.

- Cerne Valley Community Landscape Project (funded by the Patsy Wood Trust): for the sixth year of this project between September 2017 when the scrub cutting season began again and our last meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2018, we have worked on 5 different local sites on 22 Thursdays, a total of 466 mandays (with 40 on one occasion when we were joined again by volunteers from Yeovilton Air Base). We also held a very enjoyable Christmas lunch party and skittles match for 29 of our volunteers at the Acorn Inn in Evershot. All the feedback we have had from the landowners about our work has been very positive. Some of the work was carried out under contract from Butterfly Conservation for their Duke of Burgundy project on Giant Hill above Cerne Abbas. Jane Tearle, a local photographer, has visited the group again this year to take some lovely studies of the participants – all of which are on show on our Flickr site and the Cerne Abbas village site too.  
We held two guided walks on Giant Hill in Cerne Abbas on April 29<sup>th</sup> 2017 as part of the Cerne Giant Festival. Both were very successful and well attended, especially the afternoon session.  
We held a summer butterfly walk for the Cerne Valley volunteers on Butterfly Conservation's reserve at Broadcroft Quarry and then on the Sculpture Park in Tout Quarry; a very enjoyable and pleasant day was completed with a round of ice creams.
- Wildlife Havens: Over the last two years, EuCAN director Gwil Wren has been developing the idea of 'wildlife havens' and has sent in his proposals to the Secretary of State. These would be the subject of agri-environment funding for landowners and would involve them setting aside significant blocks of arable or improved pastureland to 're-wild' for, say, 15 years, thus enabling the soil structure to recover and species to recolonise which have generally become scarce on intensively managed farms.

### Contracts

- Solar Farm contract. Director Gwil Wren was contracted by the company running a Solar Farm in Derbyshire to advise on how best to deal with the infestation of docks which the organic farmer on the site had lodged a complaint about.
- Sherborne Terrace Meadows SSSI work. We have continued to be involved with local volunteers and EuCAN trainees and contractors to improve the limestone grassland habitat on the edge of Sherborne and the management of the Local Nature Reserve at The Quarr in Sherborne. For both sites we are responsible to Sherborne Town Council. We held an open event on the two sites on Sunday June 25<sup>th</sup>. The maintenance work includes cutting and removing hay on the two sites (particularly targeting the areas with the most hogweed) and sowing Yellow Rattle seed to enable the wildflowers to flourish; cutting blackthorn and other scrub regrowth on the Terraces site, cutting out all the hemlock from the site and removing ragwort where necessary. One of our powertools users lives close to the Quarr and carries out management work with our brushcutter there. We have been very impressed with the improvement in the floweriness of the Terrace Meadow.  
We have now been allocated the responsibility for the cutting of the grassy area adjacent to Terrace Meadows SSSI known as Jubilee Copse which was planted up with trees in the winter of 2017/18. We have started to introduce plug plants grown from locally collected wildflower seed to increase the floristic diversity of this area.
- Work for Natural England in west Dorset to help to clear Himalayan Balsam from the upper tributaries of the River Axe: in 2016 and 2017 money available for balsam clearance was seriously curtailed and was managed through the East Devon AONB (though it is still NE funded). In 2017 our contract was worth £1200. We were very pleased with the reduction in the amount of balsam to be cleared, a consequence of the previous four years' efforts, but sadly it looks as though there will be no further funding for 2108 and beyond – which renders all the previous years' efforts and expense fairly pointless in the long run.
- Osmington HLS contract. Although the capital works programme for Northdown Farm through its HLS scheme has now come to an end, we were contracted by the farmer on the adjacent land east of

the Osmington White Horse to carry out 9 mandays gorse cutting and burning on those slopes. All very challenging especially in the snow.

- We have carried out further routine scrub cutting activities for our friends at Lyons Gate Farm and have recently completed new chestnut fencelines bordering two of their fields.
- 2016 was the third and final year of our lucrative contract with Dorset County Council to clear Himalayan Balsam and scrub regrowth from the slopes of Beaminster Tunnel. DCC were supposed to be considering employing us every other year for this job but we heard nothing in 2018.
- We have once again been contracted to carry out maintenance work on the four reserves managed by the Dorset branch of Butterfly Conservation, including clearing scrub regrowth, ragwort control, clematis and bramble cutting on Portland and the removal of conifers on Alners Gorse Reserve. This work normally involves our sub-contractors and volunteers working with Butterfly Conservation's volunteers.
- Hazelbury Bryan 'Keep' Field. This is a Community field adjacent to the public recreation ground in Hazelbury Bryan. It belongs to the Parish Council and was formerly grazed occasionally and cut for hay each summer. Five years of neglect has caused it to become overgrown with coarse grasses and hogweed. Working with the Parish Council we have been carrying out improvement works including re-fencing one side, cutting back bramble, brushcutting some of the coarser areas, sowing yellow rattle, planting up four fruit trees along one edge and a group of shrubs in a fenced off area in the middle. We fenced the field with electric tape to enable a local pony grazier to graze his animals there but this was not consistent enough to have much of an effect. In 2017 we brushcut and raked off the rank growth in the winter. In 2018 we plan to continue to brushcut the rank growth, plant up with wildflower plug plants grown from locally sourced seed and search for a local grazier.
- Charminster Community Field, near Dorchester. A field belonging to a syndicate of local people who bought it to protect it from development, this was previously a small holding with large areas of terram and plastic netting left entangled in the turf. Part of the field has been fenced for sheep grazing. We have cut and harrowed a small area of this, resown with wildflower mix and planted with home-grown plug plants (Birdsfoot trefoil and Black Knapweed so far). We added more locally sourced wildflower plugs and will continue to maintain links with this site. Our activities there are as yet purely voluntary! We have also advised about the maintenance of a wildflower area in the churchyard at Charminster.

### Education

- We have continued to work with staff, children and parents in the wildlife area of Milford Junior School (Yeovil), to develop the school wildlife area further, though our contacts have been fewer and more intermittent.
- In July 2017, we held a moth trapping session with pupils at Charminster School and a bughunt in the field opposite the school for Cerne Abbas First School (too damp and gloomy for the planned butterfly sessions) – these were part of and funded through the Cerne Valley Community Landscape Project.

### Wildlife Holidays

- La Brenne – July 6<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2017. A very successful short visit, with 15 people taking part. We did not charge a full fee for the wildlife holiday to La Brenne so we did not expect to make a great profit. However, the visit more than covered its costs (profit £1600). For a report of this visit go to this link: <http://www.eucan.org.uk/europe/summer-visit-to-la-brenne-july-5th-12th-2017/>

## EuCAN groups

### EuCAN SomersetVolunteers

This EuCAN volunteer group generally meets every Tuesday. In the year March 2017 to February 2018, a total of 365 mandays have been worked on 35 sessions on 23 different sites. That is an average of around 10 volunteers per session. So far 99 different people have taken part, though a number of them only once. We have a very dedicated core of volunteers who get a great deal of satisfaction from the work and the social aspects of the group. We have also held several informal evening sessions in local pubs to discuss various issues and unwind. The 2017 Christmas lunch and skittles game at the Acorn pub at Evershot (joint with the Cerne Valley group) was a great success, hugely enjoyed by the 29 volunteers who attended.

Our clients vary from NGO's like the Somerset Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation, The National Trust and Natural England to individual landowners such as Freda Hennessy at Corscombe, Perilla Kinchin at Winfrith Newburgh, Pauline Pires at Lyons Gate and organisations like Sherborne Town Council, Hazelbury Bryan Parish Council, The Otterhead Lakes Trust, South Chard Gravel Pits (Aggregate Industries and Charminster Community Field).

We generally charge £200 for a volunteer day approx. 9am until 4pm. The group rate applies to groups of at least 6 volunteers with one or two powertool users with £130 added per extra powertool user. Occasionally for some of the clients we waive the fee.

We have tried throughout the year to attract new volunteers particularly through the mental health agencies. Recruitment remains a major challenge. This year we have been recruiting clients through the company Discovery who have taken over the day centres in Somerset. Several of the clients have attended the Somerset volunteers days with their key workers and we are attempting to regularise this relationship. We have also been part of the Natural Choices group managed by the Local Nature Partnership through the Dorset Wildlife Trust which aims to coordinate health giving activities in Dorset. We have both the Cerne Valley events and the Dorset Midweek Volunteers registered on the Natural Choices spreadsheet of activities.

Nigel Spring October 2018

## EUCAN.DMV

### Notes for EuCAN CIC Annual Report 2017/18

#### 1. Overview:

- 1.1. **EuCAN DMV** continues to thrive, via a combination of growth, consolidation, and a social ethos of inclusivity.
- 1.2. Our **main clients** are Natural England and the South Dorset Ridgeway Landscape Partnership. The latter is Lottery Funded, and completes at the end of September 2018. We are looking to make use of links formed to ensure follow on work.
- 1.3. One of our objectives is to NOT deprive others of paid work, so we aim to do work that would not otherwise be done. However, cuts budgets mean that NE rely increasingly upon volunteers.
- 1.4. We have invested in **Tools and Training** and have received very useful financial and material assistance to that end.

- 1.5. As a group, we work **Wednesdays only**, though a small team is formed to work an additional day if a client requires it.
- 1.6. It has occasionally been suggested that we should take on a regular additional day, but the downsides to that are:
- 1.6.1. Almost all of our volunteers are retired, have other activities during the week, so set one day aside for the work we do
  - 1.6.2. It would reduce the size of the group on the day, because not all would be available for more than one day,
  - 1.6.3. Everybody in the group is an unpaid volunteer. People would ‘cherry pick’ and attend the more interesting task, leaving the less popular task under-staffed
  - 1.6.4. It would impact negatively upon the social aspect / cohesion, which is a very important element of our group.

## 2. Our Volunteers

- 2.1. For the period 1/3/17 to 28/2/18, 40 volunteers have worked in our team. Some come only once. Others have joined worked with us sometime in that period, and have become regular or occasional attendees.
- 2.2. During that period we worked on 72 days, our clients with 947 volunteer days, with averaging turnout of 16.7 volunteers per workday.  
The maximum turnout on any one day was 22.  
That average is skewed by non-Wednesdays in with which small teams provided 127 volunteer days

## 3. Volunteer Skills Database

We have compiled a Volunteer Skills / Interests database that gives organisers and potential clients an idea of our volunteers’ backgrounds and capabilities. From our current group of attendees who have ‘owned up’ to having a previous life (many are multi-taskers) we have:-

<b>5</b>	Chainsaw operators,
<b>9</b>	Brushcutter operators (plus two who have since decided they don’t want to use the machines).
<b>14</b>	First Aiders with a current qualification.
<b>5</b>	Assessed minibus drivers.
<b>2</b>	Formal dry-stone walling qualifications; one of whom is a qualified instructor
<b>9</b>	Who have been CRB / DBS checked. Although the 6 CRBs are no longer current.
<b>3</b>	Who admit to having experience in Health and Safety, Risk Management and Quality processes.
<b>1</b>	With a background in accountancy.

<b>4</b>	With a background in safeguarding / working with vulnerable children / adults.
<b>3</b>	(at least) with Project Management experience.
<b>5</b>	Who have worked in various areas of education
<b>2</b>	Who volunteer with the Citizen's Advice Bureau
<b>1</b>	Retired Journalist
<b>Zero</b>	With a formal background in Conservation work.
A number	Have been / are involved in the Ridgeway Project surveys, teaching days and courses related to, e.g., ancient monuments and archaeology, trees, butterflies, geology, flora.

#### 4. Work and Social

4.1. Each workday day is a social event, but we also ensure that we fulfil the client's requirements. The investment in training and tools allows us to take on more ambitious tasks – which in turn makes the volunteers' day more interesting.

4.2. We have at least two social events per year. One is of course the Christmas Lunch. On 22nd June 2017 we had an organised day based around a visit to the Etches Collection of fossils at Kimmeridge, the Dinosaur footprints at Keat's Quarry (near Swanage), finishing up at Durlston Country Park for a picnic, Twenty One attended.

#### 5. Accounts

5.1. We charge our clients £250 per workday, inclusive of power tools (6 brushcutters and 5 chainsaws)

5.2. 10% of our gross income goes to EuCAN CIC.

5.3. Our net income primarily covers the cost of tools and training, the rental of a storage space for our equipment (the unit included a workshop area), running our minibus, and investment into a minibus-replacement fund.

**Dave Searle, EuCAN DMV**

### **EuCAN Milverton Conservation Volunteers 2017/18**

The EuCAN Milverton Conservation Volunteers has a successful year.

#### **Clatworthy Reservoir**

The Group has maintained its good working relations with Wessex Water at Clatworthy reservoir.

The group undertook 4 days work over the 2017/18 winter including controlling the shrub layer within Ancient Woodland by and removing holly and beech.

In the Spring of 2017 the group also constructed and erected 30 nest boxes to help the breeding Pied Flycatcher population. Approximately 25% were occupied by Pied Flycatchers and the rest by Blue and Great Tits.

Trevor also took part in the monitoring of nest and ringing of chicks.  
In July 2017 the group undertook 2 days of bracken clearance to assist the restoration of the Greater Broomrape at its last known site in Somerset.

### **Milverton Road Verges**

The Group worked on two local verges.

By the roundabout on the B3227 the Group cut back the vegetation at the end of the season and also monitored the growth over the summer months.

At the School entrance on the B3187 the Group undertook two tasks to cut back the grass growth to encourage a more diverse sward. Trevor Phelps also attended on two occasions to cut back the visibility splay.

### **Holme Moor**

The Group cut 1/3rd of this SAC in the Autumn of 2017.

### **Serbia**

Trevor and Gwil visited Serbian province of Vojvodina as guests of the local Institute of Nature. A report on the visit and its findings was written by Gwil and led to a formal Group visit in 2018.

### **Croatia**

Trevor once again provided an organizational framework for UK visitors to attend the BIOM Bird Ringing Camp in the Uzca National Park. Trevor attended for a week with 2 colleagues.

### **Nest Box Saturday**

The Group held its third Nest Box Saturday in early December 2017 with 15 people attending.

**Gwil Wren**