

Surrey Wildlife Trust **Trustee Biographies 2010**

Ron Pritchard (Chairman)

A chartered biologist and qualified teacher, Ron joined Council in 2006 and became Chairman in 2007.

Originally from a farming background, Ron gained post-graduate qualifications in Freshwater Ecology and Applied Educational Studies before starting a 37 year career in education. During that time posts ranged from Tutor in Ecology at a Field Studies Council Centre to Principal & Chief Executive of two Colleges of Further and Higher Education, plus 20 years spent as part-time tutor with the Open University's Ecology Course.

He was also involved in several community regeneration schemes in South London and an active contributor to the Surrey Chief Executives Group, helping define the county's vision for 2020. He is a Life Member of the Freshwater Biological Association and the Field Studies Council and a Member of the British Ecological Society and the Institute of Biology.

A Surrey resident for over 25 years, Ron is delighted to have returned to his wildlife conservation roots, utilising his teaching and management skills.

Paul Collins (Vice Chairman)

Paul was born in south London and grew up in north Croydon. He left school at 16 for an engineering career but eventually redundancy dictated a change of direction. Paul knew he enjoyed working with people and gained a position with Croydon Social Services as Trainee Instructor for adults with learning difficulties, ultimately gaining a teaching diploma in that field.

He spent the rest of his working life with Social Services, the last 18 years as manager of a day centre in Wandsworth. Between 1999 and 2004 he studied for a Combined Degree in Archaeology, Environment & Landscape at Surrey University and was awarded a BSc 2nd Class Honours in June 2004, five months after retiring. Paul joined Surrey Trust for Nature Conservation in 1978, became a Trustee in 1989 and Vice Chairman in 2006.

Sue Rooke (Treasurer)

A Merton resident for 15 years and Trustee since 2007, Sue works as Director of Resources for an international children's development charity. A qualified chartered accountant, she has spent 15 years working for charities both in paid and voluntary capacities, building up a deep knowledge of the technical financial issues affecting them. Her recent experience has widened to cover resource management, including human resource, IT, governance and office facilities. In her free time she enjoys the outdoors, particularly walking and visiting gardens.

Alan Oakley

Alan is a retired Chartered Surveyor and Town Planner with both private and public sector experience. Whilst working with Surrey County Council he was instrumental in extending the Metropolitan Green Belt, writing the Countryside and Recreation Chapters of the first Surrey Structure Plan, setting up four Countryside Management Projects and establishing the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust. As Countryside Manager he oversaw the restoration of the Basingstoke Canal and Chobham Common's designation as a National Nature Reserve. Alan was Chairman of the Surrey Branch of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and is a member of the RICS Countryside Policies Panel. Formerly he was a Member of the Country Land and Business Association's Surrey Committee, the Surrey Branch Committee of CPRE and is a member of the Surrey Industrial History Group and Chairman of his local Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

Alan served as SWT Chairman between 2001 and 2007 and remains a Trustee and Director of Norbury Park Wood Products.

Mary Adler, MBE

Born in Australia and brought up in Hampshire, Mary moved to West End in 1979, to a house surrounded by an MOD heathland training area. In 1986 she joined a campaign against nearby development, the success of which led to a Surrey Heath Borough Council purchase and an agreement for SWT to manage it as Brentmoor Heath nature reserve. Much of Brentmoor Heath was designated SSSI in 1988 and Local Nature Reserve in 1998. Mary was appointed Honorary Warden and ran a Wildlife Watch Group there for 10 years.

Mary is a member of the Surrey Botanical Society & Butterfly Conservation, walking a butterfly transect on Brentmoor Heath for 20 years. Her involvement as an inaugural member of the MOD Pirbright and Bisley Conservation Group in 1991 led to the MOD and SWT signing an agreement to manage 75 acres of training area adjoining Greyspot Range. Mary also worked at Deepcut and Pirbright camps encouraging recruits to participate in conservation tasks. In 1998 she became involved in the Folly Bog Project, restoring and enhancing a valley mire system on the Pirbright Ranges. As a member of the MOD Conservation Group she was a joint prizewinner of the coveted MOD Sanctuary Award on three separate occasions.

Mary received a Surrey County Council Achievement Award in 1996 and was appointed MBE for services to conservation and Brentmoor Heath LNR in 2002 and was elected a Trustee in 2006.

Gillie Muir

Born in Australia in 1966, Gillie has lived in Guildford for 14 years. She has an MSc in Ecology and a post graduate certificate in Environmental Assessment.

After studying bats and other mammals in the Peruvian rainforest and Dominica, Gillie spent 12 years working for national wildlife conservation NGOs in the UK, including the Mammal Society and the Bat Conservation Trust. Currently a full-time mother of two children, Gillie was elected as Trustee in 2004.

Heather D. Hawker, MBE DL

Elected a Trustee in 2002, Heather lives in Weybridge and is Managing Director of a company that owns and manages industrial property. A member of Surrey County Council between 1985 and 2001, Heather spent three fascinating years as Chairman, representing the County Council and increasing her knowledge of the county and its people.

In 1995 Heather was appointed Chairman of the Libraries, Leisure and Countryside Committee, including Heritage, Archives and Registration. Supported by the National Heritage Memorial Fund, she led the team responsible for the building of the Surrey History Centre. At the time this was the largest project supported by the Fund. Heather is a Trustee of the Painshill Park Trust, Chairman of the Surrey History Trust and Trustee of two local Charitable Trusts. She is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers and a Freeman of the City of London.

John Edwards

John began his nature conservation career in 1979, firstly as a researcher evaluating open spaces for their ecological value, then as a countryside ranger. Currently as Surrey County Council's ecologist he advises both SCC and the public. John joined Surrey Wildlife Trust in 1978, was Local Group Organiser for Elmbridge in the 1980s and served as chair of the Wildlife Trust's Conservation Committee. He was elected Trustee in 1993. John is a member of the Surrey Botanical Society, Association of Local Government Ecologists, the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and is a Chartered Environmentalist.

David Starkey

An SWT member for more than 30 years, David retired after a career in commercial banking, mainly within international finance and product marketing.

He developed a keen interest in the natural world after moving to Surrey as a young man, walking the North Downs Way, and wanting to improve his wildlife identification skills. A long standing association with SWT's Tandridge Group culminated in his election as Group Chairman. He became an SWT Trustee in 1997.

David is still a keen walker, other interests include music, theatre and active membership of many environmental charities including Falklands Conservation.

Pam Whyman

Pam's interest in the natural world stems from weekend walks with her father in Sussex. Then an inspirational biology teacher encouraged her to learn more and eventually qualify as a teacher herself.

Teaching posts in Chessington and Epsom followed graduation from the University of East Anglia and completion of a postgraduate Certificate in Education at the Institute of Education in London.

After a ten year break dedicated to bringing up three sons, Pam returned to teaching. Visits with students to Nower Wood soon developed into a volunteering role and a

request to join the Education Committee, eventually becoming Chair, and a Trustee in 1993.

Pam still teaches at Esher College, is an examiner for Edexcel and sits on several advisory committees for curriculum development and assessment. Pam fulfills an educational advisory role for the Trust and works closely with staff in the Education department.

Bryan Dennis

Bryan retired from the civil service in 2006 after a varied career including secondment to Defra during the 2001 Foot & Mouth outbreak.

During his career substantial training experience led to a period at the National School of Government designing and delivering learning and development events, including seminars, training courses and conferences. His particular area of interest was in organizational management, addressing issues such as quality & continuous improvement, project management, risk and corporate governance. More recently he was a Non Executive Director on the Board and Audit Committees of two Executive Agencies within Defra.

Retirement allowed Bryan the opportunity to refresh his interest in the countryside, walking, cycling, conservation volunteering for SWT and as a National Trust education volunteer. In July 2008 Bryan was appointed volunteer warden for Milton Heath and The Nower in Dorking, becoming a Trustee in 2008.

Adam Curtis

Adam enjoyed a free-range childhood close to Chobham Common. His interest in wildlife and the countryside led to a career in countryside management via four years vocational training. After a short time working in Berkshire and Dorset he returned to Surrey working on Ashted Common and as the County Woodlands Officer. He earned a BSc and an MSc through evening classes and is a licensed bat worker.

In October 2005 Adam became the Assistant Superintendent of Richmond Park, reputedly the UK's busiest National Nature Reserve and was elected a Trustee in 2008.

Chris Wilkinson

Chris is a solicitor and consultant at Simmons & Simmons, a city based international law firm. In 25 years as a partner there he gained extensive corporate and commercial experience, with a particular emphasis on corporate governance developments for listed companies and other organisations. He held various management roles including first elected chairman of their worldwide Remuneration Committee and is also a contributor or editor to numerous legal publications.

Chris is founder and chairman of the Next Generation NED Network, a new training and mentoring network for aspiring non-executive directors formed in collaboration with Simmons & Simmons and a number of other leading service providers. Amongst other roles he is a member of the UCL Campaign Executive Committee and a

keen fundraiser for The Royal Marsden Hospital Charity plus being senior adviser to a corporate finance firm.

Chris is a keen walker with an avid interest in the countryside. He has lived in Surrey for over 20 years and is a long standing member of SWT as well as a number of other national and regional environmental charities.

Kath Mills

Kath has lived in Guildford for nine years and worked in marketing and communications for over 20 years, gaining experience in commercial agencies as well as a variety of not-for-profit organisations. She has led successful marketing teams for the last 7 years, and is currently part of the UK senior management team for a global charity.

Kath became involved with the Trust following an advertisement for Trustees with marketing skills. Her professional expertise and her fondness for the Surrey countryside, where she likes to go walking with her husband, seemed like a good match.