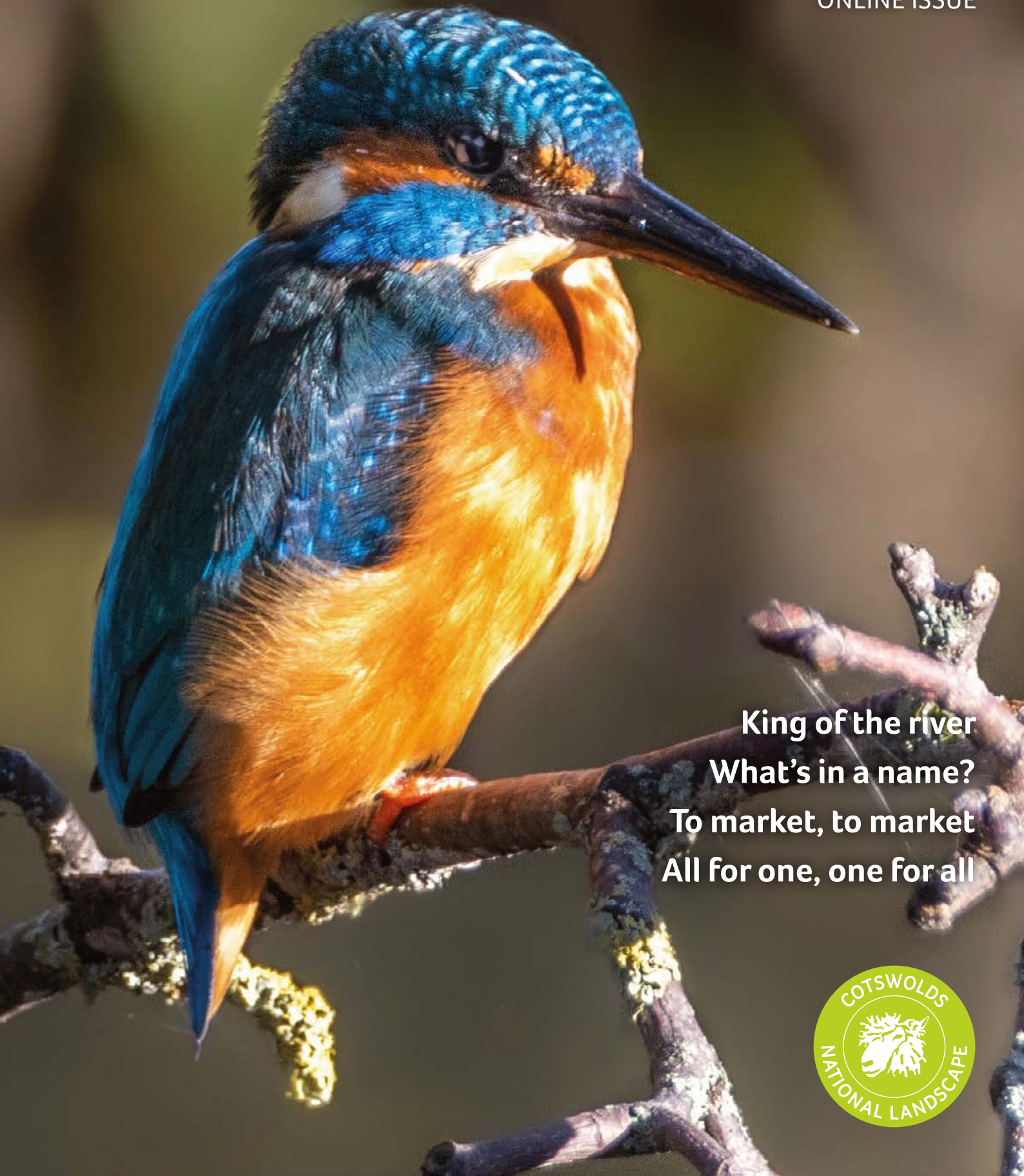


JANUARY – JUNE 2021 • ISSUE 44

# COTSWOLD LION

THE MAGAZINE OF THE COTSWOLDS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

**FREE**  
ONLINE ISSUE



**King of the river  
What's in a name?  
To market, to market  
All for one, one for all**



# Contents

Welcome to Cotswold Lion issue 44. Once again, due to the pandemic, we've decided to keep this issue online – at least to begin with. If we do take ourselves off to the printers, it'll be to share this issue with you with distribution from April, so please keep a look out. In the meantime, let's all stay safe and keep ourselves and each other well through the winter. This issue encourages you to explore using self-guided walking routes, and Sarah Townsend shares her experience

of that; we catch up with Rich Whincup, one of the stars of our 'real people' social media campaign in September; we learn about how remarkable kingfishers and bees are from Matt Brierley and Katie Jarvis; we share a little more about our new name and hopes for the future; we delve into the way our landscape has shaped our folk tales; and we look at how farmers' markets could lead the way in a refreshed approach to food shopping – and more besides!

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### Support the Cotswolds National Landscape!

Every donation helps us look after the Cotswolds today, and tomorrow! [Cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://Cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)



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The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), managed and looked after by the Cotswolds Conservation Board. The two key purposes of the Board are to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB
- increase understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB

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Front cover image:  
Male kingfisher © Louise Fletcher

# NEWS BULLETIN

## Top stories from the Cotswolds National Landscape

### New name, new look

Since our last issue of the Cotswold Lion, we've adopted a new name – Cotswolds National Landscape – and a new look, with a new logo. Don't worry – our official designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty still stands! This positive move for us is in response to a number of the proposals in the Landscapes Review, published by Julian Glover in 2019. Read more about the reasons for and background behind this exciting step forward on page 8.



### Glorious Cotswold Grasslands

We are delighted to announce the launch of a small grant scheme to assist landowners, land managers, and members of the community with their wildflower grassland projects. We offer grants of up to £500 to help fund projects working to restore existing grassland sites or the creating new wildflower grasslands using locally sourced wildflower seed. Please contact [harvey.sherwood@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](mailto:harvey.sherwood@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk) for more details.

### Refreshed website

At the same time as updating our name and logo, we have also taken steps to update our website. It's still a work in progress in places, but on the whole, we have updated its appearance, and how visitors find their way around the site.



### Guided walks will return

During the first national lockdown due to coronavirus, our wonderful voluntary wardens suspended their popular guided walks programme. Behind the scenes though, they have been working hard to find ways to bring their walks back, including developing and testing an online booking system. We hope to relaunch the guided walks in 2021 – please keep a look out. Meanwhile, follow [@mikethewarden](https://twitter.com/mikethewarden) on Twitter to stay informed with what the wardens are up to!



© Tea Smart, Squashed Robot Films

### The Cotswold Way is 50!

The Cotswold Way began celebrating its 50th year in 2020... just as the pandemic arrived in the UK! Many of our plans were cancelled, but look out for ways that we're planning to celebrate the end of the golden anniversary celebrations in spring 2021.

For more news from the Cotswolds National Landscape visit [cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

# KING OF THE RIVER

If you'd like a 2021 party piece, Matt Brierley heartily recommends pointing out kingfishers. So iconic, tangerine and azure blue with cyan flecks, unmistakable once seen, and yet so rarely spotted as to constitute an event. Show someone a kingfisher and they're impressed. So, what's the secret to clapping eyes on one? Simple. They call as they fly. Listen for a short, sharp 'peep-peep-peep' as they jet along, low over water. Learn their loud whistle and soon you'll be pointing out kingfishers before you've even *seen* the kingfisher.

As your bejewelled missile scuds into view, keep watching; they hunt from riverside perches and it won't be long before touchdown, a great chance to ogle their dazzling plumage. It's around about now you can wow your audience further and wheel out some serious kingfisher facts. First up, you can tell if it's a male or female. The females, as it turns out, wear 'lipstick'. Whereas the lower mandible of the male's beak matches the top and is black, the female sports a shade of house brick terracotta.

Next, as you admire those forty shades of blue (and this is my favourite fact of all) consider this; technically, there's actually no blue there whatsoever. Most vertebrates are unable to produce blue pigment and kingfishers are no exception. So, whereas the orange of kingfisher plumage is the product of tiny pigment granules, its cyan and blue feathers contain no pigments. These colours are 'structural'. They are created by the intricate arrangement of a transparent material which, depending

## 'PEEP-PEEP-PEEP'

on its precise make-up and thickness, responds to a wavelength of light, producing a range of colours by 'incident light'. In other words, the hallmark blue of a kingfisher is caused entirely by light shining on the feathers.

This issue of the Cotswold Lion takes us from January to June, two very different months in your average kingfisher's yearly planner. Winter is all about the next meal. Kingfishers suffer from Breeding Bird Syndrome, when our perceptions of a species are wrapped up almost entirely in their summer programme. We expect to see kingfishers by glinting rivers, on a lazy bend with luxuriant growth and dancing mayflies. Yet, when the big freeze hits, kingfishers will flee – often with a buddy – to salty coasts or sheltered urban ponds, anywhere outside the reach of Jack Frost's tendrils. Leaving a territory is a last resort though, these are hard won 1-5 km stretches of prime river habitat. If kingfishers used estate agents they'd be sold on the virtues of a plentiful supply of minnows and a quality sandy bank, just perfect for excavating your nesting chamber. By April they'll be back in territory and keen to raise the next generation. By June they'll be onto round two.

It often comes as a shock that kingfishers live in burrows, each pair ❖❖❖



THE MALE KINGFISHER

© Louise Fletcher

## THE 'LIPSTICK WEARING' FEMALE



© Louise Fletcher

raising 5-7 scrawny brutes per brood in their subterranean bunker. Every day they'll bring in some 100 fish come hell or high... actually, that's the problem. When it rains, burrows flood. Chicks cool, they starve, they drown. If you are helping to slow climate change, to combat unseasonable downpours, you are helping kingfishers. Although summer deluges are getting more frequent, thankfully, if you are looking for a comeback king, look no further.

They try again. And again. In a good year it's possible two kingfishers will raise 21 youngsters. In March 2021 a similar number of kingfisher sculptures will appear along two trails, inspired by rivers in the Cotswold National Landscape. Symbols of hope in an uncertain world. If you go and see them, keep your ears open for a lipstick-wearing peep-peeping missile without pigment and prepare to wow your friends with facts.

### **More information**

*Matt Brierley is a wildlife filmmaker and writer. Follow him @mattbrierley on Twitter.*

*Look out for the Kingfisher Trail across the Cotswolds, launching in spring 2021. More info at [www.kingfishertrail.org](http://www.kingfishertrail.org)*



© Louise Fletcher

**KINGFISHERS LIVE IN BURROWS, EACH PAIR RAISING 5-7 SCRAWNY BRUTES PER BROOD IN THEIR SUBTERRANEAN BUNKER.**

# Fresh air and nature ...the stuff of magic

Getting a bit of fresh air, and exploring nature are renowned for having life-changing, maybe even magical, qualities. Sarah Townsend tells us about her experience on a self-guided walk devised by the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens.

It was World Mental Health Day, and I'd woken with a black cloud over me – metaphorically, at least. I knew what I needed. Fresh air and nature have always been my antidote to dark times and – unusually for October – it looked like being a decent day for a walk.

I've always been a fair-weather walker, rarely equipped with the right footwear and easily swayed out of the idea of a country walk by a heavy grey sky and the threat of rain. (Those of you who have expensive technical wear that enables you to walk all year round, I applaud you. Meanwhile, I wait for the days with a hint of sunshine – and, of course, the right light for my photos.)

I don't know about you, but it's all too easy to fall into the habit of always picking the same walks. While my favourite few are nice enough, it's good to mix things up with something different. This is where [www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk) comes into its, with over 80 self-guided walks to choose from – all of which are easy to print or download to your phone.

Feeling up for a challenge, I picked a walk we'd never done before, grabbed snacks (all the best walks involve eating) and headed for Chastleton, north of Stow-on-the-Wold, with my partner.



*Wellies or trainers was the question. I opted for trainers which was, of course, the wrong answer – but hey, they can go in the wash, right?!*



*Cows always make me happy.*

Despite getting off to a bad start – where the heck were we supposed to park?! – we soon found ourselves walking downhill past an idyllic-looking farmhouse and a large barn full of cows.

Having located the second farmhouse, we headed across the field in the general direction of a stream – and I realised that what I enjoy about the challenge of a new walk is making mistakes. The directions pointed us up and across the next field 'through a gate'. But there were three of them! We opted for the middle one. It turned out to be the wrong choice, but y'know what? It really didn't matter. You rarely get lost on a country walk, and it's easy enough to rejoin the path if you do make a mistake. Just stick to the footpaths and remember the old saying "leave only footprints, take only photographs". ❖❖❖



*We're so lucky to live in such a beautiful area of the world - the least we can do is treat it with respect.*

We passed a tiny old church, skirted the village of Cornwell and decided to go off plan and explore (you can't see a lot, in fairness - most of the roads are private, but we did catch a distant glimpse of the manor house, which is pretty special).

Back to the trail, the next part of the walk took us up a long single-track lane, across a busy road and straight into fields, where it was time to sit and eat. By this point, we'd seen a red kite and numerous squirrels, sheep, horses and cows - and I'd well and truly shaken off my black cloud.

Lunchbreak over, we headed through the field that was supposed to contain a tump... (maybe we picked the wrong field again, but I couldn't see it) and across to Chastleton - a National Trust property that I know well. Though the house wasn't open, we made the short diversion to grab a photo before heading back on the next section of the walk, towards our starting point and the car (walking past the fairly obvious car park that we'd somehow managed to miss when we arrived).

*Chastleton - a National Trust property...*



You don't have to trek for miles to experience the mental health benefits of getting outdoors - and with this many walks to choose from, why not give it a try?



*Lunchbreak and Red Kites.*



**More information**

Look for self-guided walks across the Cotswolds National Landscape at [www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

Gloucestershire-based Sarah Townsend is a freelance marketing copywriter and author of *Survival Skills for Freelancers*. The #1 bestseller has been described as "absolute gold", "a pocket business coach", "warm wisdom" and "an instant gem" and is available exclusively on Amazon in paperback and Kindle formats.

You can sign up for her monthly newsletter, connect with her on LinkedIn, or find more of her Cotswold photography on Instagram.



© Tea Smart, Squashed Robot Films

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

You might have noticed that the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is now known as the Cotswolds National Landscape. If you're wondering why, then be reassured, Chief Executive Andy Parsons says: it's a positive, exciting, and welcoming step. Words by Siân Ellis and Alana Hopkins.

Julian Glover's Landscapes Review published in 2019 proposed that National Parks and AONBs should be brought closer together, as "one family of national landscapes", and that the title 'AONB' should be replaced with the easier-to-understand 'National Landscape'.

"We saw the opportunity that Julian Glover's report gave us," Andy says,

explaining that a name change made sense on both a local Cotswolds level and in a national context.

"We know that the terms Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and AONB are not widely recognised or understood: are people allowed to visit and enjoy the countryside, or is access restricted because it's purely for nature and beauty? What motivates me, as well

Above: Spring leaves – one of the landscape features that inspired the new Cotswolds National Landscape logo

as working to conserve and enhance the nature and landscape of the Cotswolds, is that I want people to come and enjoy the countryside, to spend time here, and benefit their health and wellbeing. I hope the term National Landscape really gives people the sense that it's for them, for everybody, to enjoy.

"We haven't done this in isolation," Andy continues. "To put it in a national context: there are 34 designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England and they will all be looking to change from AONBs to National Landscapes, in time. So we are part of a bigger picture; we have taken the lead and we will feed back our experiences so that others in the AONB family can learn from us. I'm really proud that



Andy Parsons, with his wife Lisa, and two of their four children.



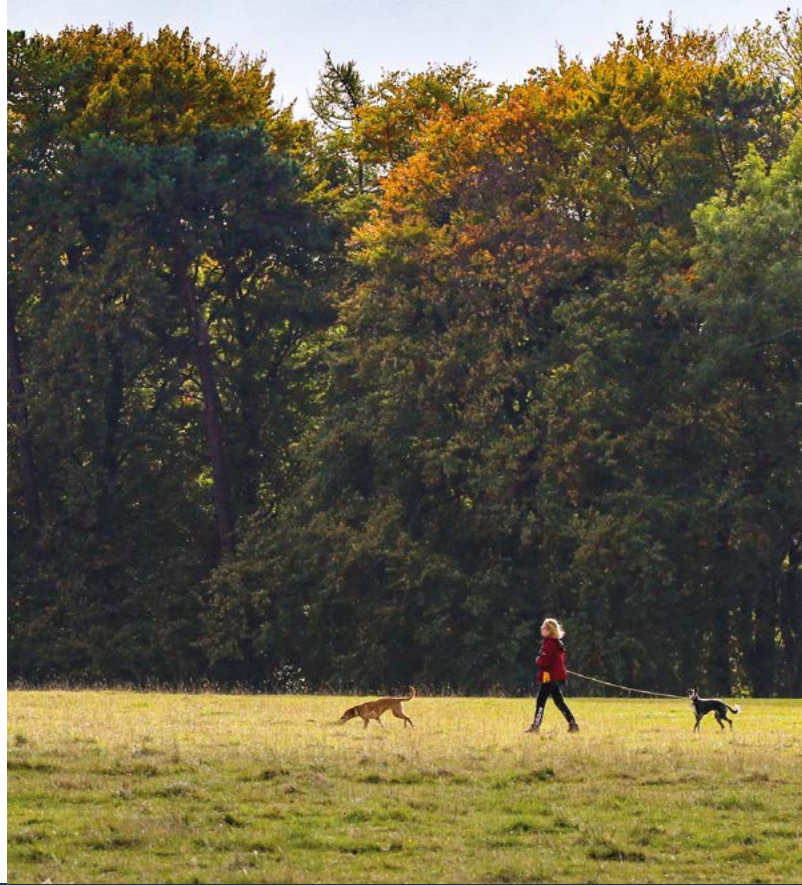


Right: The Landscapes Review published in 2019 by Julian Glover celebrated the idea that the countryside should welcome everyone

Below: Passing on skills to teach people how to dry stone walls is just one way to help look after the features of the Cotswolds landscape



© Russell Sach



*“The green is about more than conservation and the environment, it’s vibrant and fresh, pointing towards a hopeful future,”*

our partners in the Cotswolds have seen this as a great opportunity and fully support us.”

To match the new National Landscape name, the Cotswolds logo has had a makeover too, with the iconic Cotswold Lion sheep now set against a simple green circular background. “The green is about more than conservation and the environment, it’s vibrant and fresh, pointing towards a hopeful future,” Andy says.

### Exciting ambitions

In Andy’s first year as Chief Executive he has been impressed by his team’s efforts in looking after and improving access to the Cotswolds countryside, including the work of the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens who normally lead 300-plus public walks each year. The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted many plans, of course, but it has been noticeable that, as people have become more appreciative of the outdoors, a greater diversity of visitors has been coming to the Cotswolds. “Our challenge for the future is to make sure that they continue to do so,” Andy says.

The Landscapes Review acknowledges the diversity of contemporary British society, but also observes that enjoyment of the countryside is not evenly spread across this diversity. The report proposed that national landscapes should work towards “long-term programmes established to reach out to black, Asian and minority ethnicity communities”.

Dr Anjana Khatwa, a Ramblers Ambassador and National Diversity Award Finalist 2020, advises and campaigns for natural heritage organisations to recognise the changes needed in order to address the unseen barriers preventing Black and Asian communities from visiting these spaces. “Black and Asian people comprise only 0.8% of the Boards managing our National Parks and Landscapes. In addition, only 0.6% of the workforce in the environmental sector identifies as Black or Asian. I am working to change the mindset within the sector, so that management teams can understand and accommodate the needs of diverse audiences. By doing this, all will feel



Dr Anjana Khatwa

welcome, especially those who are disenfranchised from nature”.

The Landscapes Review placed people and nature at its heart, and so also in his look to the future, Andy says he is determined to work closely with partners in the Cotswolds to tackle the challenges of climate change and declines in nature, found across the UK. “One of our big focuses over the next couple of years will be to devise a nature recovery plan for the Cotswolds National Landscape so that we can hopefully slow down, halt, and then reverse declines. And the more people we can engage with in a meaningful way to help us with that, the better we hope our results will be.”

# To market, to market, to buy a plum cake

“It has been a lifeline, not just for buying exciting, delicious food, but in getting out to see people – to feel some normality returning.” That’s how a shopper at one of The Cotswolds’ farmers’ markets described the contribution the market had made to her life over the last few months. Ben Dent finds out more about markets across the area.

*“Many shoppers told us they were especially attracted by shopping in the open air,”*



service with StroudCo, which meant we could provide a service to people who were vulnerable, shielding or isolating.”

“Many shoppers told us they were especially attracted by shopping in the open air,” reports, James Styan, manager of Chipping Norton’s monthly market. “And we’ve taken sensible precautions too in terms of stallholders wearing face-masks, and encouraging contactless payments. But after the lockdown, the greatest pleasure for me has been reuniting local businesses and customers.”

A survey by Barclays in October found significant changes in our shopping habits since the start of the pandemic, with 63% of people buying more British produce. Typically, people are motivated by the quality of products, environmental benefits, a better understanding of where their food comes from and supporting local farmers and small businesses.

And farmers’ markets help nearby shops too. “We run the market to make our whole community stronger,” says Sarah Martin, manager of Nailsworth market. “The lockdown hit the town’s shops badly, and the market always helps attract extra shoppers, which benefits all local retailers. It’s all a spirit of cooperation, not competition.”

Communities across the Cotswolds have rallied round to support each other in many ways during the Covid crisis, and there is hope that these networks will remain a positive, active legacy. The continued growth in attendance at farmers’ markets, visits to farm shops, and use of other shop local schemes offers a boost to the Cotswold economy, and is a valuable way to help local communities thrive. What better way to support farmers, and food and drink businesses in our area than enjoying their delicious products? Just search online for details of your nearest markets.



After the initial disruption in spring, markets resumed in the summer, restoring the vital outlet for local farmers, and food and drink producers. Simon Weaver attends Stroud and Stow markets selling his range of organic cheese from the milk produced by his cows who graze next to the River Dikler at Lower Slaughter. “This year has highlighted why having a range of local outlets, including farmers’ markets, is crucial to our business. We also missed socialising with our regular shoppers and other traders, so we were excited as well as relieved when they re-opened.”

Farmers’ markets needed to be creative to ensure shoppers and stallholders were safe. Gerb Gerbrands, manager of the Stroud market, explained how they had to adapt. “We worked with the council so that we could expand into neighbouring streets, which had been closed to traffic anyway to help social distancing in the town centre. This allowed us to space out the stalls. We also run both a click and collect and home delivery

**More information**

*Search online to find farmers’ markets across the Cotswolds National Landscape. Remember to check opening times and dates before travelling!*



\* Please note, this article was written after the first 2020 lockdown restrictions has been eased, but before the second lockdown had been implemented. Images taken before coronavirus, and the necessary resulting social distancing measures.

# Listening to the Land...



Kirsty Hartsiotis and Anthony Nanson speak to Siân Ellis about the new book, *Gloucestershire Folk Tales for Children*, and describe how many of our local tales are inspired by the land itself.



Kirsty at Long Barrow near Cirencester

“It’s just such fun to go out and discover places, and find out about their stories,” Kirsty Hartsiotis says. Her co-author (and husband) Anthony Nanson picks up the theme, describing landscapes and townscapes as being “layered with folk stories” like great big living books.

The Stroud-based storytellers brim with enthusiasm and their latest collection, *Gloucestershire Folk Tales for Children*, bursts with intrigues: from the immortal cat of Chipping Sodbury to a shape-shifting hare, fairies and ghosts.

While stories by the Brothers Grimm *et al* are well known, local folk tales on our doorstep can easily be forgotten, the pair say, and the book aims to bring them back to life for more people: connecting a story with a place re-enchants the landscape, so you see it in a new light.

“If people perceive that the stories are in the landscape, then it makes the landscape that bit more special, and so there is that bit more of an impetus to care for the landscape,” Anthony says.

The couple always visit the places they write about, bringing the sights and sounds of nature into their work and also, by looking around them, unlocking the key to tales: just how did river floods cause a sea serpent to be stranded, for example?

In the book’s introduction, children are encouraged to get out and connect with places as well: to tell the stories out loud to each other, adding their own details from what is around them, re-enacting scenes, drawing pictures, or blogging about their experiences. “We want to encourage the idea that folk tales are something people can own for themselves and use in an active way,” Anthony says.

The authors delved into many books, nooks and crannies to unearth their tales, and we see the Cotswolds through



Anthony on a walk at Deerhurst

different eyes illuminating the beliefs of different times: whether Roman Paulus along the Ermin Way acclimatising to his new home, or a girl encountering Puritan opposition to the Cotswold Olympics on Dover’s Hill in 1636.

“There are particular hotspot areas for folk stories around the Cotswolds, for example Chipping Campden,” Kirsty says. “Chipping Campden possibly attracted more folkloric interest due to the Guild of Handicraft being there in the early 20th century, and people would stay there and collect the folklore.” One humorous tale tells of the madcap schemes of Ebrington villagers – Yubberton Yawnies – to outdo Chipping Campden in the Cotswolds Best Church Tower competition.

The authors came across many Civil War tales, too, including romance and treachery at Beverston Castle ❖❖❖





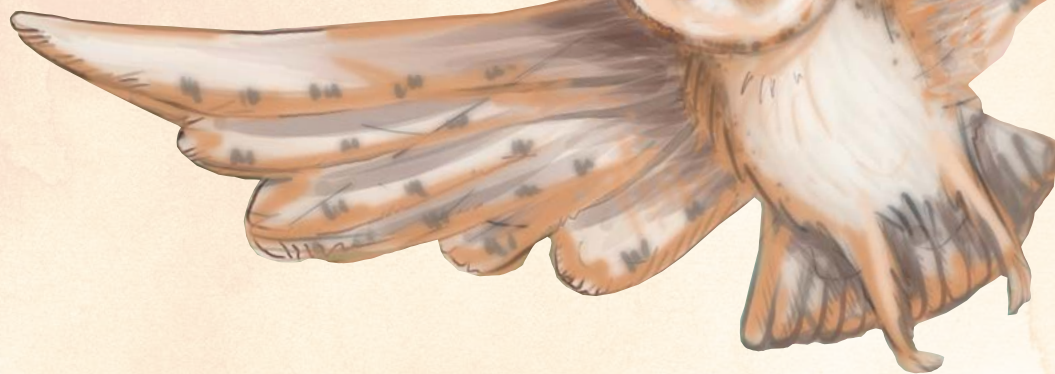
Dover's Hill

*“If people perceive that the stories are in the landscape, then it makes the landscape that bit more special, and so there is that bit more of an impetus to care for the landscape”*

and Chavenage House near Tetbury. “The Civil War really made its mark on the psyche of people,” Kirsty says, telling also of a ghostly walk at Edgehill in Warwickshire.

Numerous tales spring from the seasonal round, rooted in the landscape and customs like May Day revels and wassailing. Fairies take revenge on people who disrespect the land or a custom, and reward those who show kindness or good stewardship of the land – the hungry, hardworking ploughman near Wotton-under-Edge who mends a fairy peel (shovel to take loaves in and out of an oven) gets a tasty cake soused in brandy.

You’ll come across some wonderful, authentic Gloucestershire dialect words



– woodwose (legendary wildman of the woods), povey (barn owl), slabbered (dirty) – and there’s a glossary at the back of the book. Like folk tales and the wellbeing of our environment, such words need to be rescued and valued otherwise they’ll be lost.

“Folk tales are for everybody and by giving [children] stories that hopefully appeal to their imagination, it brings the landscape alive for them and makes them want to care for landscapes and townscapes,” Kirsty concludes with a big smile.



**More information**

You can buy or order Gloucestershire Folk Tales for Children (*The History Press, £9.99*) from your local bookshop. Also visit [www.anthonynanson.co.uk](http://www.anthonynanson.co.uk) and [www.kirstyhartsiotis.co.uk](http://www.kirstyhartsiotis.co.uk) to find out more about Anthony’s and Kirsty’s storytelling, shows, talks and publications.



Marin Anastasov with his bees

# ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR ALL

Here's an inspiring story of cooperation. Of members of a community working towards a common good; sacrificing individual interests to ensure that, together, they survive and thrive. Katie Jarvis finds out more.

Sounds intriguing? In fact, it's something that happens under our very noses each and every day. For these are defining characteristics of honeybees.

"It is fascinating," muses master beekeeper Marin Anastasov. His 25 colonies include six in his garden in the centre of Minchinhampton. (Town bees steal a march on wild bees: the enthusiasm of Cotswold gardeners ensures there's always a flowering 'something' for them to visit.)

"You've got this small insect," Marin continues, "which is pretty simple in the way it is made and functions. But, when you put 10,000 or 100,000 of them

together, they form a colony and become a completely different animal."

Eating honey is the easy bit; understanding how it is produced is a mind-bending glimpse into an alien world. For Marin, a love affair with bees began as a teenager in Bulgaria, studying for a degree in animal science where beekeeping was part of the course.

Despite his youth (the average UK beekeeper is in their 60s), Marin was hooked. "I was immediately drawn to how colonies operate. How they are incredibly successful as a super-organism."

Each colony revolves around one

queen bee, the only reproductive female – though don't imagine she is treated like royalty: "She is a complete prisoner. Her only function is to breed more bees." And this she does with astonishing effectiveness. Each day, she will lay a quantity of eggs exceeding her own bodyweight. In summer, that could mean up to 2,000 eggs.

The queen will make only one mating flight in her life – though she can mate with as many as 20 drones (male bees), storing their sperm for the rest of her days.

Marin knows his bees inside out. But does he think his bees recognise him? ❖

“Absolutely not,” he says. For one thing, any human – trying to collect the honey that bees have made for their own winter feed – is an enemy.

But there is one slightly strange phenomenon. As a young keeper, still nervous of the bees, he would get stung relatively frequently. “Now I am not afraid, I get an occasional sting, but much less. I ask myself: Can the bees tell?”

In large part, it’s thanks to Nobel-prize-winning scientist Karl von Frisch that so much is known about the honeybee’s biology and behaviour: pheromones – chemical signals – they emit to communicate. And the ‘waggle’ dance – which von Frisch wrote about way back in the 1920s – by which they inform each other of the location of a rich food source.

*“I was immediately drawn to how colonies operate. How they are incredibly successful as a super-organism.”*

But there are still puzzles, such as the swarm. Every four or five years, a colony will collectively decide it’s time to split in two to create a new, separate community.

Before a proportion of the workers leave, they start raising new queens. Then, when the time is right, they fly in a swarm with the old queen – leaving the new ones behind; only one will ‘triumph’ – to find a new site.

Although the trigger is not yet understood, swarming is an awesome phenomenon. Two years ago, working in one of his apiaries, Marin noticed bees tumbling out of one of the colonies in waves. “The air was a swirling soup; the noise really loud.

“Sometimes, when bees swarm, you’ll never see them again. On this occasion, they settled on a tree branch nearby and I ended up with a new hive.

“It was a joyous moment. In bee terms, it was like seeing the birth of a baby.”

#### **More information**

*You can buy Marin’s honey from Taylor’s, the butcher’s, at 1 West End, Minchinhampton.*

*Marin is a member of the Gloucestershire Beekeepers Association: [gbka.org.uk](http://gbka.org.uk). Other associations in the Cotswolds include:*

*[wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk](http://wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk)*

*[warwickshirebeekeepers.org.uk](http://warwickshirebeekeepers.org.uk)*

*[wbka.uk](http://wbka.uk) (Warwickshire)*

*[obka.org.uk](http://obka.org.uk) (Oxfordshire)*

#### **Help our beekeepers!**

Among invaders posing a danger to British honeybees is the Asian hornet – which can completely destroy a hive within days. The first confirmed sighting in the UK was in Tetbury in 2016. Thanks to a vigilant member of the public, the invaders’ nest was reported and eradicated within two weeks. Any potential sightings should be reported to a local beekeeper, or via information available from the National Bee Unit: [nationalbeeunit.com](http://nationalbeeunit.com)



In conversation with...

# Rich Whincup

Rich Whincup grew up in the Cotswolds National Landscape, and still relishes being able to get out and about and reaping the many rewards of being out in the countryside.

## I grew up in Stow-on-the-Wold

To me, the Cotswolds landscape is special. There is always a view, the patchwork fields all year round mean it's different, varied, and ever-changing. Moving from London as a child, the Cotswolds represented more freedom to explore, fresher air to breathe.

## What the Cotswolds teaches all of us

Is that not far away from the large, more urban areas around the national landscape, is an open space in which we can work, cycle and explore. It's important to remember that we are lucky to have a holiday destination on our door step, I can be guilty of forgetting that. It is easy to entertain ourselves by spending money, but especially in the current COVID climate, it's worth remembering that the Cotswolds are open, free, and widely accessible.

With this in mind though, we should consider that we all need to care for and preserve the landscape and use it responsibly. The hills and countryside have been there for many years (forever, even) and provided that we use and enjoy them with others in mind, the open spaces will continue to be there for generations to come.

## As the Dad of 2 very different boys

Walking in the Cotswolds offers all of us physical activity, views, areas of interest and varied wildlife to enjoy. We like walking with a view, and the achievement of reaching the top of a hill.

## Growing up with a stammer, the Cotswolds felt safe and understanding

Lots of people knew who I was, and I didn't feel under any pressure to try to be somebody I wasn't. The small communities helped me to feel at ease, and comfortable to be who I was. I love my rugby, and my first club was Stow RFC, a club that I now help to coach. I am an ambassador for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and throughout my own time participating in the scheme, the Cotswolds were my training ground. I was Head Boy of the Cotswold School, and my wife was Head Girl. We both moved away for university, and now living in Tewkesbury, it's great to be able to see the hills, and it's even better to know that they are within easy reach, every day.

**“We like walking with a view, and the achievement of reaching the top of a hill.”**





# A note about our supporters

Due to Covid-19, many of the attractions, businesses and organisations who normally support us through advertising have been closed and unable to advertise. The situation has been very difficult on our local tourism trade. We want to support them by encouraging our readers to keep looking out for the re-opening of the tourism industry across the Cotswolds – and most importantly, to respond to that in the most responsible way. Please remember to follow official government advice; check details before you travel; support local businesses (and check what their individual adaptations to coronavirus have been); and please do be as understanding as possible as we all find our feet and adjust to life after covid-19.



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