**Wales Report for the AGM 2021**

With lockdowns and other concerns, there has been little scope for activities or social meet-ups, but it is hoped that the Wales Committee might be able to arrange some activities for the end of the year and for 2022. We have only a small membership and are rather scattered across Wales, so meeting up is a challenge at the best of times. We are now looking at working with the National Trust in Wales to see if we might be able to use one or more Trust property for activities of interest to members and, perhaps, the general public. Raising awareness and support for donkeys is an important facet of the objectives of the Society, so it will be good if we can spark an interest in the general visitors to heritage sites. We hope to start by organising a few events at Llanerchaeron, a lovely National Trust property in Ceredigion, beginning with some input to the Trust’s Christmas activities at the property.

The Donkey Welfare Adviser for south Wales from The Donkey Sanctuary, Katana Ashby will be supporting us in our future awareness-raising and training days. Looking to the future, Katana has a number of priorities for her work in Wales over the next few years, but two stand out for her. Firstly, she is keen to increase the number of Guardianship homes for Sanctuary donkeys in Wales – there are less than 50 such homes in Wales at present. She is keen to promote awareness of this opportunity and sees wider awareness-raising of the special qualities of donkeys as key to this. Secondly, she is enthusiastic about developing training and opportunities for disseminating practical advice to owners and would-be owners in Wales. It’s a long way to a Donkey Sanctuary site to participate in one of their courses – when they re-start – so opportunities to deliver small group training and advice workshops in Wales will be invaluable. Katana is keen to work with the DBS Wales Committee to create a practical community of support, including opportunities for donkey owners to meet and learn from each other. The Committee will be working with Katana to develop these activities during the next few months.

The Committee produced a newsletter for Wales members in August. This included an appeal for comments and suggestions, as well as an invitation to join the Committee. I am nearing the end of my second term as Chair of the Wales Committee and Regional Delegate. As yet, no other member has come forward to take on the rôle, which is a concern, as the post was vacant for a while some years ago and a further hiatus could well hinder plans for activities and partnership working.

Ann Slater

Regional Delegate

annslater@gmail.com

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