

# WWOOF UK NEWS

world wide opportunities on organic farms

issue 233

winter 2011



Planting a tree in honour of  
**WWOOF's 40th birthday**

## Inside:

- **WWOOF 40th Birthday celebration**
- **Reports from WWOOF conference in Seoul**
- **Land auctions**

[www.wwoof.org.uk](http://www.wwoof.org.uk)

# editorial

Welcome to the Winter edition of the WWOOF UK newsletter!

This issue is packed with wonderful reportage of this Autumn's WWOOFing activities. Scarlett Penn reports on the UK AGM and birthday celebrations at the fantastic Bore Place where fruit trees were planted to mark WWOOF's 40 years and provide beauty and sustenance for years to come - alongside much merriment, celebrating and of course important AGM business.

Ian Baird tells us about the incredible connections that were reinforced with our wider WWOOF family at the International Conference in Korea back in September and sets out important issues around global WWOOF co-ordination that I'm sure many of you will be most interested to hear about.

If that's not your thing though, you'll surely be inspired by Scarlett's nail biting tale of a frenzied land auction - there are some great tips for avoiding pitfalls of this complicated system.

As ever, we love to hear from you so please do write in to [editor@wwoof.org.uk](mailto:editor@wwoof.org.uk) with your letters, photos, ideas, tales and adverts, which are now free up to 50 words.

Warm wishes for a peaceful Winter,

Alissa Pemberton, Editor

## write to us!

We're looking for interesting host features, WWOOFing stories, your letters, international news, Transition Initiatives, news from food and farming groups, seasonal stories – recipes, customs, food storage, book reviews and, of course, your classified ads.

Please send contributions to [editor@wwoof.org.uk](mailto:editor@wwoof.org.uk) or by post to the office, by the following dates:

**3 1st Jan for Spring 12 issue**

**30th April for Summer 12 issue**

**3 1st July for Autumn 12 issue**

**3 1st Oct for Winter 12 issue**

Don't forget you can always post adverts, questions and comments on the forum at [www.lowimpact.org](http://www.lowimpact.org)

## what is WWOOF UK?

WVVOOF UK holds a list of organic farms, gardens and smallholdings, all offering food and accommodation in exchange for practical help on their land. These hosts range from a low-impact woodland settlement to a 600 hectare mixed holding with on-site farm shop, cafe and education centre. Hosts do not expect you to know a lot about farming when you arrive, but they do expect you to be willing to learn and able to fit in with their lifestyle.

The list of hosts is available by joining WWOOF UK for a membership fee. Once you have the list you can contact hosts directly to arrange your stay. Your host will explain what kind of work you will be expected to do, what accommodation is on offer and will discuss the length of your stay.

WVVOOF is a charity; WWOOFers do not pay to stay with hosts and hosts do not pay WWOOFers for their help. Charity number: 1126220

WVVOOF UK is administered by LILI - the Low-Impact Living Initiative. [www.lowimpact.org](http://www.lowimpact.org)

**The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those held by WWOOF or LILI**

# news from the office

The autumn has been a very busy time for the WWOOF UK team so far – we are starting to settle down with our new personnel, Taryn Field as Host Contact and James Dennis our new Publicity and Projects Worker, and are looking forward to a productive winter. The whole team was able to attend the AGM and 40th Birthday celebrations, which we all enjoyed immensely.

Scarlett Penn represented WWOOF UK at an important International Co-ordinators' meeting in Korea in September, accompanied by Ian Baird of WWOOF Independents and Amanda Pearson of WWOOF International. The meeting was considered to be very successful and there are detailed reports elsewhere in the newsletter.

We continue to work on developments for our website and will be introducing some exciting new functionality in the near future. The first thing we have planned is a new feature for hosts to use to let WWOOFers know if they are full at any time, or have a particular need for WWOOFers for specific tasks. This has been developed from an original idea of Sue Coppard's, our founder, and we hope it will save a great deal of time for both hosts and WWOOFers. We will make it live during early December so that everyone can get used to using it during the, allegedly, quieter winter months. We will welcome any feedback and suggestions for improvement; Taryn will contact hosts during December to explain how to use the extended system.

And there is just a whisper that hosts will soon be able to add photos to their profiles! We don't have a timescale for this just yet but watch this space for an update in the next newsletter and we're sure it won't be long.

## Feeding the 5000

At the time of going to print, plans for this year's Feeding the 5000 event were well under way.

The idea is to give anyone who ventures to Trafalgar Square on Friday 18 November 2011, 12pm - 2pm, a delicious, healthy and free lunch from food which would otherwise have been thrown away.

The event is designed to make people and businesses think about just how much food they throw away and, as in 2009, has WWOOF UK's support.

If you want to know more, get in touch via the website <http://www.feeding5k.org/>

## WWOOF UK documentary on DVD

WWOOF UK documentary on DVD for sale from [www.blueatomstudios.co.uk](http://www.blueatomstudios.co.uk) for £7.50 (includes postage world-wide). Approximately 26 minutes long, this documentary visits WWOOF hosts from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The DVD explores what volunteers do, where they stay and how hosts benefit from the experience. Look online for trailers!



# Happy 40th birthday WWOOF!

Blue skies, autumnal hues and the gentle lowing of cattle greeted people as they arrived at Bore Place, a picturesque organic dairy farm and conference site nestled in the heart of Kent countryside. Such an idyllic setting seemed appropriate as the gathering was to mark a very special date; four decades of wonderful WWOOFing - to the day!

There were two other reasons it felt right to hold the 2011 AGM here. Firstly, it is close to - and has links with - Tablehurst Farm (now part of Biodynamic College at Emerson) where, on 15th October 1971, the very first WWOOF volunteer exchange took place. And secondly, Bore Place is home to Lottery funded project Grow2Grow, brainchild of Paula Conway and created in collaboration with WWOOF. Grow2Grow offers organic farming opportunities, in a supportive



as a global network and more can be read about this in a separate article.

Saturday morning again dawned bright and clear and after a hearty breakfast, WWOOF Council met for the first time to discuss business. After some hard hours of brain activity they were rewarded by a special lunchtime treat as Giles Chapman, a WWOOFer representing Roy and Irma at Sedlescombe Organic Vinyard, unveiled the perfect birthday gift – two crates of specially labelled WWOOF 40th Birthday

white wine! We toasted the (dry and fruity) taste of Sedlescombe with heartfelt thanks and demurely stuck to one glass with lunch, knowing full well the remainder would get the evening's entertainment going with a swing.

Straight after lunch was a tour of the farm, the low autumn sun warming faces and lending an air of contentment and tranquillity. One sharp eyed eight-year-old even spotted a cow starting to give birth – a special moment witnessed by all thanks to her. Paula then showed everyone round the Grow2Grow gardens, which were bursting with vitality. En route was the group's HQ hut, impressively made entirely from items found, grown, crafted and reused from the site. Visits were also paid to the Maureen Pynches memorial room, which is used for weekly check-in chats (Maureen co-ran WWOOF UK for over 20 years).

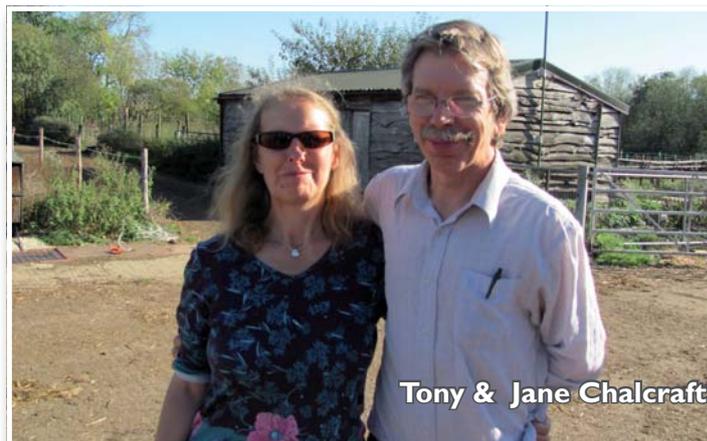
Then a ceremonial moment; Sue Coppard, esteemed WWOOF founder, planted the first of four organic fruit trees given to commemorate four decades of



A young WWOOFer visits the organic herd

environment, to vulnerable young people and was having its launch event on the Friday. It seemed a fitting place to both reflect on 40 years of history and look to the future, and everyone present was honoured to witness first-hand the difference that connection with the land is making to young lives.

After welcome, orientation and supper, Friday evening saw Amanda, Scarlett and Ian, freshly back from their visit to the International WWOOF Co-ordinators' Conference in Korea, talking to the assembled group about their experiences there. The meeting in Korea was considered by all to be extremely beneficial and successful for WWOOF



Tony & Jane Chalcraft

WVVOOFing. Back inside Sue – who also attended the conference in Korea - described how happy she was to see WVVOOF reaching more people worldwide, and how proud she is of all those who work together to make it happen. Sue was also presented with a special card Korean-style, signed by all 20 nations which had been present, and a copy of her own green prayer in Korean.



Tea and birthday cake made especially by the Grow2Grow followed, along with perusal of the swaps table; a mountain of seeds, chutneys, vegetables, gardening books / clothes – all exchanged for free. The AGM was a quick affair, ably dealt with by Richard Hazell (Director) and Rob

Lea (accountant). New Director Tony Chalcraft was welcomed on to Council. A showing of James Goodhind’s great video about WVVOOFing in the UK (see page 3 for details of how to buy) delivered us perfectly to suppertime.

The evening’s entertainments were fittingly home-grown with Chris Schmidt-Reid, seasoned Redfield host, bravely kicking things off with his own song about WVVOOFing. A steady stream followed, and it was inspiring and touching to see people who wouldn’t normally consider themselves to be performers getting up to do their bit. Too many ‘artists’ took part to name individually, but Kath Hallewell does deserve special mention. Until recently Kath did promotional work for WVVOOF UK, but now has decided to concentrate on her singing. As she regaled us with relish, song after song, we could all see why – it was a privilege to listen and a pleasure to watch a born performer in action. We hope she’ll come back and make music with us in years to come.

A suitably slow Sunday provided an opportunity for some WVVOOFing, some relaxed conversations and, importantly, some thanks. It was wonderful that Annie and Jenny from WVVOOF Ireland, and Chemi, Gina and family from WVVOOF Spain had journeyed especially to join in with the weekend’s



Kath & Emma (Director) singing for their supper

celebrations. Appreciation was given to Richard Hazell for his work over the years arranging this and other meetings (a role which will now fall to the admin team). Gratitude flowed to Paula for putting Bore Place forward as a venue, and to Andrew the chef for his sumptuous organic offerings. Admiration went to Tony and Jane for their commitment in getting to the venue in an environmentally friendly way. And a big self-congratulation was earned by everyone who hoisted themselves out of their comfort zones and contributed to Saturday night’s celebrations!

And so as we move forward to a new era of WVVOOF, with greater communication and collaboration the world over, it seems fitting to end the reflections of such a big occasion with the words of Sue Coppard’s own green prayer:

*Great Spirit of Life, who has given us such a beautiful world, fill our hearts with love for our fellow beings throughout the planet and help us to serve the well-being of all.*

*May the Light always shine through WVVOOF.*



Beautiful Bore Place

# Seoul Food

Back in May this year, I saw an ad for a job with WVVOOF. Being paid to work for an organisation that I have been involved with as a volunteer for the last ten years seemed like too good an opportunity to miss. I applied – and reader, to my delight, I found myself in gainful employment.

During my induction there was the occasional reference to “Korea” in September. Apparently there was to be a gathering of co-ordinators and team members from all over the globe. Tentative discussions around my involvement were had. Was it appropriate to send such a newly-appointed member of the team so far away? Equally – how could such a brilliant networking opportunity be turned down?

From a personal point of view there seemed to be only one answer – yes, yes, yes. WVVOOF had previously provided me with bed and board around the world – now it was going to fly me to a continent I had not yet visited! Furthermore I would get to meet Sue Coppard, the founder of WVVOOF. How could I refuse?

And so it was that I found myself assembling with four other WVVOOF staff from UK and Ireland (and the aforementioned Sue) at Heathrow airport on a golden Saturday afternoon.

Generally speaking I am not a fan of group travel and organised itineraries; if I’m honest, it’s because of the kind of people they attract. Not, in my experience, the independent, free-thinking types that I usually like to mix with. But this was no normal group gathering, this was a coming together of WVVOOF people - people who like an adventure! Any remaining nervousness I had around the fact that the last time I saw two of our party was when they interviewed me was quickly dismissed as warm hugs of greeting were passed around.

Twenty four hours later, I experienced a brief reprise of those nerves as I sat at the conference opening ceremony like a kid on her first day at school, watching old friends and colleagues meet and greet one another. It wasn’t long before this international community comprising people from as far apart as Australia, USA, Taiwan and Nigeria welcomed me into their fold. WVVOOF folk are my kind of folk; an extended family if you like – and that is true the world over. All brought together because of their belief in, and commitment to, the WVVOOF ethic.

We spent our first couple of days together in Seoul, staying in a beautiful traditional Korean guest-house complex. The accommodation

was light, airy and tranquil with lots of ornate wood-carving decoration but an empty floor space – except for the bed rolls. You soon get to know one another when you are lined up five in a row at night!

My immediate impressions of Seoul and South Korean culture in those early days were of a modern city with vivid colours, extreme hospitality and great attention to detail.

If you want to learn how to finely chop fruit and vegetables – go to Korea! Our first lunchtime feast must have taken hours to prepare. It was almost too beautiful to eat. Those of you who have visited this part of the world already will know that the national dish is known as kimchi. It is served at almost every meal, and few Koreans can last more than a few days before cravings get the better of them. There are hundreds of varieties of kimchi. It is made with a main vegetable ingredient such as napa cabbage, radish, green onions or cucumber and then fermented with varied seasonings. The taste can be variously described as hot, salty and sour with a crunchy texture. Many of our group developed a liking for it; I can’t describe myself as one of them!

We all, however, learnt to use the phrase “kimchi” whenever posing for one of the many and various group photos that were taken before, during and after every stage of our six-day programme.

The other culinary feature was a surfeit of glutinous rice cakes designed to give your jaws the best workout ever; often in the most extraordinary colours. On our first whole day together we visited a museum where we learnt the traditional way to make these delicacies – which involved beating the living daylights out of boiled rice. Great hilarity was had, as we cheered one another on to see who could release the most pent-up aggression after their long journey. A great ice-breaker exercise and a very shrewd move on behalf of our hosts!



Seoul brothers and sisters

# Invitation to join WWOOF Ltd. Council

Council is the joint decision-making body for WWOOF UK and WWOOF Independents. Although structure may change in the future, currently it consists of a minimum of three Directors, plus one representative each from WWOOF UK, WWOOF Independents and WWOOF International Development. We are now actively looking for new Directors to join this collaborative group.

## Commitment

- Directors are asked to attend 3 meetings per year, held on weekends usually in February, June and October
- Directors are asked to be responsive and keep up-to-date with communications and actions in between meetings

## Skills

In addition to being passionate about WWOOF, we are looking for Directors with a wide range of experiences and skills. In particular we would be interested to hear from good people with any of the below:

- Financial experience
- Legal knowledge
- Skills in publicity and promotion
- Knowledge/an interest in immigration and visa systems
- Fundraising experience
- Have knowledge of/links with other like-minded charities
- Human resources knowledge
- Comprehensive WWOOFing experience
- Comprehensive WWOOF hosting experience

## Other characteristics

We are looking for people who enjoy and are good at working in a team; people who can bring their ideas to a group, who enjoy a diversity of opinion and who can abide by group decisions. Directors need to be comfortable representing the diversity of opinion from the WWOOF Council, as well as the staff and the wider membership. There is no specific type of person that we are looking for; we welcome interest from anyone and believe that diversity among the Directors will make our organisation stronger.

## What you get in return

- reimbursement of reasonable travel costs to meetings;
- reimbursement of telephone and postal expenses incurred on WWOOF business;
- opportunities to get involved with key projects;
- the possibility of representing us at other meetings, events and AGMs;
- the possibility of attending relevant training courses (subject to agreement and budget);
- free membership as a host or a WWOOFer

If you are interested in becoming a member of Council and would like to receive a more comprehensive document or to talk further, please contact [scarlett@woof.org.uk](mailto:scarlett@woof.org.uk) It is also possible to volunteer your time without taking on the role of Director; again, please contact Scarlett for more information.

# WWOOF at Wirksworth

## The Big Green Day Event -24th September 2011

On a glorious sunny Saturday in Wirksworth, Derbyshire the WWOOF stall was all set and ready for action. The date 24th September 2011, the event – The Big Green Day Eco Fest. The WWOOFERS on duty Phil Bramhall and Gill Williamson.

Adorned with the WWOOF banner, the stall proved a real hit – drawing people to the stall as much out of intrigue and curiosity, as interest. Many people when asked did know about WWOOF, and those who didn't were impressed by its values, its mission and its 40-year legacy!

One interesting comment from a Big Green Day attendee was how might WWOOF make its volunteering opportunities available to undergraduate and recent graduates by working with the Students Union organisation in universities. This was seen as a gap in the market place for students who might be interested in volunteering and learning about more organic growing practices, and environmentally beneficial lifestyles while developing practical skills and gaining self confidence.

WWOOF and Positive News sat side-by-side on the stall - as complementary eco-bedfellows - alongside other local organisations and attractions promoting a more organic and eco-friendly lifestyle. The stall holders included fruit and veg growers, willow crafts, low energy devices for the home, sewing and recycling and reuse ideas, eco pods. It was an enjoyable event, full of inspiring conversations – fresh produce, creative eco-ideas – music, poetry, fun and games. Many connections were made, networks developed or strengthened and new people introduced to eco-friendly lifestyles.

Wirksworth is a small market town in the Derbyshire Dales and located on the edge of the Peak District. It is a town working towards Transition Town status and is populated by varied groups of socially-minded and environmentally-aware people. The town is also known for its commitment to the creative arts, equality and social justice. It's a place with a real sense of community and understanding of its importance to the wellbeing of people, prosperity and place. The town also provides the base for the Eco Centre, a learning centre for the development of sustainable living skills.



The WWOOF stall

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# Going once, going twice...

When Simon Fairlie (of Chapter 7 and The Land magazine fame) told us that a land auction is a heart-pumping, head-spinning sort of event, I don't think any of us took him too seriously. We were coming towards the end of our Smallholding course with Low-Impact Living Initiative (LILI) when he made this claim, then followed it up by announcing he was going to give us a practise run there and then. He himself would be playing the part of the auctioneer.

We all sniggered uncertainly into our cups of tea, but Simon wasn't giving us a choice. He galvanised us with official-looking details of plots of land we could bid for, teamed us up, gave us budgets, made us think about our dreams for the future and then, with the air of a true professional, gave us an auction. By the end of it we were wide-eyed and stunned, complete with sweaty palms and racing hearts as promised. One team even got so flustered they ended up bidding against each other! The learning was incredible; with tens of thousands of pounds and a possible dream location at stake, it really would be important to 'practise for real', I decided.

And so it was on a perfect autumn day I found myself at a Kent hotel, where the group of friends I'd tagged on to nervously nibbled their fingernails, waiting to bid on 4 acres of paddock and woodland. They'd come prepared with identity documents, proof of address and means to pay the 10% deposit should they be lucky enough to be the winning bidders.

The first thing I noticed when I arrived was that the number of lots available had gone down from 12 as advertised, to 5. That was a bit of a shock. Some had been delayed and were now entered for the next rural property auction in two months, some had sold already through other means and one had been withdrawn after a change of heart. That might have explained why there were only about 30 people there, and with perhaps only 10 of them serious bidders. Anyway, Lot One was still available and that was all that mattered. Even I was nervous!

Some of the group stood at the back and others sat towards the front. I was near the front too, eager to be close to the action, but soon realised this wasn't a good idea as I couldn't see what was going on behind me. But I could see the man next to me and suddenly he was bidding. In next to no time, after perhaps 12 bids, we heard 'All done, sold to the bidder on my left'. It was over the guide price, but it had been bought by the group - hurrah!

The next four lots went by in a blur, none of them taking longer than a couple of minutes. I was amazed at how quickly it all happened. And the auctioneer was certainly very skilled at creating a high-pressure environment of urgency, uncertainty and persuasion. His foreign phrases had me furrowing my brow. 'The bid's out-seated!' Erm... really? And more darkly, 'It's all in the shadows'. But you can't very well stop proceedings to ask him to clarify.

15 short minutes later we gathered at the bar, but celebrations were short-lived when we discovered the very same thing that happened in my course practise auction had happened in real life; people from the same side had been bidding against each other! Nooooo!!! Because the two live bidders were in different places, they couldn't see each other well and in the heat of the moment didn't realise they were up against each other. We think this mistake cost about £10,000 but it could easily have been more.

So it felt important to share Simon's wisdom and my experience with other potential smallholders; if you're thinking of buying land at auction – especially in a collective - take heed of this tale, have a clear bidding strategy within the group and PRACTISE FIRST. Good luck!

Scarlett Penn

## Send us your pics!

We want to give people an idea of what WWOOFing in the UK is like by showing them all the different ways in which people are WWOOFing.

So we need your photos for the website please!

Please make sure that you get the permission of the hosts and WWOOFers in the photos.

Photos can be emailed to editor@[Wwoof.org.uk](mailto:editor@Wwoof.org.uk)

# Ian's adventure in Seoul

**Ian Baird, WWOOF Independents Co-ordinator, attended the third international WWOOF conference in Seoul (Korea) at the end of September.**

The conference was the first of its kind since 2006 and came at a particularly opportune time for WWOOF Independents, as it faces difficult decisions about its future. It was also an opportunity to try to resolve conflicts that had developed between different WWOOF organisations following the previous conference in Japan. Was it possible to make progress on both fronts – develop ideas about how WWOOF Independents can best serve the WWOOFing community in the coming years and resolve the anomaly of two lists of independent hosts on the Internet, to the confusion of both WWOOFers and hosts?

In Korea, the wonderful organisation and planning of our hosts – WWOOF Korea – helped to create a relaxed and constructive atmosphere and it shouldn't have been a surprise that all the other representatives from 20 countries were good, friendly people who also wanted to heal rifts and make progress towards the global development of the WWOOFing movement. During a week which combined formal meetings, and cultural and social events (at least as important!), the collective will of delegates made significant progress in a number of areas. This informal feedback on what was achieved focuses on those which had particular relevance to WWOOF Independents, its future and its relationship with other WWOOF organisations. First however, I offer some background information on the two issues which, if the conference was to be considered a success from the perspective of WWOOF Independents, needed to be tackled: the future direction of WWOOF Independents and the simmering dispute between some WWOOF organisations.

It is difficult to be precise when identifying a starting date for WWOOF Independents because in the early days independent hosts were simply listed as an appendix to UK and other national lists in a fairly haphazard way. But from about 1999 the organisation began to evolve in its own right. As WWOOFing had spread from its starting point in the UK, there were initially large numbers of independent hosts and relatively few national WWOOF organisations. Over the years, WWOOF Independents has been a nursery for the embryonic development of new national organisations, first listing the pioneer hosts in a country, then as the number of hosts grew, helping them to float away from Independents to their own 'independence'. In the early years of the new millennium there was a continuing

rise in independent hosts, peaking in 2007 at over 1000, just prior to the formation of WWOOF France in that year. In addition to the 37 countries currently listed by WWOOF Independents, over the years it has also has listed hosts from Italy, Ghana, Czech Republic, Uganda, Turkey, Mexico, Bulgaria, Sweden, Estonia, Israel, Spain, Taiwan, Brazil, Romania, Cameroon, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Greece, Nigeria and Serbia, all of which were helped to develop their own organisations by previous co-ordinators, Fran and Carl. Other countries which were listed but floated off without any help were France, India, Belize, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Philippines, and Guatemala. It's worth recording these countries in detail to remind ourselves how rapid and extensive the growth of the global WWOOFing movement has been in recent years. WWOOF Independents also runs the WWOOF.org website to promote the general ideas of WWOOF, supports WWIndy News, gives small grants to new organisations for start-up or for travel to WWOOF conferences, and generally supports development and promotional work through its Development Co-ordinator, Amanda Pearson.

So what is the problem? As more and more countries form national organisations, there are fewer with independent hosts. This means that WWOOF Independents' host numbers (and countries listed) is on a decline. Unlike a national organisation in decline, these statistics actually reflect success, not failure. It is the only WWOOF organisation which actively seeks to lose hosts! But with fewer hosts comes fewer WWOOFers taking out membership and therefore a declining income. Although we still list over 300 hosts, because these are geographically dispersed, only a percentage are in practice accessible to a volunteer depending on what region or continent they are travelling in. With the downward trajectory certainly continuing, the problem will be simply to manage a declining number of hosts with the best interests of both hosts and WWOOFers in mind, and continue our supportive activities with a declining income.

Complicating the resolution of WWOOF Independents' future is the perception of the organisation's role in the global WWOOF movement by some national WWOOF organisations, mainly, but not exclusively, in Asia and Oceania. The feeling from this group has been that WWOOF Independents does not democratically represent the movement. For historical reasons, WWOOF Independents is based in the UK and has a legal and structural relationship with

WVVOOF Ltd, which in turn is also the parent charitable organisation of which WVVOOF UK is a part. In short, it is felt that WVVOOF Independents is too close to WVVOOF UK and that its strategy, appointment of staff and financial management is driven solely by UK interests without reference to the wider WVVOOF movement. Accordingly, following the last international conference in Japan, at which an International WVVOOF Organisation (IWA) was set up but not subsequently adopted by most WVVOOF national organisations, an alternative WVVOOF Independents (Assoc.) was launched, together with an alternative generic WVVOOF information site (WVVOOF International) to WVVOOF.org.

Clearly, for a movement which champions cooperation and harmony, this did not set a good example to the WVVOOFing volunteers and hosts who are confused by the duplication. It was a recognition of the inappropriateness of the position that we had got ourselves into that I think focused minds in Korea to find a solution.

The solution was found in the form of a resolution that was agreed at the conference by all the delegates, including Sue Coppard, WVVOOF's founder. (Minutes still to be ratified and formally circulated.) The key points of the resolution (paraphrased) are that:

- a not-for-profit democratic body which all WVVOOF groups can join with equal rights will be created;
- the existing IWA will be wound up;
- the WVVOOF Independents (UK) and WVVOOF Independents (Assoc.) lists will be amalgamated into a single WVVOOF Independents list;
- the WVVOOF International information site will

close and WVVOOF.org will retain its current function;

- WVVOOF Independents (and WVVOOF.org) will be absorbed into the new organisation and will break existing links with WVVOOF Ltd;
- existing staff will retain their positions and transfer to the new organisation;
- the organisation would trademark WVVOOF on behalf of all groups not currently protected by a national trademark registration.

The resolution represents a major achievement in addressing outstanding issues. The anomaly of the duplicated Independents and information sites will be resolved. The residual relationship of WVVOOF Independents with WVVOOF Ltd, and hence with WVVOOF UK, will be broken and the perception of the organisation as fully representing global WVVOOF interests will be correspondingly enhanced. Although specific decisions on the future direction of WVVOOF Independents were not made at the Conference, some of the directions in which it might evolve were presented and with this proposal, an environment in which all interests can be involved in WVVOOF Independents' future can be established.

It now depends on those WVVOOF organisations who were not able to be present at the Conference to support the resolution. This resolution was not a compromise. It was fully supported by all present and the hope is that the commitment to it can be extended to all WVVOOF organisations. I hope too that the independent hosts that I represent will be supportive of what we achieved in Korea. Please let me know!

**Ian Baird, WVVOOF Independents Co-ordinator**

### **Seoul Food cont.**

Of course, I wouldn't want any of you to get the impression that this was just a WVVOOF jolly. Having travelled all that way and emitted all that carbon we had to ensure that whilst we experienced much of what the country had to offer, we also got down to business too. Key items on the agenda, and referred to elsewhere in this newsletter, included the development of a revised mission statement; exploring how to resolve the dual independents listing; and the possible creation of an overarching, international WVVOOF Council or body. And these items weren't just discussed as part of the formal talks. It was often the incidental conversations one had with a colleague sat on the bus going to or from a host farm, the King's palace or a local market that could prompt a breakthrough or realisation. On occasion, I kidded myself that in some small way this must be what it is like to work at the United Nations! Except possibly the people I was working with were a whole lot nicer.

The highlights of this full-on week really are too many and various to list here – I have barely touched on our attendance at the IFOAM conference or encounters with Korean WVVOOF hosts – though the two-hour bus ride to Handemy eco village which turned into a cabaret act (chaired by Fanindra Regmi from WVVOOF Nepal and featuring most of the national co-ordinators) must rank as one of the most memorable.

As many of us sat up late into the night on our final day, awaiting taxis to whisk us off to early check-ins and scatter us once again to the four winds, I was most struck by a conversation with a colleague from Australia who sighed and commented that she had waited eight long years to get to meet everybody and put faces to names.

How lucky am I to have got to meet all these amazing people and talk about WVVOOF and the international scene after being in post for only three months. Now comes payback time, as I put into practice everything I have learned and agreed back home.

# the classifieds

Classified ads are now free up to 50 words at the editor's discretion. WWOOF accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of advertisements and does not endorse the products and services offered. You are advised to check before availing yourself of what is offered.

**Keen WWOOFer Male 50**, seeks long term WWOOFing UK or abroad. Honest, hard working, loves nature/animals. Modest wage would be helpful. Would consider short term. Stephen Taylor 9 Lund Court, Framwellgate-Moor, Durham, DH1 5EZ, UK. Tel 01207 560833 or 07413 153034

**WVVOOF UK** are looking for someone to help us officially clarify the situation with regards to volunteers and immigration in the UK. If you have some knowledge on the subject, or simply are interested and feel you could give us some time, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact scarlett@WVVOOF.org.uk

**Room to Let** in permaculture/WVVOOF host household in East Devon. Comfortable accommodation with shared use of kitchen or shared meals to suit. Large gardens. Negotiable rent. Excellent transport links. Call Phil 01404 851048

**Housesitter/s required**, for Christmas/New Year period to look after 2 ponies, cat, house and Rayburn in beautiful Highland glen. Wonderful walks, and bike rides locally. Will have to have own transport. Tel Juliette on: 01349 884440

**Long term volunteer opportunities** to be a part of the team straw baling, lime rendering and clay plastering our woodland house in Cornwall from march 2012. See [www.pentiddy.blogspot.com](http://www.pentiddy.blogspot.com). Please apply telling us a bit about yourself to ele and anthony, mail@pentiddy.co.uk or phone 01579 363775

**House wanted** in exchange for building, decorating, carpentry by family man experienced in the trade. Gardening, cleaning etc by partner. 2 children and dogs. Prefer countryside but all offer considered (refs) Please email [nutrigardens@gmail.com](mailto:nutrigardens@gmail.com) or call 07963 378733

**Energetic**, enthusiastic female WWOOFer seeks short or long term opportunities between Nov and March. Interests include animal husbandry, all aspects of horticulture, willow work, dry stone walling, DIY, learning new skills. Self contained accommodation and food required. Reliable, responsible, dedicated worker. Any area/s. Vicki 07761 906191

**Wanted** - Cheerful long-term WWOOFer April - October 2012 for small market garden enterprise on Isle of Mull - primarily to pick, pack and prepare veg and fruit for 'croft shop'; also opportunities to help with sowing and growing. Food and accommodation provided. Could combine with other part-time work. Contact [rosie@burgessmull.f9.co.uk](mailto:rosie@burgessmull.f9.co.uk) [www.ecocroft.co.uk](http://www.ecocroft.co.uk)



The WWOOF 40th Birthday Gang!

**next copy deadline: 31st January 2012** [editor@wwoof.org.uk](mailto:editor@wwoof.org.uk)  
**WVVOOF UK, P.O. Box 2154, Winslow, Bucks, MK18 3WS**