

SNAPSHOT



Vanessa Bone of Creative Cultures, Chair of CIWEM's Arts and Environment Network.

Career: My first job was lecturing in French. I then moved into educational administration and decided to do a post-graduate teaching degree. This convinced me that I didn't want to teach.

I turned my attentions from an academic career to arts management. I blagged my way into a job as administrator for the York Music Festival. I did that for a couple of years, which taught me a great deal. Back in the 80s there were no arts administration qualifications, so people just came into it.

I then managed a small gallery in York, before going into a local government Arts Department. I got a job with Greater London Arts, before becoming Deputy Chief Executive of South East Arts.

When my son was born I decided that I didn't want to go back to work full-time and I became a freelance, self-employed arts administrator. It has been a really interesting 12-13 years.

Turning point: Not going down the academic line. I thought, for me, it would be more productive, stimulating and creative to go into arts administration. I saw the national curriculum coming in and I didn't think it would be a good thing for the teaching profession.

Greatest career challenge: This was at South East Arts. I was getting paralysed by the funding of the arts. This was not policy but politically driven.

Most inspirational moment in your career: Working on educational programmes in schools, when I was up to my elbows, engaging with artists on projects, and seeing the children's faces light-up by what they were doing.

Greatest environmental concern: I am shocked and dismayed on a daily basis by global greed and the drive for profits, the way human greed drives money and money drives environmental destruction.

Have you made any lifestyle choices to benefit the environment? Being brought up in the 1950s by parents who had been through the war, you become more alive to the value of things and the need to be thrifty. I try to cut down on my food miles. I use air travel as a last resort. But I don't do carbon off-setting because I think it is a scam. I buy clothes from second-hand shops. The secret is shopping in wealthy areas. And I pass clothes on to charity shops and friends. I recycle. But the extent you can do that depends on your local authority and packaging is not labelled well, making it difficult to know what can be recycled.

How do you like to enjoy the natural world? I am a devoted townie. I have never wanted to live in the country. I find the country boring. But I love the natural world. It is mainly visual. My house overlooks the heath at Blackheath and I get to see these fantastic skylines and cloud formations. I can appreciate the tranquillity of a forest and I enjoy animals, everything from a shiny green fly to a deer.

Your eco-hero: I don't do heroes, because I think they are only slightly more acceptable as role models than celebrities. However, I read about Rebecca Hosking. She made a film in Hawaii and was concerned about birds dying because of waste plastic. She came back and decided over a drink in the pub to abolish plastic bags in her local town. Now even the supermarkets are phasing them out.

If you ruled the world for a day what would be your first declaration? I'm not much into declarations, but I thought I would show Hosking's film and David Attenborough's series everywhere on huge screens. They would be shown everywhere on all public screens and environmental films would be shown on all television channels for the full 24-hours.

Vanessa sadly died a few weeks after this interview. CIWEM's thoughts are with her family and friends at this difficult time. An obituary will be published in the next edition of *CIWEM Business Briefing*.