Changing lives: love of ospreys leads to new life for



A fascination with birds of prey has proved a life changer for 51-year-old Tracy Norris. The Hampshire GP was so enthralled with the ospreys nesting at a Welsh nature reserve that she has moved home and job to be near them.

“I first visited at the end of the 2013 season. I loved the area so much that I decided to come back the following year in my campervan,” says Tracy who was attracted by news that the Cors Dyfi Nature Reserve near Machynlleth was building a state-of-the-art osprey observatory, thanks to a £900,000 grant from HLF.

On her return she enquired about volunteering with the observatory project and she was hooked: “I have always loved raptors and in particular ospreys. When I heard they were nesting here I had to visit and then to see them in all their glory was just a dream come true,” says Tracy. “When I first walked to the 360 Observatory it brought tears to my eyes. It is such a special place.”

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>
> - Tracy

Although this was a volunteering first for Tracy she decided that a 400-mile round trip from her Hampshire home was no longer possible. First of all she bought a static caravan on a nearby campsite so she could stay all season and then decided that she wanted to be involved all year round. There was only one thing to do.

“Having become involved in the people engagement side of the project I decided that I would like to be involved more and out of season if possible. My career allows me to work pretty much anywhere,” she says. She had heard from friends at the nature reserve that there was a need for GPs in Machynlleth. “I decided to resign my partnership in Hampshire and move here lock, stock and barrel.”

And this is what she has now done, arranging her days off from the GP practice so as to be available to help at the Reserve which is run by the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust. Her new availability means she has been on hand to receive training in various aspects of reserve management.

“My involvement has improved my work-life balance enormously. The people are so friendly and we are like a huge family,” says Tracy. “I love talking about the birds and the animals on the reserve, the flowers and insects, and identifying other birds too. I feel so very at peace when I am at the project and, as my family are from South Wales, I feel as if I have come home.”



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