



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Stroud Valleys Project
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	23/2/23; [and 7/9/23]
BRIEF REPORT	
<p>SVP continues to run a wide range of projects at 15 sites across the district from Berkely and Cam to Bisley, Prinknash and Kingswood, including tree-planting at SDC-owned Salmon Springs and other sites (c. 8000 in 2022); Himalayan Balsam removal and hedge-planting along the canal; installation of an eel-pass at Arundel Mill Pond; creation of the Sensory Garden in Stratford Park; habitat creation and management at SDC-owned Capel's Mill Pond; guided walks (bats, snowdrops, swifts, etc.) and talks and community events such as the Landscapes of the Lark Festival on the Commons and Simon Pickering on Stroud's otters; Carers in Nature for carers to benefit from outdoor activities; allotments in Stroud and Bisley for less independent individuals; Prinknash Abbey Walled Garden; a writing workshop with Katie Fforde; and many more. Around 150 volunteers take part in these, as well as hundreds of people attending the events. The Eco Shop in Stroud offers recycling of items not collected by Ubico, refills of cleaning products, and sells many environmentally-themed items. Plans are being made with Stroud Town Council and Cotswold Canals Connected to install a bridge over the canal at Capel's Mill. A regular page in Stroud News and Journal features SVP projects and broader environmental issues. SVP works with c.30 partner organisations, including SDC.</p> <p>SVP was the Winner of the Environmental Project of the Year in SNJ's 2023 Community Awards; runner-up in STC's Diversity and Inclusion award; and is Stroud Coop's current Charity Partner of the Year.</p> <p>As for many small charities, finances have been difficult recently. SVP is a creative fundraiser, good at obtaining funds for projects from e.g. the Lucky Severn Lottery and the Big Give crowd-funder, and special events such as an upcoming sponsored firewalk. The Eco Shop also makes money, and has recovered well following the pandemic. But core funding for staff (c.80% of expenditure), rent, etc. is harder. There has been a budget deficit in recent quarters, which inevitably means drawing on reserves. Staff will nevertheless receive a 5% salary increase from October. Individuals can help by becoming Friends (see the website) and using the Eco Shop.</p>	
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr. Martin Brown
DATE	4/9/23