



AGM Held at Angie's on 15th January 2024

1. Those present were: - Mary, Angie, Pete, Denis, Andrew, Ian, Kirsty, Fred, and Ann.

Apologies sent were from: - Leonie, Sarah, Mike, and Julie.

2. AGM

- a. Election of Committee: All committee members were happy to continue in their roles.
- b. A finance report was given by the treasurer Andrew. We have sufficient funds to support the website for this coming year but will have to look at ways of obtaining a grant in the future.
- c. There was a review of the Constitution, Volunteer Agreement and Risk Assessments with Kirsty Newberry, Volunteer Groups Support Officer. All were signed off.
- d. AOB. It was noted that Brush Cutter training only covers the user for 5 years. Denis and hopefully Mike will undertake a course to be arranged. There is a Woodland Management course that hopefully Pete will undertake. First Aiders held up to date certification.

We have been incredibly lucky to have had some practical help from Michael who is funded by Gallagher, the company he works for, on a couple of occasions this year. We were concerned as to who's insurance is being used to cover him in the event of an accident: SGC or his company. This is being investigated by Kirsty.

3.

- a. Pete gave a detailed update on the main activities undertaken for 2023 along with an action plan produced in April for the years 23/24.
433 hours were worked, including the support from Michael.
Pete attended a Pond Management Course and there was a guided tour for the Green Spaces Forum members.

There was a Scything course held by SGC in our Orchard during the summer. Maintenance of trees included weeding, mulching, pruning, and raising of crowns etc.

Management of bramble, blackthorn, and pernicious weeds.

Collection of litter on a regular basis. Timber removed from the pond and litter from the stream.

Paths were kept clear.

A bird box survey was conducted.

Hedges were maintained and created.

Brush cutter activity helped to maintain views and sight lines.

- b. Future workday activity for the coming months include: -
 - Hedge work, introducing willow, tidy and clear the area on the left of the orchard towards the exit.
 - Prune fruit trees, weed, mulch, and stake all trees.
 - Coppice/pollard, blackthorn/bramble management.
 - Litter pick the Wetland.
 - Clear leaves around snowdrops and species daffs.
 - Plant out young trees and harvest holly for a protective hedge.
 - Brush cutter and hedge trimmer activity.
 - Clean benches.
- c. SGC Wetland Project. The naturally occurring leaky dams along with the trenches are working well at holding back flood water. We are not sure yet how effective the new Bund is. Kirsty is going to discuss with other SGC officers what, if any plans, there are still to be achieved. We would like to see the Dogwood cut back this year as although in the winter its colour is wonderful, it is spreading across the width of the wetland and blocking the view. We discussed wildflowers being introduced into the wetland again as the diversity is drastically reduced.
- d. There was discussion about the ongoing maintenance of the pond. The trees have grown so tall around it that it is too shady and needs more light to keep diversity of species. SGC to be consulted. The invasive Floating Pennywort needs careful management, and this was also discussed. The ducks we have always seen on the pond have been absent and it is suggested that it is due to the area needing tree surgery to allow a flight path.

- e. We are hoping to acquire funding for a new bench to be sited at the front of our nursery area over the stone bridge on the left. SGC have approved it in principal but funding and insurance need to be sought.
- f. Bird box survey completed in December showed, apart from Box 6 all had remains of a nest. Two tit boxes were replaced. A robin box and a bat box were also added, and an old bat box rehung.
We have a dozen or so boxes all in good condition. No spares are held currently. If a box is unsuccessful for 2 years running it should be relocated.
- g. Trees: There were two new trees recently planted in the lower southern end of the valley by SGC as part of their dedication remit. In better weather, we are to complete the plotting of trees, planted over the past few years, as well as those in the orchard, for inclusion on the map held on the website.
- h. Ian gave a resume of the website showing use and content. Although funding it is a problem, we think it is well worthwhile to keep it going.
- i. The South Glos Forum meeting that we normally attend was cancelled. Next one is hopefully in March.
- j. We have heard that one of the new Parish Councilors, Stephen Pick, is to be involved in running the Local Climate and Nature Action Plan. (Latterly the Local Nature Action Plan). We have yet to know what involvement we can take.
- k. Wildlife around the valley was discussed. The Egret is spotted daily, now the the weather is colder. Andrew has asked us to look out for Waxwings during the colder weather as flocks of these birds have been seen in Gloucestershire. We regularly see healthy foxes in the surrounding area.
- l. AOB: The friends group mailing list was discussed, and the secretary will be looking into this.
John Morris of SGC has been invited, through Kirsty, for a site visit to advise on unresolved issues.
- m. The next meeting will be held in the summer. Date to be confirmed.