



Meeting held at Mary's on 11th Sept 2025

Those present were Mary, Angie, Pete, Denis, Andrew, Mike, Liz, Pip, Sally and Natalie Everson

Apologies sent were from Leonie, Owen, Aaron and Ian.

We welcomed Natalie Everson who has taken over from Kirsty as Volunteer Group Support Officer

1: Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2: Pete, who is our Workday Manager then gave us a resume of tasks that have been completed since the last meeting: -

There have been 14 official workdays which equate to 174 hrs. of labour. The orchard had an annual prune and was tidied up around the trees with weeding etc.

Coppicing was carried out at the Badminton Rd end of the valley and primroses planted.

Donated Yew was planted to reinforce the edge of the path where the fence is breaking up. There was a meeting with a SGC officer to discuss the removal of the excess Dogwood in the Wetland.

Litter picking and a general tidy of the stream in March.

There was a tidy around spring plants to allow for good flowering.

Fallen timber was removed and relocated to more suitable areas.

There was a lot of brush cutter and hedge trimming activity.

The Orchard trees were maintained, and ties adjusted etc. and were weeded and watered. We waited all year for promised mulch for the trees but to this date we haven't secured any.

Crowns were raised on Oak trees and overgrown plum trees.

Management of bramble and nettle was ongoing and reduction of excess fruit on the orchard trees was carried out.

Native wildflower seeds were broadcast.

The Wildflower triangle at the middle entrance was cut back after seeds had fallen and resown.

The Methodist Church paths were tidied.

Sight views were recreated after the annual grass cutting and any areas that were damaged were tidied.

The Elder on the middle path was significantly reduced.

One member attended the First Aid Course on 26/8/25 provided by SGC.

NB. We welcomed Sally, Aaron and Pip who joined Liz as new recruits to the Happy Band of Volunteers.

Pete then went on to tell us about the proposed work from now until the AGM in January.

Keeping paths clear of fallen trees etc.

Bramble and Blackthorn management.

Hedge work and brush cutter activity.

Plant species daffodils and broadcast other wildflowers.

Weed the nurseries.

Maintain and prune the trees where appropriate.

Reduce Sedge Grass.

Tidy the pond and when a good-sized group is available, remove the Invasive Pennywort.

Coppicing and gathering bean sticks etc.

Annual Birdbox Survey in October or November.

Removal of rubbish accumulating in the stream will be ongoing. Above the 4th Leaky Dam several large items will be removed.

3: The Natural Flood Management Project carried out by Bristol Avon Rivers Trust:

The Leaky dams and the Berms are it would seem doing what was intended. That of changing the course of the stream to benefit fish, plants and invertebrates, and using our Valley to hold back flood water. Having had little rain over the summer we have now had an abundance of it, and it is causing some concerns among the members and indeed the public.

The Four Leaky Dams built in the Wetland are indeed holding the water back, but with only the one channel being open to the Wetland, the water has been very high under the stone bridge. Some days barely an inch of space.

Residents have expressed worries that the stream is indeed blocked but the Group have verified good flow along the stream from the 4th Leaky dam that is not visible to walkers.

There is going to be Fixed Point Photography allowing BARTS to monitor the project's progress. There will be a notice with a QR code for anyone interested in taking a photo and uploading it to BARTS. This will be up and running very soon.

4: SGC Work

South Glos came into the valley to carry out the annual mow. First with the large machine with pick up, then a smaller machine to access more awkward areas. We have been in touch with the officer responsible for our valley to enquire when the annual mow of one third of the Wetland will be carried out. Also, when the Cornus will be further reduced. We also wish him to consider the drainage from the damp meadow under the path and into the Wetland. This regularly blocks the path and has already done so this autumn. The handrail at the Badminton Rd end of the valley has been reported as broken on numerous occasions and we are still awaiting action. Also, the stone wall at the middle path alongside the children's play area has fallen and been reported.

5: Tools and equipment.

Shears, loppers and secateurs were purchased. Two new bird boxes were acquired and are ready to replace any of our existing ones that may be damaged.

The Bug Hotels have been removed being inactive and donated to Downend in Bloom where they are being refurbished for their Bee Garden.

6: Trees.

There has been an unusually high number of trees losing their branches this year. SGC came and sadly had to take down one of the two American Red Oaks along the back of the Aintree Drive houses. The Oak by the wooden bridge lost a large branch and now lost another. The Oak in the Spinney also lost branches, which is very concerning with it being along the central path. The Plum trees were so heavily laden with fruit this year they too lost branches and were dealt with by SGC. One of the trees by the children's play area planted by SGC looks dead but we will monitor it until Spring. Sadly, there was a fire in the Orchard which scorched several of the trees and we can only hope they will recover.

7: Maintenance has been carried out on Notice Boards where they have been cleaned, repaired and repainted where necessary.

8: Training courses provided by SGC have been undertaken and further courses will hopefully be attended. The First Aid Box has been updated. We discussed the Lonealert app that can be downloaded and used to access help in an emergency. Also, What 3 Words to provide correct location information in an emergency whilst working in the valley.

9: The Friends Website.

This is updated as and when necessary and remains a source of contact with the public. It will require funding for a further year in late December, and we discussed ways to explore how to do this.

10: South Glos Green Spaces Forum

We regularly send members to attend this group meeting. It is a way to communicate with other groups and with councillors. Lately though we feel it is heavily loaded towards parks and not smaller open spaces.

11: Parish Council Local Nature Action Plan.

Whilst this new plan of the parish council sounded exciting, we have yet to have any communication with them regarding our patch. They were recently concentrating on Community Gardens as corridors so we may come into their remit eventually. The Yew trees we planted though were given to us by them.

12: Wildlife news.

Sparrowhawks nested at the southern end of the valley and the Great Spotted Woodpecker was very vocal. A Kingfisher was seen by one of the group and we hope to see the Egrets again during the winter.

13: Any other business.

50 Species Daffodils and Wildflower seed were purchased along with a Tick remover for the first aid box.

14. Date of next meeting was set at Thursday January 15th . 7pm at Angie's.

