

South Stoke Wildlife & Conservation Group: Trustees' Report May 2025

The Wildlife Group has now been active for four years and is well established in the Parish, and, as well as having good links with other local nature-based groups, is now firmly on the map of Oxfordshire societies benefiting the environment.

The group has again been very active and has continued to run a varied series of events in pursuit of our aims - to promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the environment around us. We have continued to attract commensurate grant funding for our activities, as well as raising funds from events such as quiz nights, together with donations.

Our main objectives for the year have been around hedge planting, habitat improvement - which has included hedge laying - and participation in groups seeking to restore local spaces for better conditions for wildlife.

During the last year we also ran the following activities in South Stoke; regular wildflower and invertebrates surveys, a dragonfly survey, our annual glow worm survey, installation of swift boxes, a pond dipping event, butterfly and dragonfly surveys, a talk on Gardening for Wildlife, two wildlife based pub quizzes, repeated bird survey transects (conducted by a local birder) and several trips to nature reserves. We also took a stall at the annual May Fair with the aim of engaging with the community, promoting our activities and raising funds.

Trustees visited the Knepp rewilding site for inspiration, Lardon Chase to view the spring butterflies and Westonbirt Arboretum in Gloucestershire to look at the trees.

The improvement and ongoing maintenance of the reclaimed parcel of land that is now designated White Hill Quarry has been given over to the Wildlife Group by the Parish Council and we have organised for a local group - Wallingford Green Gym - to undertake hedge laying activities along with general improvements to this beautifully maturing haven for nature.

We made significant progress on our strategic aims this year:

1. We continued planting hedging along Icknield Rd by the old aerodrome - this year our volunteers planted just over 230m in total - and we are approaching a kilometre of new hedging over the

lifetime of the group. We also planted twenty disease-resistant elm trees around the parish.

2. We continued to work with nature-based advocate groups and funders to work up a long-term vision for specific areas for wildlife improvement and restoration in and around South Stoke; this includes an active role in the steering group for the Lower Meadow planned restoration, alongside the Parish Council, the Environment Agency and BBOWT.
3. We continue to provide support for other areas in the parish that need volunteers to develop and maintain their sites eg The Park community growing areas and environs.
4. We continue to record species and numbers into national databases to contribute to an understanding of trends and issues – to date we have identified nearly 1,500 species around South Stoke and submitted 5,400 biodiversity records to the iRecord database.
5. We contributed to the Oxfordshire lead Local Nature Recovery Strategy by identifying areas within the parish that have significant potential to be improved for nature.
6. In terms of education and involvement we have built a growing online presence with 109 Facebook followers, a regularly updated website and a quarterly published e-newsletter, now enjoyed by over 100 subscribers.

In terms of funds SSWCG finished the year with reserves of £1926.23, with income of £6773.74 and expenditure of £5771.22 over the period. Income included two grants from SODC, two from TOE, one from CAG and further amounts from fund raising, including from two pub quizzes and a Village BBQ, plus additional sums from donations. In terms of financial strategy, the Trustees agreed to establish a Reserve Fund to cover running costs in the event of a collapse in income, at a level of two years of these costs estimated at £1000, and to be built up over two years. Please see the separate Financial Report for 2024/2025 for further details.

Plans for 2025/26 include further hedge planting and laying, planting of more trees - including disease-resistant elms and rare Black Poplars - installation of additional Swift nesting boxes to expand colonies, running our regular activities and surveys in order to continue identifying and recording species and to explore and progress new opportunities to protect and enhance South Stoke's environment.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank our many supporters, notably Maggie Filipova-Rivers, our District Councillor who helped us again this year with more generous grant funding. We were

also given funds by the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment, the Community Action Group and several individual donors. We would like to offer condolences to Martin Bullock's family following his death in September last year and convey our appreciation for his generosity in allowing us to plant hedges and undertake wildflower surveys across his land. Also, to Guy Hildred for allowing this, and last year's, hedge planting on his land.

As ever we would also like to thank all of our wonderful volunteers - who pitch up in all weathers - and all the rest of the Trustees who contribute their time, energy and effort into making the group enjoyable and successful.

**Ian Haslam, Chair, South Stoke Wildlife & Conservation Group,
May 2025.**

South Stoke Wildlife & Conservation Group

Registered Charity No. 1203252

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ending 5 April 2025

	2024/2025		2023/2024	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
SODC Everyone Active Grant (2023/24)		-		930.00
SODC Everyone Active Grant (2024/25)		943.00		-
TOE Grant No 1		160.00		-
TOE Grant No 2		1,496.52		-
CAG Grant		119.00		-
SODC Councillor Grant		800.00		-
Fund Raising		2,294.92		1,695.32
Gift Aid		105.00		67.50
Donations				
Cash	840.00		379.00	
Go Fund Me	14.31	854.31	43.67	422.67
Other		0.99		
TOTAL INCOME		<u>6,773.74</u>		<u>3,115.49</u>
EXPENDITURE		£		£
Activities		3,955.47		2,509.38
Equipment		1,206.16		662.98
Website		423.59		-
Marketing & Advertising		-		956.00
Meetings		16.00		8.00
Insurance		170.00		158.92
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>5,771.22</u>		<u>4,295.28</u>
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		1,002.52		(1,179.79)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 5 APRIL 2025

RESERVES

General Fund				
As at 6 April 2024	923.81		2,103.60	
Excess of Income over Expenditure	1,002.52		(1,179.79)	
	1,926.33		-	
Transfer to General Reserve	(500.00)		-	
Transfer from General Reserve	-	1,426.33		
General Reserve as at 6 April 2024	-		-	
Transfer from General Fund	500.00			
Transfer to General Fund	-	500.00		
		<u>1,926.33</u>		<u>923.81</u>

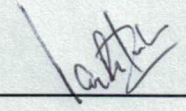
REPRESENTED BY

Balance at Bank as at 6 April 2024

	£		
SODC Everyone Active Grant (2022/23)	159.28		159.28
SODC Everyone Active Grant (2023/24)	44.13		44.13
SODC Everyone Active Grant (2024/25)	64.21		-
TOE Grant No 1	-		-
TOE Grant No 2	-		-
CAG Grant 2024	-		-
SODC Councillor Grant (2025)	119.58		-
General Fund	1,039.13		720.40
General Reserve	500.00		-
	<u>1,926.33</u>		<u>923.81</u>

Committee Chair:

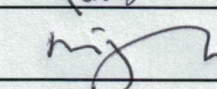
Ian Haslam

Signed: 

Date: 14/04/25

Honorary Treasurer:

Mark Taylor

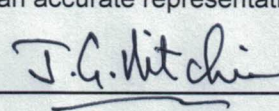
Signed: 

Date: 14.4.25

I have examined the books, vouchers and bank statements relating to South Stoke Wildlife & Conservation Group Charity and in my opinion they show an accurate representation of the Group's finances.

Honorary Auditor:

Joe Ritchie

Signed: 

Date: 25.4.25