Sustainable South Brent

Annual Report to the Charity Commission 2026

Chair's Introduction

It has been a busy and instructive year for us Trustees, not to mention a bit of a steep learning curve for some! But we have been helped enormously by the incredible work and dedication of all the previous Trustees who have built a Charity that is as resilient as its name implies. So we thank them all for providing firm foundations – and inspiration – for us to build on.

It has been a year of progress on several fronts: the Repair Café and Tuesday Fair Share continue to go from strength to strength; we have been able to restart the Litter Picks as a regular event thanks to two brilliant new volunteers; and the Community Market Garden & Orchard project is proceeding, with a hard-working Steering Group navigating complex negotiations to achieve a lease, while also doing practical work on the ground, including planting over a hundred fruit trees.

All our projects rely on groups of remarkable volunteers who achieve an enormous amount through dedication, enthusiasm and commitment.

We have been holding a series of Wildlife Talks at the Old School and these have drawn good audiences. We are currently re-thinking what we can achieve with regard to Wildlife and Conservation, which are central to what SSB is about. Details will emerge as the year progresses.

Finally, for now, thank all of you for being part of our amazing community – SSB is you after all.

We hope this Report is useful and answers any questions you might have about who we are and what we do, but please get in touch if you want to know more.

Joanna Rothon Chair chair@ssb.org.uk

Company Number 7309926 **Registered Charity No. 1145553**

School House, Totnes Road, South Brent TQ10 9BP

Projects' Progress

Community Market Garden & Orchard

Sustainable South Brent is negotiating a freehold transfer from South Hams District Council. Meanwhile we have been working with a three-month rolling licence which has allowed us to do some preparation work on the field.

Last May we planted 200 donated seed potatoes in compost from the Marsh Compost Site which resulted in an unexpectedly large crop, much of which was donated to SSB's Tuesday Fair Share. A nature survey took place on the field in June 2025 supported by our local plant, wildlife and insect experts which was well attended by our volunteers.

In late 2025 we were given funding by SHDC to buy fruit trees. These were supplied by Adam's Apples and had to be planted by the beginning of March 2026. Together with additional trees donated by the Devon Wildlife Trust we were able to plant an orchard of 140 fruit trees on Sunday 15 March with the help of our amazing volunteers – 37 adults and 6 children – and supported by the SSB Wood Group. Despite working in the rain all day a great time was had by all.

Project Co-ordinator: Joe Rothon Contact: marketgarden@ssb.org.uk





Marsh Community Compost Centre

The Marsh community compost site was substantially renovated in October with very generous funding from the parish and district councils. Work included re-surfacing the yard and new compost bays, with improved volunteer facilities still to come. While the site was closed we took the opportunity to provide several tons of compost to the Market Garden project. And our glorious band of volunteers worked to return about 25 tons of compost to the community during the year.

On a beautiful midsummer evening, the Marsh hosted a brilliant solstice celebration cook-out for the volunteers and the new trustee group, an event which will be back by popular demand this year.

Project Co-ordinators: Stuart Saunders & Rowan Wylie Contact: marsh@ssb.org.uk



Community Fridge

Almost every day of the week surplus and end-of-line food is collected by volunteers from supermarkets and local businesses who would otherwise dispose of it. This is put in the Community Fridge at the Old School Centre for the people of South Brent to come and take to use to feed themselves and their families. More volunteers check the fridge room every day to keep it clean and make sure no out-of-date food remains in the fridge, helping to keep our environmental health rating at the maximum of 5.

The food in the fridge is available to all in the village and surrounding areas. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 52 weeks a year. In the last six months almost 5 tonnes of food have been saved from going to waste. Following the recent installation of a CCTV camera we know that the fridge is visited over 100 times a day and so all the food put into the fridge is very quickly taken to be eaten!

A temporary home has been found for the fridge while the Old School Centre is closed for renovation.

Many thanks to all involved in this project, particularly our volunteers and everybody donating surplus food.

Project Co-ordinator: Felicity Ferry Contact: fridge@ssb.org.uk

Litter Picking

Litter picking afternoons happen on the last Sunday of alternate months. They began under the umbrella of *Talking Rubbish* several years ago and are now a simple way of taking care of the environment and our village while getting together with others.

Everyone is welcome, children need to be accompanied, using the kit is fun, and we finish with cake!

Project Co-ordinators: Ted Coombs & Linda Simpson Contact: rubbish@ssb.org.uk

The Luces Garden

A landmark was reached in 2025 when the Luces finally became the property of South Brent Parish, a gift from Noel Gould and his family. SSB has undertaken to look after the site, so if you're interested in helping with that please contact Rowan at the address below.

We aim to keep the path clear for walkers and to provide access to the bench to sit in the sun; to encourage a wildflower meadow and enable the many fruit trees and bushes to thrive for the benefit of all. It's our space to enjoy and share with wildlife. At the moment nettles and ground elder are dominant, but regular scything should increase biodiversity.

Project Co-ordinator: Rowan Wylie Contact: luces@ssb.org.uk



Repair Cafe

Repair Cafés are held 6 times a year on the second Saturday morning of alternate months, January onwards. We have a fantastic team of volunteers and we need as many general helpers as we do repairers, so about 22 every Repair Café.

The categories of item that we repair include electrical, textiles, leather, upholstery, jewellery, general household, tools (including sharpening), bikes and scooters. In 2025 we had 192 clients, repaired 225 items and were unable to repair (or just advised on) only 51. The most popular service is tool and knife sharpening/repairs.

We've had some heartwarming stories behind the items for repair:

- One youngster brought 2 broken remote control vehicles which were particularly special to him; once they were mended they were put through their paces in amongst the tables, chairs – and visitors' feet.
- Someone brought a sentimental necklace to be restrung.
- We had a 1990s Buzz Lightyear toy needing a leg replaced.
- We even mended a vintage fruit machine!

Do you have something that needs mending? Please bring it along! And enjoy our lovely café while you wait.

If you have any skills you could offer or just like being helpful, please send us a message and join our lovely crew. You only volunteer for the sessions you want to - no pressure to do more.

Project Co-ordinator: Jude Bishop Contact: repaircafe@ssb.org.uk



Community School Garden

The garden group is starting its seventeenth growing season, working alongside children of all ages from 4-11 years old. Our main focus is growing food to enjoy tasting in the garden and supplying the school kitchen with our larger harvests when possible. We run weekly gardening sessions with our small, but wonderful, group of volunteers.

We also continue to develop the wildlife area, which is proving to be a suitable habitat for snakes, dragonflies and many more species, much to the children's delight. Occasionally we run workshops in school on a range of "green" subjects – renewable energy, biodiversity and recycling for example. We have been very lucky in being able to ask experts from other SSB projects to contribute to these events.

We are now affiliated to the RHS Campaign for School Gardening and are hoping to increase our growing areas this year to incorporate more produce.

Project Co-ordinator: Helen Hall Contact: schoolgarden@ssb.org.uk



Tuesday Fair Share

The Tuesday Fair Share (TFS) redistributes surplus food and hygiene products to the community. It runs every Tuesday afternoon at Palstone Park Recreation Pavilion (the Rec) between 2.30 and 4pm.

We currently receive 250Kg of food each week from the Charity FareShare. The food is free but, to cover transport and rent costs, we suggest a contribution of £3.50 for 10 items. There are often also free hygiene products, free fruit and vegetables from local farms and always free refreshments including homemade cakes. We welcome 40 to 50 people each week.

We estimate that over the last year we have redistributed between 15 and 20 tonnes of food, equivalent to approximately 40,000 meals or £50,000. TFS could not operate without the support of our partner, Plymouth-based FareShare Southwest, and our dedicated group of 15-29 volunteers.

To learn more about volunteering or more about TFS please look at our Frequently Asked Questions on the website or contact us at the address below.

Project Co-ordinators: Caroline Grundy & Penny Wainwright
Contact: tuesdayfairshare@ssb.org.uk



Hedges and Woodland Group

We welcomed new participants to our programme of hedge and woodland work over the year with over 50 people taking part. We enjoyed practising the rural traditions of hedge laying, coppicing, tree planting and maintaining work tools, and we harvested the produce for processing and drying as firewood.

The companionship of working together outdoors and the emphasis on learning skills continued to be important features of the group, while walks, visits, quizzes and pizzas all figured in our programme of social activities.

Project Co-ordinators: Robin Toogood & Harry Jennings Contact: woodgroup@ssb.org.uk



Energy

Around twenty very enthusiastic, very young people brought their own infectious energy to the recent *Energy Fair*, getting to grips with the serious business of making mini-solar-scarecrows, while in the hall next door their parents and many others considered the less-fun, but very necessary matter of energy in our homes.

The one hundred or so who attended had a variety of local businesses to engage with ranging from a professional handyman, David Gibson, advising on loft insulation, to much larger firms – Mole Energy; Bloom Renewables and EcoNRG – well-seasoned installers of renewable energy kit. South Dartmoor Community Energy were also out in advisory force. Their presentation regarding Government Grants was complemented by a home-owner's depiction of going through the – highly effective but occasionally painful – 'retrofit' process of installing energy efficiency measures.

Friends from the much-lauded South Brent Community Energy Society were there to engage in community consultation around the wind turbine's future – your input is invited!

Installed in August, thanks to an SBCES grant, the Primary School's new solar panels output was displayed: over 5000 kWh and counting. SSB volunteers showcased the thermal imaging cameras that have – throughout the year – been helping our community identify heat loss from their homes and – on occasion – water leaks and the odd swarm of bees.

Big thanks to the star team of SSB volunteers and to our collaborators at Sustainable South Hams. Lovely that you chose SSB to co-host this engaging event.

Project Co-ordinator: Hayden Gabriel Contact: energy@ssb.org.uk

Youth Liaison

Busy, Buzzy Work Experience 2025. Tending Hope Wood's recently planted trees; chatting with the Hub users and providers from South Brent & District Caring; helping little ones in SSB's School Garden; visiting South Brent Community Energy Society's wind turbine; helping out at SSB's Tuesday Fair Share; checking in with Cows in Clover; making compost in SSB's Compost Centre; finding out about SSB's Repair Café, Market Garden and the Hedges and Wood Group. Phew! That's a lot for 17-year-olds to pack into one week's Work Experience, but the five who attended rose so well to the challenge and they didn't stop there.

After all that effort, there was some thinking to do: how do those activities relate to the students' A-level studies, their career ambitions, and a wider global context? And how does the work meet SSB's aim of "creating a resilient, low-carbon community where all life thrives"?

Those reflections were then presented by the students to the activity providers, all accompanied by tea and cake and conversation. A lovely finale to our time together.

Big thanks to all who provided the opportunities. You welcomed us in so warmly and the week couldn't have happened without your kind engagement. Thank you.

Project Co-ordinator: Hayden Gabriel Contact: yaa@ssb.org.uk



Hope Wood

Hope Wood is without doubt the most ambitious nature recovery project ever seen in the parish of South Brent. It is a 55-acre native woodland creation scheme led by South Hams District Council with planting organised by ParkLife South West. However, it would not have happened without tireless work and negotiation by leading members of Sustainable South Brent and SSB remains an active partner in the project.

The winter of 2025-26 is the second and final planting season which has concentrated on the northernmost section of the site, close to the Marley Head road. From 1 December last year there were 12,500 trees to plant consisting of native broadleaved woodland (oak, silver birch, yew, rowan, hawthorn and twelve other species) surrounded by a fringe of so-called "scrub" (hazel, blackthorn and others). Finally there is a belt of wet woodland along the Horse Brook and its feeder-stream in which willow and alder predominate.

At the time of writing the woodland and its scrub fringe are planted and good progress has been made with the wet woodland. This is thanks in large part to dedicated South Brent volunteers turning out in all weathers on Fridays and Saturdays over the winter. Their work is creating a lasting legacy, not just for our community, but for the health of the planet.



The Hub

The hub has become an important focal point of SSB. It is where the trustees and several of the projects hold their meetings, and where members can drop in on Friday mornings for informal chats. It has been used for talks, film shows and exhibition displays over the past few years. We share the space with South Brent and District Caring and the Old School Community Centre.

Treasurer's Report

SSB's overall income in the year to September 30 2025 was £43,809. Operating income of £21,949 was supplemented by generous grants totalling £21,860 for the refurbishment of the composting facility. These monies were provided by local authorities and representatives. In addition to ordinary expenditures of £17,446, an onward grant of £27,178 came due for the primary school solar panels. A healthy ordinary operating income of £4,504 in combination with the flow of grant funds thus resulted in overall net expenditure of £815.

The organisation continued to be supported by its loyal and expanding membership, and by numerous generous donations and the ongoing efforts of several volunteer enterprises. The success of the new FareShare market, which aims to run on a small margin, resulted in increases in ordinary income and expense relative to prior years.

At year end the cash balance was £78,147. This included the aforementioned solar grant which was payable at the turn of the financial year and was disbursed in October of 2025, the remaining reserves totalling £60,523. Of the reserve, £24,346 was restricted cash for use in the compost facility refurbishment.

Stuart Saunders (for the finance committee)

Membership Report

Our membership reached a record level of 330 by the end of 2025, and the great majority have already subscribed again for 2026: thank you! But if you're a recent member who hasn't yet re-subscribed for 2026: there's still time, and now is a good moment, to be 'back in' ahead of our AGM on 14 April. Please don't leave it until the day itself unless you can be sure of getting there nearer to 7 than to 7:30 – the signing-in tables get very busy as people arrive!

Your subscriptions remain the bedrock covering SSB's baseline running costs. Even more importantly your support as Members is a great encouragement to the Trustees – and a major factor towards the success of our grant applications. So SSB has once again been able to take on new challenges through 2025, and now during 2026 too!

Not yet a Member and would now like to Join? It's quick and easy to do online. Use the JOIN button at the top of our website page: www.ssb.org.uk.

Or, if you're one of the recent members who hasn't yet re-subscribed, you should have received a reminder email by the time you see this Newsletter, with details of the payment options. (If not, please check your spam/junk folder!) This year might you be able to set up an annual Standing Order for us with your Bank? Then you will never need reminding again.

Membership Secretary: Alexander Eaden Contact: membership@ssb.org.uk

Structure, governance and management

Sustainable South Brent is a private company limited by guarantee, established solely for charitable purposes. The Charity is regulated by The Articles of Association that allow for up to 13 trustees elected by the Members, one nominated by South Brent Parish Council and up to 4 co-opted trustees appointed by the existing trustees.

Current trustees:

Joanna Rothon (chair)
Carol Clifton (vice-chair)
David Butcher (joint treasurer)
Stuart Saunders (joint treasurer)
Moira Prosser
Michael Cady
Caroline Grundy
Helen Hall
Rachel Rafiqi (parish council representative)

Stood down since the last AGM:
Tony Kuhl
Maggie King
Becky Warnes
Richard Walters

Holders of other SSB roles:

John Severn - company secretary
Alexander Eaden - membership secretary
John Rawlinson - website manager
Tim Ferry – social media and newsflashes
Alan Lewis – IT support

Stood down since the last AGM:
Alastair Cuthbertson

We remember Eva Stephens, who very sadly passed away in January 2026. She was an imaginative and energetic trustee whose legacy lives on in the projects she helped to create and the people she inspired.

The trustees declare that they have approved the above report.

Joanna Rothon
Chair of trustees
October 7th 2026

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Registered Number 07309926

SUSTAINABLE SOUTH BRENT

Micro-entity Accounts

30 September 2025

Micro-entity Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	£
Fixed Assets		7,114	9,947
Current Assets		78,385	52,296
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		(24976)	(25,251)
Net current assets (liabilities)		53,409	27,045
Total assets less current liabilities		60,523	36,992
Total net assets (liabilities)		60,523	36,992
Reserves		60,523	36,992

- For the year ending 30 September 2025 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.
- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.
- The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Board on 12th May 2026

And signed on their behalf by:

David Butcher, Director

Notes to the Micro-entity

Accounts for the period ended 30 September 20254

	2025	*2024*
Employees		
Average number of employees during the period	0	0

SUSTAINABLE SOUTH BRENT
REGISTERED CHARITY NO 1145553
COMPANIES HOUSE NO 0730 9926

YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the accounts for the above year as set out on the financial statements:

1. Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ended 30 September 2025 showing a total deficit of £814.65

2. Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 30 September 2025 showing Net Funds of £60,523.01

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by Sustainable South Brent and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and I have sought explanations where necessary and appropriate.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out below,

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the need:
  (a) to keep reasonable accounting records, and,
  (b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records,

  have not been met, or,

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



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Sarah Reynolds
ICB Member No. 434886

Date: 28 August 2026