

Explore, Enhance, Protect  
and Promote Smestow  
Valley Local Nature  
Reserve' (SVLNR)

# Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve Heritage Lottery Bid







## Explore, Enhance, Protect and Promote Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve



Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve (SVLNR) follows the natural valley of Smestow Brook alongside the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal forming a green corridor covering 51 hectares and approximately 4.5 kilometres long.



Stretching across western Wolverhampton it provides over 51 ha of high quality natural green and blue space within easy reach of 100,000+ people who live within 2 miles.



The canal, the railway walk, and surrounding nature reserve provide excellent habitat for a range of wildlife such as wildflowers, birds, insects, amphibians and mammals many of conservation priority in the UK, such as the water vole. SVLNR was designated Wolverhampton's first official nature reserve in 1998 and forms part of the Black Country Global Geopark.





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The Staffordshire and Worcester Canal designed by James Brindley is over 200 years old and forms a key feature of SVLNR. The site also contains a number of Grade II listing structures including the distinctive landmark 'Meccano Bridge' which carries the disused railway line across the canal.



This unique heritage site linked to the city and the regions industrial heritage is in need of restoration and management. This project will allow us to enhance, preserve and highlight SVLNR.



SVLNR links the canal network to the North and National Cycle Route 81 which runs from Wolverhampton to Aberystwyth providing opportunities for a range of health improving activities such as walking, running, cycling and canoeing.





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In August 2023 an application was submitted to The Heritage Lottery Fund to:

1. Increase accessibility onto and throughout SVLNR including paths and access points making them inviting and welcoming.
2. Restore, highlight and promote the built heritage including the landmark Meccano bridge and the platform at cupcake lane.
3. Improve the natural heritage of SVLNR enhancing the canal corridor to protect and expand resilient habitats increasing biodiversity and climate resilience.
4. Create signage / wayfinding to promote routes and highlight heritage features improving the visitor experience. Increase engagement through heritage focussed community events and volunteering
5. Provide opportunities to train staff and volunteers

December 2023 application for the development phase successful. TOTAL Cost £227,218



## Complimentary Funding

April 2024 – March 2025

## Engaging communities to enhance Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve Green Space

A number of projects funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund will be delivered during the development phase of the wider project funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund (April 2024 – March 2025).

These pilot projects will provide opportunities to test the way in which we can engage with local people and volunteers to participate in the development of and ensure the sustainability of the nature reserve.

Additional match for the delivery phase will be sought and bid for during the development phase.



ACTIVITY	£
Canal Towpath Improvements	75,000
Coir roll installation	85,000
Reinstate Ponds	6,500
Meadow Creation	8,100
Hedgerow Restoration and Creation	4,900
Community Orchard	5,000
Raised path and ephemeral pools	8,000
Woodland Management and Planting	7,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200,000</b>

# Financial Implications Delivery Phase

April 2025 – March 2027

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Costs	£
Preliminary Works	189,344
Repair and Conservation Work	705,996
Access improvements	524,327
Other capital work	20,000
Digital Outputs	25,000
Other capital	3,500
Professional Fees	26,754
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL</b>	<b>1,494,921</b>
Staffing (Conservation Officer / Project Manager / Apprentices / vol training)	259,653
Activity costs, Events, Materials & Professional Fees	47,065
<b>TOTAL ACTIVITY COSTS</b>	<b>306,718</b>
Other Costs	78,329
Non-Cash Contributions (match)	69,037
<b>TOTAL DELIVERY PHASE</b>	<b>1,949,005*</b>

\* Costs for inflation and contingency have been submitted as a separate cost



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## Strategic Fit

The Council Plan Our  
City: Our Plan

Open Space Strategy  
and Action Plan

Wolverhampton - proud of its history and ambitious for the future allowing for transformation whilst retaining its unique identity.

A vibrant, green City that we can all be proud of.

A healthy, thriving city where people live happier, more active lives in clean, green neighbourhoods with community spaces

Ensure parks and open spaces are accessible for residents and cater for the needs of our diverse communities to enable residents to live longer, healthier and more active lives.

A diverse natural environment to support and protect wildlife habitats, which are well connected and accessible to all, and adapt to climate change. This includes:

Improve and widen access to recreation opportunities, increasing participation in sport and fitness activities helping to improve people's health and well-being.



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## Strategic Fit

New Horizons – Our  
Vision for the City in  
2030

Smestow Valley LNR  
Supplementary  
Management Plan  
2020 – 2025

A city which serious about boosting health and well-being, committed to sustainability for future generations,

A vibrant and diverse range of quality parks and open spaces, well distributed across the City. Sites will reflect local needs and historical and natural characteristics.

**Conserve & Enhance Biodiversity** - The wildlife of Smestow Valley is what makes it special; biodiversity will be conserved, and steps taken to actively enhance its ecological value.

**Access & Recreation** - Smestow Valley is an important open space for local people; every reasonable step will be taken to allow people of all physical abilities to access and experience the site.

**Conserve the Archaeology & the Historic Landscape** - The archaeological and historical assets of Smestow Valley will be recognised, protected and celebrated.

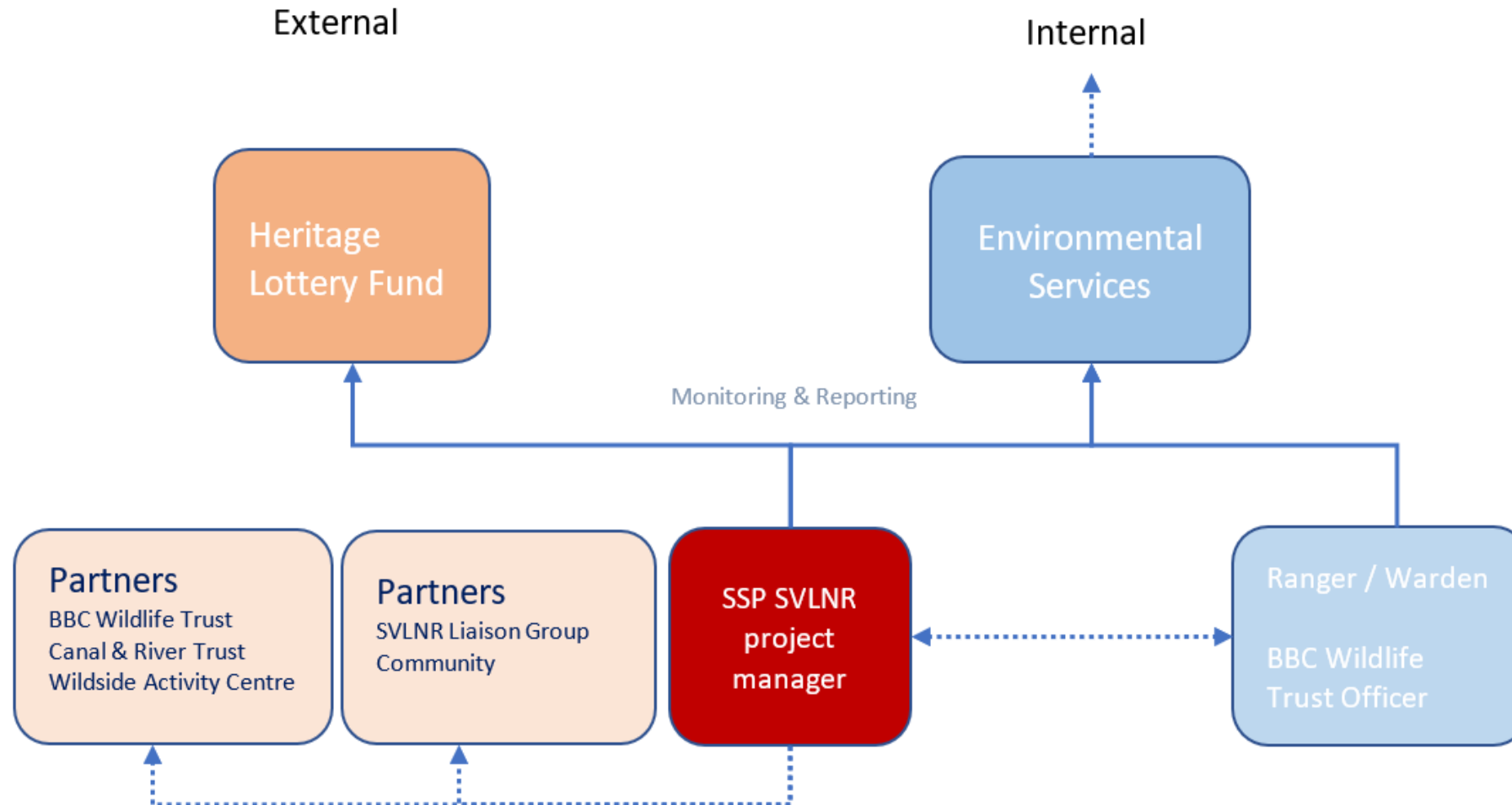
**Forge Partnerships** - The management plan will be taken forward with local partners, groups and individuals so as to maximise the benefits that Smestow Valley brings to local residents and the wider community of Wolverhampton.

**Spread the Word** - Awareness and understanding of all the valuable aspects of Smestow Valley are vital and will be promoted to a wide audience



# Governance

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# Questions?

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