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**Eco trade fair raises hundreds of pounds for Stroud environmental charity**

Gloucestershire green businesses have raised more than £1,700 to help newts and bats prosper in the Stroud Valleys.

The Stonehouse Energy Trade Fair run by GFirst attracted hundreds of people and more than 25 of the county's top environmental companies including Green Fuels, Ecotricity and Executive Energy.

Profits raised from the event at Wycliffe College have now been donated to local environmental charity Stroud Valleys Project.

GFirst Development Manager David Smith said: "The trade fair was a great success and it was good to see so many eco-businesses in one room for the event at Wycliffe College. We were very pleased with the turnout and the £1,717.75 that was raised, which has now been donated to Stroud Valleys Project - an environmental charity which is working to make the district a better place for future generations. We hope the money will help them to run more of the charity's wonderful projects."

The cash will now be used to fund a range of biodiversity projects with secondary schools in the area.

Chief Executive of Stroud Valleys Project Clare Mahdiyone said: "We are very grateful to GFirst for the money they have given us. We have never worked with secondary schools before and this donation will enable us to run biodiversity projects with them. We are hoping to begin by doing bat projects with Wycliffe College and another at Stonehouse newt pond, before working with other schools in future."

Head of Wycliffe College, Margie Burnet Ward said pupils on the Duke of Edinburgh scheme at the college would take advantage of the scheme.

She said: "The college was pleased to host the event and learn more about the wide range of eco-businesses operating in the Stroud Valley. Our Duke of Edinburgh pupils are now looking forward to starting the projects and learning more about the wildlife in our area."

For more information please contact Sarah Webb at GFirst on 01452 328315.