

Abingdon Carbon Cutters AGM 2016

Weds 20th July 2016, 7.30pm in the garden of St Ethelwold's House, 30 East St Helens St

Present: 21 people : Cliff Marshall (chair), Linda Coker (accounts), Sally Reynolds (minutes), Fiona Habermehl, Richard Howard, Pauline Marshall, Lucille Savin, Richard Riggs, Petra Greenland, Ann Barnes, Sam Bowring, Liz Domoney, Marguerite Osborne, Paul Norton, Sue Norton, Cheryl Briggs, Heinz Bachmann, Sheila Bachmann, Maureen Buckingham, Amy King, Dora Martinez (CAG project officer).

Apologies: Sharon Betts, John Killick, Susie Howard.

Minutes: Minutes of the last AGM on 15th July 2015 were agreed.

Accounts for period 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

The accounts were presented by Linda who explained that they have been independently reviewed by Jeanette Paskins. We have a healthy balance of payments. Our income was just over £2000 of which over £1,500 was from apple pressing. The automatic grant from CAG has stopped but they still provide insurance, and we can still bid for money for specific projects, tools or equipment. The accounts were accepted and thanks given to Linda for her work, and she was asked to thank Jeanette.

Appointment of officers

The officers who had served last year were returned unopposed for another year, and thanked:

Co – chairs: Richard Howard, Cliff Marshall

Treasurer: Linda Coker

Secretary: Sally Reynolds

Core Group members for 2015-2016 were Paul Buckingham, Sophie Christopher- Bowes, Linda Coker, Fiona Habermehl, Richard Howard, Susie Howard, Cliff Marshall, Sally Reynolds, Richard Riggs, and Lucille Savin. Samantha Bowring joined during the year.

Sophie has asked to be removed from the Core Group list.

Core Group members for 2016 – 2017 will thus be Samantha Bowring, Linda Coker, Fiona Habermehl, Richard Howard, Susie Howard, Cliff Marshall, Sally Reynolds, Richard Riggs, Lucille Savin, (and Paul Buckingham subject to consent.)

A request was made for new Core Group members, and a general invitation was given to Core Group meetings which are always on the 1st Wednesday of the month (not August) at 7.30 in St Ethelwolds House.

Annual Summary of Activity July 2015 - June 2016

Review of the year. Cliff presented a written review of the year (attached below). Verbal reports were given as follows:

Town Council : Sam Bowring reported the student consultancy reports had been very useful, although it remains to be seen if any of the suggestions will be taken up. The Local Plan is open for consultation.

Abingdon Hydro: Richard Riggs reported that the winding up of the company is well advanced and all shareholders have been reimbursed 87% of their investment. He was grateful for all the positive messages of thanks from the shareholders. All paperwork will be passed on to the Low Carbon Hub.

Edible Abingdon: Petra Greenland reported that the new venture growing veg in containers outside Old Station House is doing well. Refurbishment of the Open Air Pool will start in the Autumn and it is not clear whether the “kiosk beds” will still be available next year.

Cookery Classes in Caldecott School & South Abingdon Children's Centre: Fiona Habermehl reported that many children have learned to chop and eat vegetables, and have had a healthy lunch using fresh surplus food from Oxford Foodbank. However due to cuts, SACC will close at the end of February 2017. She has joined a group to help save the centre for community use.

Bee Beds: Pauline reported that the annuals are in their 4th year and the perennials in their 3rd and there has been no vandalism. More help would be appreciated with watering although a new volunteer, Rachel Kenneil, is now watering twice weekly.

Priorities & Activities for 2015-16

A brainstorm of ideas for the coming year produced the following, in no particular order:

- **Abbey Meadow Development.** Find out what will happen to the kiosk beds and contact the relevant councillor to ensure that we are offered alternative growing space if needed.
- **Measuring our energy use.** Offer Smart meters to local residents.
- **Lifestyle changes.** Promote reductions in energy and water use in the home. Help people understand their water bills.
- **Food Miles.** Influence supermarkets to sell local produce.
- **Work with schools to grow veg.** Dora reported that CAG is promoting work in schools currently and would like to know of interested CAGs. We felt it might be difficult to introduce into schools without an enthusiastic champion among the teachers.
- **Harvesting unwanted apples.** Ask members to report any apple trees with fruit that is not being harvested.
- **Edible Abingdon beds elsewhere in town?** Offer Edible Abingdon veg beds in the army quarters in Shippon. Rachel de Thame had a project growing flowers with army wives in Didcot Barracks. We would need a local contact, perhaps via the chaplain.
- **Rehoming rescued chickens.** These make good pets and can also provide eggs.
- **South Abingdon Children's Centre.** Support the move for a community centre there.
- **Student Consultancy.** Ask a new team of students to help with energy reduction in the Guildhall.

Date of Next Core Group Meeting: Weds 7th Sept, 7.30pm at St Ethelwolds.

Next AGM - 3rd Wednesday in July 2016: Weds 19th July 2017

Meeting closed at 9pm and was followed by a walking tour of the Abbey Meadow, taking in the "Bee Beds" (annual and perennial), Edible Abingdon's Veg beds, and the Wildflower Meadow.

Attachments below:

1. Abingdon Carbon Cutters Annual Summary of Activity July 2015-June 2016
2. ACC accounts inc-exp 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016



Abingdon Carbon Cutters Annual Summary of Activity July 2015-June 2016

It is good to be able to report that, in addition to ongoing activities in the well established areas of our work, significant advances have been made with regard to our progress as a town in transition. In January we were able to provide support and encouragement to Town Councillors when they successfully persuaded the council to adopt a policy which committed the Council to 'reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2020' and 'aim to become carbon neutral by 2030....' This decision by the Council is a very welcome first step for the town in achieving an energy descent plan – one of the key aims of a Transition town.

Two new initiatives have developed linked to this Town Council resolution. The Town Council established an Environment Working Group to take forward the implementation of the resolution and a member of ACC

has been co-opted onto this group. As the resolution was being adopted ACC were engaging a Student Consultancy Team from Oxford University to research the measurement and reduction of Abingdon's Carbon Footprint with particular reference to the Council's energy usage. The report of the Student Consultancy Team (SCT) was well received in March by the Working Group and two further SCT were engaged. One SCT was to specifically research ways in which the carbon emissions of the activities of the Town Council could be reduced. The other SCT was to focus on strategies for estimating the carbon footprint of various sectors of the Abingdon community. Both SCT reported back at a meeting of ACC on 15th June with very useful findings which will:

- a) feed into the Town's Working Group's deliberations
- b) provide valuable suggestions on where the key foci should be to achieve reduction in carbon emissions across the community.

One immediate outcome from these consultancy reports has been the decision to seek further SCT to help us take forward this energy descent work.

Unfortunately whilst making this progress with the Town Council and mapping out town-wide strategies for carbon footprint reduction, it was very disappointing to receive the news that the Abingdon Hydro Project would not be able to go ahead. Despite the strong support of Councils and of hundreds of shareholders, when the tenders for construction were received the sums required were well in excess of working assumptions and made the whole project financially unviable. The project had been developed by key members of ACC and other directors who all deserve a great vote of thanks for all their hard and detailed work. Hopefully we will be able to make use of their acquired expertise in other projects in the future. ACC has also now become a community shareholder in the Low Carbon Hub Community Interest Company which will enable us to bid for project funding from the profits fund arising from the LCH solar energy schemes.

The other strands of ACC activities have developed well during the year. The Wild Flower maze, the two Bee Beds and the Edible Abingdon Plot in the Abbey Meadow were all successful and well received by the public. A notable extension of this work has been the installation of a container-based vegetable growing plot in the grounds of Old Station House Care Home showing how food crops can be grown in ways which do not require a garden or allotment. Apple pressing was again a major focus of activities in the autumn with two sets of pressing equipment in intensive use for over two months. As a result 11,512 litres of juice were pressed, 53 different people hired the press, approx 5 of which were for community events, and £1569 was raised. Work with the South Abingdon Children's Centre and Caldecott School has continued during the year, the meadow is flourishing and the January Wassail was much enjoyed by all who joined in. Planning has now started for the development of work in South Abingdon in the future after the closure of SACC in March 2017.

Once again our activities have been enhanced by support from members of Green Gym, Abingdon Horticultural Society and Larkmead Foundation Learning Garden team. Monthly meetings continued to attract a varying audience with topics including: Particular: The Art of Knitting, Chemistry and Gentle Protest, Building Energy Efficiency, the City Dark film, Getting the Best from Raised Beds, Vale of White Horse Council officers explaining how the Vale has reduced its carbon emissions and hearing about the Buzz Tour visiting projects across the country. Through meetings and the other activities of the group this year we have increased our contact group by a further 10%, the number signed up now is 436. As ever, the officers are very grateful for the hard work and support of the members of the core group who meet on the first Wednesday of each month to plan activities and the wider group of other members who are involved in looking after the bee beds, the Wild Flower maze, Edible Abingdon beds, Caldecott Meadow, working with SACC and Caldecott School, etc. We are particularly grateful this year for the efforts of the three student teams from Oxford University in providing such well-focused and useful consultancy reports.

Cliff Marshall

July 2016

Officers for the year 2015-16:

Co – chairs: Richard Howard, Cliff Marshall

Treasurer: Linda Coker

Secretary: Sally Reynolds

Abingdon Carbon Cutters income & expenditure April 2015 – March 2016 summary

	y/e March 2016	y/e March 2015
b/fwd	£ 2,509.65	£ 3,468.02
Income Received	£ 2,032.63	4353.08
Interest Received		
Diff. written off/back	£ 8.92	£ 18.66
Insurance Grants	£ 50.00	£ 50.00
	£ 2,091.55	£ 4,421.74
Expenditure Paid Out	£ 2,292.23	£ 5,380.12
cancelled chq reissued		-£ 50.00
Diff. written off/back		
Insurance deducted from grants	£ 50.00	£ 50.00
	£ 2,342.23	£ 5,380.12
c/fwd	£ 2,258.97	£ 2,509.65
Natwest	£ 2,156.06	£ 2,409.27
Nationwide	£ -	£ -
Petty Cash	£ 102.90	£ 100.37
	£ 2,258.96	£ 2,509.64

Abingdon Carbon Cutters income & expenditure April 2015 – March 2016 analysis

	total funds including b/fwd	£ 2,509.65	£	2,258.97
	Bfwd	Income	Expenses	Net Gain/Loss This Year
<u>Restricted</u>				
CAG Grant_ Insurance	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00
Mobile Kitchen Equipment (Grant)	300.00	0.00	320.81	(20.81)
	300.00	50.00	370.81	(20.81)
<u>Unrestricted</u>				
Apple Press & Juicing	1,317.70	1,569.17	1,217.12	1,669.75
Misc	1,462.86	28.92	5.00	1,486.78
Other Donations	124.36	118.86	0.00	243.22
Environmental Development	(469.97)	0.00	132.05	(602.02)
Local Excellence Markets	(67.28)	0.00	12.00	(79.28)
Monthly Meetings/Events	(72.40)	324.60	545.85	(293.65)
Website	(85.63)	0.00	59.40	(145.03)
	2,209.65	2,041.55	1,971.42	2,279.78
	2,509.65	2,091.55	2,342.23	2,258.97
per combined bank acs & cash	£ 2,509.64		£	2,258.96
less above restricted funds	£ 300.00		-£	20.81
available	£ 2,209.64		£	2,279.77