

Abingdon Carbon Cutters AGM

Weds 15th July 2015, 7.30pm at St Ethelwold's House, 30 East St Helens St

Present: 23 people including Cliff Marshall (chair), Linda Coker (accounts), Sally Reynolds (minutes), Peter Lefort (CAG), Fiona Habermehl, Richard Howard, John Killick, Pauline Marshall, Claire Morris, Priscilla Morris, Lucille Savin, Daniel Scharf, Richard Riggs, Petra Greenland, Sharon Betts, Ann Barnes, Sam Bowring, Eleanor Dangerfield, Tobias Fett, Giovanni Rizzo, Beverley Roger.

Apologies: Paul Buckingham, Susie Howard (who provided the cake!).

Minutes: Minutes of the last AGM on 16th July 2014 were agreed.

Accounts for period 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015

The accounts were presented by Linda who explained that they have been independently reviewed. We have a healthy balance of payments. Some projects (e.g. hiring out the apple press) raise income, and others don't. The CAG grants were threatened with cuts in the county council budget but have been reinstated after protest, however Cliff pointed out that they will probably stop at some stage. The accounts were accepted and thanks given to Linda for her work.

Appointment of officers

The officers who had served in the year 2014 – 2015 were returned unopposed for another year:

Co – chairs: Richard Howard, Cliff Marshall

Treasurer: Linda Coker

Secretary: Sally Reynolds

Core Group members 2014-2015 were:

Paul Buckingham, Sophie Christopher- Bowes, Linda Coker, Fiona Habermehl, Richard Howard, Susie Howard, John Marshall, Cliff Marshall, Sally Reynolds, Richard Riggs, Lucille Savin, Nicky Warden, Christine Whild.

John Marshall, Nicky Warden and Christine Whild have asked to be removed from the Core Group list. We thank them all for their service over several years.

Core Group members for 2015-2016 are thus Paul Buckingham, Sophie Christopher-Bowes, Linda Coker, Fiona Habermehl, Richard Howard, Susie Howard, Cliff Marshall, Sally Reynolds, Richard Riggs, and Lucille Savin.

A request was made for new Core Group members, especially someone to help with social media and communication, both with members and with the press/media.

Annual Summary of Activity July 2014-June 2015

Review of the year. Cliff presented a written review of the year (attached below).

Abingdon Hydro: Richard Riggs reported that the share offer will be relaunched in September. A bridging loan is being sought and a contractor has been selected but will not be able to start until Christmas 2015. The scheme needs to be generating by September 2016 to take advantage of the current Feed-in-Tariff. Richard was congratulated and thanked for all his hard work.

CAG Infographic. Peter Lefort presented a striking Annual report in pictures showing our activities and the numbers of people we have reached and tonnes of CO2 saved. It was thought to be a good way to give a lot of information, and Peter was congratulated for being part of the team who developed it. It will be put on the website and attached to these minutes.

Priorities & Activities for 2015-16

1. Transition initiative in Abingdon

Councillor Samantha Bowring requested help to write a motion on Transition to be submitted to the Town Council in the Autumn. Cliff Marshall agreed to work on this with her.

2. Local plan input. Our objections to the Local Plan were submitted to the VoWH planning dept, and there will be an examination in September. Daniel Scharf will help us prepare a response, and Sam Bowring may be able to represent us. Daniel said our motto should be, "Don't disadvantage future generations".

3. Lobbying on Climate Change. The Oxfordshire Growth Board seems to have more power than we thought. Several Carbon Cutters attended the lobby of MPs last month. Ed Vaizey has agreed to meet the climate groups monthly, and we wondered if Nicola Blackwood would do likewise.

4. Abbey Meadow Development. We would like to have input into this.

5. Edible Abingdon beds elsewhere in town? A potential site near the Old Station House is being explored.

6. Caldecott cookery classes. These will change. Our team has been asked to target families in need.

7. An "Ecofair" in the market-place?

8. Local Transport. A request was made for more local electric car charging points, and it is noted that Abingdon will be part of the developing Science area which will attract new funding for transport.

9. Green Film night. Thanks were expressed to Anthea Norton-Taylor for the use of her barn at Stonehill House. Film nights will resume in the Autumn, and all were asked to look out for suitable films.

Date of Next Core Group Meeting: Weds 2nd September, 7.30pm at St Ethelwolds.

Next AGM - 3rd Wednesday in July 2016: July 20th.

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 2014-June 2015
2. ACC accounts inc-exp 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015
3. ACC 2015 Infographic



Abingdon Carbon Cutters Annual Summary of Activity July 2014-June 2015

Since July 2014, Abingdon Carbon Cutters activities have featured a number of strands. In each case the activities have been promoted to promote the growth of a sustainable community and to highlight the nature of change which a community in transition needs to undertake. Activities have included promoting renewable energy through wind power and hydro electric power generation alongside development of local food growing and sourcing. An ongoing focus has been the encouragement of local councillors to be aware of the transition initiative so that local policies might reflect the aims of a community in transition. A number of local councillors are on our circulation list and get involved in activities and, in January, ACC was invited to give a presentation about Transition Initiatives to the whole Town Council. This presentation was received with interest and supportive encouragement. It will continue to be a central concern for the group during the coming year to enable community groups, councillors and other interested parties to work together to make the notion of transition real. A particular ongoing need will be the clear communication about what being a community in transition means for the people of the town and surrounding area.

As part of the work towards a successful transition initiative, ACC has continued to hold open meetings on the third Wednesday of the month. During the winter months Green Film nights were held in Stonehill House Barn and these have proved valuable ways to extend our awareness of key issues as well as providing a means to meet members of other local Community Action Groups. In the late Spring it was good to extend our links with Blewbury by making a visit to their permaculture orchard project. Flower beds in the Abbey Meadow, showing how to grow plants to attract bees and other pollinating insects, have been well received. A meeting focusing on Co-housing proved to be an interesting evening raising questions about future housing policy. We were also very pleased to support the Wassail event held in the Caldecott Meadow which proved to be an enjoyable event for the local community – very much in the spirit of transition.

In the Abbey Meadow, ACC's development of bee-friendly planting has continued. For the current year the flower bed containing perennial and longer lasting flowering plants has been relocated within the fenced off play area to protect it from flood risk. The space vacated, by the Outdoor Pool Kiosk, has now been established for vegetable growing under the banner: Edible Abingdon. This is already attracting interest with encouragement given to passers-by to sample produce when it is ready. Together with the developing Wildflower Maze these growing areas are proving a real centre of interest for local people and visitors as well as providing opportunities for local groups, such as Green Gym, Abingdon Horticultural Soc. and Larkmead School Foundation Learning gardening team to get involved. When the Longworth CAG decided to close they were kind enough to transfer their residue of funds to ACC and these will be put to good use in supporting horticultural projects such as these in Abingdon and district.

The Food Group has continued with its successful work with the Mother and Toddler Group at South Abingdon Children's Centre encouraging the development of cooking skills to produce tasty meals from scratch using limited, 'left-over' ingredients. This work has been recognised by the award of a grant from Sovereign Housing Association. This has been used to buy a 'mobile' cookery kit. The Food section of the ACC website now also includes examples of recipes which make use of local ingredients and in particular vegetables. The Food group continues to run an ACC Stall at Local Excellence Markets and has been actively promoting the local produce market held outside St Nicolas Church on Friday mornings and the establishment of a Drop Off Point for Cultivate in St Ethelwolds House on Friday afternoons. Work on the meadow at Caldecott School has continued, now largely in an ongoing maintenance phase. Once again apple pressing proved to be popular, with the apple pressing kits being well used; more equipment is being sourced to enable this activity to grow. The Community Shop in the town centre in the Autumn proved a very good venue for apple pressing by local people but the hope for the future includes extending this facility to community centres around

the town. Involvement in activities promoting Fair Trade goods and practices in the town has been a way to draw attention to the global interconnectedness that is part of our world and which needs to be recognised in a global transition to sustainable living.

The Abingdon Hydro Group has continued to make real progress with the successful launch of shares in November and hard work by the team involved during the year to meet the various requirements to enable the scheme to be put in place ready for generation next year. Also on the renewable energy front, last summer ACC funded the workshop at which a demonstration wind turbine was constructed. This was an exciting occasion and the turbine is already being put to good use in schools and, most recently at the Reclaim the Power Climate Camp at Didcot.

The Oxon CAG Network has continued to strongly support the work of ACC both financially and through the encouragement and valued advice of its officers. We were very pleased that the County Council agreed to continue to provide funding support for the CAG Network; it is a major asset to the County in promoting waste reduction and reduction of carbon emissions, etc. As ever, we are grateful to the CAG Network for a grant towards and provision of public liability insurance.

The ACC website has been an important tool for communicating the work of ACC and providing information about such things as bee friendly plants, vegetables that can be grown at home, recipes, etc. The number of people who have asked to be kept informed about ACC activities now stands at 396, an increase of over 17% in the last year. The officers are very grateful for the support and hard work of members of the core management group who meet on the first Wednesday of the month to organise activities and also those other members who help with activities such as the LE Markets, Fun in The Park, looking after the pollinator-friendly beds, Edible Abingdon beds, Wild Flower Maze, Caldecott Meadow, etc.

Cliff Marshall

June 2015

Summary Accounts for 2014-15, year ending March 31st

	<u>y/e March 2015</u>	<u>y/e March 2014</u>
b/fwd	£ 3,468.02	£ 3,216.96
Income Received	4353.08	£ 3,122.23
Interest Received		£ 0.13
Insurance Grants	<u>£ 50.00</u>	<u>£ 3,122.36</u>
	£ 4,403.08	
Expenditure Paid Out	£ 5,380.12	£ 2,855.02
cancelled chq reissued	-£ 50.00	
Diff. written off/back	-£ 18.66	£ 16.28
Insurance deducted from grants	<u>£ 50.00</u>	<u>£ 2,871.30</u>
	£ 5,361.46	
c/fwd	<u>£ 2,509.65</u>	<u>£ 3,468.02</u>
Natwest	£ 2,409.27	£ 3,428.26
Nationwide	£ -	£ -
Petty Cash	<u>£ 100.37</u>	<u>£ 39.76</u>
	<u>£ 2,509.64</u>	<u>£ 3,468.02</u>
	-£ 0.00	£ -



REPORT 2014/15

EVENTS

ATTENDEES

VOLUNTEER HOURS

79

1,816

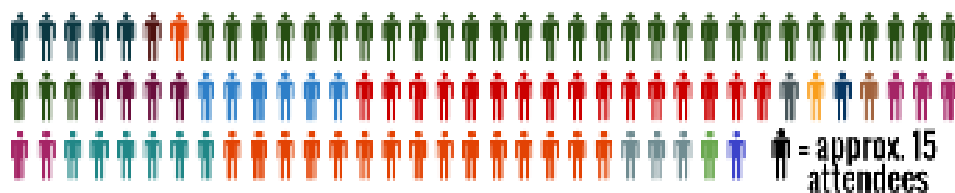
820

equivalent to
1.5 every
week

5.5%
of the population of
Abingdon

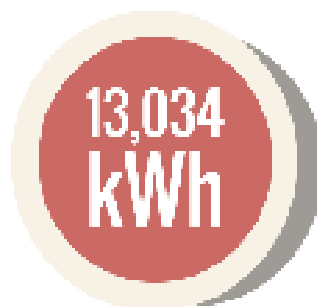
£10,637
in paid salary
(very useful for match funding)

attendance
breakdown



Apple event / Carbon conversations / Community shop / Cooking workshop / Film screening / Group Meeting
 Gardening in public spaces / Gardening with Schools / Info Event - Alt energy / Info Event - Energy saving
 Info Event - Comm energy scheme / Info Event - food waste / Info Event - Gardening / Info Event - Local food
 Information Stand / Low carbon living / Upcycling - arts and crafts

energy savings



carbon emissions avoided



cost savings to attendees



These impacts are estimates based on data submitted by the group relating to specific activities and do not encapsulate the entirety of the group's work. The impacts are generated by the Community Impact Modelling Tool, a unique peer reviewed model to estimate the impact of community led activities.