

Abingdon Carbon Cutters AGM 2022

Weds 15th June 2022, 7.30pm in the garden of St Ethelwolds House, 30 East St Helen St.

- 1. Present:** Caroline Townsend (chair), Sally Reynolds (minutes), Beverlie Blee, David Newland, Anne Cossutta, Tabitha Serle, Tom Draper-Rodi (treasurer), Susie Howard, John Killick, Lucille Savin, Anne Smart, Nadine Matough, Priscilla Morris.
- 2. Apologies:** Sharon Betts, Samantha Bowring, Pippa Hoy, Catherine McNeill, Richard Riggs, Robin Tucker, James Wigmore.
- 3. Minutes:** Minutes of the last AGM held on Weds 21st July 2021 were accepted.

4. Accounts for period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

Copies of the accounts (attached below) had been prepared by Tom and circulated to the Core Group. Our income was £4,353 and expenditure £2,384. Our balance at the end of the year was £2250.54 and we sent £793 to the Food Bank from the produce table. Tom was thanked for all his work.

5. Appointment of officers

The AGM appoints 3 officers, other roles are co-opted by the Core Group. The officers who served last year were: Chair: Caroline Townsend, Treasurer: Tom Draper-Rodi; Secretary: Sally Reynolds. Caroline, Tom and Sally are willing to continue and were returned unopposed. Tabitha has taken over management of the website and is willing to continue in this role.

Core Group members for 2021-22 had been Anne Smart, Caroline Townsend, Catherine McNeill, Clive Elsmore, Fiona Habermehl, James Wigmore, John Killick, Lucille Savin, Nadine Matough, Paul Buckingham, Pippa Hoy, Richard Riggs, Robin Tucker, Sally Reynolds, Sam Bowring, Susie Howard, and Tabitha Serle. All are willing to continue except Fiona Habermehl and Clive Elsmore who have asked to be released from the Core Group but will continue to volunteer for other ACC activities. Grateful thanks were extended to them for their work over the years.

6. Annual Summary of Activity June 2020 - 2021

Caroline presented a written review of the year (attached below). This was warmly welcomed.

Bee beds: Susie asked for volunteers to water the bee beds, Tabitha volunteered to do it with a friend. Gardening occurs between 9 & 10 on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month, and although 18 people helped to plant the bulbs, only 4 came last time.

Edible Abingdon is also looking for volunteers to help with gardening or watering. New this year are the raised beds in Abbey Gardens.

Wildflower Meadow. There are bats, toads and mice and lots of insects as well as flowers. Insects need to feed throughout their lifecycle so we have encouraged plants that will give a long flowering period. 32 different plants last year, 47 this year.

Food Group. Apple pressing - Susie would like more school PTAs to hire our kits, Anne suggested she ask Daniel to mention it during his school outreach. Helpers needed for the Plot to Plate Festival on 9th July, morning or afternoon. New campaign for municipal compost to be provided.

Abingdon Cuts Plastic. 3 new champions this year and 1 “ally”. The council has a plastic-free policy. The 3rd Green Forum is on plastic, market stall on 16th July will involve making beeswax wraps. New members welcome.

Green Forum. The first topic was on active travel, including a survey and public engagement at a street stall. Nadine created a page on the Abingdon Town Council website, and people can express interest in bikeability courses there. This quarter was on Biodiversity and involved a very successful stall at the Jubilee Meadow Festival, with queues to make insect hotels for solitary bees, and guided entomological walks with children.

Repair Café. Has been running twice a month in the CEC, 1st Saturday for fabric repair and 3rd for Electrical Repair, sharpening, and bike checks under the arches. We are short of repairers, Sally & Anne to put out an emergency call this evening.

Trees. New swamp cypresses to be planted on Vale land near Orpwood Way. 420 trees were planted on Rye Farm meadow and most have taken but need mulch. The Boxhill Orchard trees are being watered by local people and Duke of Edinburgh award students. Foxglove trees to be planted on Heron's Walk on Monday afternoon.

Abingdon Liveable Streets. Suggested bikeability courses and an active travel map. Community local walking & cycling Infrastructure plan will be adopted by the council in December. Successfully lobbied for a 20mph limit in Abingdon which has been agreed. A car-sharing scheme will be implemented next year. Inputting into the Central Abingdon plan, and the Oxfordshire Active Travel Round Table, supporting Sustrans in School Streets, removing barriers on the cycle network, planning the Bridge Street junction, Daisy Bank path clearance.

Talks this year were either outdoors or online.

Neighbourhood Plan first report is on the Town Council website.

The Environment & Amenities Committee has replaced the Green Scrutiny Committee and Anne has been co-opted on to it.

7. "One Planet Abingdon" Climate Emergency Centre

thanks us for our involvement. They are planning a strategic review in July, as the running the café has become the main activity, with not enough focus on the climate emergency. We ask Anne to create a shared calendar where anyone can post events so that we don't clash.

8. Liaison with other organisations. CAG (Sally), Low Carbon Hub (John), Friends of the Earth (Anne). Full list in the chair's report.

Date of Next Core Group Meeting: Weds 6th July, 7.30pm in St Ethelwolds House.

Next AGM - 3rd Wednesday in June or July 2023

Attachments:

- 1. Chair's report for the year**
- 2. Treasurer's summary and analysis.**

ACC Annual Summary of Activity June 2021 –June 2022

Welcome to the AGM. We have had a busy and successful year at Carbon Cutters:

- We held our first community tree-planting event at Rye Farm Meadow
- We received awards from the Low Carbon Hub and the Town Council for our efforts
- On 20th October we had an open Q&A session with Layla Moran, about COP26
- Column in the Abingdon Herald: on 18th May, John Killick's column "Climate of Change" was the first of our columns for the third Weds of the month, alternating with the CEC.
- We built raised beds in Abbey gardens

Bee Beds (Pauline, Cliff, Susie and Lucille)

1. The bee bed in the playpark is now well stocked with pollinator-friendly plants which are giving food to a wide variety of insects from Spring through to late Summer. Whenever we're down there, passers-by stop to talk, ask questions and admire the beds
2. Last August we invested in 775 new tulip bulbs - four varieties in white, pink and purple which gave a really colourful display in March and April and should return next year.
3. After receiving so much welcome help with the bulb planting in November, we now have a group of 18 volunteers we can call on to help with weeding, staking and dead-heading during the Summer.
4. So we plan to meet regularly during the Summer on the second and fourth Sunday of the month for an hour between 9 and 10am. All are very welcome to join us. Please bring your own tools.

Edible Abingdon (*Petra, Pat, Sally, Linda, Julie, Janet, Sharon & occasionally Anne & Sheila*)

All 3 areas where Edible Abingdon Volunteers plant and maintain with vegetables, fruit, herbs and pollinator friendly flowers continue to flourish despite the vagaries of the British weather and in the case of the Kiosk beds, being consumed by geese. I suppose that's what makes gardening so interesting or frustrating!

The Kiosk beds have slowly been developing to be less intensively managed over the past couple years, we have planted several fruit bushes and even enjoyed the 'first' fig. Also self-seeded flowers are encouraged and last year we had some fantastic sunflowers, as well as calendula and borage.

At Old Station House we grow crops in old recycling boxes and it's amazing what can be grown in them throughout the year, though during the summer they do need a lot of watering. We get a lot of very positive feedback from people passing by, many who say they pick the odd herb or make a point of coming past to see what is growing or in flower. This spring we have been able to top up all the boxes with some fresh topsoil ready for planting.

Our biggest challenge has always been the growing bed in Abbey gardens which has such poor, compacted soil. The volunteers had always wanted to build some raised beds and this spring we managed to obtain some wood and lovely topsoil and they have now been built and planted.

One of the positive things about helping with Edible Abingdon is that it's such a good way to build up a dialogue with the public, people are always interested to know what we are doing, ask advice, offer suggestions, share stories about their gardens.

If anyone would like to help with Edible Abingdon whether it by growing plants, helping to maintain the 3 growing areas or perhaps help with watering, we would like to hear from you as we have sadly lost several volunteers over the past year. Please contact the ACC website and your enquiry will be forwarded to one of us.

Sharon Betts, Edible Abingdon 8/6/22

Wildflower Meadow (*Lucille*)

Objectives:

Bête noire

Supermarket effect

Position today

Aims

Apple Juicing

We did the usual hiring out to individuals last year and two weeks in October in the newly opened CEC. We have three sets of kit and would like to get more schools involved this year.

Food Group (*Fiona, Anthea, Sally, Susie*)

“Plot to Plate Festival” in Old Abbey Buildings Saturday 9th July.

To encourage the growing and eating of more vegetables. We will have a stand all day which will focus

- on growing in containers inside and out
- using home produce to make jams, pickles, cordials etc
- there will be activities for children

Helpers needed on the Stand

Message will be coming shortly asking for help on the Day.

Climate Emergency Centre

We have offered two salad making sessions at lunch time and plan to do them monthly in future

Various ACC members regularly make cakes for the Café

Compost campaign.

We are thinking how we might start a new campaign to get the Vale to provide good quality compost from Brown bins to ordinary residents, to prevent people having to buy compost in plastic bags

Abingdon Cuts Plastic (*Anne; Chair, Caroline, Marion, David, Jill, Sally Ainslie, Sally Mears, Dan Kitcher, Cheryl Briggs.*)

Our group seeks to prevent further environmental damage by plastic pollution.

Each year, we work to renew our status of "Plastic- Free Community" with Surfers Against Sewage, by building on our objectives. We work closely with the Town Council, which has developed a Single-Use Plastic policy. Anne sits on the Environment and Amenities Cttee. In Dec/Jan, Anne and Mayor Cheryl Briggs took a questionnaire to 21 takeaways in town, asking about alternatives to plastic packaging. The Council is now considering a Green Star scheme for restaurants, and is suggesting some takeaway businesses collaborate to buy cardboard packaging in bulk, to reduce costs. Approx 150 people came to our Zero-Waste coffee and cake stall on 25th Sept for Great Big Green week. The Council and Waitrose donated some reusable cups for us to give out in return for a donation. We are planning the 3rd Green Forum, from July-Sept, during which we plan to encourage more businesses, schools and others to reduce their use of single-use plastic. So far this year we have 4 new Plastic-Free Champions: Chic-It-Up, Missing Bean, Friend & Co, and The Shed. Also a new Ally, St Edmund's School. We organise a twice-yearly river and riverbank clean up, in collaboration with AbiBinit and Kingfisher Canoe Club; we had a successful clean-up on 12th March, and plan another for 24th September.

Abingdon Green Forum:

As part of the Town Council's pledge to take positive action in response to the crises of global warming and environmental destruction, Cllr Gabby Barody proposed a series of Green forums for 2022. The purpose of

the Forums is to promote and initiate changes which will help towards carbon neutrality in the town, reduce waste, promote well-being, and improve local biodiversity. Local groups including ACC and One Planet Abingdon are collaborating on the 4 quarterly Forums. Information is shared on the webpage: <https://oneplanetabingdon.org/green-forum/> As well as sharing what actions are already being undertaken or proposed, each Forum seeks views and ideas from Abingdon residents, either on-line, or at events such as market stalls. This allows people to be more proactive in the town's future. The 1st Forum, from Jan-March, was on Active Travel and Sustainable Transport, which culminated in a market stall on 26th March. About 60 people attended; they were invited to write on post-it notes on a map of Abingdon, suggesting improvements to cycling and walking routes, and public transport. All comments have been fed back to the Council, and local groups eg Abingdon Liveable Streets and Sustrans are taking ideas forward. We ran a schools competition for a logo to go on the back of Hi-Viz backpack covers and vests, which were printed with the winning entry and either distributed as prizes or given away for a donation. 53 young people took part, producing excellent designs promoting active travel and discouraging the use of cars.

Our current green forum is on Biodiversity; we ran a very successful stall at the Jubilee where 80 insect boxes were made, a huge tree poster embellished and George McGavin ran nature hunts. The next forum is on Reducing Consumption and starts in July.

Cutting Carbon in the home is a new sub-group of ACC which is being planned by Daniel Scharf and Anne, with a first meeting on 1st September. This is also the topic of the 4th Forum, in the last quarter of this year.

Repair Café (*Richard and Susie*)

These have been running twice monthly on a Saturday morning from 10.30 to 1.00 pm in the Climate Emergency Centre since they opened in September 2021. The first Saturday is mending clothes and the third Saturday is electrical, knife sharpening and bike advice/repairs.

Between 10 and 20 customers appear on each occasion.

More repairers are needed for the electrical and knife sharpening sessions.

Trees Group (*Sally; Secretary, Caroline; Chair, Clive, John, Lucille, Catherine*)

Area between Orpwood Way and the River Ock.

We have 10 swamp cypress which are in a temporary home at Peachcroft Farm. We plan to plant them next to the river as they grow fastest in wet areas.

Rye Farm meadow: The VWHDC granted us a tree licence in February! We dug up the 420 whips in a holding area at Peachcroft Farm on Friday 25th and had a community planting event at Rye Farm meadow on Saturday 26th at which over 150 local people participated. Next planting will be in November; we have 420 trees promised by the Woodland Trust and some local people have trees to donate.

Boxhill Park:

£1,130 was raised for an interpretation board for the Community Orchard at Boxhill which was installed on 10 October. Since then we have seen a colourful display from our bulbs and have some D of E students helping Keith keep the trees watered.

Heron's Walk:

Lucille has permission from the Town Council, to plant some foxglove trees in the park opposite Heron's Walk. They will be a colourful addition to this grassy area.

Abingdon Liveable Streets *(Sally, Robin, John, Richard, James)*

ALS Highlights from the year:

- Supporting the first active travel and sustainable transport green forum
- Having the Abingdon Liveable Streets community led LCWIP becoming a formal county council led Local Walking and Cycling Plan and being part of the steering group moving it forward
- Supporting Sustrans Liveable cities and towns and paths for everyone priorities through aiding on projects led by the LCT Coordinator
- Successfully lobbying for 20mph in Abingdon
- Gaining interest for a car sharing scheme in Abingdon and developing a plan to make this a reality

ACC Talks

We started the ACC year with an entertaining talk on making compost with ideas from Lucille and Susie and James Wigmore's "revolting, revolving revolution". We had two talks and discussions on COP-26, first with Chris Church and secondly with Layla Moran (live form the Houses of Parliament) and Neil Fawcett. In the new year we had Ian Pritchett talking about Climate Positive Housing and then Neil Kitching on his book: Carbon Choices. In March, Catherine advised us how to Eat Well for You and the Planet. In April Nadine held a lively Sustrans Liveable Neighbourhood Workshop and in May, John took us on an informative Biodiversity Walk at Albert Park.

The Town Council

The Neighbourhood Plan process

The Neighbourhood Plan has been developing well and it's first report can be viewed on the town website . This consists of various topics about the town and a map of important issues. The consultant held a very educational public meeting where questions could be asked. There are further interactive occasions planned in the future.

Green Scrutiny Committee

The Town Council's Environment and Amenities Committee- with whom we work closely eg on tree planting and the Green Forum- has replaced by the Green Scrutiny & Advisory Committee. Anne, James, John and Richard have each attended some of the 5 meetings since last July. Anne was co-opted onto the Committee in January.

Climate Emergency Centre.

Since our launch One Planet Abingdon has been very successful and the relationship with Carbon Cutters has been a crucial element to that. We have loved working with you on our many and various events and activities.

We are looking forward to continuing the relationship and exploring ways that we can grow our impact on the towns response to the climate emergency and help our community move close to achieving one planet living. We particularly want to diversify our activities and connect with a diverse group of people who are not already in our 'green bubble'.

We recognise that as a new organisation, we are evolving and that what worked for us at the outset may not serve us so well going forward. We have a clear mission and set of goals and there is a sense that now is the time to see if a bit of course correction is needed to ensure we are still on the right track.

We have decided to undertake a strategic review and planning exercise during July, to take us through to the end of this year and beyond. The run-up to that will be reaching out to supporters, partners and stakeholders to canvas feedback and we know we can rely on ACC to do that in a constructive way.

Collaborations/ Links

CAG (Sally is our representative), Oxford University, Abingdon Green Party, Friends of the Earth, Stonehill Community Garden, Oxford Food Bank, VWHDC, Friends of Abingdon, Abingdon Chamber of Commerce, Low Carbon Hub (John is our representative).

Contact list membership figures – currently 665 on our email list

Social Media

The newsletter is issued in January, April, July and October.

The ACC Facebook group is seeing many posts and views.

Our Instagram account has 126 followers

The website is managed by Tabitha

ACC 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, juicing apples, Plastics etc.

Caroline Townsend July 2022

Officers for the year 2021-22:

Chair: Caroline Townsend

Secretary: Sally Reynolds

Treasurer: Tom Draper-Rodi

Treasurer's Summary 1/4/2021 – 31/3/2022

	<u>y/e Mar 2022</u>		<u>y/e Mar 2021</u>
b/fwd	£ 3,330.84		£ 3,772.61
Income Received	£ 4,353.16		£ 1,267.33
Insurance Grants	£ 52.00		£ 200.00
Total in	£ 7,736.00		£ 5,239.94
Expenditure Paid Out	£ 5,233.46		£ 1,909.10
Insurance deducted from grants	£ 252.00		£ -
Total out	£ 5,485.46		£ 1,909.10
Balance	£ 2,250.54		£ 3,330.84
NatWest account	£ 2,181.35		£ 3,300.02
Nationwide	£ -		£ -
Petty Cash	£ 69.19		£ 30.82
Cash Diff. written off/back			
Balance carried forward	£ 2,250.54		£ 3,330.84

P.T.O. for Analysis

	Net Gain/Loss Cfwd	Income This Year	Expenses This Year	Net Gain/Loss Cfwd	Notes
Restricted					
CAG Grants_ Including Insurance	£ 200.00	£ 277.00	£ 477.00	£ -	Inc. £252 repairs insurance & £200 trees stakes
Old Station House Edible Abingdon Donation	£ 50.00			£ 50.00	
Abingdon Town Council grant			£ 155.00	-£ 155.00	Promotion of active travel: Hi-Viz waistcoats & backpack covers w/ children's designs bought in this financial year but grants received in the next.
Low Carbon Hub grant			£ 471.47	-£ 471.47	
Oxford Wood Recycling		£ 200.00	£ 176.80	£ 23.20	Donation towards tree stakes
Waitrose		£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ -	
Fitzharrys/Boxhill planting project Donations	£ 171.33	£ 577.49	£ 604.00	£ 144.82	Contributed to Boxhill Park fruit trees information board
Total Restricted	£ 421.33	£ 1,554.49	£ 2,384.27	-£ 408.45	
Unrestricted					
Abingdon Cuts Plastics	-£ 255.30	£ 253.96	£ 60.00	-£ 61.34	
Apple Press & Juicing	£ 4,918.88	£ 981.71	£ 459.99	£ 5,440.60	
Environmental Development (Abbey Meadow & bee beds)	-£ 1,245.21		£ 170.00	-£ 1,415.21	
Environmental Development (Edible Abingdon)	-£ 387.24			-£ 387.24	
Environmental Development (Misc - Forest Classroom etc.)	-£ 537.42			-£ 537.42	
St Ethelwold produce table / Donations to food bank		£ 793.15	£ 739.00	£ 54.15	
Startup donation to One Planet Abingdon - Climate Emergency Ctr.			£ 500.00	-£ 500.00	
Misc/other donations	£ 1,492.15	£ 256.50	£ 497.60	£ 1,251.05	
Repair Café	£ 870.66	£ 289.10	£ -	£ 1,159.76	
Make & Mend		£ 148.35		£ 148.35	
Room. Monthly Meetings (core & events)	-£ 544.93	£ 127.90	£ 166.00	-£ 583.03	
Storage Hire	-£ 600.00		£ 400.00	-£ 1,000.00	Hire 2020 & 2021 (£200 per year)
Website	-£ 800.03		£ 110.40	-£ 910.43	
Total Unrestricted	£ 2,911.56	£ 2,850.67	£ 3,102.99	£ 2,659.24	
Restricted plus Unrestricted	£ 3,332.89			£ 2,250.79	
per combined bank acs & cash	£ 3,330.84			£ 2,250.54	
bal carried forward	£ 3,330.84			£ 2,250.54	