March 2022

# Interim Report

The One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre is an inspirational community hub run by volunteers, for the benefit of the people and the planet - building resilience in a climate emergency, right in the centre of Abingdon-on-Thames.

## Mission

To make the Climate Emergency Centre a space where the magic happens; connecting and supporting our community to change lifestyles and reduce our carbon footprint, whilst addressing issues of social injustice and inequality to build resilience and cohesion.

## Vision

To help to create a 'one planet' Abingdon where everyone in the town works together towards living within the earth's resources and repairing the damage done, whilst enjoying happy, healthy lives and leaving ample space for nature to thrive and flourish.

## Purpose

To provide a vibrant community place where people can come together to promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical, natural and social environments in the town of Abingdon for the public benefit of its residents and the wider community.

To build community ties by working collaboratively with local groups and individuals, learning with and from the public, local business and other local bodies on the impact and mitigation of, as well as adaptation to climate, ecological and social challenges.

To develop understanding and create a sense of purpose to act on the climate, ecological and social issues that affect us all in order to deliver positive changes within our lives and in the town of Abingdon leading to a sustainable, enjoyable and positive future.

# Message from the Chair

One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre is young and yet, already we are strong…

We have been open for 6 months and it has been a richly rewarding experience for all involved. Our plans are evolving and developing, and we are learning to be agile in these uncertain times! Relationships and collaborations with other groups are strengthening and we are excited by the possibilities and opportunities we are creating together.

Significant milestones include confirmation of our legal status, a 'not for profit' Company Limited by Guarantee, with powers delegated to the Steering Group. We have registered as a Climate Action Group with Friends of the Earth and as a Community Action Group with the Community Action Group (CAG) Oxfordshire. We have also registered as a Food Establishment with the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Our focus initially has been on engagement and outreach, ensuring that we have sufficient events on offer to attract those outside of the 'green bubble'. This year we are particularly seeking to engage with the youth of Abingdon, they are the future and their participation and voice are most important.



*A collaboration we are very excited about! One Planet Abingdon CEC, Friends of the Earth Oxford and Damascus Youth Project are exploring ways to find out what the young people of Abingdon feel about the climate emergency. The first of hopefully many sessions was held in February, and we are very grateful to Charlotte Orr (Illustration) and Chris Church for their support.*

We are also key partners of the newly formed Green Forum, participating in meetings and hosting the Green Forum on our website, thereby providing skill and resource to this collaborative effort to move the green agenda forward in the town of Abingdon. The first quarter has focussed on Sustainable Travel and Transport and we look forward to reviewing the results of the survey and other activities with the Forum.

> *'Let us fill our hearts with our own compassion - towards ourselves and towards all living beings.'* - Thich Nhat Hanh, B 1926 - 2022

# Key indicators - first 6 months of operation

September 2021 - February 2022

## Visitors to the CEC

**594** over these 6 months

## Volunteers

**36**

## Steering Group Members

**12**

## Regular Days Open

**3** per week

## Cakes donated

**many!**



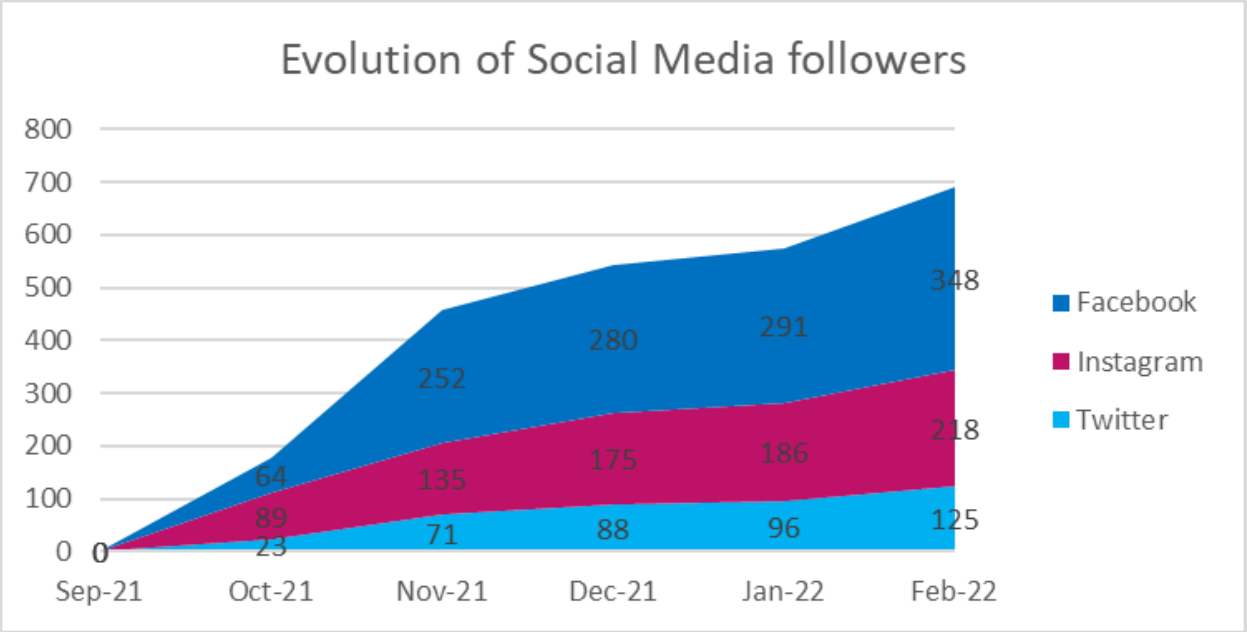

Most of our refreshments are homemade with ethical and local ingredients by our amazing team of volunteer bakers. We support local as much as we can, and prefer Items in reduced or no packaging. We don't sell our refreshments, it is by donation only to ensure accessibility to all.

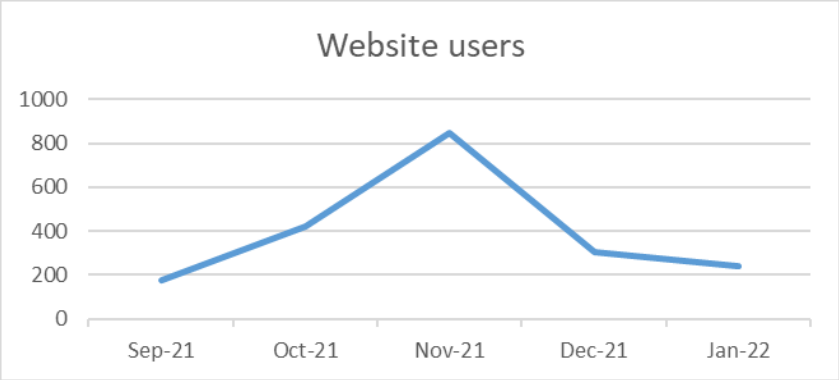
## Fundraising

We received £500 from Abingdon Carbon Cutters to support our startup costs. Insurance for the year was donated by Daniel Scharf. The Town Council covers the rent and services. This is an area we are hoping to develop now that we have our processes in place.

# Social Media presence

One Planet Abingdon is active on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

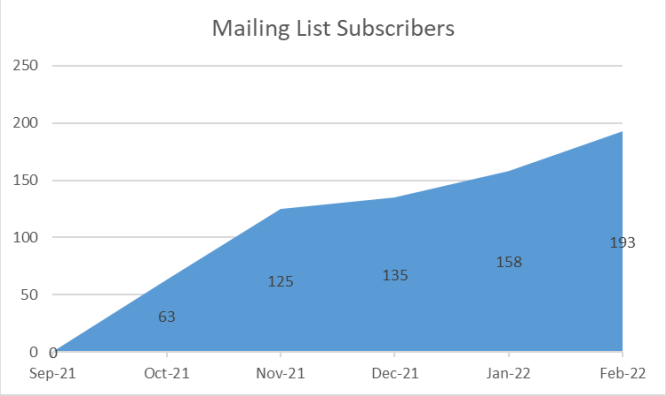



## Website

We see increased online traffic when many events are organised in the centre.

December and January were quieter due to Christmas and our Covid-19 closure.




## Mailing list

Managed via Mailchimp.
We send two “Latest News & Upcoming events” emails on average per month.

# Diversity (not officially recorded)

*This is a sensitive area and by sharing this information we hope to improve accessibility and inclusivity to all the people of Abingdon by stating that everyone is welcome.*

Age - Youngest supporter actively involved is 12 and oldest is 89 years old

Gender and sexuality - we have had visits from the LGBTQ+ community, who have shared openly as being gender fluid, heterosexual, bi and trans.

Race/culture/origin - we have welcomed visitors from Peru, Spain, South Africa, America, Canada and New Zealand. We are planning to host an event in October which will welcome Christians from Europe in a Twinning Town experience.

We have had visitors requiring the lift due to disability and lack of mobility and for mums with pushchairs.

We have also engaged with the social prescriber in order to offer a service to patients with mental health challenges. We hope to receive low key volunteers and for them to use the space to regain confidence due to the isolation imposed by Covid 19.

It is important to us that everyone feels welcome in the space… we always have a puzzle out for those who may prefer to sit quietly before interacting. We have board games, books in our Eco Library and toys for the children. We sell nothing - it is all by donation to ensure that we are accessible to everyone.



# Activities over the first 6 months

**24** Eco events in the centre, all are held within the 10 Principles of [One Planet Living](), the framework by which we do everything.

Including:

- 🧸 Toy Swaps
- 🍏 Apple Pressing
- 🧵 Make and Mend
- 🔧 Repair Cafe
- 🧶 Learn to crochet
- 👑 Learn to play chess
- 👚 Teenage Clothes Swap
- 👗 Swish
- 🎀 Natural Wreath Making
- 🚲 Bike Checks
- 🌱 Plant Swaps
- 🎨 Block Printing Workshop




**4** External visits including visits to schools and invitations to make presentations at various Community Group meetings.

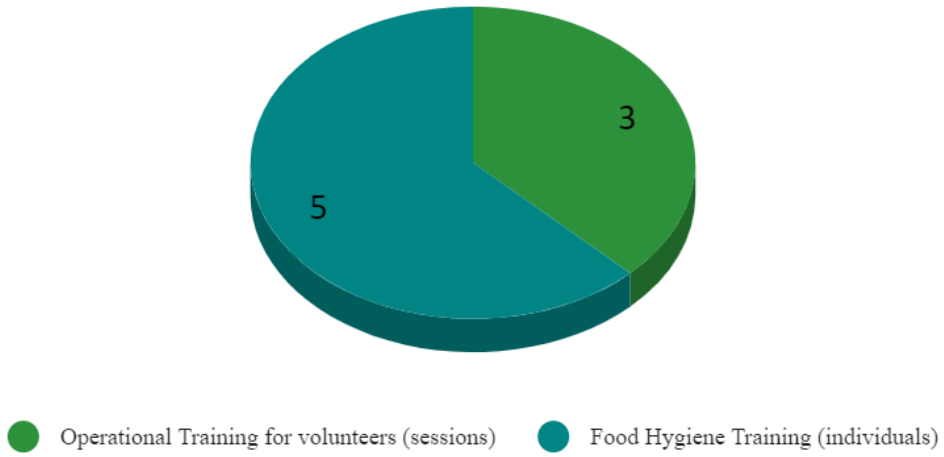
**4** Educational talks held in the centre including Plastic Pollution, Biodiversity, Carbon Footprints and Sustainable Food

# Communications and consultations

**9** Consultations submitted

**12** Blogs/press releases published

# Training




## Operational Procedures

These are a work in progress - we have finalised first version risk assessments, health and hygiene policies, including safeguarding and continue to review as we learn. We have five volunteers who have completed their Certificate in Food Safety in Catering Level 2.



# Youth Engagement

**7** Young people engaged actively and regularly in planning an eco event (4 different schools)

**5** Schools engaged

- Green Panel at St Birinus School
- Outreach to St Helen and St Katharine with plans for Sept 2022
- Outreach to John Mason School and events planned for March 2022
- Outreach to Larkmead School with plans for July 2022
- Youth events shared with Europa School parents' group

## Outreach to Damascus Youth Project/Youth Voice/TAB

The collaboration with Damascus has been inspirational and we are learning so much from the young people already. We are confident that interaction in their space (under the gazebo) to connect and start building relationships is the right approach. We hope to offer these young people sustainable and fun learning experiences that will colour their world with natural beauty and empower them to be a part of the solution.



We have embarked upon a project with the Youth Voice Group, in collaboration with Friends of the Earth and Charlotte Orr (Illustrator). We hope to work with them in the Centre with a view to gaining insight into what their needs are - 'what would a One Planet Abingdon look like for them?' Watch this space!

## Teenage volunteers

We are supporting Duke of Edinburgh students engaging with sustainability projects from Europa School, Larkmead, St Helen and St Katharine, Our Lady's Abingdon, St Birinus School and John Mason School.

# Events and activities by One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre (OPACEC) to look forward to!

## No Sew Bunting - we are delighted to have been asked by the Town Council to coordinate the making of the town's bunting for the *Queen's Platinum Jubilee* - we hope to engage everyone with this exciting project and make our town look good enough for a Queen without the carbon footprint! We have created a Facebook group for the occasion.



## Abingdon Community Festival- a brand new and exciting collaborative event with Abbey Building Trust, Abingdon Partnership Events, Abingdon Carbon Cutters and ourselves to be held at the Abbey Buildings on 9th July.

## Abingdon Eco Business Fair - a collaboration with GreenTech, Vale of White Horse District Council and ourselves - date and details tbc

## Abbey Buildings Trust Guided Tours - A collaborative event by OPACEC and Abbey Buildings Trust. Hear the stories that make history come to life by joining a guided tour of the beautiful Abbey Buildings. By creating an awareness of our heritage and history, we can learn to love what we have and respect our past.

# Thank you

Thank you to Abingdon Town Council for their support and faith in One Planet Abingdon CEC (OPACEC). The free use of the old Mousehole Cafe is a gift which we have gratefully received.

We would also like to thank Abingdon Carbon Cutters, Aspire Oxfordshire and Soha for their support which manifested in many forms. Thank you!

To the people of Abingdon who have come down the stairs to see what we are up to - thank you. Our request to you is to come again and to bring your family and friends along with you. Your support and participation is all we need to make this a beautiful experience for all of us. Building resilience and community; as we do all we can during these unprecedented times.

Last but not least - our incredible group of volunteers without whom none of this would be possible, thank you. Let's keep on doing all we can to create our 'One Planet Abingdon'.

Michelle Charlesworth
Chair - One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre



> *'Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet…'*
> Thich Nhat Hanh, B. 1926 - 2022

# A call to action!

We hope that you have been inspired by our activities thus far and that you are feeling moved to participate and support in some way.

We have managed to do all of this with very few funds and would love to be able to do more and more often. We are in a climate emergency and we have no time to waste.

One Planet Abingdon is run entirely by volunteers. We do everything from stewarding events, to the day to day running of the Climate Emergency Centre. It's rewarding work and we're always looking for people to join our amazing team! Whether you are looking to donate time, skills or expertise; looking to learn more about the environment and the issues facing it, to socialise, gain experience, give something back to society, we would love to hear from you.

If you are a young person you can contact us here.

If you can support us financially please donate here.

One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre is here for you, run by the town's ordinary people doing extraordinary things. We would love for you to be a part of it.

*With love and determination from the team at One Planet Abingdon CEC*



