

COMMUNITY ACTION GROUPS OXFORDSHIRE

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

Photo:
The Community
Growers Network





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfordshire is home to an incredible array of organisations, community groups, and social enterprises all doing amazing work harnessing the power of collective good will. We are a network comprised of mostly volunteer-led efforts to make the place we call home a greener, safer, fairer, more sustainable place to live, work, and play!

With critical core funding from Oxfordshire County Council, we were able to support nearly 130 community-led action groups to deliver a thriving network of climate action and social change activity.

CAG Oxfordshire cannot take credit for the individual efforts of the member groups, but we are their biggest cheerleaders and are pleased to play a small part in their successes as detailed in this report. They are the heart and soul of the climate and social action community in Oxfordshire.

Of the **69 groups reporting** this year, **the network held 7,800 events** and activities across the county, **reaching over 80,000 participants**. Member groups recorded **87,000 volunteer hours**, demonstrating residents' continued dedication to contributing their time and energy to community action in Oxfordshire.

These activities resulted in approximately **1,924 tonnes of non-food waste** being diverted (including 1,741 tonnes of wood via Oxford Wood Recycling) and **48 tonnes of food diverted** from waste to be redistributed, cooked, eaten or processed, **preventing nearly 120 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions**.

Well done to the entire CAG network for an amazing 2025/2026 year of impact. Onwards!

WHO WE ARE

Our mission is to support and facilitate the development of a strong, well-connected network that is enacting community-led social change. Our network of nearly 130 community action groups is working across Oxfordshire to make it a safer, fairer, greener, more sustainable place to live, work and visit.

Started in 2001, our member groups work in their local communities organising events and projects to take action on issues including waste, transport, food, energy, biodiversity and social justice.

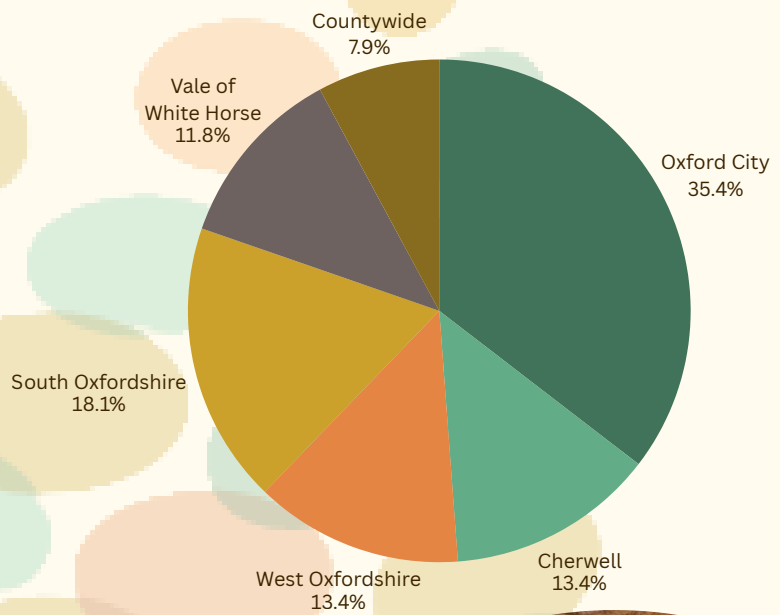
We really feel [CAG Oxfordshire] is such a vital and unique resource that exists in Oxfordshire. It's not something that exists in lots of other parts of the country. And particularly in times when so many groups are struggling to keep their heads above the water or are having capacity issues that are forcing groups to work in isolation. CAG plays this beautiful role of building a network and bringing people together to learn and feel like they are part of a bigger movement, they're not just acting on their own." - Transition Together, a national network support organisation

OUR NETWORK

The CAG Oxfordshire network continues to grow and evolve in response to the needs and opportunities in communities across Oxfordshire. There are a total of 127 CAGs with 12 new members joining this year.

New Members include:

- T(ART) Productions CIC
- Senegambia Oxford Union
- Henley Repair Cafe
- The Wolvercote Mill
- Oxfordshire Doughnut Economics
- Keep Nethercote Rural
- The Berin Centre
- Northway Together CIC
- Oxford Phoenix Rising
- Bampton Thriving Together
- WEmpowered CIC
- Greener Henley



OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE



From April 2025 to March 2026, the CAG network delivered again! This is just a snapshot of what the network achieved.



Nearly **16,000 Volunteers** offered over **87,000 hours** of their time, demonstrating the continued dedication of residents to contribute their time and energy to community action within Oxfordshire.

Food Redistribution

Energy Library of Things

Education

Biodiversity

Trees Transport

Nature Recovery

Community Gardening

Refill shop **Repair**
Community Markets

Swap Shop Social Equity

Waste Repurposing

There are now **127 groups in the Network** working on a huge range of activities. Most groups cover more than one activity area.



The REPAIR CAFE network continues to grow with 35 repair cafes, including 5 new repair cafes, running regular events all over Oxfordshire and over 11,000 views on the listings website.

More than **80,000 people** participated in over **7,800 events**, activities and projects run by CAG members. That's as many as can fill Wembley Stadium!



We gave away **7,500 trees and hedgerow packs** to be planted in private and community gardens in partnership with the International Tree Foundation.



Over **800 people** attended CAG co-hosted events to learn new skills to support their work in communities.



NETWORK ACTIVITY

Connecting People with Nature

CAG members ran a number of events that encouraged people to spend time in and connect with nature. A few highlights from the year:

- New CAG **WEmpowered** held events bridging cultural differences through art and gardening in nature.
- **Rainbow Families** help LGBTQ+ families connect with nature through a weekly drop-in session at the **Oxford City Farm**.
- **Barracks Lane Community Garden** continued to run activities for a group of unaccompanied asylum seekers from Oxford Spire Academy.
- **Hagbourne and Upton Group for Sustainability** held their annual meadow morning sharing the stunning meadow in full flower and offering an orchid tour.
- **Langford Community Orchard** welcomes groups of Cubs to the orchard to instil a love of nature from a young age.



Photo: Her Land Girls Group

Biodiversity and Nature Recovery

Supporting nature's recovery is a focal area for many CAG members, with over 50 groups working to monitor, enhance and protect nature in their areas.



Photo: Planting at Cheney School

- The **Garden Tree Giveaway** saw 12 CAGs distribute thousands of trees across the county, increasing the future biodiversity of people's gardens.
- **Greening Chinnor** hosted over 50 conservation events at their community orchard, including surveying the area's flora and fauna and conducting archaeological digs.



Photo: Wild Oxfordshire

- **Green Fifield** built a 5 star bug hotel and continue water monitoring and verge and village green maintenance for biodiversity. Their 'Spring in Bloom' event was a huge success with 100 seedlings swapped and talks from ecologists on wildlife friendly gardening and on composting.
- **Sustainable Harwell** worked with their Parish Council to agree and deliver a tree planting plan for the village.
- **Chalgrove Volunteer Group** actively participates in riverfly and water quality monitoring.
- **South Stoke Wildlife and Conservation Group** added to their biodiversity records, carrying out multiple wildlife surveys.
- **Oxford Conservation volunteers** continued to organise work parties every Sunday (and some Saturdays) throughout the year. They accrued almost 4,500 volunteer hours of help.

NETWORK ACTIVITY

Community Food Growing

This has been a strong year for community growing across Oxfordshire. New projects were started, emerging projects solidified, and veteran sites have continued to thrive. The Oxfordshire Community Growers' Network, facilitated by CAG, provides a forum for connection and learning.

- Berinsfield is the site of a number of thriving community growing initiatives, including a reinvigorated communal kitchen garden by **The Berin Centre**, a new wellbeing garden by St Mary and St Berin Church, and a number of activities aimed at empowering people to grow more fresh produce at home.
- **Cotteslowe Greenhouse** started a regular gardening club at the greenhouse, in addition to the weekly community allotment sessions.
- **Denny Gardens Allotments** is a new allotment site, activated by the **Oxfordshire Community Land Trust**. The site prioritises access for local residents, aiming to improve the currently poor access to fresh food in the Littlemore ward.
- **Mill Lane Community Garden** in Chinnor runs 'Little Greens Garden Club' every Saturday mornings in term time, and visits youth and adult groups on a regular basis.
- **Fruit Patch** is new gardening project, which runs popular drop-in gardening sessions specifically aimed at LGBTQ+ people, twice a month.
- **The Oxfordshire African Caribbean Multicultural Association** is having its first allotment season, creating a plot which specifically celebrates Caribbean crops whilst being open to everyone.



Tackling Food Waste, Food Insecurity

While many groups are growing food and contributing to a thriving local food economy, others are ensuring food is not wasted, and that food gets to the people who may have least access to healthy, affordable options.

- **Down to Earth Community Cafe** serves delicious, healthy and affordable food at their public cafe, using as much surplus produce as available. They also run regular community meals intended to support individuals and families with the cost of living crisis and to help build friendships and community.
- **Cherwell Collective** partnered with Oxford Food Hub, SOFEA and Savona Food Service to rescue over 11 tonnes of food during their festive food redistributions - adding a new collection point in Barton.
- Many groups, including **Kidlington Abundance, Langford Community Orchard, Peace Oak Orchard, Steeple Aston Community Orchard, Chalgrove Volunteer Group, Sustainable Wheatley, Sustainable Didcot, sustainable Wantage and Sustainable Wychwoods Action Group** have been pressing apples into juice both for members of their community.
- **Flo's - The Place in the Park** introduced their 'Me & You Menu' - a free to access food scheme for anyone to use seven days a week via their Community Cafe.



NETWORK ACTIVITY

Transition to a Circular and Sharing Economy

Many CAG members have continued to avert waste in Oxfordshire by encouraging sharing, reuse, repair and upcycling of materials and household items.

- **Sustainable Wheatley** celebrated their 75th swap shop with the latest one in April drawing in 138 customers through the door who took away 701 kg of items to re-use.
- **Oxford Wood Recycling** facilitated 1741.4 tonnes of wood waste for collection and recycling.
- **Sandford Talking Shop** continues to run a regular pre-loved market.
- **SHARE Oxford** had a big year with a 60% increase in Library of Things Visits and more than 530 things fixed or rehomed.
- **Bullington Community Association** celebrated ten years of their Repair Cafe - previously known as the 'Fix-it Café', which could possibly make it the longest running Repair Café in Oxfordshire!
- 800,000 bottles and packaging items refilled via **SESI**, reducing new plastic demand by approx 16 tonnes.



Sustainable Energy

A number of CAGs have been busy delivering activities to help Oxfordshire residents save money on bills and reduce their energy consumption. Some examples are:

- **Westmill Solar Co-operative** has given an incredible £30,000 to community organisations in 2025 through its Community Funding Grant Scheme, including a number of CAG members.
- **Low Carbon East Oxford** continued their thermal imaging project, taking images for local residents on request, offering advice, installing draught proofing measures and fitting radiator foil as indicated.
- **Low Carbon Oxford North** continues to run a home energy stall once a month at the City Larder.

Community Hubs

Across the network, members are bringing life back into disused and underused spaces, creating welcoming community hubs shaped by local people and their priorities.

- **The Berin Centre** in Berinsfield opened a new community cafe, housed in purpose-built, eco-friendly premises featuring solar panels, an air source heat pump, sustainable materials throughout, and an ethos which prioritises using surplus food and fresh produce from the nearby community gardens.
- **One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre** provides a vibrant community space, bringing people together for the benefit of people and the planet. This year they were able to recruit a paid volunteer coordinator.
- **Sustainable Didcot's** 'Green Hub' has gone from strength to strength; in part, due to now having a paid member of staff. They ran over 200 events this year!
- **The Wolvercote Mill** is a community-owned space which hosts a number of weekly wellbeing sessions.



NETWORK ACTIVITY

Community Markets

CAG community markets are going from strength to strength, with **five CAGs** now hosting weekly or monthly markets. These lively local community hubs give residents convenient access to fresh, sustainable, and locally sourced produce, while creating vital trading opportunities for local producers and businesses. By prioritising ethical, local suppliers, they help keep food miles low and money circulating in the local economy.

Many feature plastic-free refill stalls for dry goods and cleaning products —such as the South Oxford Community Market, whose refill station replaced 1,500 bottles. Several offer free repair services so residents can fix rather than bin household items.



Photo: East Oxford Community Market



Photo: Windrush Bike Project

Liveable Streets and Active Travel

A number of CAG members are working to encourage active and sustainable travel, reduce traffic and pollution, and create accessible and people-centred streets. A few highlights are:

- **Cyclox** had several policy wins on improving infrastructure.

Broken Spoke Bike Co-op teamed up with fellow CAG member **Flo's - The Place in the Park**, to deliver cycle training for mums and kids as part of Equal Start Oxford, led by an all-female team of instructors.

- **Windrush Bike Project** continues to deliver Bikeability cycle training in 42 West Oxfordshire schools. Since they started counting in 2018, they have trained 5,623 people to cycle.

Supporting Equitable Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

A growing number of our members are tackling health inequalities through community-led and culturally informed approaches. Much of this work is shaped by people with direct experience of systemic barriers, ensuring that support is relevant, respectful, and rooted in solidarity rather than charity.

Body Mind & Soul runs a low-cost weekly chair yoga workshop for women aged over 50 in East Oxford, predominantly attended by women of African and Caribbean descent.

Oxfordshire African Caribbean Multicultural Association (OACMA) hosted a menopause and wellbeing workshop, as well as a regular men's group in Blackbird Leys, focused on mental health and wellbeing.

Transition Lighthouse Empowerment Space continues to run the WOW (Women Of the World) Space in Oxford — a safe, self-referred space for migrant women with lived experience of trauma — alongside a drop-in centre in Faringdon offering similar support.

Tandem Collective continued with their Starlings Sessions programme, a global folk community orchestra whose positive mental wellbeing impact has been well documented. They've also run 17 music instrument lessons for Asylum Welcome clients, in collaboration with Oxford Refugee Health and the Oxford Hub.



OUR SUPPORT

Our core work is supporting our members to run effective community action groups. In 2025-2026, CAG staff offered support in many different ways.

"[The programme] helped me become more confident to take my group forward, to build our community and achieve the change we want to see."

TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS

The CAG staff team organised or collaborated on 16 Network support events, these included a series of training workshops, webinars and socials.

NEWSLETTERS

We send newsletters every week: The Network Update, providing resources and opportunities for groups, and The Key, sharing events and general sustainability news to a distribution of over 2,300 subscribers.

"it is very encouraging to know how many groups are active in the area, and to find out what they are doing. We are not alone!"

"CAG Oxfordshire is our go to to ask -- the support is always helpful and constructive. There is also a wide range of information that we have picked up from the newsletter which is a newsletter of value and definitely one to be read in detail!"

EQUIPMENT

CAG Oxfordshire has a bank of equipment which can be borrowed by members. Some items are held by SHARE Oxford's Library of Things, including a bike-powered smoothie maker, PAT testers and an apple juicing kit.

INSURANCE GRANTS

CAG provided a total of £5,430 in grants to 31 network members to support them with insurance costs during the project year.

"[CAG] directly helped us recruit new volunteers, including new Board members, and ask existing volunteers for more help."

"CAG has been helpful in supplying information on setting up different not for profit companies, providing links with other actors, and access to funds and advice."

"So much positive work is being catalysed because of the vision of what [CAG does], and the [staff] who are carrying those key roles to support that vision."

1:1 SUPPORT

CAG staff offered 1:1 advice and guidance to a number of member groups, particularly those starting out or dealing with change or conflict.

"It means a lot to know the CAG team are "there." There's a "moral support" aspect to the work you do which energises us, with good newsletters keeping us abreast of what's going on and a team who are both approachable and proactive in helping us develop.

COLLABORATE GROUPS

To facilitate network members and partners to work together on common themes and benefit from peer support, 20 Collaborate meetings were held across the following themes:

Trees

Community Markets

Youth

Nature Recovery

Energy

Circular Economy

Oxfordshire Community Growers

OUR PROJECTS

Replenish



Replenish is a project, funded by Oxfordshire County Council, which supports residents of Oxfordshire to grow and cook nutritious food with zero wastage.

Replenish ran 35 workshops, stalls, and activities across all five districts, engaging over 500 people:

- 13 events focused on composting
- 13 events highlighted food waste reduction
- 9 events covered both topics

Events were organised and hosted in partnership with 8 CAGs and 12 external organisations, including Oxford Brookes University, Banbury Larder, Youth Challenge Oxfordshire, Rose Hill Junior Youth Club and the Old Fire Station, as well as several libraries.

Owned by Oxford

CAG continues to co-ordinate the Owned by Oxford (ObO) partnership. A group of 11 organisations — grassroots community groups, locally-rooted VCSEs, and Oxford City Council — that came together in 2021 through concern about the stark inequalities shaping life in Oxfordshire. Their vision is for a fair, democratic and sustainable economy that works for people and the planet.

The group works on an approach to local economic development called **Community Wealth Building**, that aims to build community power and shift wealth and assets toward communities that have historically been excluded from these.

The project works on two interconnected fronts.

1. Working alongside communities most impacted by health and wealth inequalities — supporting community-led solutions, building local leadership, and channelling funding and resources into grassroots organisations.
2. Working with local anchor institutions — councils, universities, and other large employers — supporting them to use their spending, assets, and influence to advance social equity and act as enablers of community power.



Photo: Cooking Sessions with Replenish



Photo: Owned by Oxford Steering Group

OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

We wouldn't be where we are today without the funders that support our work and our network of partners with which we collaborate. Thank you for working with us in 2025-2026 and we look forward to building our relationships in the years to come.

FUNDERS



PARTNERS



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