

# COMMUNITY ACTION GROUPS OXFORDSHIRE



## ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

*Photo courtesy of Steeple Aston Community Orchard Group*

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Photo: Sustainable Didcot - Green Hub Craft Activity

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfordshire is home to a vibrant ecosystem of community groups, organisations and social enterprises working tirelessly to create positive change. Among these, the CAG Oxfordshire network stands out as a remarkable force for collective action—bringing together mostly volunteer-led groups dedicated to making our communities greener, fairer, safer, and more sustainable.

While the individual successes of our member groups belong to them alone, we are proud to support and amplify their efforts. These groups are the beating heart of Oxfordshire’s climate and social action movement, and their achievements—highlighted in this report—are a testament to the power of grassroots leadership.

It is a privilege to work alongside such inspiring individuals from across the County. At CAG Oxfordshire, we remain committed to supporting both the network as a whole and the needs of each group, ensuring they are equipped, connected, and empowered in their work. We are deeply grateful for the continued support of Oxfordshire County Council, whose partnership is crucial to enabling community-led solutions.

**Katherine Chesson**  
Director, on behalf of the CAG Oxfordshire team





# 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 120 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.

Find out more at our website: [www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk)



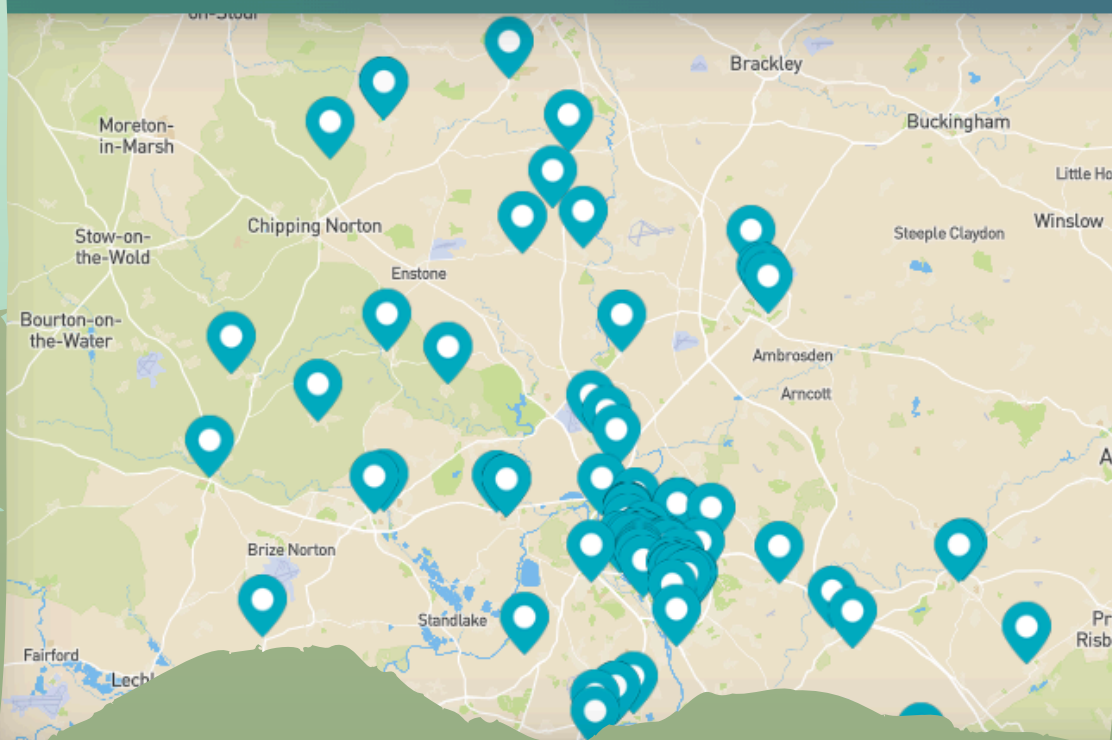
Photo: Wild about Wallingford at Wallingford Carnival

## 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 117 CAGs with 6 new members joining this year.

This year, we partnered with the Hedgerley Wood Trust and joined their Mycelium Map to provide a geographical visual for our CAG members. The Mycelium Map connects people in their local communities to take action on climate change. This version of the map on our website filters out groups in the CAG network. You can see all groups on the Mycelium Map here. [www.mymap.eco](http://www.mymap.eco)

### Mycelium Map



You can find all  
our CAG  
members here

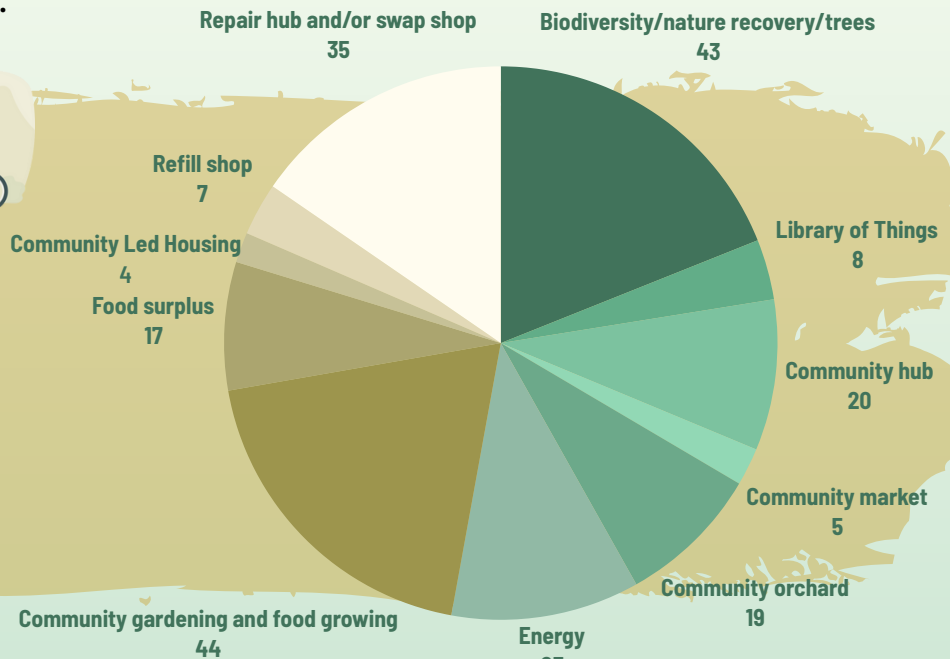
Find out about  
what is happening  
in your district by  
downloading our  
District  
Factsheets

# OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

From April 2024 to March 2025, the CAG network delivered some impressive achievements! We are proud to share the impact of the network and grateful to all those who showed up for their communities last year.



There are now **117 groups** in the Network working on a huge range of activities with most groups covering more than one activity area.



More than **120,000** people participated in over **8,000** events, activities and projects! That's the size of a packed crowd at Glastonbury's Pyramid Stage!

Over **100,000 volunteering hours** were recorded, demonstrating the continued dedication of residents to contribute their time and energy to community action within Oxfordshire.



These activities resulted in approximately **380 TONNES** of food diverted from the waste stream, equivalent to 190 adult male African elephants! This prevented nearly **950 TONNES** of carbon dioxide emissions.



30 groups organised a total of **350 REPAIR CAFE** events, allowing the public to "fix not bin" their broken household items. This is twice the number of events since 2021, highlighting the growing popularity of these gatherings and the shift towards repair culture.



*This data was collected from 65 groups in our network of 117 groups from April 2024 to March 2025.*



# NETWORK ACTIVITY

The next few pages provide a glimpse of the activities undertaken by CAG member groups, split by theme. This really is just a snapshot of the huge overall output.

## Connecting people with nature

CAG members ran a whole range of events that supported people to spend time in, and deepen their connection with nature, recognising the benefits to physical and mental health that spending time in nature can bring.

- **One Planet Clanfield** experimented with woodland crafts, making plant stands from locally sourced materials.
- **Barracks Lane Community Garden** continued to host their 'Singing for Wellbeing' sessions and obtained grant funding to run activities for a group of unaccompanied asylum seekers from a nearby secondary school.
- **Greening Chinnor** kept going with their 'Orchard Story Group' to find out who lived and lives there – whether people, plants, or animals!
- **Langford Community Orchard** regularly host groups of Cubs and Brownies, who have been learning about nature and helping to care for the orchard.



Photo: Bourtons Bat Walk for Great Big Green Week



Photo: Planting beds at Cheney School as part of Great Big Green Week

- **Hagbourne and Upton Group for Sustainability** continue to run monthly work parties to maintain their green spaces.
- **Sustainable Harwell** planted 100 metres of whips to establish a new hedgerow and **Green Fifield** continue to maintain their wildflower verges with 'the big verge rake' removing 13 tonne bags of grass arisings over the year.

## Community food growing

Community growing projects and orchards provide a space for local people to learn practical food-growing skills that employ climate- and nature-friendly methods.

- **Hogacre Common** secured funding to carry out community engagement work in central Oxford.
- **Oxford African and Caribbean Multicultural Association (OACMA)** has taken out an allotment on Sorrel Road, and is working to establish it as a community plot for their members.
- **Grassroots Bicester** ran 94 community garden sessions.
- **Bridge Street Community Garden** hosted a myriad of garden wellbeing and nature-inspired sessions, often including arts, crafts, music and dance.

Photo: Community Orchard Workshop with International Tree Foundation





## Tackling food waste and 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 it gets to the people who may have least access to healthy, affordable options.



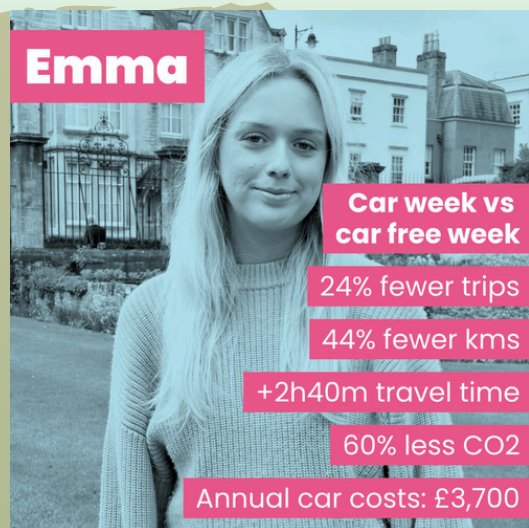
- **Abingdon Community Fridge** redistributed over 71 tonnes of surplus food over the past year.
- **Cherwell Collective** and Oxford Food Hub jointly hosted their popular 'Midday Mass' event during the holiday period, diverting 20 tonnes of food surplus.
- Cutteslowe Community Allotment, run by **Cutteslowe Greenhouse**, regularly sends produce from the plot to the nearby community larder.
- **Down to Earth Community Cafe** uses food surplus to run their public cafe, as well as offering regular community meals and a lunch club.

*Photo: Cherwell Collective's 'Midday Mass' food surplus giveaway*

## 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.

- **Low Carbon Oxford North** ran a 'car-free' challenge where local residents tried going without their cars for a week.
- **Broken Spoke Bike Co-op** ran over 700 workshops and training sessions on bicycle mechanics, repair and cycle training for adults and children.
- **CycloX** provided 15 responses to various consultations to create a safe, accessible and connected cycling network for everyone.
- **Windrush Bike Project** repaired or serviced over 726 bikes, delivered Bikeability courses to 1,072 children and taught 123 children to ride a bike.



*Photo: An example of LCON's car free challenge campaign*

## Transition to a circular and sharing economy

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



- **Sustainable Wheatley** saved 2,500kg of items going to landfill by repairing, upcycling and swapping through their swap shops.
- **Biodiversity Bloxham** ran a community clothes swap where 100 items were repaired or upcycled.
- **Sustainable Didcot** launched a Library of Things in December 2024 within the 'Green Hub.'
- **Great Milton Freecycle Live** held pop up community cafes over the year and repaired, upcycled, swapped and borrowed 1,874 items.
- **Orinoco Banbury** recently celebrated saving 51 tonnes of items going to landfill since October 2021 – that's roughly an average of 13 tonnes a year!
- **Sustainable Wantage** facilitated 1,872L of refills, 237 gifts swapped, and 117 glass bottles reused.
- 200 people participated/hired equipment from **21st Century Thame's** Equipment Bank.

*Photo: South Oxford Swap Shop*



## Sustainable energy

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

- **Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon** celebrated the end of the Clean Heat Streets project, which helped more than 30 local residents switch to modern, energy-saving heat pumps.
- **Low Carbon East Oxford** continued their thermal imaging project, taking images for local residents and offering energy saving advice.
- **Transition Eynsham Area (Green TEA)** celebrated its fifteenth birthday. The group was delighted to have their work on CAP Zero recognised at a House of Lords event on zero carbon homes.
- **Sustainable Woodstock, Green TEA** and Sustainable Botley with Low Carbon Hub submitted a response to the formal consultation on community benefit of the Botley West Solar Farm.

*Photo: Thermal Images of Didcot Buildings taken by members of Sustainable Didcot*



## Community Hubs

Several network members have been working to bring underused spaces back into community use, to provide spaces for local people to come together and organise.

- Most of the hubs help to support sustainable behaviours, such as **'The Hub' in Shrivenham** or **'The Mix' in Wantage** which hosts a refill shop, a pre-loved items shop, repair cafe and recycling collections for 'hard to recycle' items.
- Most hubs also run sustainability events. **Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre** hosted several, very popular 'Learn to Sew' sessions.
- The **Oxford Poetry Library** hosted more than 200 events again this year. A particular highlight was co-curating the Oxford Di-Verse Poetry Festival, supported by a CAG Special Project Grant.
- **Climate Collective Oxford** set up pop-up stalls and outreach events to raise awareness across more than 400 people around climate and nature issues, as they continue to look for a physical hub space.

*Photo: One Planet Abingdon celebrates three years of its Climate Emergency Centre*



## Supporting equitable health and wellbeing outcomes

An increasing number of our members are working to address health inequalities through community-led and culturally informed approaches. Many of these initiatives are shaped by people directly affected by systemic barriers, ensuring that support is relevant, respectful and delivered in a spirit of solidarity, not charity.

- **Rainbow Families Oxford** runs weekly drop in for LGBTQ+ parents and their children. People have reported feeling more connected, supported and able to talk about unique challenges as a result of the group/events.
- **Body Mind & Soul and OACMA** delivered health and wellbeing sessions for over 50 men of Global Majority backgrounds, providing a safe space to discuss topics such as prostate cancer, sickle cell disease and visiting doctors with confidence.
- **Transition Chipping Norton** have successfully increased youth participation by hosting pop-up events at a local play park - where young people already gather - and running around 50 youth-focused activities throughout the year, ranging from camping to bushcraft.

*Photo credit:  
Usha Kar, Inclusive Nature Recovery day at Willowbrook Farm*



# AWARDS

CAG members were widely recognised over the course of the year for their contributions to their communities.

- **CAG Oxfordshire** won Best Partnership Award along with Oxfordshire County Council at the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee awards.
- **Hook Norton Community Land Trust** swept up a myriad of awards for their new housing development. Accolades include Oxford Climate Awards, Building Awards 2024, Inside Housing Awards 2024, Community Land Trust Awards, and Unlock Net Zero Awards.
- **Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon** was the overall winner of the Oxford Climate Award and also winner of the Climate Community Group Award.
- Two leaders of the **Windrush Bike Project** were included in Cycling UK's 100 Women in Cycling 2024.
- **Oxford Poetry Library** was recognised as a Big Issue Changemaker 2025, a recognition made even more meaningful by the fact that they were nominated by their own community.
- **Wantage Market Garden** volunteer Olwen, won Volunteer of the Year at the Oxfordshire Adult Social Care Awards.



photos: Oxfordshire County Council at LARAC awards, Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon at the Oxford Climate Awards, Hook Norton Community Land Trust at Inside Housing Awards.

# GRANTS

As part of our project to connect communities and nature, with funding support from The National Lottery Community Fund via Cherwell Collective and The Big Give Green Match Fund, we supported new partners to CAG such as:

- **Parkinsons.Me** who run a community garden program to engage more vulnerable groups in and around Wantage.
- **Oxfordshire Asian Women's Voice** runs a weekly walking group. The group began back in March and regularly has 15 to 20 ladies taking part.
- **Her Land** is a social enterprise that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of women and girls.
- **People's Theatre Collective** aims to empower and inspire young people and their communities through the arts.
- Existing members **Parasol Project, Banbury CAG (Bridge Street Garden), Wild about Wallingford, The Nature Effect, and Transition Chipping Norton** also received support.
- **Cotteslowe Greenhouse** received a Special Project Grant for legal fees related to establishing the lease for their site (which they now have for 25 years!)
- **The Nature Effect** received a Special Project Grant towards their community garden project, Inside Out at Bullingdon Prison. The garden is complete with very enthusiastic feedback from prison visitors and staff and has been named Bloom & Play by families.

## Community Allotment Work Party

Every Wednesday  
11.30am-1.30pm



Help us with maintenance tasks to produce fresh food for the Cotteslowe Community Larder



Photo: Cotteslowe Greenhouse Publicity



# OUR SUPPORT

Our core work is supporting our members to run effective community action groups. In 2024-2025, CAG staff offered support in many different ways.

*"CAG continues to be such an essential source of wisdom and support for us - an extremely valuable resource and helpful bunch of people!"*

## 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 nearly 2,000 subscribers.



Photo: Knife and tool sharpening training

Photo: CAG Youth Solidarity Event



## PEER TO PEER SUPPORT AND COLLABORATE MEETINGS

To enable network members and partners to work together on themes of shared interest, the team organised 20 'Collaborate' meetings.

## 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.

*"Good to be part of CAG - in a small group it's good to have another resource to be able to draw on for advice and support."*

*"From the very first moment we joined, we felt truly supported. Please continue your hard work in building bridges between communities."*

## 1:1 SUPPORT

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

## PATHWAYS FOR COMMUNITY VOICE

Critical to CAG's strategy is the inclusion of community voices into policy and decision making processes. This year, we did that by inviting, and compensating, groups to participate in forums such as these:

- Inclusive Nature Recovery Working Group
- Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership
- Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Summit



Photo: CAG AGM and Summer Social



# OUR PROJECTS

Alongside supporting our growing network of community and climate action groups, we run projects that support our vision and values.

Photo: (Most of) The ObO steering group

## OWNED BY OXFORD

CAG continues to co-coordinate the Owned by Oxford (ObO) partnership. ObO is a strategic partnership between grassroots community anchor organisations, infrastructure bodies and the City Council, aiming to precipitate a shift towards a just, fair, and regenerative economy for the city - centred on the lived experience and leadership of those most impacted by structural inequalities.

ObO invests in the leadership, resilience and voice of Oxfordshire's grassroots community organisations - particularly those rooted in communities most affected by structural inequality. ObO channels funding and capacity-building resources into these groups to strengthen their organisational resilience and impact.



[Visit the Owned by Oxford Website](#)



Photo: Berinsfield Community Garden



## COMMUNITY GARDENS

With support from Oxfordshire County Council, and recognising the role community gardens play in capitalising on the co-benefits of engagement with nature, physical exercise, and social connections, we helped to establish new community gardens in Blackbird Leys, Littlemore and Berinsfield.

In each location, the gardens build on the work of existing community partners and partnership infrastructure. This year, the groups focused their efforts on establishing garden infrastructure and starting to run regular gardening activities with their members, learning new skills together.



## REPLENISH OXFORDSHIRE

[Visit the Replenish Oxfordshire Website](#)

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

During the project year, Replenish, alongside partners and other CAG members, ran 46 workshops, stalls, and activities across all five districts, engaging over 750 people. An additional 21 Replenish-supported events were hosted by local community groups, facilitated through Cook and Share Month and Food Waste Action Week grants.

Events and activities focused on reducing the amount of domestic food waste going into general waste bins by promoting the reduction of food waste, home composting and the use of food recycling caddies and supporting the development of cookery skills and awareness around nutrition.



### FOOD WASTE ACTION WEEK, 17- 23 MARCH

#### OXFORDSHIRE EVENTS

##### HOLI 2025 CELEBRATION OF COLOURS

Come and take a dip in colours of love, joy and happiness this HOLI Celebrate with Oxford Hindu Temple in collaboration with Oxfordshire Nepalese Community. Music, dance, food and fun.

Saturday 15th March / 2:30-5:30pm / Oxsrads Sports Centre, OX3 0NQ

##### SOUP AND SMOOTHIE MAKING

Aged between 10 and 16 years old? Bring along any fruit or veg lingering in the bottom of your fridge and turn them into soup and smoothies with Sonning Common Youth Club.

Wed 19th & Thu 20th March / 6-8pm  
Malden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School Reads Lane, Sonning Common

##### USING THE FRITWELL COMMUNITY FRIDGE

Come and listen to a short talk by Kerry Mellor to hear how you can use the Fritwell Community Fridge to save surplus food.

Thursday 20th March / 7pm / Village Hall, Somerton

##### BEAUTIFUL BARTON COOK AND EAT

Join Beautiful Barton for this family friendly event, preparing several dishes using food surplus and sharing ideas and recipes to reduce food waste. Bring along a tupperware for leftovers, veg peeler and veg knife if you have one.

Saturday 22 March / 10.30am - 2.30pm / Barton Neighbourhood Centre

##### FAMILY FRIENDLY WORMERY & COMPOSTING WORKSHOP

Come to Oxford City Farm and meet the most important animals on the farm and learn how to compost your food waste rather than put it in the bin.

Saturday 22 March / 2pm - 4pm / Oxford City Farm / Booking Essential

##### FAMILY CHOP AND CHAT

Join Hendreds Environment Group for a family friendly event. Prepare a meal then enjoy it together.

Friday 21st March / Cooking starts at 4pm - serving the meal from 5:30pm  
Snells Hall, Church Lane, East Hendred

MORE INFO AT [WWW.REPLENISHOXFORDSHIRE.COM/EVENTS/](http://WWW.REPLENISHOXFORDSHIRE.COM/EVENTS/)



# 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 2024-2025 and we look forward to building our relationships in the years to come.



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Our core work is funded by  
Oxfordshire County Council.

## FUNDERS



## PARTNERS



## PROUD TO BE MEMBERS OF



## STAY IN TOUCH

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Photo:  
CAG staff member Jabu and her  
granddaughter litter picking in Barton