

Sustainable Harwell Annual General Meeting 2nd September 2020

Chair's Report

Sustainable Harwell has been in operation for over a year and I suggest has already accomplished much. With nearly 80 people now involved with the Group, we are generating growing interest and reach within the Harwell community.

Along with many other similar organisations we are part of the network of Community Action Groups Oxfordshire and make use of their support. See <https://cagoxfordshire.org.uk/about/>

With a strong focus on taking local action within the village and surrounding area, the Group has been working on five project areas from the 18 original ideas suggested to improve sustainability:

- Improving cycling and footpaths
- Lobbying for new houses to be more sustainable
- Tree-planting/rewilding
- Setting up a refill facility
- Starting a recycle facility for items that are harder to recycle.

As a voluntary organisation we are highly dependent on people offering their time to take these projects forward and later this evening you will hear more about the accomplishments and plans for each.

I want to publicly thank those who have helped with the Group's work during the last 12 months. Particularly the Group Officers, Martin and David who have been highly supportive. I also wanted to thank those who have been leading and helping with the projects. Not all are here tonight but those that deserve special mention include Alan, Janice, Sue, Penny, Aisling, Sally as well as those working to promote our activities on the internet and social media, including Claire and most recently Victoria. Without their involvement little would have been achieved.

Finally, I also wanted to thank numerous other people, too many to mention, for their support and interest in the Group. With your commitment we are making a difference to improve things as I hope you will see later on this evening.

Driving our work is the recognition that there is much to do in a short space of time and I am sure we all recognise that there are major changes required to tackle the big issues of climate change and the decline of biodiversity in a fair way that works for everyone in society.

It is my belief that alongside these challenges there are also great opportunities. At this exceptional time the phrase "build-back better, build back greener" is gathering momentum.

Sustainable Harwell expects to be part of this transition, working locally to take ideas into action and acting as a source of information and guidance. Later this evening I will spend a few minutes outlining some thoughts and suggestions for the future direction of the Group which we would welcome your views on.

In summary I suggest it has been a useful first 12 months. The Group has achieved a lot but there is still much to do. I very much hope that people will continue to offer their support so we can accelerate our activity.

Giles Barwell
Chair