

Report for the E & A committee of Abingdon Town Council, re Green Forum
April to June 2024 - topic "Grow Your Own"

Aims of this forum include –

- To help reduce the carbon footprint of Abingdon, especially food miles
- to introduce gardening to young people,
- to improve mental health through gardening;
- To share knowledge at Seed & Plant swaps, and a Gardener's Question Time.
- To learn about organic gardening and seasonal Fruit & veg,
- To learn about different soil types and what grows well on Abingdon soil, and share knowledge about controlling pests.
- To teach what crops are expensive in the shops but easy to grow, eg salad crops, herbs, soft fruit, improving diet & countering food poverty.
- To have allotment visits to learn about composting, growing methods etc.

We have held 4 meetings via Zoom, latest on 24 April, with an attendance of between 6 and 10 people.

Display boards are up in the CEC with large posters encouraging GYO. Display in library booked for June.

Survey.

GYO survey designed and made available to fill in online, tear-off slips given out at stalls & in CEC: <https://bit.ly/OPACECgrowyourown> . Oxford University student consultancy arranged to analyse the survey results at the end of June.

Events already run:

- **Saturday 30 March** – OPACEC stall in Market Place, Easter activities included seed planting.
- **Monday 15th April** Stall at Abingdon & Witney College event for staff, along with several other organisations. Not a lot of footfall but good networking.
- **Weds 17th April** in Abingdon Baptist Church : ACC film screening of "Six Inches of Soil" film attracted 70 people, the church provided free venue and refreshments.
- **April Ecotots** in the CEC on a gardening theme: the small children enjoyed making paper pots.
- **Saturday 4th May** 11:00-13:00 . "Open Garden" at Old Station House showcased the garden run jointly by Edible Abingdon and the activities manager at OSH, and was an excellent example of co-operation between the two organisations.
- **Saturday 4th May**, 10:00-13:00 Green Forum stall in marketplace, with seedling and seed giveaway, and link to GYO survey.
- **Monday 6th May** 10-1 Allotment Tour with Bridget at Peachcroft Farm.

Events planned:

- **Wednesday 15th May** 7.30pm in Old Magistrate's Court, ACC meeting on Stonehill Community Garden, open to public.
- **Saturday 18th May**, 2-3pm Permaculture talk by Brigid Sundaram. In Kempster Room booked. Booking via OPA website
- **Saturday 25th May**, 10:30-12:30 Plant, seedling and seed swap under museum arches (Kempster if wet)
- **Monday 27th May**, 10:30-11.30, Edible Abingdon Walking Tour. Sign-ups from 10am in Market Place with Civic Society. Volunteers: Sharon & Petra.
- **Sat 8th June** 7.30pm. Allotment tour at Drayton Road Allotments run by allotmenters.
- **Saturday 15th June**, 10-4 One Planet Living Festival: GYO Stall and Gardeners Question Time in market place.

Other events in the pipeline:

- Composting workshop – Lucille at St Eth's garden.
- Wormery workshop – Kim & Michelle in Kempster Room

Date of next meeting 23.5.24 7.30pm on Zoom , link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85152664138?pwd=Z1owa1JqazZRcGIKc0ZPNmQxQ0hvUT09> Meeting ID: 851 5266 4138 Passcode: 011144

Sally Reynolds 12.5.24