



AUCHENCAIRN CLIMATE TRANSITION SCIO

**Summary Annual Report
2025-26**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our annual report 2025-26. It has been a significant year for ACT, beginning with our incorporation as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), the formal agreement of our constitution and election of a board of trustees. Since then its been non-stop, with the development of new policies to underpin how we work and the creation of a new logo and website (www.act.scot) to ensure we have a professional brand and online platform. Volunteers have continued to be at the very heart of the organisation, inspiring its vision and driving its work forward with their time and commitment. Thanks to funding from the Volunteer Support Fund, we are now able to develop resources to better support our existing volunteers and to recruit new volunteers. This work is essential to build capacity in the organisation and ensure the sustainability of our work into the future. ACT is keen to encourage volunteers from across the community in recognition that many voices are needed for an inclusive and socially just adaption to the challenges ahead. In the context of unfolding gobal instability, in which the climate emergency is a driving force, our work has never seemed more urgent or necessary. ACT believes in the power of community, of appreciating each other, sharing our skills and caring for this beautiful place, Auchencairn, where we are fortunate enough to live. In a time of global crisis, taking reponsiblilty for this small part of the world is the place where we can start from and where we seek to make a difference. What follows is a review of our projects and highlights from the last year. It is a testament to what is possible with grassroots organising that is driven by passion, energy, and a commitment to place and community.



ACT Volunteers with the rubbish collected from Red Haven beach on a recent litter pick as part of the 'Keep Scotland Beautiful Spring Clean'.

PROJECT REPORTS

Our projects form the core of our ongoing work in the community, and underpin our objective of building resilience to the climate crisis through biodiversity enhancement, local food growing and sustainable travel. Here the project leaders report on their project activities and achievements over the last year.

BIODIVERSITY - Lee Paton

The Biodiversity Group have held various activities over the last 12 months.

Once or twice a year we have hosted an activities session for the primary school children in The Community Field involving activities such as moth trapping, bug hunts and soil worm counts. Our last one was in Spring 2025.

New safeguarding rules mean that all helpers at events aimed at children must now be registered for ACT on the PVG scheme and we now have a bank of volunteers who are PVG checked. This is added to from time to time.

We have a monthly gathering which in the winter months tend to focus on tidying our small tree nursery, collecting tree tubes from local woodland for re use and maintenance of trees and fruit bushes in the Community Field.



Maintaining trees and fruit bushes in the community field.



An adder enjoying the spring sunshine, spotted whilst litter picking.

The first few months of 2026 have seen us plant Rowan trees along the burn side, distribute free trees from our small tree nursery and have a litter pick in Auchencairn Bay as part of Keep Scotland Beautiful's Spring Clean Scotland. Litter picking equipment was purchased with money from our volunteer development fund.

This spring we have put together a slightly more ambitious programme for the coming year including plant and tree id and guided walks to look at wildflowers and hedge maintenance on a local farm. In addition, we plan outings to Dumfries and Galloway Woodland's site at Bennel Wood near Dalbeattie, Balmangan Farm near Borgue and other local woodlands.

FOOD GROWING - Jenny Stephenson

The food growing group met on Monday afternoons to work together to grow healthy food whilst nourishing the soil and working with nature. 7 volunteers worked together to grow food and enjoy a cuppa after the hard work.

From March to November, we worked at preparing the ground, planting seeds, weeding, mulching, pruning, propagating, composting and harvesting together. We made a rota for watering the Polytunnel in summer, and any surplus food harvested was donated to Stepping Stones Food Bank.

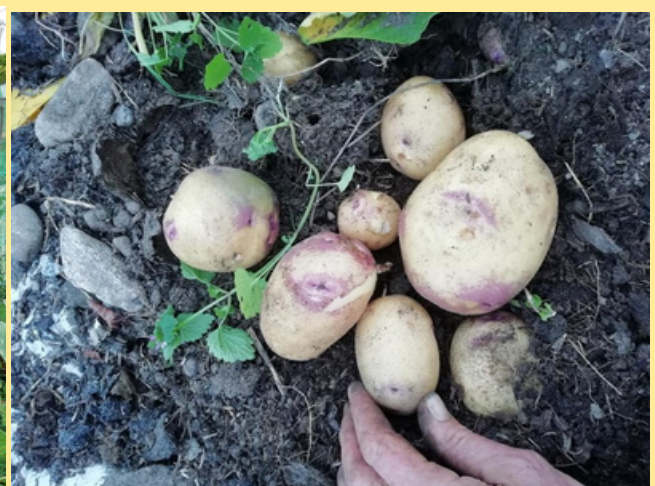
In June, Lusi Alderslowe's Permaculture group visited the community allotment and helped with mulching the beds turning the compost and creating nettle & comfrey feed.



Apple pressing in the community allotment

On the Climate Awareness Day in October, about 6 people visited the community allotment on bikes, and joined in with a tour and demonstration of the Solar powered watering system using a 12v pump, and had a go at using it to fill up the water butts. We did some plant identification, learning the difference between the plants Comfrey and Foxglove, and harvested Borlotti beans for drying.

In the Autumn we held an Apple Pressing day, where local people brought their apples to turn into tasty juice. It was a good turnout and lots of tasty juice was made. D&G Climate hub seed fund provided £100 to the Community Allotment which helped to buy propagating shelves, seed trays, a watering can and seeds.



CYCLE HUB PROJECT - Alex Ross

This year's activities have included our ongoing work with e-bike and cargo e-bike hire, Dr Bike Clinic sessions, bike skills sessions and Bikeability courses at the local school, led bike rides, second hand bike sales, and bike services and repairs. We enjoyed hosting a bike-sale and celebration event with hot soup and cups of tea for all. The Hub continues to grow as a vibrant working space, with regular volunteer input supporting the project. In March we employed a new part-time project worker to support our development.



Moving forwards we are hoping to see wider integration with other ACT projects (for example bike powered compost collection for the community allotment, or led bike rides for volunteers to travel to bio-diversity activity days). We will also need to look at developing new income streams in order to become more self-sustaining, ideas so far include introducing a new subscription model for members....

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT - Rowan O'Dowd

The community transport project has had a busy year, running eight minibus trips including transport to two Bodega gigs, four family activity days, a trip to the Christmas panto in Dumfries and a community learning exchange with Machars and Cree Valley Climate Action Network in Whithorn. On some trips the 16 seater minibus was fully booked. To facilitate these trips we hired minibuses from Dalbeattie Community Transport and Galloway Community Transport (GCT).



To build capacity in the community for further trips and to respond to demand, we have trained three volunteer drivers, putting them through MIDAS training with GCT. This will ensure they can drive both the Dalbeattie and GCT minibuses (including the new GCT owned electric minibus) if needed. The ACT community transport project represents joined-up thinking in our approach to climate adaptation. Beyond the immediate concerns of reducing our carbon footprint, it is also about community building and promoting behaviour change towards collective travel. Some of our trips have been targeted towards young families and those who do not have their own transport, and this has been important to promote social inclusion and engage a wider cross-section of the community in our work. Foremost, the value of community transport is to travel together, and in the process, meet our neighbours, have conversations, and build the relationships and cohesion that are so important to community climate resilience.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The following review showcases the variety of events and activities organised by ACT over the last year and reflects the diverse ways in which we respond to the climate crisis and seek to build resilience in our community.

MAC-CAN LEARNING EXCHANGE

In February and March ACT took part in a community learning exchange with the Machars and Cree Valley Climate Action Network in Whithorn. Using a minibus and one of ACT's volunteer drivers, people from Auchencairn and Kirkcudbright went to Whithorn to see the incredible work being done by MAC-CAN at the South Machars Community Centre and the nearby permaculture croft. Afterwards we also went across to Port William to see the inspiring project at Number 12. On the way home the minibus was buzzing with conversation and ideas about what we had seen. A few weeks later, the folk from MAC-CAN came to Auchencairn where we started the day in the Community Shop with a talk by Anne from The Initiative. Following this, we went to the growing project at the primary school, the ACT Cycle Hub, community allotment, Link Park and finally the Community Field where Lee talked about the work of the biodiversity group. Both days were a testament to what can be achieved in small communities and the value of building links between communities as a way to share ideas and build a network of wider support. Reflecting on the learning exchange, ACT volunteer and trustee Lee Paton commented, "I was surprised at how much I got out of this. Making it an exchange visit was particularly valuable for the re-visiting of ideas, comparison of the two communities and firming up the connections. It was also an excellent way to include the other village organisations and showcase what they are doing. Definitely worth repeating". Thanks to MAC-CAN for making us so welcome, to D&G Climate Hub for funding the catering for both visits and to Lee Paton for being our volunteer driver.



Lee talks to visitors from MAC-CAN about the Community Field and the work of the ACT Biodiversity Group.

ART EXHIBITION AND CABARET

The 2025 Auchencairn Art Exhibition, given the title of "Beneath One Sky", ran from April 8th - 22nd and was open to anyone local, amateur or professional, irrespective of their skill level. Twenty five people with ages ranging from 8 to 88, plus all the Primary School pupils exhibited, attracting a total of 262 recorded visitors and much positive acclaim!

A "Cabaret night" was held on April 19th for the non-visual arts, with bold contributions from a huge array of mostly musical talent. This proved to be a very popular event, which it is hoped to repeat some time in the winter of 2026.



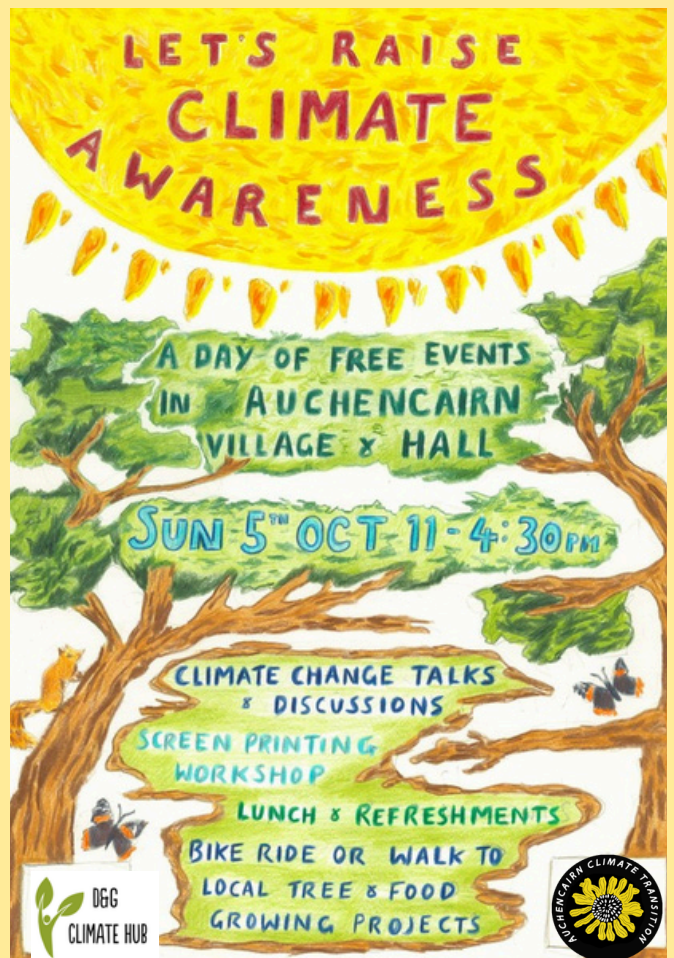
Exhibits on display in the Murray Hall, Auchencairn

CLIMATE AWARENESS EVENT

Auchencairn Climate Awareness Day, supported by funds from D&G Climate Hub, was held on Sunday 5th October 2025 as part of Climate Awareness Week. There were a variety of activities on offer, along with a hot lunch and a tree sapling sale.

Some highlights of the day included the Climate Conversation that introduced the idea of climate concern to people who may not usually think about climate issues; the Climate Change Talk that explained complex climate science in a way that was both expert and accessible; the screen printing that engaged people in a creative activity; the opportunity to join in a practical activity at the community allotment; and the led bike ride that showcased the great projects run by ACT in the village.

The event attracted a good number of attendees throughout the day, including residents and those from surrounding villages, with ages ranging from 2 years up to the elderly.



CHRISTMAS MARKET

This is the second year ACT has organised a Christmas Market. The idea was to support local makers in selling their wares and support more sustainable and eco-conscious gifting through a truly local economy. It was also a very lively social event for the festive season with mulled juice and mince pies.



The Christmas market was very popular, the hall was filled with local makers and was well attended by the community.



COMMUNITY BARBEQUE

In February, the community turned out in force to support our BBQ with people seeking asylum based near Dumfries. The event was a partnership between ACT and Plant Listening, meat was provided and community members brought along extra dishes to share. It was a heartening show of solidarity and friendship that has never felt more important. More positive still was the support we received on our Facebook post after the event, which recieved more engagement and 'likes' that any previous posts. Thank-you to all who took part, we hope to run more events like this in the future.



People seeking asylum help with maintenance work in the Link Park

ADAPTIVE BIKE

Adaptive bikes make cycling accessible to everyone, regardless of physical ability. ACT's specialist design XCR handcycle provides the stability and tailored control that standard bicycles lack, fostering independence and freedom while boosting confidence and mental well-being through the simple joy of movement. Adaptive bikes serve as a vital tool for social inclusion, breaking down barriers to mobility and allowing riders to enjoy outdoor activities alongside friends and family.



Our XCR handcycle

Because our handcycle allows the rider to sit in a stable, ergonomic position and use their hands for both propulsion and steering, it is an ideal solution for those with lower-limb disabilities or balance issues. Handcycles provide a powerful cardiovascular workout while specifically building upper-body strength in the arms, shoulders, and core. Beyond the physical gains, handcycling offers a high degree of autonomy and improved emotional-health by enabling riders to access trails and outdoor spaces that might otherwise be out of reach.

ACT envision using the XCR handcycle to expand connectivity between different demographics as well as for individual users benefit. It is also a wonderful asset for developing enterprise activity in alignment with our aims and objectives.

VISIONING DAY

On 15 February, we had our external workshop facilitator, Isabel Davies, return to us this year for another great day of big picture visioning for the future direction of ACT. In the first half, trustee, Hala Zaluczkowska, presented a bird's eye view of our current projects, achievements and objectives, which ACT regulars and local community members were invited to reflect on and make suggestions for the development of. In the second half of the day, we took a deep dive on our core organisational development, identifying which processes and systems need refinement. Thanks to all who attended and fed into an important day, we look forward to developing and delivering on the outputs from this day in the coming year.

WITH THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS



For more information about ACT and our activities visit
www.act.scot

For information about membership or to sign up to our e-mailing list email
www.actbefore2025@gmail.com



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Millside
3 Bakery Street
Auchencairn
Dumfries and Galloway
DG7 1RN