

Hanover Action

Working towards a sustainable community in Hanover and Elm Grove

Annual Report covering the period April 2016-March 2017

Summary report of activities

It's now seven years since Hanover Action became a constituted group, promoting sustainability with partners in the local community of Hanover and Elm Grove. 2016 saw a flurry of activity with the One Planet Living group working tirelessly to develop and consult on a One Planet Living Plan for Hanover and Elm Grove. The VEG group continued to meet weekly to develop the community growing space at the Hanover Centre, and the Film Group held screenings of thought-provoking films raising awareness and discussing necessary actions for these challenging times.

About us: Hanover Action (formerly Hanover Action for Sustainable Living) was established by a group of local residents. Our key aims are to:

- Bring people together to foster understanding of and take practical steps to promote sustainable living in Hanover and Elm Grove
- To promote Bioregional's One Planet Living framework as a means to enable broad-based action on sustainability issues
- Promote community spirit and alternatives to unsustainable consumption
- Undertake activities to promote awareness of the impact of climate change globally.

Hanover Action works mainly through our sub-groups (as below) and a bi-monthly General Meeting.

<p>One Planet Living Group <i>The One Planet Living group was created in April 2016, subsuming the work of the previous Hanover10:10 group, and broadening out to embrace the 'One Planet Living project'.</i></p> <p><i>The One Planet Living project has transformed the Vision set out at the public community Visioning Workshop - for One Planet Living in Hanover & Elm Grove in November 2015 - into an action plan with short, medium and long-term objectives; to be launched in March 2017</i></p>	<p>HASL Film Group <i>We run a regular free film season in the community room of The Hanover pub, 242 Queens Park Road.</i></p> <p><i>We choose socially-relevant and community-oriented films around the theme of sustainability. We aim to raise awareness of particular issues and we invite the audience to join in with an informal discussion and social afterwards. Films are run on a donations basis and everyone is welcome.</i></p>
<p>Streets are for Sharing (occasional events) <i>To raise awareness of the problems of car dependency, pollution, health, speeding and parking issues in Hanover, as well as promoting community cohesion through street-based social events.</i></p> <p><i>We promoting walking, cycling, public transport and communities using their streets including for art, play, and social gatherings.</i></p>	<p>VEG (Vegetable Education Garden) <i>Our small community education garden is based in the Hanover Centre (33 Southover Street). We come together for weekly work days to learn how to grow things by doing it together and sharing each other's skills. Our aim is to promote sustainability whilst building nourishing friendships over the vegetable patches. The space is an ideal example of what can be done in a small urban garden</i></p>

Key achievements in 2016-17 include:

One Planet Living group

- **One Planet Living Workshop: Land Use & Wildlife. Moulsecomb Forest Garden.**
Arriving by bike or walking to this hidden space, in June 2016 we listened to a talk about the local wildlife project and reflected on what could be achieved in Hanover & Elm Grove. Discussion was enabled by folk from Natural England, & Sussex Wildlife Trust. We considered how we could 're-wild' and create a healthy green urban environment, helping to counter local air pollution, and improve our personal and collective well-being with greener landscape. Issues of flooding and the opportunities presented by the parking developments in Hanover & Elm Grove were all considered. Tree planting and bird boxes were a keen focus along with the positive impact that green roofs and growing walls could make. We identified the need for a full audit of existing and possible green spaces.
- **Visit to Sussex Wildlife Trust Headquarters**, via the Big Lemon Bus. A packed coach of Hanover Action members and supporter of all ages enjoyed a day out in September 2016 with talks about the nature reserve and sustainable transport.
- **Green Infrastructure Audit of Streets:** Over a series of evenings in September 2016 a green infrastructure audit was undertaken for the whole of Hanover, and around one third of Elm Grove. This entailed detailed mapping of each street and its infrastructure of street trees, dropped curbs, bank stands, and other areas of green space. Possibilities for further 'greening' were noted for each street. Audits for the remainder of Elm Grove will be completed by the summer of 2017 and will provide a complete audit for the Ward area.
- **Collaboration with the Local Action Team and Brighton Hove City Council:**
Throughout October and November 2016, drawing upon the results of the green infrastructure audit and wider engagement with Hanover Action, we contributed to the development of an extended version of the 'core principles' to be taken forward in the controlled parking zone consultation. This included the need for strategic placing of bike stands, opportunities for more trees, and wider streetscape improvements.
- **Consultation with City Council Officers:** Further meetings were taken forward in 2016 with specific council officers with responsibility for dropped curbs, bikes and infrastructure, and with the Head of Operations for City Parks on a way forward to redevelop the neglected Street planters throughout Hanover. This resulted in:
 - *Agreement on the identification of a number of 'priority routes' for dropped curbs throughout Hanover and Elm Grove (Southover Street, Islingword Road and Elm Grove).*
 - *A Street Planter Protocol, ensuring that a local councillor, City Parks officers and the affected community are consulted on any major development of street planters.*
- **Public Meeting: The Greening of Hanover and Elm Grove, October 2016.** Members of Brighton and Hove building green (experts on green roofs and walls) gave a talk with slideshow on the benefits of green roofs and walls and the One Planet Living Group presented the headline results of the green asset audit of Hanover and Elm Grove.
- **Public Meeting and Workshop for Call to Action on One Planet Living Action for Hanover & Elm Grove.** Community event at the Hanover Centre in November 2016. Speakers from Action for Happiness, Bioregional (Brighton), Brighton Energy Co-op, the Living Rent Campaign and Brighton Community Agriculture talked on a wide range of issues from happiness, community, equity, local economy, zero carbon energy.
- **Launch of the Call to Action - One Planet Living action plan for Hanover and Elm Grove**, 4 March 2017. Opened by the Mayor of Brighton & Hove.

VEG group

- We run a weekly garden day every Thursday at the Hanover Centre, open to the public to come and learn how to grow food sustainably as a community throughout the seasons. We have created a gardening community of up to 15 adults and young people each week people learning essential skills to grow their own food

Following discussions with our hosts the Hanover Centre a program of works in 2016 was agreed. This included:

- The removal of the community compost bins (due to rodent infestation)
- Sourcing a better composter
- Relocation and repair of several planters
- Relocation of water butts;
- Better storage for equipment and materials;
- Relocation and refurbishment of the play hut - relocated with some work still to be done.
- Improvements to the seating area, benches donated by the Constant Service pub
- A seed and seedling swap in April 2016.

VEG enables the following for local people:

- Learning about how to grow, food, about pollinating plants and other beneficial plants
- Involvement in a regular activity based in the area that is healthy, interesting and free
- The use of waist-high raised beds allows access to those with disabilities
- The growing of friendship and support networks
- Parents to teach children about the provenance of food
- A contribution to the physical and mental well-being of group members.

Hanover Action film group

- Films are all on themes of sustainable living and/or awareness raising around the impact of climate change. Each stimulates a discussion and sharing of ideas and information.
- In addition to showing the films Hanover Action started a lending system in 2016 where people are encouraged to borrow films they haven't seen, watch them at home and return them. There are occasional film reviews in the Hanover directory to share the ideas.
- The group has been exploring the possibility of working in conjunction with other environmental/sustainability groups active in Brighton and Hove to combine our efforts and develop a joint programme of educational films to reach a wider audience. In the meantime Hanover Action continue to have a programme of interesting films and to attract a good audience locally.

Other Hanover Action/partner initiatives in 2016 included:

Food Waste Collective

A partner of Hanover Action, the Collective saves surplus food from bins, raises public awareness of food surplus waste issues, offers education, recruit volunteers and take part in events.

Hanover Action's reach (latest figures available February 2017)

- 310 Facebook friends, and 873 followers on our Twitter account @HanoverAction
- HASL Website (www.hasl.org.uk) – current unique weekly visitors average of 170
- Emails to our 458 Members + Supporters.
- One Planet Living & Hanover Centre Eco-refit Facebook Page, 169 Followers
- One Planet Living LinkedIn site, 224 connections
- Monthly articles in page of *Hanover Directory*. Read by an estimated 10,000 people

Our website www.hasl.org.uk **Facebook:** Hanover Action **Twitter:** @HanoverAction

Hanover Action positively welcomes new members to become involved in great ideas and actions to promote a sustainable Hanover and Elm Grove. Come join us!