



Community Action Groups Devon Impact Report

April 2024 – March 2025

What is CAG Devon?

CAG Devon provides advice and support to community groups taking action to build climate resilient communities.

- ✓ Getting started and setting up
- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Insurance
- ✓ Policies, procedures and basic governance
- ✓ Media and publicity
- ✓ Training and skill sharing
- ✓ Impact monitoring
- ✓ Networking, case studies and inspiration



2016

CAG Devon set up by Resource Futures, contracted by Devon County Council Waste Department. Focus on waste reduction, repair and reuse.

2023

Geographical and topical scope expanded to cover wider sustainability themes (e.g., biodiversity) and cover all districts. Additional funding from Devon Climate Emergency (DCE) and Public Health. Project Officer role created.

2024

Targeted East Devon support funded by East Devon District Council. East Devon Project Coordinator Role established.



Funded by:



Managed by:



Network Impact

2024/2025

To measure the impact the CAG Devon project is having, we use the Resource Community ImpactTracker (ResourceCIT).

This is an online tool for community groups and funders to estimate the impact they are having on reducing waste, carbon, energy use and cost savings for individuals and the community.

Community groups submit data on the activities they carry out; we are then able to generate individual reports on each group's achievements and calculate the impact members have had collectively across the CAG Devon network.

35

groups provided their data between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025

16

new groups were trained in our impact monitoring tool (Resource CIT) in 2024/2025.



51
19

CAG Devon groups taking action on waste reduction and reuse
Partnerships engaged with

1,219
Events across Devon



78,774
Attendees at CAG events



Events include repair cafés, food surplus cafés, community fridges, litter picks, tree planting, citizen science, eco-festivals, community food growing, library of things and more.

10,216
Trees planted



44,909
Volunteer hours



£504,336



Cost savings to consumers

£657,912



Value of volunteers time

167



Tonnes of waste prevented

107



Tonnes of waste diverted from "energy from waste"

463

Tonnes of carbon emissions avoided



Social impact

We also collect data to quantify the social impact of CAG Devon through annual surveys to groups and their volunteers. Our CAG members' 'top motivations for volunteering' are:

96% Supporting the local community

67% Concern about environmental issues

60% Giving something back

56% Meeting new people

53% Having fun



As a result...

88% feel better connected to their community

76% have fun/enjoy themselves

73% meet new friends

41% have increased knowledge, skills, or confidence

32% change their behaviour around repair, reuse, waste and climate

Making a difference

In the 2024/2025 annual volunteer survey, volunteers were asked to recall their "most memorable moments" of volunteering with their CAG group. These quotes illustrate the value of volunteering in a CAG group, and link to the [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#).

Give

"Seeing the satisfaction of the repair team when they send happy people away with their mended belongings."

Keep learning

"I really enjoy helping, interacting, and learning from others. I feel incredibly fulfilled by having the opportunity to use and share my skills to help prevent the needless disposal of perfectly repairable items."

Connect

"Met some amazing friends who have honestly helped me socially and mentally with great advice and support."

Take notice

"Being in the soothing environment of the village pond area on a Sunday morning and spending time in the company of like-minded people who exude a wonderful positive vibe."

Connect

"Meeting with all the other volunteers at the annual get-together and feeling a sense of what we have achieved together."

Be active

"Participating in a community litter-picking event just after Halloween. It was amazing to see the community come together, with people of all ages pitching in to help keep the local area clean."

Give

"Taking surplus food to families who are struggling financially, they are so grateful."

Membership

2024/2025

51

members (active in all eight county districts)

17

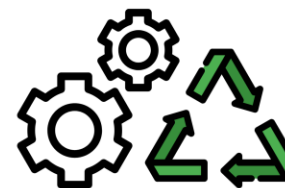
new groups joined CAG Devon

This increase reflects the impact of expanded eligibility and geographic reach.

Many CAG members are involved in multiple activities (e.g. transition groups). The number of groups involved in the six main activity types is shown here.



Nature & Biodiversity
25 groups



Repair & Reuse
26 groups



Food
19 groups



Plastic reduction
17 groups



Water related activities
9 groups



Sustainable travel
6 groups

Case study: Ashburton Community Fridge

Between April 2024 and March 2025, the team at Ashburton diverted a staggering 38 tonnes of food from going to waste – a remarkable achievement!

But they didn't stop there. Last year, with help from Co-op community funding, they also launched a community freezer. This allows large quantities of surplus food such as ready meals and bakery items, to be frozen and re-distributed to the community.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of 40 volunteers keep everything running. To show appreciation for their time and commitment, they recently hosted a celebratory meal - a small gesture for the huge impact these individuals make.

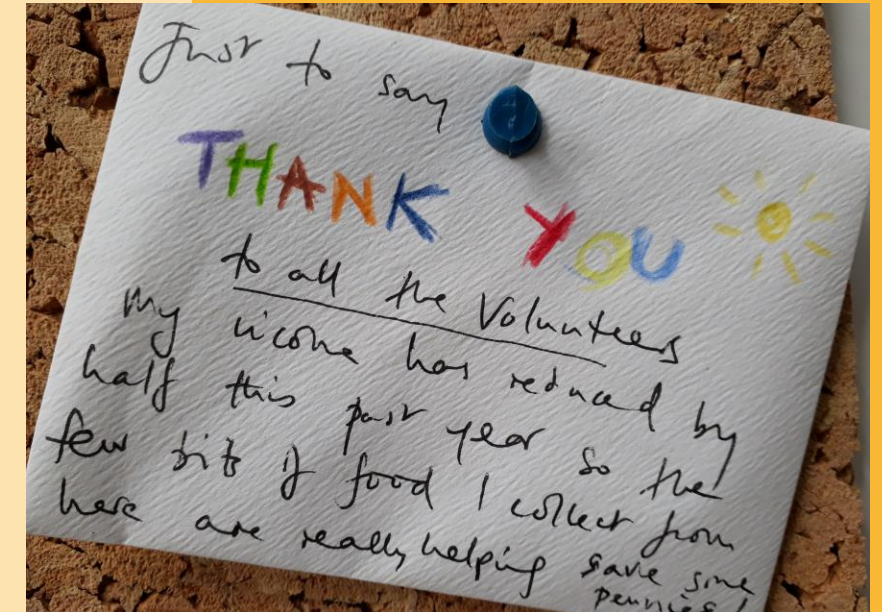
Using CAG Devon's impact tool, the numbers speak volumes:

- ✓ The food diverted from waste amounts to 104 tonnes of carbon emissions saved
- ✓ They've contributed over £70,000 worth of time
- ✓ And helped local people save more than £100,000 by making surplus food freely available.

Perhaps one of the most inspiring parts of their story is how they've supported other CAG Devon members. Ashburton has helped new and aspiring community fridge projects, sharing their knowledge and experience. One such group, Bovey Community Fridge, recently won an Environmental Champion Award.

Coordinator Cya believes that "All community fridges benefit from working in collaboration and supporting one-another" to prevent food waste and help communities.

From setup guidance, to grants that helped them grow, CAG Devon has supported Ashburton Community Fridge since 2021. Since then, they've become a shining example of what's possible when a community comes together.



Member Support 2024/2025

We run regular 'Collaborate' sessions which enable peer-to-peer support, learning and collaboration on a specific topic. These sessions provide a platform for group members and individuals who are more experienced in a specific activity to support those who are just starting out.



Training

7

training courses delivered

"Very clear and concise training given"



63

participants

"Excellent course: the teacher completely understood his subject and delivered it with demonstrations and humour."



Topics covered:

- Volunteer Recruitment
- PAT testing
- First Aid
- Bike Maintenance
- Safeguarding
- Social Media 1-2-1's

"Thanks for everything you do, offer, and support."



Small grants

11

insurance grants awarded (2k total)

16

small grants awarded (£4.5k total)*

** funded signage, equipment, seating, tools, seeds/plants, website support*



"It's so good being a member of CAG Devon, especially when they award us a grant! Thanks to this, we have been able to make improvements over this winter at our fully accessible plot at Marland. Proper job!"

Case study: Seaton Repair Cafe

Seaton Repair Café got off to a confident start in 2024, with support from CAG Devon, including a grant which helped cover insurance costs, and two volunteers receiving PAT testing training, ensuring the team was well-prepared to launch.

Their first event took place in July in Seaton Library and was a great success. 17 volunteers, including 9 skilled menders, were on hand to repair a variety of items including vacuum cleaners and hedge trimmers, jewellery and a long-neglected sewing machine. A highlight of the day was repairing the fairy lights in the Seaton Library children's reading pod.

Local resident Lucinda shared her joy: "Absolutely fantastic service! Paul repaired my sewing machine after 10 years of waiting. So delighted. And I was offered cake!"

Seaton Repair Cafe also received a start-up grant from Seaton Town Council and the Mayor and Chair Cllr Amrik Singh commented: "We are proud to support Seaton Repair Café... helping people save money, reduce landfill, and connect through learning and social interaction."

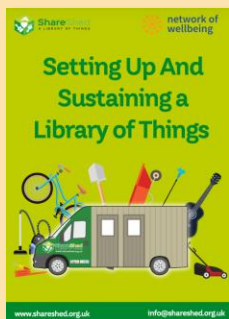
Now running monthly at The Masonic Hall, Seaton Repair Cafe continues to repair under the slogan: "Repair, Revive, Refresh, Reduce Waste." They're always looking for new volunteers, menders, cake makers and committee members to join the team.

Between July 2024 to March 2025, the Repair Café has prevented nearly 2 tonnes of waste, avoiding over 2 tonnes of carbon emissions and saving consumers nearly £5k, thanks to over £10k of donated volunteer time (CAG Devon ResourceCIT).



Resources

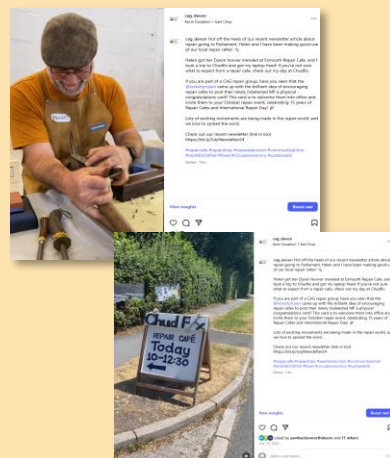
The CAG website hosts a suite of resources under the 'Organising your Group' and 'Doing stuff' tabs. New resources were developed in 2024/2025 including...



Contributions to the development of CAG group ShareShed's new Library of Things Toolkit, which can be found on the CAG Devon website.



An online learning module 'Setting up a Community Group' developed in partnership with Iridescent ideas.



Information reels on 'What are...' Repair Cafes and Libraries of things posted on the CAG Devon Instagram!



SkillShares

Sept 24: North Devon Mini SkillShare in partnership with North Devon CVS at National Trust Arlington Court (40 attendees)



Nov 24: CAG Devon whole network SkillShare at the Mint, Exeter (79 attendees)

2

SkillShare events in 2024-25

Key Highlights

- Tech Amnesty by Fixy: 30kg of redundant tech collected for reuse/recycling
- Talk and workshop by Peter Lefort (University of Exeter) on Positive Tipping Points and how CAG Devon contributes to creating them.
- Lunch by CAG member ReRooted: Made from gleaned pumpkins and apples.



Network promotion

18

external events attended across the county

3

speaking engagements

- Buckfastleigh Open Community Meeting about setting up a Repair Cafe
- Sustainable South Hams (SSH) Symposium for Parish/Town Councils and Climate Emergency
- Wild About Devon (WAD) Conference.

500

people engaged through talks and conversations

Impact

- New partnerships and new members
- Newsletter signups and social media followers



Case study: South Molton Eco Fair

In September 2024, Project Officer Leah represented CAG Devon at South Molton's first Eco Fair, using the opportunity to connect with local sustainability groups.

At the event Leah connected with **361 Energy**, who were later invited to take part in **SkillShare24**, strengthening collaboration across North Devon.

More significantly, two new groups - **Sustainable Chulmleigh** and **South Molton Community Garden** - were inspired by their conversation with Leah and went on to join the CAG Devon network.

By the end of the 2024/2025 contract year, the network had grown from **zero to four active groups in North Devon**, a significant step in expanding our regional outreach. This event demonstrated the power of face-to-face engagement was a turning point for CAG Devon's visibility in North Devon.

Key Partnerships

CAG Devon built on existing and developed new partnerships in 2024/2025.

As CAG Devon's network has expanded, several strategic organisations have expressed interest in joining - not as grassroots groups, but as partners aligned with our mission.

'Connector Membership' will be launched in 2025/2026 to more formally acknowledge the work we are doing with partners.



Image courtesy of Libraries Unlimited

University of Exeter

CAG Devon is a partner in an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded research programme, exploring climate related issues of conflict within communities, and approaches to resolving them. This project is still in its planning infancy and will involve more CAG time in 2025/2026.

East Devon District Council (EDDC)

Following the decision of EDDC to fund CAG type support across the district, a new East Devon Project Coordinator was recruited in September 2024. Key targets included membership growth, provision of small grants, running events and increasing awareness of CAG and the support available throughout East Devon.

Libraries Unlimited

Many CAG Devon members have connections with their local libraries – hosting repair cafes, community fridges, seed swaps and more.

Following research into members' working relationships with their local libraries, CAG Devon and Libraries Unlimited (deliverer of Devon library services), came together to develop and submit a successful £1.5 million bid to National Lottery Climate Action Fund for the Together for Tomorrow project.

Vision:

“more people doing more stuff more of the time” around climate action in their local community

Goals:

Strengthen the capacity of existing CAG groups, support the establishment of new groups, and establish the 54 libraries across Devon as local sustainability hubs

Work will begin on this five-year project from June 2025 and CAG Devon will recruit a Project Manager and Project Officer.

Looking ahead to 2025/2026

- **Member-led Support**
Continuing to respond to members' needs and shape our support delivery around member feedback and wider research.
- **Efficiency & Impact**
 - Streamlining internal systems, including new database
 - Developing improved impact monitoring tools.
- **Resource Development**
Continuing to update and add to our CAG resources eg. banking and insurance guides; Real Nappy projects "How-to" guide.
- **Collaboration & Capacity**
Continuing joint work with CAG Somerset and others to maximise reach with limited resources.
- **Network Growth**
Preparing to support a larger, more diverse network through *Together for Tomorrow* and growing local presence.
- **Strategic Positioning**
Strengthening partnerships to align with local priorities and influence devolution-led delivery.
- **Sustained Grassroots Focus**
Balancing outward growth with strong local support to ensure long-term, community-led impact.





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