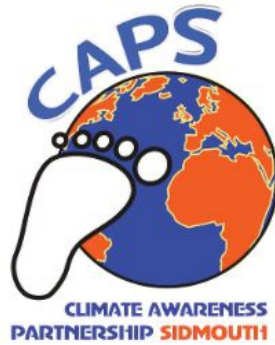


CLIMATE AWARENESS PARTNERSHIP FOR SIDMOUTH (CAPS)

Report to STC Environment Cttee – 8 December 2025



GREEN: POINTS OF INTEREST:

The Climate Awareness Partnership for Sidmouth (CAPS) was established as a community-led initiative, with STC as a key partner, to promote environmental sustainability & climate change issues. The project has been active since late 2021, run by partner volunteers, with STC endorsement including financial & logistical support. The Eco Hub Sidmouth, initiated late 2024, has been the Partnership's most active current project.

*During the current climate crisis, STC has supported efforts through CAPS & the Eco Hub to promote the Partnership's **aims & objectives**: raising awareness of local climate challenges; promoting behavioural change & community participation; supporting STC's wider sustainability objectives.*

Engagement with the Sidmouth community has included CAPS:

- commissioning research by an Exeter Uni MA student on engaging the Sidmouth community
- creating public questionnaires [online & at events] on climate change & carbon footprint
- public events incl Café Sci sessions, talks to local societies & advertising other groups' events

And Eco Hub Sidmouth:

- six-month trial of an Eco Hub hosted at the TIC and Sidmouth Library, with more planned
- screening of two environmental films at the Radway & panel discussions from local farmers
- collaboration with Sidmouth College Eco Group: Byes field trip to identify flora & fauna
- partnership with Sidmouth's Food Forest to run a course on creating your own food forest

Networking has meant new relationships, in Sidmouth & beyond, have been forged on which new initiatives can be developed, including Libraries Unlimited and their sustainability project funded by the Lottery and CAG skills workshops. There has been cross-fertilisation of ideas, support and relationships through opportunities offered by CAPS events and the regular Eco Hub Sidmouth sessions. Bridges are slowly being built with the Primary School and Sidmouth College.

Eco Hub founder Bernie Davis provides some '[Reflections on Engagement](#)' – including the **concept of 'tipping points'**, which supports efforts to work from within the existing group of active partners to increase visibility and engagement – in order to reach the point 'when amplifying feedback within a system gets strong enough to support self-propelling change'.

AMBER ISSUES:

*There is still much more work to be done if the Partnership is to realise its aims: CAPS needs to **learn lessons** from its first years. New approaches could be explored through support and collaboration with current & new partners – and by considering other project models.*

*Looking within the CAPS umbrella, the more **successful projects** have been:*

- Thermal Imaging Surveys which have engaged a wide section of the community
- talks given to clubs & societies, incl U3A, WI, Churches, Rotary & Scout, addressing over 350 and challenging us to think about how to change our lifestyles
- Carbon Footprint project, with a **further workshop on carbon foot-printing with Chris Lockyear planned for 6th December**
- the more interactive Eco Hub sessions, which have engaged the public well
- the two film showings at the Radway, organised by Emma Pilgrim and Bernie Davis, with audiences of over 180 and 160 respectively - “a huge success”

Other green projects in Sidmouth can act as examples for CAPS/Eco Hub to develop partnerships, including: the 2019 Fragile Earth series by the Churches gaining tangible follow-on actions; hands-on groups such as the Food Forest, Plastic Warriors & Sidmouth in Bloom; the Biodiversity Group providing the real pull of 'nature'; Sidmouth School of Art involving different demographics and sectors in using creativity to connect to nature.

RED ISSUES:

Looking to the future and to provide continuity, it is recommended that the CAPS projects [including the Eco Hub Sidmouth] be incorporated into the Vision Group for Sidmouth; and that the Sidmouth Science Festival support future Climate Change awareness projects locally.

The VGS steering group are prepared for the VGS to take on the CAPS projects; the VGS set up and currently manages the website and social media, and provides content for both, as well as the newsletter; the VGS would be willing to take on the task of sending out the CAPS newsletter.

Due to its limited resources, however, the VGS would still seek to involve and build on the work of CAPS current partners in any future actions; it will also seek to widen engagement through working with new partners.

The basic premise of CAPS as a ‘partnership’ would continue – as the most successful models throughout Sidmouth have been such, including the School of Art projects, the Science Festival and Sidmouth in Bloom – which have all relied on getting other local groups involved.

Finally, at the VGS AGM in November, the VGS held the [Sustainable Sidmouth Champions Awards 2025](#) which went to those who have played a part in the Eco Hub Sidmouth – by recognising the many volunteer groups which staffed the fortnightly sessions and which have been crucial to making CAPS and the Eco Hub happen – and to making it a success.

Recommendation:

It is requested that this committee support the recommendation that the CAPS projects [including the Eco Hub Sidmouth] be incorporated into the Vision Group for Sidmouth; and that the Sidmouth Science Festival support future Climate Change awareness projects locally.

Whilst continuing to work in partnership with STC and reporting to the Environment Committee.