



Fair Green Green Fair

Results and Next Steps

By all reports, our Fair Green Green Fair on Monday 8th May 2023 was a great success. We had lots of compliments from visitors, stallholders and others, and requests that we do it again next year. Here is a quick summary of what happened there, and the resulting plans for our next steps.

The Green Fair was organised by the Fair Green Neighbourhood Association, together with people from the PlaNet Diss and Diss Repair Café projects. It was meant to honour the coronation of our new environmentalist King, to be a good community day out, to push forward the vision and practice of sustainable living in the Diss area, and last but not least, to raise funds for the Fair Green Neighbourhood Association. It succeeded in all of those objectives.



What happened at the Green Fair?



The layout on Fair Green was dominated by the stalls, some 40 of them, all with at least some Green credentials. The largest number were craft stalls, displaying hand made items of all sorts. There were 11 food stalls, including the Fair Green Neighbourhood Association's famous tea, cake and ice cream stall. There were also 5 organisational stalls, including the Green Party and Extinction Rebellion.

And there was our recently formed Repair Café doing repairs and demonstrations. The stallholders all seemed happy with the day and many

asked for a repeat next year.



Entertainment was centred on a marquee where we had classical guitar from Louey, jazz from Trio Vert, singer/songwriter Elsi, and Daisy and the Continentals. All drew good sized crowds. For children, there was Cosmo from the Foolhardy Folk with circus skills including juggling and stilts in the centre of the field, and face painting, (and of course the wonderful Fair Green play area). We had a small group of roving comedy performers including a king-like figure with two attendants, who approached people and gave them OBE's and MBE's if they had done any environmental good deeds.



There was a large 'Green Living' marquee, for the more serious environmental activities. We had four speakers: Adrian Ramsey, the Green Party National Co-leader, Bonny Williams Climate Community Action, David Wolfe, Wakelyn's Farm. Gary Alexander, A Green Future for Diss. Adrian Ramsay drew a crowd of about 40 people,



We gave out free Go Green badges and had a table with materials to help people make their own name badges.

We had flyers promoting our new online social network, PlaNet Diss, which we gave out. The response was nearly universal approval, and we had a number of new members join.



There was a display of a vision of green living principles, and a community consultation, in which the public were invited to vote (using little sticky stars and post-it notes) on a range of potential and already started initiatives to further green living in Diss. The results of this were:

1. Diss Community Hub 16 + 2 post-its
2. Repair Cafe 12
3. Transport Co-op 10 + post-it
4. Local Food Network 8
5. Diss Energy Savers - 7
6. Fun Team 8
7. PlaNet Diss local social network 6
8. Care Network 5
9. Diss Peacemakers 4
10. PlaNet Diss Community Fund 1



Finances

The Green Fair raised about £1100 for Fair Green Neighbourhood Association, which is a large amount for one of our events. That was split roughly evenly between takings at our tea and cake stall, and donations from the stall holders (who were not asked for a fixed sum).



The Future: Next Steps

Our objective is to build on the success of the Green Fair in ways that further green living in and around Diss.

1. The top entry in our consultation, was the 'Community Hub, A community owned and run shop and meeting space'. It might house the second entry, the *Repair Café* and much else. We need a good organising committee who can explore possible premises for a pop-up shop and recruit businesses to fill it.
2. We had very good discussions with people on the Green Party stall, which was in the Sustainable Living marquee. They have just gained overall control of Mid-Suffolk District Council (the first Green council in Europe), which is adjacent to Diss, and where there are several towns with initiatives with very similar objectives to our Green Fair. We are hoping that the new Green council will help all of these to work together, sharing best practice and support for difficulties.
3. We have a few people who are willing to help with a 'peacemakers' group, to help us learn to resolve conflicts constructively.
4. We are planning to set up PlaNet Diss as a legal entity, probably a cooperative, as a framework for green living, to enable us to attract funding, and to set up a community exchange system.

Can you help?

We are looking for people who will help with a range of tasks: moderating and support for PlaNet Diss, help with the financial and legal side, and general coordination, promotion and recruitment.

Contact: Gary Alexander, garyalexand@gmail.com, 07766 711999.

Appendix: Our community consultation and its results



Green Living in Diss: *Have your say:*

Mark your own views, with a check mark or write in a comment and return to Gary Alexander.



Diss Community Hub

A community owned and run shop and meeting space

High streets are changing, with lots of older businesses closing.

How about a 'community hub' with sustainability and community at its heart?

Perhaps as a pop-up shop in disused premises such as Beales or M&Co.

- A flexible indoor market - supports small businesses with no premises
- Repair Cafe and up-cycling
- A drop-off point for community exchange and local food
- Bulk buying of basic goods selected for sustainable qualities
- Meeting place for social and educational events



Repair & Up-cycling Café

- Great potential for saving money!
- Consuming less by re-using things
- Small jobs for practical people

We have a team that is starting this. Check out their stall!



Transport Co-op

- Organising informal car sharing with people who have cars that aren't used much

- Formal car sharing: cars that are community owned and maintained
- Electric cars charged by solar panels for hire
- Ride sharing
- Deliveries by car, van and cargo bicycle

Local food network



A key to green living, and an easy way to earn money or do favours.

- Recruits local gardeners, farmers, cooks, distributors.
- Food mostly from local or regional ingredients
- Regenerative agriculture (emphasis on rebuilding soil, high welfare of animals)
- No packaging or Reusable packaging

- Cooked by people who love cooking
- At first, mostly for the Green Social Events

Some of the stalls around here show the beginnings of this, but they aren't organised overall.



Diss Energy Savers

- Advising on saving energy
- Installing home insulation
- Installing solar panels for heat and electricity



Fun Team

Puts on Green social events

We need to know each other and connect more than at present. Social events build

communities.

- Social events large (like this [Green Fair](#)) and small (as shared meals with friends, parties, musical events.)
- The Green dimension can include local food, a session of offers and wants including favours, and communication skills.



PlaNet Diss local social network

Our own online social network to organise the mutual support and promote events

- We make all the rules,
 - All funds raised are used for the community
 - *Safe*: active facilitation to avoid trolls, a culture of treating people well, no selling our data.
- Technically-able volunteers needed badly! A prototype is up and running. You can join it here! See separate flyer for instructions.*



Care network

We know the dire state of the caring services in modern Britain. We can support care through the community and free up hospital beds!

- Organised exchange of care of children, elderly relatives, help when ill or disabled,
- Providing food, companionship, other care services.
- Bring people together with a particular emphasis on personal connection and trust



•The Peacemakers

Living together skillfully

- Teaching skills of resolving conflict constructively
- A team of people that can step in when needed
- Handling conflict well before police and courts are neededPlaNet



Diss Community fund

A new relationship to money!

Helps members trade with each other

- Records exchange, including favours, build reputation
- We charge either a membership fee or a work contribution.
- A transaction fee funds the community.

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Give your completed survey to Gary Alexander, or copy to garyalexand@gmail.com