



Annual Report & Financial Statements

for the year ended 31.03.23

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Steering Group report

Steering Group members

Name	Position	Dates
Sarah Wiltshire	Co-ordinator	Current
Ian Orton	Secretary	Current
Paul Cochrane	Treasurer/Transport Lead	Current
Vacant	Assistant Treasurer	Current
Ray Hill	Membership Secretary	Current
Richard Boothman	Member	Current
Barry White	Member/Comms lead	Current
Melanie Fryer	Member/Food lead	Current
Andrew Pease	Biodiversity lead	Current
Sandy Tod	Energy lead	Current
Keith Waterson	Internal Auditor	Current

Registered address at 31.03.23:

Lower Moss Cottage. Keasden. Clapham. Lancaster. LA2 8EU

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc
PO Box 7193
Planetary Road
Willenhall
WV1 9DG

Insurers

Zurich for Public Liability and Employer's Liability (covering volunteers)

Website

Impress – ACE is registered with Impress for press regulation

Structure, governance and management

ACE has a steering group, elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), consisting of a co-ordinator, secretary, treasurer, assistant treasurer and membership secretary and up to 10 ordinary members. The steering group has the power to:

- co-opt additional members for specific tasks
- set up working groups

as required. The steering group meets (in person or via video conferencing) at least 8 times each year. Each meeting runs to an agenda and notes are made of key actions.

The steering group ensures that ACE:

- works to its constitutional objectives and methods, including financial management;
- undertakes forward planning; and
- runs regular events to involve its members such as monthly Green Cafes.

The steering group has role descriptions for its officer roles and keeps a skills audit of its members to ensure that the organisation has the skills to implement and develop its work.

ACE has 5 themed groups:

- Biodiversity;
- Energy;
- Food;
- Transport; and
- Communications

ACE is a membership organisation with members encouraged to participate in one or more themed groups in accordance with their specific interests. Each themed group has a lead member who reports the group's activities to the steering group on a regular basis.

Two members' meetings are held each year with one being the AGM. The steering group reports to each of these meetings. ACE also has supporters who may become involved in our work prior to becoming a member

Membership is open to all who are interested in actively furthering the objects of ACE, whatever their age, upon payment of a membership fee. The amount of the membership fee and any concessions are recommended by the steering group and agreed by the membership at the AGM. There were 64 members as of 31.3.23.

We have safeguarding and photography statements, a privacy policy and a complaints procedure in place. All current statements and policies are reviewed annually at April's Steering Group.

The organisation's objects

Extract from the constitution:

- a) ACE is a community campaign group covering Settle and Area.
- b) ACE is action-orientated to campaign on the Climate and Ecological Emergency and on making a just transition to a sustainable net zero carbon community.
- c) To campaign on the Climate and Ecological Emergency, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- d) To promote education and awareness on the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

Principal activities of ACE (1st April 2022 - 31st March 23)

Green Cafes, Presentations, displays and exhibitions and AGM

12 Green Cafes have been run over the year, with 25+ people regularly attending and as many as 40+ for our speaker events.

Cafes are an opportunity for members and supporters to meet and talk over refreshments about topical issues related to the climate emergency, share their experiences and learn more about a range of issues.

Some of these events included presentations, often related to initiatives that we can take or that are already underway. Specific presentations and discussions were as follows:

May – we participated in Greenpeace's 'Big Plastic Count'. This gathered data to show how much single use plastic we are all using. The output from the count was a call for the government to cut this by 50% by 2025.

June – provided a 'carbon tariff' of beverages and cake sold to illustrate how individual ingredients contribute to our carbon footprint.

October - we ran our second 'Give and Take' Day. The intention was to reduce landfill and to provide people with the opportunity to donate items they no longer need and to take others that they do, all free of charge.

February 2023 – talk by the RSPB's Catherine Ramsey on the 'Curlew Recovery Project' and the forthcoming breeding wader surveys taking place across the 'Clapham and Bowland Clusters'. Attendees were invited to join the survey.

March - focused on the 'Circular Yorkshire' Campaign. There were presentations by Erin Wheeler, Circular Economy Officer and lead for the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Circular Towns programme, and Ann Harding of Settle Victoria Hall about their new upcycling initiative. The presentations were followed by questions and a discussion about how we might take a 'circular towns' approach in Settle.

During **COP27**, in November, we

- collaborated with Settle Stories with our '**All About Rivers**' event which featured in their Yorkshire Festival of Story (YFOS) programme. This was a double bill with the showing of 'Scotland the Big Picture's 'Riverwoods' film, followed by a talk by Jack Spee (CEO of the River Ribble Trust) on the Trust's work. This was also live streamed to a YFOS online audience.
- YFOS also showed "Margaret's Story", an animated film about climate change activism created by Ideostone. This was followed by a panel discussion with the film makers Richard & Karen Boothman along with Barry White from ACE.
- Spoke at a Settle Primary School all age assembly about climate change, with students clearly aware of the issues.

In addition, we

- held a **stall** at Settle's event to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee., This was part of the energy group's consultation on a draft local area energy plan on local renewable energy.
- gave **talks** to Horton Mothers Union about ACE's work and to Settle Library about the energy transition.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions were a new piece of work for us, and we were pleased to work in collaboration with:

Settle's Gallery on the Green exhibition (September) – which saw suggestions for energy saving tips, curated by Paul Cochrane, and more information about the energy group's Local Area Energy Plan, inviting feedback.

The Folly's Climate Emergency Season (15th October-23rd December) – this was a three-way exhibition featuring ourselves, the Yorkshire Peat Partnership ('Give Peat a Chance') and All Our Land (see below). Our display focused on the climate emergency in general and specifically across energy, food, transport and biodiversity. 1568 adults and 163 children visited the exhibition, with many commenting how informative they had found it.

Settle Area Swimming Pool

Our display moved from The Folly to the Pool in February and will continue to be available over Spring/Summer 2023.

Organisational development

We have started work on a new website to make it more outward facing and a revised recruitment leaflet. We will also be looking at how we can assess our impact and make the best use of our resources in the coming year.

We would also like to see an increase in membership during the coming year. To achieve this, we are considering different ways of engaging people. We are using, for example, our energy group work and connections with the Pool and sports clubs to encourage an increase in solar panel installations during 2023/24.

We are also aware that we could use our social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter more effectively. Our Communications group will look at this as a specific project in the second half of 2023.

During 2021 – 22, we set up an internal audit process which has continued this year. The internal auditor is drawn from the membership but is not a member of the Steering Group.

Joint working

- (I) **Settle Town Council (STC) Climate and Biodiversity Sub Committee** – STC adopted a climate change and biodiversity policy in March 2021. ACE and other local environmental groups are invited to meetings of the Committee, to act as 'critical friends' in the development and delivery of the Town's carbon reduction 'Action Plan'. Since the last ACE annual update report the committee has met on two occasions in October 2022 and February 2023 and will next meet in June 2023. The meeting is attended by STC councillors and chaired by Cllr Barry White. Other regular attendees include the CDC/NYC Climate Emergency Officer, Fiona Protheroe, ACE representative, Ray Hill, Philip Taylor from St John's Methodist Church Eco Group, Robert Bellfield, former STC councillor. The STC Clerk also attends. The ACE representative has attended all meetings. The committee is not a decision-making group, but after deliberation, makes recommendations to STC's Full Council for agreement and actions on matters relating to carbon reduction and biodiversity in Settle. Discussions are focussed on progress

and opportunities to take forward the Council's 'Table of Actions' to reduce carbon emissions and enhance biodiversity. For example, a carbon emissions accounting tool, the proposed bus shelter in the Market Place and LED street lighting.

- (II) **Craven District Council/North Yorkshire County Council** – a close working relationship continued with the remit for climate emergency work now under a dedicated, but part time climate emergency officer. With preparations for the start of the new unitary authority underway that role will be transferred into North Yorkshire Council. A new climate change strategy is also being prepared – with groups such as ACE invited to initial discussions and to provide a response to the draft strategy. For more information, see under 'Consultations' below.
- (III) **York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership** – we have been working closely with YNYLEP particularly in relation to our energy group initiative. We will be dovetailing with and adding to the work identified in their Routemap to net zero: <https://www.ynylep.com/routemap>
- (IV) **Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust** – has provided, on long term loan, a thermal imaging camera for local people to assess heat loss and pinpoint areas of their accommodation that might benefit from insulation measures.
- (V) **All Our Land** – was a one-year project funded by Natural England and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust as part of the broader Wild Ingleborough project. All Our Land worked with young people to explore and express their reactions to the relationship between climate change and the upland landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales. Sarah Wiltshire and Richard Boothman attended 3 workshops between them to provide some context for the climate emergency and to talk about the work of ACE. The project culminated in a thought-provoking exhibition of artwork arising from the participants' time in the countryside. The exhibition took place at The Folly as part of their "Climate Emergency" season (see above).
- (VI) **Fossil Free North Yorkshire** - We maintain a working relationship with Fossil Free North Yorkshire. This is part of an English network which campaigns for the divestment of local authority pension funds from fossil fuel companies and their reinvestment in green and sustainable projects. The group has meetings with North Yorkshire County Council's (NYCC) Pension Fund Committee (based in Northallerton) has built working relationships with some councillors on the committee. Fossil Free North Yorkshire also works with other campaigning groups who are part of the wider Border to Coast Pensions Partnership, a UK based pensions pool which pools the investments of 11 Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds – called 'Partner Funds' which includes NYC. Established as a regulated asset manager in 2018, they are one of the largest LGPS pools in the UK with assets of £38bn at 31 March 2022 (latest figure available). More at: <https://www.bordertocoast.org.uk/>

(VII) North Yorkshire Climate Coalition – we have continued to be an active member of this group. We have contributed to actions such as the joint response to NYCC/NYC’s draft climate change strategy and meetings with senior officers and members.

(VIII) Other groups – ACE also continues to work with ROOTS (Respect Our Old Trees Settle), local churches, COBRA (local emergency response group), Friends of the Dales and Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS).

THEMED GROUPS

Biodiversity (lead Andrew Pease)

After removing all the plastic tree guards at Kelcow Woods (5000 in total!) the group has been trying different things and looking for a new project. To that end:

- We surveyed Marsh Gentians and discussed the removal of an invasive species from a pond with Natural England.
- We spent a cold snowy day removing rhododendron from a woodland in Wigglesworth.
- We picked litter alongside the Ribble in Long Preston Deeps.
- We had a trip to a small holding near Wham where we were shown the pros and cons of off grid living.

Whilst these were all good events, the group works better if there is focus on a single or a couple of projects and this is what we hope to achieve in the future.

Energy – (lead Sandy Tod)

Following on from a conference in March 2022 -‘Cutting Our Carbon in Energy and Transport’ - the group moved forward with its ambition to create a local area energy plan. This entailed inviting members of the local community to a workshop in May followed by a period of consultation over the summer. The results of the consultation were considered at a second workshop in September.

A ‘Future Energy Landscape’ model was used for the first workshop. This is a method of engagement developed by CPRE, the Countryside Charity, with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, to look at renewable energy within the local landscape. The outcome was a proposal for appropriate technologies to be pursued.

Our Local Area Energy Plan was published in December 2022. This covered the parishes of Settle, Giggleswick and Langcliffe, which share an electricity sub-station. During the first quarter of 2023 the group has been working on developing the recommendations of the report. This includes the creation of an Energy Local Club (ELC) with support from Energy Local CIC, which would cover a large proportion of the project area served by a single supply substation.

Steps have been taken towards:

- the appointment of an adviser to work with the first directors of the club
- to recruit members
- to identify community partners such as the Pool, Catholic and Methodist Churches and local sports clubs as energy generators.

The potential for solar rooftop generation has been addressed by commissioning a study of potential rooftop yields within the three parishes. This will be completed in early summer 2023 with a presentation by the author of the report, Tom Nicholls of Lancaster University Knowledge Business Exchange Centre.

Efforts will also be focused on preparing a practical action plan to bring as much as possible of this considerable potential into production. In parallel, efforts are ongoing to identify potential sites to provide balance to the summer generation from solar by winter generation from hydro and wind power. Hydro power already provided by the Archimedes Screw turbine on the River Ribble at Bridge End Weir is a good example. 85% of the turbine's annual output is generated in the winter months. However suitable sites on the main river are limited in number and capacity, and smaller high head schemes are being investigated on the tributaries.

Wind resources are mainly confined to the eastern margins of the project area, making grid connection a major consideration. This is in addition to constraints due to visual and environmental considerations in a sensitive landscape.

The Energy Group is working closely with the District Network Operators (DNO's) – Electricity North West Ltd and Northern Powergrid, who have responsibility for the local grid network, to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and keep to a minimum the need for expensive infrastructure upgrades.

This work is long-term and on-going.

Food (lead Melanie Fryer)

Articles have been written for the newsletter on plastic waste, preserving food and using gluts of produce. "Veg Power" was an initiative run by The Food Foundation and was featured in December 2022. This involved cooking and eating locally produced, organic vegetables.

After the idea emerged in November 2022 it was agreed that the main focus for 2023 would be to work towards Settle becoming a Fairtrade Community, seeking accreditation to the Fairtrade Foundation by the end of the year. Following a presentation by Liz Roodhouse of Skipton Fairtrade Town at January's Green Cafe, additional people joined the food group to take this initiative forward. During Fairtrade Fortnight (27th February to 12th March) a 'Bean to Bar' event run by Bruce Crowther and funded by ACE was organised for Settle Primary School's Year 3 to give them hands on experience of making chocolate, finding out where the

ingredients come from and the issues for growers. We also held a display at Settle Library, connected with the eco-explorers (4-11yrs) group and St John's Church organised a coffee morning to raise funds. We are also working on an entry, for the first time, in the 2023 Flowerpot Festival.

In addition to the Primary School, we have involved the churches, some cafes and a range of Settle organisations.

We have also joined the steering group of a new campaign group 'Plastic Free Settle' and will be attending their first meeting in May 2023 to look at how to develop this initiative over the coming year. This will include booking stalls and arranging publicity about the problems with plastic, both for human health and the environment.

Transport (lead Paul Cochrane)

We are a very informal group, just a bunch of locals sharing their knowledge and experience about local transport. We talk about things that don't work, services that could work better, and what we might do to bring about the changes we wish to see. And such is the expertise in the group, we all learn something new every time. This might be a technical detail about running the railways, like why the gates of the crossing have to be kept locked at Settle, or the risk of missing your bus if you sit on the bench in the bus shelter at Helwith Bridge.

Over the past year the group has:

- evaluated all of Settle's streetlights as possible on-street public EV charging points for Settle Town Council,
- secured Settle Town Council's agreement in principle for the provision of a bus shelter / mini mobility hub on Settle market place,
- petitioned Craven District Council to install cycle parking stands on Settle's Ashfield Car Park,
- responded to the public consultation about the transport-related proposals of the Yorkshire Dales National Park's *Local Plan*; the Friends of the Dales *Transport Strategy*; and North Yorkshire Council *Climate Change Strategy*,
- members have also contributed to the Highways' Authority *Consultation on Speed Limits* and the proposed *Garsdale to Hawes Greenway*,
- monitored the impact of the first rail strikes, the rise in fuel prices to 199.99p/litre, £2 cap on bus fares, the installation of EV charging points in Ashfield Carpark, the further restrictions in the use of the *Dales Card* for local rail journeys, and the prevalence of bus drivers driving with only one hand on the steering wheel,
- produced an article on lift sharing for *Settle Community News*,
- and received monthly reports on the performance of Northern Rail and support of Dales Bus services.

Communications (lead Barry White)

We have continued to consolidate our communications work with frequent coverage mainly in the Craven Herald and the bimonthly Settle and District Community News. We are particularly grateful to Alastair Cook the editor of the Community News for the space he provides us, especially as he is often overwhelmed with copy from various sources and must reject some material due to lack of space. This is important as the Community News has a wide readership in the Settle area, copies being distributed to local households and businesses.

Earlier this year we decided to produce a new recruitment and promotion leaflet (or flyer) which would also reflect some of the campaigning work of ACE and our working groups. This will be produced early into the next financial year.

As reported to the last year's AGM, the ACE Steering Group decided to redesign our web site (<http://acesettleandarea.org/>) to reflect changes on our work, ambitions and achievements. Thanks to Elizabeth Smith from our Communications Group who is leading this work. The new web site should be launched in the early summer well in advance of the AGM.

Meanwhile on social media our accounts on Facebook and Twitter (both as ACE Settle) continue to be active with regular postings about our activities to both. As our Facebook presence is as a Group, there are regular posts from group members. Our Twitter account has a feed from our blog and postings about our events and retweets of interest from other accounts.

Lobbying and consultations

We submitted responses to the following consultations:

- The Yorkshire Dales National Park's consultation no 5 on the draft local plan which will cover the development period 2023-2040.
- NYCC/NYC's draft climate change strategy 2023-2030. We met with our constituency MP, Julian Smith, to raise the issue of community capacity to develop more local renewable energy. Mr Smith was supportive of the energy group's work and felt it would be most successful if done at scale.
- Members have also been encouraged to participate in signing petitions and responding to consultations organised by other activist groups.

Thank yous

We are very grateful for the support that we have received from the following organisations:

Green Cafe venues – staff at Settle Victoria Hall, Settle Methodist & Catholic Churches.

Settle Community and Business Hub – for use of their Zoom account and for hosting our videos on their YouTube channel.

Settle Rotary – for use of their display boards.

ACE Annual Accounts to 31.03.23 (internally audited)

ACE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 01.04.22 - 31.03.23

	Notes	2022/23	2021/22
		£	£
INCOME			
Donations from Steering Group members			0.00
Membership subscriptions		1,311.00	986.00
Donations included in membership payments	(1)	141.00	129.00
Donations at meetings and events etc.		476.35	272.52
Donations - badges. Other		0.00	67.60
TOTAL		1,928.35	1,455.12
EXPENDITURE			
Room hire/hosting		270.00	30.00
Refreshments for meetings		0.00	8.00
Website design, hosting, security, maintenance etc.	(2)	37.50	0.00
Stationery, paper, laminating pouches, banners etc		0.00	259.70
Themed Group expenses	(3)	353.91	74.40
Other campaigning expenses	(4)	780.00	41.75
Expenses, travel etc		7.56	0.00
Bank charges		72.00	72.00
Insurance/Impress (website publishing regulator) etc		284.19	284.19
Exceptional Expenses	(5)	154.00	0.00
TOTAL		1,959.16	770.04
NET INCOME		(30.81)	685.08
Total funds brought forward		1,178.73	493.65
Total funds carried forward		1,147.92	1,178.73

ACE BALANCE SHEET AT 31.03.23

	Notes	31.03.23	31.03.22
		£	£
ASSETS AND LIABILITIES			
<u>Fixed Assets</u>			
		0.00	0.00
<u>Current Assets</u>			
Debtors and prepayments		0.00	0.00
Cash		0.00	0.00
Cash at bank		1,647.92	1,178.73
Total Current Assets		1,647.92	1,178.73
<u>Current Liabilities</u>			
Creditors and accruals	(6)	500.00	0.00
Total net assets		1147.92	1,178.73
<u>Funds</u>			
Funds brought forward		1,178.73	493.65
I & E		-30.81	685.08
Total funds		1,147.92	1,178.73

Notes to the Accounts

- (1) Overpayment of membership subscriptions are treated as donations.
- (2) The content of the ACE website is maintained by volunteers. Technical support with hosting, security etc is provided by Mark Dale, Mixed Solutions.
- (3) Themed Group expenses were: Biodiversity - £15.31; Energy - £153.60; Transport - £0; Food - £185.00. All were pre-approved by Steering Group.
- (4) Includes cost of display boards for exhibition at The Folly.
- (5) Fees for inadvertent use of licensed images on website.
- (6) Loan from a Steering Group member to maintain reserves following the payment for exhibition display boards