



ALTON CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2022



YOUNG ACAN SPECIAL EDITION

INSPIRING & EMPOWERING:

YOUNG ACAN'S SCHOOLS' ECO-CONFERENCE IS A GREAT SUCCESS!

Young ACAN concluded their lottery-funded projects on Monday 4th July with a hugely successful schools' eco-conference held at Alton Maltings. Attended by 12 local schools, over 70 pupils from Year 2 to Year 12 were empowered to become environmental changemakers.

ACAN's Schools' and Education Lead, Emma Jones, opened the conference by setting the agenda for the day to inspire and empower our young people to take action for the planet. She then introduced Young ACAN ambassador, Daisy, who introduced the moving song 'Time to Heal' by local children's eco-choir, SOS from the Kids, of which she is a member. This was followed by an inspirational speech from Young ACAN's founding member and ambassador, Lillie, who set the tone for the day with clear messages that taking action for the planet not only gives us hope but also helps counteract climate anxiety. Lillie also shared some of the results from our recent climate survey which over 300 students participated in last month. These speeches were followed by our keynote speaker, Youthtopia's Ridhima Pandey, a 14 year old climate activist from India who spoke to us via zoom. Often compared to Greta Thunberg, Ridhima talked about how flash floods in her community when she was only 5 years old inspired her to take action and to eventually take on the Indian government when she was 9 about their inaction on climate change. Miss Pandey's key message was that it is the human right of all young people to use their voice to help create change.

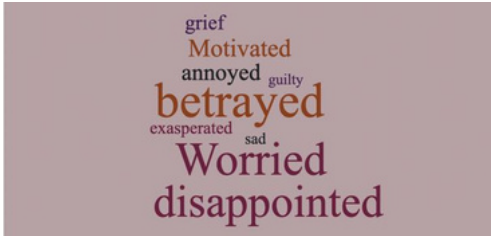
Most of the day was spent in workshops and students were able to attend two workshops based around the following themes: cooking, upcycling, ocean plastic, art, activism and project design. Outcomes from these workshops were varied and included a poster to be used for future Young ACAN campaigns, letters to our MP, bags made from recycled jeans and tasty quesadillas.

To conclude the conference, we welcomed parents and Alton's mayor, Cllr Boxall, to a presentation from each of the workshops. This enabled the students to not only share new knowledge to a wider audience but to show off what they had achieved during the day. The day then concluded with closing speeches by Cllr Boxall and Jenny Griffiths, founding member of ACAN.



ALTON'S YOUNG PEOPLE ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Last month's Young ACAN climate survey revealed that climate anxiety is prevalent amongst young people aged 10-24. The lottery-funded survey, conducted by Fiona Witcomb on behalf of Young ACAN, was conclusive: feelings of desperation, sadness and fear are felt amongst the young people in our community in view of the climate crisis.



The full results of the survey are due to be published later this month. However, the headline that nearly half of the 300 students surveyed feel sadness about the climate crisis cannot be ignored and for Young ACAN the survey outcomes will shape the charity's future projects, with the following themes being particularly important to the surveyed 10-24 year olds: biodiversity, waste and plastic, transport and food and agriculture.

Although the climate crisis does not always hit the headlines, our survey showed that young people learn about it from social media which can often fuel anxiety. Young ACAN is currently on Instagram, aiming to provide accurate information about environmental issues. It can be found by searching @youngacan.

On a positive note, to quote Young ACAN ambassador, Lillie, the good news is that there is something that you can do. Action. This could be litter picking, signing a petition, writing to our MP or sorting out clothes to bring along to our next Back on the Rack event. Action leads to hope and that is a much more positive feeling. We would certainly welcome volunteers to join the Young ACAN movement as well as ideas for future projects. Please reach out to us via our Instagram page, @youngacan or email us at: young.altoncan@gmail.com



COMING SOON: BACK ON THE RACK 2 FRIDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2022



Following the success of April's Back on the Rack, Young ACAN have booked Alton Maltings to host the popular thrift shop once again. This time we are trying a brand new time and day - Friday 23rd September at 3.30pm - 6.00pm.

The concept of a thrift shop is simple: say no to fast fashion by bringing along pre-loved clothes to swap for other pre-loved clothes.

All in exchange for a donation to Young ACAN (to fund our next thrift shop!).

As well as the thrift shop, which this time will feature clothes for 7-20 year olds, there will be a chance to learn some upcycling skills and attend a climate cafe where young people can come and talk about the environment with our ambassadors.

So, next time you are having a wardrobe sort out, please save a bag for Back on the Rack 2!

