



“We are a network of grandparents and elders who care deeply about the world our descendants will inherit. We have learned that the current plans of energy companies and governments will, if not radically changed, put our grandchildren’s future at risk. We seek to cooperate and enter into dialogue with others. Where other actions fail, we are prepared to take direct action, in a spirit of non-violence and respect.” (from our website).



Five nations, one climate. Lausanne July

Since our last newsletter in March we have been involved in actions prompted by developments within the climate change field. Following the Paris talks last December (COP 21) the newly-formed **International Alliance of Grandparents for the Climate** (www.gpclimat.ch) had its first meeting in Lausanne in Switzerland in June, and this was attended by one of our members. We are a small group, and such links are important to our work. After all, the climate covers the *whole* planet.

Closer to home, we continue to make links with other groups where there is an overlap of interests. In October we teamed up with Friends of the Earth, Fossil Free Bristol and a number of other groups during a week-long protest outside Barclays Bank in Bristol. Barclays is the no.1 player in investing in **fracking**, a form of fossil-fuel extraction which is becoming increasingly common in the UK. County Council planning departments in the North of England have failed to hold back such developments, and the present Government is committed to extending fracking to parts of Somerset and Wiltshire, in our own area. The planning process is already beginning: we will be there to oppose this process. During Speak Up Week in October, some of our members contacted their Members of Parliament about climate change. This was a national initiative headed by the Climate Coalition, of which we are a member.



Banking on each other:

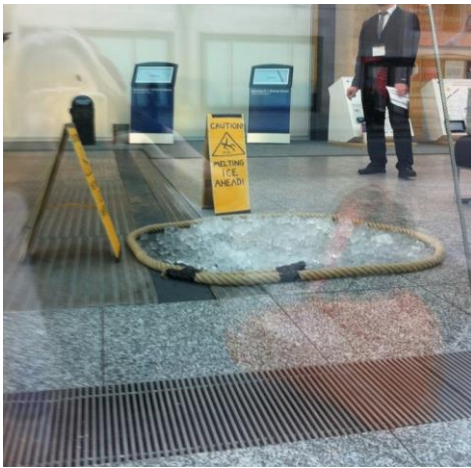
Young and old face the frackers

Other planning processes are also receiving our attention. The expansion of **out-of-town shopping centres** encourages not only increased consumption of goods made from diminishing global resources, but also in car travel to these shopping centres. Both these are climate change issues. Some of our members are involved in using the planning process, in David-and-Goliath fashion, to hold these corporations to account, the Cribbs Causeway Centre being our current target.



Picking brains at an Irish U3A branch

where one of us gave a conference lecture, we are currently working at setting up a U3A group in Taunton (Somerset) as a way of increasing peoples’ awareness of climate change.



“Danger, melting ice ahead!”

Earlier in the year one of our members, together with another group, was found guilty in Court of defacing a sign outside the then Department of Energy and Climate Change in Whitehall, London. They had changed the text on the sign to Department of *Extreme* Climate Change. Last week the group deposited a supply of ice inside the new Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, which has taken over matters

relating to climate change.



Foul-weather friends outside Court

On a more joyous note, we had an information stand at the Celebrating Age Festival in Bristol in October. 500 people from 75 organizations are represented at this annual festival, which provides an opportunity to speak to members of the public about our work. Less visible, but no less important, is our behind-the-scenes lobbying. Two of our members regularly attend meetings of some of our pensions providers. All County Council Pensions schemes are required to merge into larger “pools” by 2018, and we are concerned that these pools may become less accessible. The new Brunel Pension Partnership, which will cover the West of England will be starting in 2017. We intend to be there to pose questions about County Council policies around investing in fossil fuels, which currently runs at an approximate average of 7% of all their direct investment. This, and fracking are two of the big climate change issues currently facing our part of the world.



Dressed to drill: 2 generations give the thumbs up to action against fracking

But reflection, not just action, is also essential. We have held a study day for ourselves on the Steady State Economy, which challenges conventional assumptions around the need for endless economic growth and increased personal consumption. Following this we have written an analysis of The Neoliberal Economy, and this is available on our website. At our study day in the New Year we will be turning our attention to the ideas of Professor Clive Spash, an economist who writes, researches and teaches on public policy, with an emphasis on economic and environmental interactions.



Leo Dicaprio comes to the West Country!

Many of us have seen, and at least one local group that we have links with is intending to screen the documentary *Before the Flood*, in which Leonardo Dicaprio says: “...I think about the shame which each of us will carry, when our children and grandchildren look back and realize that we had the means to stop this devastation, but lacked the political will.” Not bad for a 42 year old celebrity! The film can be seen free on YouTube.

Follow our actions on www.youtube.com by typing Grandparents For A Safe Earth into the search box.

Visit us on <https://network23.org/gfase/>

