

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network Newsletter

February 2024 – Issue 35

The Low Carbon Warwickshire Network aims to connect low carbon groups across the county, sharing ideas and stimulating and supporting new activity. Although primarily rural in focus, we exclude no one.



<https://www.harburyenergy.co.uk/warwickshire-low-carbon-network>

Welcome to the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network (LCWN) Newsletter

The LCWN aims to create a central hub providing guidance, information and inspiration for new and existing groups, mainly in rural areas. 'Low Carbon Communities' events have been held in Harbury, Napton on the Hill, Henley-in-Arden, Church Lawford, Boddington, Kenilworth, Brailes, Cubbington, Wroxall and Wellesbourne. **There is a Spring Social bring and share lunch on Saturday 23rd March 2024 at Napton, email lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com for further info.**

The Tomorrow's Wellesbourne Event – Saturday 27th January 2024

This inspirational and informative event attracted 61 people through the door. With speakers, volunteer organisers and people hosting displays there were over 70 people in the room. The event was attended by the Leader of Stratford District Council, Parish Councillors from Pillerton Hersey and Great Alne, the Ward Councillor from Snitterfield and Claverdon and the candidate for Kenilworth and Southam MP.

Lucy Hartley of Sustainable Wellesbourne welcomed everyone then Bob Sherman, Chair of the LCWN, gave an introduction into the aims of the Network, the groups in it, its focus on rural areas, the school's task group and communications through Facebook and the Newsletter.



Callum Bate, RSA Area Manager for the Central Area gave a potted history of the RSA (The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce), some of its achievements and the benefits of becoming a Fellow.



Louise Bowlt, Senior Project Officer & Retrofit Advisor from Act on Energy, demonstrated how much heat is lost through the various elements of a house and how to help prevent that heat loss. Anyone interested in the various energy efficiency advice schemes in Stratford District can contact Susan Needham, Community Outreach Officer at Act on Energy on 0800 988 2881.

WARM & WELL IN WELLESBOURNE?



for more info go to
www.actonenergy.org.uk
 or call our free phone
0800 988 2881







Emma Rowan, South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust (SWFT) talked about 'Sustainability in Healthcare'. The NHS is the biggest public sector emitter in the UK. Human health and well-being is inextricably linked to planetary health. Health effects caused by pollution, extreme weather events and climate change include: respiratory conditions, cardiovascular disease, strokes and reduced life expectancy. If you have any questions email: emma.rowan@swft.nhs.uk

SWFT's green plan

- Workforce and Systems Leadership
- Sustainable Models of Care
- Digital Transformation
- Travel and Transport
- Estates and Facilities
- Medicines
- Supply Chain and Procurement
- Food and Nutrition
- Adaptation



What can Wellesbourne do?



1. PREVENTION

Promoting health and preventing disease by tackling the causes of illnesses and inequalities

3. LEAN SERVICE DELIVERY

Streamlining care systems to minimise wasteful activities



2. PATIENT SELF-CARE

Empowering patients to take a greater role in managing their own health and healthcare

4. LOW CARBON ALTERNATIVES

Prioritising treatments and technologies with a lower environmental impact



https://www.youtube.com/watch?embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fpowerpoint.officeapps.live.com%2F&source_ve_path=MTY0OTksMig2NjQsMTY0NTAz&feature=emb_share&v=O01rmmniCYo



Stratford District Councillor Dr Susan Juned (SDC Leader and Climate Change Lead) talked about where the UK's greenhouse gas emissions come from, what local government and strong partnerships can achieve, why local action and community engagement is necessary, the barriers to taking action, the co-benefits of taking action, Stratford District Council's climate change work, the Community Climate Change Fund, the South Warwickshire Climate Engagement Programme and future plans.



“You only get change when people know the benefits of the change”

Topics covered in the discussions at the end of the presentations included: the planning system, the Merton Rule, the role of Parish and Town Councils in community engagement, education, excess produce schemes, repair cafés, men's sheds, community pantries, recycling and re-use initiatives, heritage open days to highlight those properties where retrofit has happened, information panels where Council grants have improved energy efficiency and how to give advice to those who want to do something but don't know what to do.

There were displays and further opportunities for discussion on: Wellesbourne Library, Wellesbourne Flood Action Group, wildlife gardening, Wellesbourne Open Gardens for Wildlife, Plastic Free Wellesbourne, Wellesbourne Repair Café, Wellesbourne Allotments, Chedham's Yard, energy saving at home, Eco churches, thermal imaging, cars and the school run, litter picking, zero waste style shops, bicycle buses and trees to plant.



Napton Know-How Talks – Growing your own fruit and veg

There was a skills and knowledge sharing talk from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 17th 2024 at Napton Village Hall, The Crescent, Napton on the Hill CV47 8LS. The talk, organised by Napton Environmental Action Team (NEAT) was on growing your own food at home,



The talk for new and experienced growers was given by Becca Stevenson, Head Grower at 'Five Acre Farm' - a Community Supported Agriculture project at Ryton-on-Dunsmore (adjacent to Garden Organic). With 10 years in the role she offered helpful advice on growing your own, sharing her knowledge and gardening wisdom and responding to many questions.

In addition NEAT explored interest in setting up some food related projects ...

- 'Fruit Share' project that could reduce surpluses from fruit trees going to waste.
- Greater use of the NEAT Apple Press, and a
- 'Seed Share' - in which residents offered to others their spare vegetable / herb / flower seeds

Pre-loved gardening books and magazines were also available.

CLEAN CALL-OUT FOR SUNFLOWER GROWERS

Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN), in partnership with the Sky Garden are running a joyous community sunflower planting project and are looking for people who have room in greenhouses and polytunnels and would like to grow some sunflowers. Here are the details:

Summer of Sunflowers

To grow from seed in pots, and then plant out, 5-10,000 sunflowers in community venues, schools and other green spaces in Lillington, Cubbington and further afield.

Purpose

To bring joy, grow pollinators, grow bird seed, bring people together, widen environmental awareness and participation in 2 local environmental projects – CLEAN (Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now) and the Sky Garden.

Ways people might help

Lend us a bit of space in greenhouses/ polytunnels, for the sunflowers to grow in pots from seed, till they are ready to plant out i.e. from mid-April to the end of May.

We're looking for space for any number of pots, from 20 upwards to 500 or more (and if perchance anyone knows any emptyish polytunnels, please let us know).

What we'll supply

We'll supply 9cm pots, ready with seeds and compost in, in trays.

If people simply want to grow their own, and have their own materials, that's fine too. We're having a couple of weekends in April when we'll be putting seeds and compost into pots and would love people to come and help us then too.

Where we've got to so far

We've got 7,000 x 9cm pots and half the compost required. We've been offered space in greenhouses and polytunnels for up to 1, 450 Sunflowers. We have 3 allotment sites – Kenilworth, Black Lane, Cubbington - interested in being involved and other local environmental groups also, and are working with the District Council. We already have St. Mary's Church, Lillington, Lillington library, Cubbington Community Garden, Valley Road health hub, the Mencap Day Centre, the roundabout wanting to have sunflowers planted. We're chatting to Cubbington Church and school as well. We plan to make a grand photo-collage artwork of 5-10,000 Sunflowers, and a small artwork memento-gift for all who take part.

Please join us on this joyous journey – it's going to happen, and we want you to be part of it!

Join us in any way – big or small

Plant 1 or 1,000 – we'll all grow tall!

CLEAN ARTS EVENT SEEKS LCWN MEMBERS TO TAKE PART/ HAVE A GO

Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now are running an LCWN green-themed arts event on June 15th. We'd love LCWN members to have a go at creating a theatre sketch, poem, song, monologue, comedy piece, dance, cartoon, painting, or whatever, that is low carbon or green themed.

This is with a view to inspiring more creative resources to help us all get our green messages across, and to sharing those resources with each other. Of course, many LCWN members do this, but the more creative resources the better. It seems we need to reach people's hearts and minds!

I imagine contributions might mostly be roughly 3-5 minutes, and it could be a great opportunity to work on something with someone else. And you might be inspired by a particular low carbon activity that you are involved in, or you're obviously completely free to ignore that and do whatever you're most inspired by.

Please let me know if you're interested and might be up for this! So I can get an idea of numbers.

Matt Black, Chair, (CLEAN) Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now CIC
For more info – mob 077656 84941



LCWN Steering Group

The steering group meet infrequently and only when we have something of significance to discuss. **If you would like to get in touch with us please contact Bob Sherman or Jacky Lawrence at lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com**

To find out a little more about the steering group members see their ‘**who are we?**’ answers:-

Bob Sherman - [LCWN-Newsletter-Issue-3-February-2021.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Jacky Lawrence - [LCWN-Newsletter-Issue-7-June-2021.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Ted Dowdeswell - [LCWN-Newsletter-Issue-9-August-2021.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Ian Wood - [LCWN-Newsletter-Issue-10-September-2021.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Teresa Buckle - [LCWN-Newsletter-February-2023-issue-24.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Matt Black - [LCWN-Newsletter-April-2023-issue-26.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Louise Bowlt - [LCWN-Newsletter-August-2023-issue-30.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Bryn Turner -

Do you want to host a LCWN event in your community?

If you would like to host an RSA funded “Low Carbon Community” event where you live, please email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com and let us know where and when and we will support you in planning it. You will not be on your own.

Feedback from the Sustainable Wellesbourne event: -

“Thank you so much to you all for your involvement. I think we pulled it off and it wouldn’t have happened at all without you! The advice and support from you all in the lead up gave us the bones and the detail for smooth flow of everything; from poster design, through Eventbrite page to putting all the speaker’s presentations on to one memory stick!”

“Thank you for a very inspiring meeting!”

“Some excellent speakers and really useful information”

“I just wanted to say what a really excellent meeting!”

“It was a real call for everyone to step up and join in”

The LCWN Steering Group have also started to develop an **event resource library** including an events guide, draft programme / timeline and creativity ideas plus posters to support your event.

The RSA

Callum Bate is the Area Manager for the Central Area. His contact details are: The RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London, WC2N 6EZ, e: Callum.Bate@rsa.org.uk, w: [The RSA - RSA](#)



The RSA – the Royal Society for encouragement of the Arts, manufactures and commerce. Where world-leading ideas are turned into world-changing actions. The RSA is committed to a world where everyone can fulfil their potential and contribute to more resilient, rebalanced, and regenerative futures.



Climate Action Advisors from Let's Go Zero offering free advice to schools, colleges and nurseries!

Let's Go Zero is a national campaign for schools across the UK to declare their intention to be zero carbon by 2030. [Sign up](#) [Take action for zero carbon schools - Lets Go Zero](#) and join the growing number of schools working to decarbonise for a greener future.

Schools can get FREE support to help them along their journey to zero carbon. All schools should have a sustainability lead and a climate action plan in place by 2025 in line with the [DfE's Sustainability Strategy](#) and we are here to support schools to achieve this and more.

Locally based Advisors can offer your school individualised support to understand your setting, work with you to build a climate action plan and help find funding to facilitate change. By filling in [this form](#) you will be contacted directly by an advisor in your area and help you on your sustainability journey.

**Sarah Mills, Let's Go Zero Climate Action Advisor to schools
(West Midlands)**

Helping schools become zero carbon by 2030. Book your free visit from a Climate Action Advisor [here](#) [Climate Action Advisors - Lets Go Zero!](#)

Open hyperlinks above or see Links on page 16.



Climate Action Advisors

We would love to hear about any school initiatives which you think could be shared. Do email, **Teresa (O'Connor) Buckle** at: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

Diary Dates

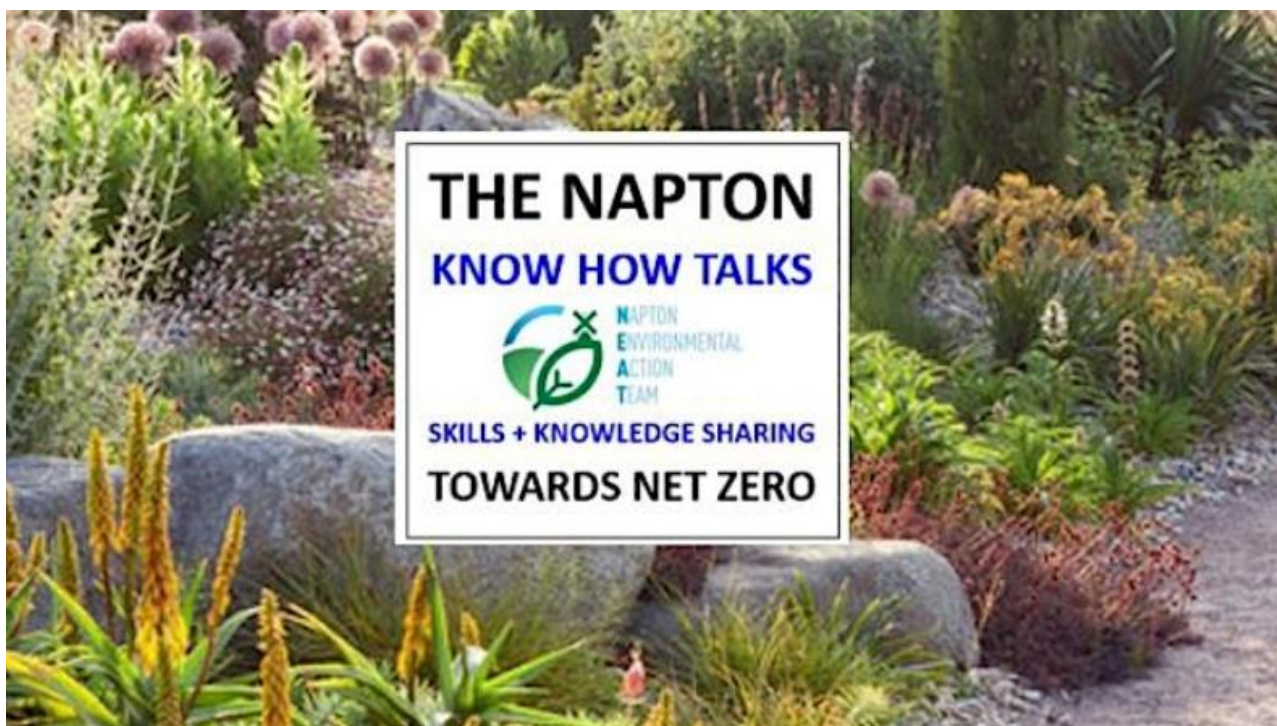
LCWN Spring Social an informal, friendly gathering plus bring and share lunch in Napton, 12:30 till 3 on **Saturday 23rd March 2024**. Contact Jacky Lawrence for further details if you'd like to join us at lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com or email: jackylawrence31@hotmail.co.uk

At the Autumn social last September, a good time was had by all with interesting conversations, mutual encouragement & support and delicious home grown food. Groups represented at that social included: Harbury Energy Initiative (HEI), Harbury e-Wheels, Napton Environmental Action Team (NEAT), Kenilworth All Together Greener (KATG), Grapevine Environmental Action Team (GREAT), Community Energy Warwickshire (CEW), Tachbrook's Residents Action on Climate Change (TRACC), Sustainable Wellesbourne, Cubbington and Leamington Environment Action Now (CLEAN) and Warwick Avon Rotary.



Napton Know-How Talks the March skills and knowledge sharing talk will start at 2 p.m. till 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 23rd 2024 with a talk on Climate Change and our Gardens. It's at Napton Village Hall, The Crescent Napton on the Hill CV47 8LS.

[CLIMATE CHANGE AND OUR GARDENS Tickets, Sat 23 Mar 2024 at 14:00 | Eventbrite](#)



Learn about the impact of climate change on our beloved gardens and explore sustainable gardening ideas and practices.

Lucy Hartley from 'Lucy Hartley Gardens' in nearby Wellesbourne will be giving this talk.

Lucy used to be a science teacher - now she follows a passion as a Garden Designer. Her talk is based on current research and thinking on the impact of climate change on our gardens and the things she feels that we, as gardeners, ought to know.

After covering, briefly, what climate change actually means for our gardens Lucy's talk will look at ways we can use our gardens to guard and support local biodiversity while sequestering more carbon. It will then cover insights on how to cope with the changes that are coming. Tips are given on how to nurture a healthier and more resilient garden.

THE EVENT IS FREE TO ATTEND - DONATIONS TO COVER SPEAKER COSTS + REFRESHMENTS WELCOMED.

The **Warwickshire Climate Alliance** are running an event from 11am-2pm at Coleshill Town Hall on Saturday 9th March. Details are on the poster. Hopefully see you there!

THE BIG SAVE
Your actions count!

Learn simple actions that can make a difference to you, your family and the planet.

**Saturday 9 March 2024
11am - 2pm**

Coleshill Town Council
High Street, Coleshill
Warwickshire. B46 3BG

Lots of activities and cost-saving ideas from local community groups including:

- Pop-up repair cafe
- Free refreshments
- Family-friendly activities
- Music & entertainment
- Children's toy swap
- Free seeds and plants
- And much, much more!

Follow @WarwickshireClimateAlliance on Facebook or @warksclimate on Twitter to keep up to date with the latest event news.

Funded by Warwickshire County Council's Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund 2022

Warwickshire County Council
Warwickshire Climate Alliance

CLEAN (Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now) will be holding a low carbon arts event on June 15th at Lillington Club, Leamington. Initial plans for the day include displays, family activities, talks and an evening cabaret.

Who are you?

If you have an interesting story to tell which could inspire others to take action, please send your answers to the five 'who are we?' questions to lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com. We'll include your story in a future newsletter.

1. What is your first memory of when you realised things needed to change?
2. What made you commit to doing something?
3. What have you done?
4. What's kept you going? What sustains you?
5. If there was one thing / one solution you wished everyone knew about / did - what would it be?

My Electrifying Year - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

It's over a year since I went 'all electric' at home – heat pump, solar pv, battery, electric car and smart meter. In this blog I will outline my experience.

Carbon Savings

Our 40kWh Nissan Leaf electric vehicle is our family's 'second car', replacing our previous Skoda Citigo. I estimate a 73% carbon reduction in carbon emissions from 1.8 to 0.5 tonnes. I say 'second' car, but really it is our first car of choice. We use it for journeys of up to 120 miles, saving the diesel-powered Skoda Octavia for occasional longer journeys or when two of our family need to drive at the same time.

The heat pump has reduced our carbon footprint even more. Our previous combined electricity and gas emissions were 2.5 tonnes. This has fallen to 0.7 tonnes, coincidentally also a 73% reduction. This calculation is based on 2022 carbon emission factors, and this will continue to improve further as the UK's electricity grid becomes cleaner.

Running Costs

This is what everyone asks me about, but I make no apology for starting this blog with carbon savings. Yes, money is important, but a liveable planet is very important too.

The petrol for an equivalent car would have cost £1,400 versus £400 for the electricity to run the Nissan Leaf. This is based on us charging at home, using a 17p per unit cheap rate tariff from Octopus (versus 28p normal home electricity tariffs). In fact, our running costs are even lower than £400 as some of the charging is 'free' from our solar pv. There is no road tax to pay either.

The heat pump is more complicated. If you simply replace a gas boiler with an electric heat pump, then the running costs will be similar. This is because the efficiency of the heat pump is offset by UK electricity costing four times that of gas. You can make savings if you move to variable rate electricity tariff and heat the house as much as possible at a cheaper tariff.

In addition, the solar pv reduces my need to buy electricity. 'Excess' solar energy is used to charge my battery enabling free electricity in the evenings and free hot water all summer long. In the winter, I switch battery mode. I take advantage of cheap electricity times to charge up the battery from the electricity grid.

Taking all of this into account my home energy bill (excluding EV) in 2023 was £1,200, a 36% saving on my estimated bill of £1,900 for 2022 (using the same electricity prices).

Is Solar pv good?

Yes. Solar panels are easy to install, minimal maintenance, work away in the background and provide you with a warm feel-good factor. It is however very seasonal. Over 500 units in June which is more than my electricity needs, but only 30 units in December, a drop in the ocean. I do have trees nearby, and this has a big shading effect in the winter months when the sun is low in the sky.

Is a Home Battery good?

This is more complicated to answer. In the summer it does enable a much larger degree of self-sufficiency by providing free electricity into the evenings and overnight. In winter I use the battery to take advantage



of cheap rate electricity tariffs which, on the face of it, reduces the cost of most of my electricity from 28p to 17p. In 2023 I bought 83% of my electricity at the cheap rate (16p).

But then the Battery Management System consumes a little electricity constantly; plus conversion losses as you charge the battery then discharge it. I have no data to work out what these losses are, but I would guess they are at least 10%. So, if I buy 10 units of electricity from the grid and use it to charge the battery, I will only get 9 units of useful electricity (at 17p rather than the more usual 28p).

The future will be to connect your (large) car battery to your home to optimise the running of both. Trials are already taking place to prove that this works.

Do I need a Smart Meter?

Yes. Smart meters aren't all about making it easy for your energy company to read your meter, or for you to better understand your home energy consumption. They are much more. They are an enabler of smart tariffs (different prices at various times of day). This is essential for the National Grid to maximise the use of renewable generation and to help balance our national and local electricity grid. For the householder, a smart meter enables you to access cheaper tariffs at certain times of the day. For example, we often use our dishwasher and washing machine overnight when electricity is cheaper.

We also take part in the 'demand management' trials. When the National Grid is forecasting a peak demand, we are paid to reduce our demand (compared with the equivalent time the previous week). This may even have the benefit of avoiding the need to fire up a stand-by gas or coal power station.

Comfort and Convenience

The EV is quieter, smoother and with faster acceleration when you need it. There is less maintenance required because there are fewer moving parts in the engine.

We now keep our house at a more even temperature all day (this improves the efficiency of the heat pump).

In terms of complexity, the heat pump controls are certainly harder to set up and to understand although a good installer should do this for you. However, it is good to understand the basic physics. Heat pumps work more efficiently at the lowest flow temperature through your radiators (or underfloor heating) sufficient to keep your house warm enough. On a daily basis the flow temperature is regulated by a clever weather compensation device (it automatically sets a higher flow temperature when it is colder outside) and the heat curve (which calculates what flow temperature is required to heat your house up dependent on the outside temperature). If your house isn't heating up quickly enough, then you can increase the heat curve.

Funnily, most visitors comment that our radiators don't feel warm to touch. That is good! It means they are operating at an efficient low flow temperature, around 37°C, the same as your body temperature.

Financial Payback

This is extremely complex and will vary based on your circumstances. In my case it is too complex to work out given that I invested in an EV, heat pump, solar and battery at the same time so there are too many variables.



My gut feeling is that solar in a good location will payback in around 10 years; a battery may take longer and then it will depend at what rate the battery degrades over time. The heat pump is an expensive investment that based on electricity costing four times that of gas may never payback in simple financial terms (but neither does a new fitted kitchen, double glazing, or a foreign holiday)! It may, however, increase the value of your house. In Scotland there are proposals to force householders to install a 'clean heat' system soon after purchasing a house. Any house with a heat pump already installed will be more attractive to a buyer and will attract those who want to live in an environmentally friendly house. It should therefore increase the value of your house.

Home Energy Use

My electricity consumption has tripled from 2,800 to 9,100 units per year. Interestingly this is approximately one third home use, electric car charging and heat pump. Of course, I have eliminated my 11,000 units of gas consumption and reduced my purchase of petrol for the car. From a society perspective my energy needs are more local and secure, no longer reliant on fuel imports from overseas unstable regimes.

What Next?

I could buy a second EV to eliminate my use of petrol and diesel, but I am keeping this under review as our family circumstances change. We may be able to manage with one car, in which case I'd like to swap our current Nissan with an electric car with a longer battery range.

I'd also like to invest in triple glazing for all windows in our house, but this is hard to justify at present given we installed double glazing 15 years ago.

The Government needs to narrow the wide gap in prices between gas and electricity. This should be possible given the growing number of windfarms. They might have a marginal running cost of less than 5p per unit, but the energy companies sell this to us at 27p per unit.

Householders need to be told if their Council is planning to build or facilitate a heat network (district heating) through their street. If they are, then it would be better to connect to the heat network than invest in an individual heat pump.

We also need a smooth, joined-up approach to make it easier to buy a heat pump as a 'distress' purchase, when your gas or oil boiler breaks down. This will require quick access to advice, grants and loans, and a speedy installation service from installers.

Carbon Choices

If you like my blogs, you might also enjoy my book, Carbon Choices on the common-sense solutions to our climate and nature crises. Available direct from me [Buy \(carbonchoices.uk\)](http://carbonchoices.uk). I am donating one third of profits to rewilding projects. Follow me at X: (Formerly Twitter) [Neil Kitching 🌐 \(@carbonchoicesuk\)](https://twitter.com/carbonchoicesuk) / X, Facebook [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/carbonchoices) or Instagram [Neil Kitching \(@carbonchoices\)](https://www.instagram.com/carbonchoices) • [Instagram photos and videos](https://www.instagram.com/carbonchoices)

[My Electrifying Year \(carbonchoices.uk\)](http://carbonchoices.uk)

Neil Kitching, My Electrifying Year, January 2024



Thoughts from an Organic Farmer – Soil Gurus and Compost Tea.

My conventional, reductionist scientific education, which emphasised individual processes rather than an appreciation of complex systems, left me with a reluctance to accept what I don't understand.

At agricultural college, we were shown response curves to fertilisers, and taught how to calculate economical application rates; soil was merely an inert physical medium that provided water and helped crops to stand up. There were a few soil scientists who emerged from the basement, blinking like moles, to teach us about mycorrhizal fungi, earthworms, legumes, and the nitrogen cycle – but no one was very interested. It was all too nuanced compared to the fast, dramatic impact of ammonium nitrate.



Even then, a tiny number of freaks on the fringe believed that healthy soil fed healthy crops, which in turn fed healthy livestock and humans. But apart from the enlightened few, the narrative of farming in my lifetime has been dominated by synthetic fertilisers and pesticides and exploited by their salesmen.

As an organic farmer, the importance of healthy soil did slowly dawn on me – but the more I learnt about the soil's complex, interrelated biology, physics, and chemistry, the more I despaired of ever understanding it. I gave up too easily and kept few meaningful records. Instead, I relied on casual observations of what seemed to be working and followed hunches and intuitive beliefs. Perhaps I was too busy selling veg boxes and running a business to pay proper attention to understanding my soil.

Given how varied soils, geography, climates, and farm systems are, I have developed a strong resistance to universal solutions – be they compost tea, garlic extract, biochar, or wholesale abandonment of the plough. I am equally resistant to the growing band of self-appointed 'regenerative' gurus who promote these solutions, normally with too much dogmatism and too little humility.

However, last week I spent a day at Riverford's Devon farm with Ben Taylor-Davies, a.k.a. 'Regen Ben'. I realised that, at 63, I need to get over myself and listen (selectively) to this new generation of self-taught, farm-based, holistic soil scientists. Ben reckons that our soils are good, but we need to boost biological activity to get more out of them. He showed great knowledge and confidence, mixed with just enough uncertainty to overcome my prejudice.

I may try to make my own compost tea. I may even record the results... but I probably won't muster the patience and perseverance.

Guy Singh-Watson, February 2024, farmer and founder and creator of Riverford Organic Farm

Ted's Tech - The secret heat pump that doesn't cost the earth

Phil Hemsley who gave the Napton Know-How talk on energy efficiency has done a blog about his experience with an "air to air" heat pump. Last year I learned about a man from Kenilworth who had been very pleased with his installation of an "air to air" heat pump system at two flats he rented out in Rugby. Well worth a read.



[The secret heat pump that doesn't cost the earth | Thoughts from a Minimalist Christian \(philhemsley.blog\)](https://philhemsley.blog)

A E. (Ted) Dowdeswell, Member of Harbury Energy Initiative, January 2024

The Great Collaboration Banter Sessions

[The Great Collaboration - What Can Your Local Council Do To Help?](#)



In 2019, The Great Collaboration started working with local communities to help everyone to act on climate and nature.

The Great Collaboration Banter Sessions are light-hearted, free, weekly sessions to help develop the Great Collaboration project, to align the very best and most appropriate Climate Change projects / plans / guidelines / advice to each user.

All members and officers of UK town, parish and community councils and their communities are welcome to participate, in either a "drop in, ask your question(s), get your answer(s) and then drop out" protocol (for very busy people!), or simply remain for the full hour-long session to enjoy, and contribute to, an atmosphere of good humour and helpful cooperation.

Each session is recorded, so that those unable to attend may benefit later. For any questions, please contact gcstones52@gmail.com or 07486 575922.

[Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Poetry Corner - The Movie We Are Living In

I want to be an eco-Superhero,
to star in this film called Mission Net Zero,
don't want to be a weary Dear-o Dear-o,

Want to learn the strange symbols, to recycle better,
know the backs of packets to the letter,
what to do with plastics wet with Feta.

Handful to bagful, binfull to landfill,
Glitter And Teabags Clog Blackpool To Standstill –
The End is Nigh, while we stand by, blame the Council.

I was a waste doubter, the story, I bought it,
but it's not mostly exported to Asia, as reported,
and the more we sort, the more gets sorted.

I don't want plastic in my body, plastic seas,
it's best to buy less plastic, and yes, please,
I should write letters to Tesco's and M.P.s –

Politician, oilman, greedy banker,
be your true kind self, stop being a wanker,
Act Now, and your kids will come to thank yer.

Six hundred million years, for a quick Coke drink,
it's like pouring history down the sink.
As Spock says, Do you humans really think?

It'll save metal and glass, it once seemed great,
this polyethylene Terephthalate,
this wicked black bin at the garden gate.

If you throw it in, haven't got a minute
to check what goes in, whether you should bin it,
ask the fish with the Asda bag in its gullet.

So before it gets drastic, quasi-Triassic,
let's all be gymnastic, enthusiastic,
bombastic fantastic recyclers of plastic,

We can be Greta Thunbergs, Robert De Niros,
or be our own eco Superheroes,
with our own starring roles in Mission Net Zero.



By Matt Black

Research Poet-in-Residence, Dogs Trust 2021
Sniffing Lamp-posts by Moonlight – book of
dog poems, 2020,
The Storm Officer – play touring 2020,
Tales from the Leaking Boot – travel haiku,
Iron Press, 2018,
Spoon Rebellion – Smith Doorstop, 2017,
Derbyshire Poet Laureate 2011-2013,
www.matt-black.co.uk, + 44 77656 84941

Useful Links

- www.harburyenergy.co.uk
- [Warwickshire Low Carbon Network – Harbury Energy Initiative](#)
- **Community Energy Warwickshire Fund** <https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CEW-2020.pdf> The fund aims to:
 - • Support the development and installation of renewable energy projects
 - • Encourage the sustainable use of energy and reductions in carbon emissions
 - • Promote public awareness of environmental issues and support educational initiatives
 - Available Funding - There's grant of up to £2,000. Funding must be spent within 1 year. CEW-2020.pdf (heartofenglandcf.co.uk)

Repair Cafés

1. [\(1\) Repair Cafe Alcester | Alcester | Facebook](#)
2. [Bar zero Barford | Facebook](#)
3. [\(1\) Repair Cafe Harbury | Facebook](#)
4. [Repair Cafe | Repair Cafe Kenilworth | Kenilworth \(\[repaircafe-kenilworth.org\]\(http://repaircafe-kenilworth.org\)\)](#)
5. [Repair Café Leamington Spa | Leamington Spa | Facebook](#)
6. [\(1\) Repair Cafe Rugby | Rugby | Facebook](#)
7. [Stratford Repair Cafe: A Net Zero and Stratford Town Trust Venture, organised by Stephen Norrie - Co-operate \(\[coop.co.uk\]\(http://coop.co.uk\)\)](#)
8. [\(1\) Repair Café Southam | Facebook](#)
9. [Wellesbourne Repair Cafè | Facebook](#)

Let's Go Zero

[IKEA X Let's Go Zero Competition - Lets Go Zero](#)

[Take action for zero carbon schools - Lets Go Zero](#)

[Climate Action Advisors - Lets Go Zero](#)

[Sustainability and climate change strategy: our progress so far, December 2023 \(\[publishing.service.gov.uk\]\(http://publishing.service.gov.uk\)\)](#)

[Climate Action Advisors: Register your Interest \(\[office.com\]\(http://office.com\)\)](#)

[Our competitions - Lets Go Zero](#)



Act on Energy is a local charity which partners with Local Authorities to offer a full home energy support service and free, impartial advice.



What measures that **YOU CAN APPLY FOR HELP WITH:**

- Gas, oil & LPG boiler replacement (not warm air or electric)
- Replacement of existing old & broken heating systems
- Replacement of electric storage heaters to high heat retention heaters
- First time central heating to homes with existing gas connections
- Replacement of or new heating controls
- Replacement of hot water cylinders
- Help with fuel bills payment, fuel voucher, small measures
- Low cost insulation measures ➤ Boiler Servicing & Repairs

*Certain eligibility criteria apply in respect of all the above

We can also offer **expert advice** on:

- Energy efficiency tips to reduce your bills
- Grants and funding for energy efficiency measures
- Help with energy debt ➤ Billing issues with your supplier
- Home upgrade advice (retrofitting)

for more info go to

www.actonenergy.org.uk

or call our free phone

0800 988 2881



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Act on Energy is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales, number 3621022 and a registered charity number 1075679.

Registered address: Unit 2 Lauriston Business Park, Pitchill, Salford Priors, Warwickshire, WR11 8SN

Want to get involved? – find your local climate action group

Have we got the correct logo for your group or organisation?

The LCWN aims to bring people together to share ideas and stimulate new activity in rural areas.

Keen to see real practical change in your community?

Are you part of a local low carbon group? Why not join us and the 33 groups already in the Network?

For contact names and details see the May 2023 or earlier newsletters.
[LCWN-Newsletter-May-2023-issue-27.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](https://www.harburyenergy.co.uk/LCWN-Newsletter-May-2023-issue-27.pdf)

Plus: Shrewley and Wroxall Environment Action Team (SWEAT), Clean Water Kineton, Arley and Ansley Big Local

LCWN Facebook group set up by Emma Powell for everyone to share useful things. Please like and follow it. Please send any comments to lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/Low-Carbon-Warwickshire-Network-101562702401683/>



Have your say— What do you want to see in future editions?

This is your newsletter and only as good as you make it – it is your opportunity to: publicise any on-line events you are holding, let other community groups know what you are currently up to, share your experiences, let others know of interesting low carbon news.

Ideas, requests, offers, Q & A, hints & tips

Please send all copy (by 12th of each month), news items, case studies, details of events, comments, suggestions and enquiries about this newsletter to: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com referring to the issue date and number for queries or phone Jacky Lawrence on 07906 440496.

