

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network Newsletter

March 2024 – Issue 36

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.

The next event is a 'Green Themed Arts and Entertainment Event' hosted by Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN) on Saturday June 15th 2024 at Lillington Club.

The Warwickshire Climate Alliance Big Save Event, Coleshill – Saturday 9th March 2024

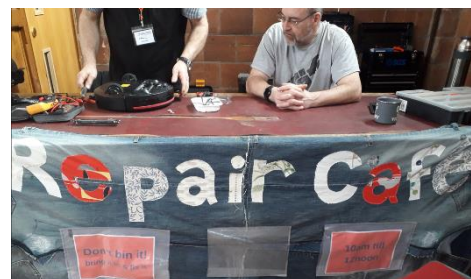
On Saturday 9th March, residents of Coleshill enjoyed the second 'The Big Save' roadshow organised by Warwickshire Climate Alliance. The roadshow gave local residents tips on saving energy, reducing food waste, recycling, and offered a pop-up repair café to fix residents' broken items for free.

The roadshows are funded by Warwickshire County Council's Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund and four more events are planned, with the **next one due to be held in Atherstone in September 2024.**



Hazel Underwood, Committee Member from Warwickshire Climate Alliance, said: "It was great to engage with local residents in Coleshill and the feedback we received from people who attended the event was all extremely positive. We'd like to thank Town Councillor Sheena Wynn for coming along to support the event and for showing such a keen interest in what we are trying to achieve. We're already planning our next event in Atherstone so that we can help even more Warwickshire residents and full details will be announced soon."

Steve Currie, who helped host the repair café at the event, said: "Repairing broken items instead of sending them to landfill is a great way of saving money. There was a lot of interest in this aspect of the event from local residents and local groups, so it is clear that residents would like to see this happen on a regular basis. There are regular repair cafés in other towns across Warwickshire, and it would be fantastic to see one open here in Coleshill too."



If you'd be interested in helping set up a regular repair café in Coleshill, please email info@warwickshireclimatealliance.org.



The Big Save also offered residents cycle and scooter security marking, a seed swap, a children's toy swap, and a basic bike maintenance course in conjunction with Warwickshire Cycle Buddies. Members of Twin Rivers WI also supported the event with two imaginative upcycling craft activities and helping to serve the free refreshments.



Keep up to date with the latest Big Save news and other events organised by Warwickshire Climate Alliance online:

<https://warwickshireclimatealliance.org/>

You can also follow WCA on social media:

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/WarwickshireClimateAlliance>

X (formerly Twitter) <https://twitter.com/warksclimate>



The HEI / LCWN display

Hazel Underwood, March 2024

LCWN Steering Group

The steering group met on 14th March. Topics talked about included: members in the Network, Act on Energy retrofit advisor workshops, events since the last meeting, the planning of future events, progress on environmental action in schools, Great Big Green Week, the possible formation of new community groups in the County and mapping of the existing groups.

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 \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

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.

The LCWN Steering Group have also started to develop an **event resource library** to support your event planning.

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.

Diary Dates

A Talk on The Fascinating World of Bees and Beekeeping, Wednesday 10th April 7:45 pm at Wren Hall, Wroxall CV35 7NF

As part of our bee-friendly theme we've arranged for a local bee-keeper Alan Deeley from Burton Green to give a talk at Wren Hall. Alan's talk will be practical and interactive with various beekeeping props and interesting objects to hand around.



The talk will cover the following topics:

- Bees and the composition of a Honeybee Colony
- Evolution of beekeeping and bee hives
- Swarming
- Threats to bees and pollinators
- What you can do to help
- Honey and hive products
- Honey Sampling

£5 entry charge on the door. Honey will be available for sale!

Martin Wood, SWEAT: martinwood.fiveways@gmail.com
[NEWSLETTER \(shrewley.org\)](#)

Green Themed Arts and Entertainment Event, Saturday June 15th 2024 at Lillington Club

This event will be hosted by **Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN)**. CLEAN would 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 share 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, 077656 – 84941



STOURVALE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK, SATURDAY 8 JUNE - SATURDAY 15 JUNE 2024

There will be various SAFE events in and around Shipston, to raise awareness of Environmental Issues and Solutions.

See the web site updates on the events including : a Family Town Trail; a Visit/Walk around Cornmill Meadows; two chances to visit a local Regenerative Farm; Two Opportunities to take part in a 'Wonderful Weeds Walk'; a visit to a Solar Farm (Stratford on Avon's GBGW); and an Illustrated Talk about Swifts' Conservation.

[Stourvale Great Big Green Week - Great Big Green Week](#)



Get in touch if you'd like to know more, especially if you can volunteer to help in any way. Email or call **Jacey Jackson** on jacey@2jays.co.uk or 01608 661288.

Bidford's Clothes Swap At the Village Cafe, First Saturday of each month, 2-4pm

Coffee, cake, a new outfit and a warm feeling knowing your unwanted clothes have a new life - what's not to like?

How does it work?

- Dig out up to 10 items of clothing that you don't want - clean and in reasonable condition, please
- Bring them along to the Clothes Swap
- Get a token to swap the same number of items
- Have fun choosing from the clothes, shoes, bags, hats, etc.



[Bidford Climate Change Action Group - Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council \(bidfordonavon-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

[Bidford's Clothes Swap - April – Sustainable Warwickshire](#)

[Bidford's Clothes Swap - May – Sustainable Warwickshire](#)

LCWN Schools Project Team – Useful links

Let's Go Zero – Climate Action Countdown,

The Climate Action Countdown is Let's Go Zero's annual climate action challenge. Every day from **7th June to 5th July**, we'll help schools around the UK take on a different activity linked to sustainability. That's 29 days of fun, inclusive, inspiring action.



Our campaign is supporting schools to reach zero carbon by 2030. Remember, your small actions add up to one big difference.

Your daily activity can be anything you like – but to make things easier, we've made a Climate Action Calendar with fun and easy-to-do challenges to try out. They range from holding a uniform swap shop to planting a butterfly bush, serving up a meat-free Monday and taking part in our Great Big Climate Quiz.

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



Green Schools Project – Impact Report

Zero Carbon Schools, a comprehensive package of resources, training, and support, designed by teachers, to help schools measure and reduce their carbon footprint. Over 26 sessions, pupils learn about the climate crisis and respond by planning and leading projects to reduce their schools' emissions. Adaptable for ages 8 – 13 (years 4 - 8), the programme is cross-curricular with links to science, maths, geography, and English, and includes outdoor sessions that improve pupil wellbeing and nature connection.

[Green-Schools-Project-Impact-Report-2022-23.pdf](#)
(greenschoolsproject.org.uk)



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

Warwickshire County Council – Sustainable Warwickshire Podcast

Youth Council Episode Now Available

The latest episode of the Sustainable Warwickshire podcast features two members of Warwickshire's Youth Council, who want to encourage other young people in the county to get involved in climate change issues.

During the episode, Riyasa Uprety (Rugby High School) and Adam Ratcliffe (King Edward VI Sixth Form College) talk about the importance of young people making their voices heard on the behaviours and actions that we can all do to influence climate change. They also recognise the need for young people to be better informed about the importance of climate change and protecting biodiversity, and the challenge of having sufficient time and space to focus on these issues within schools and colleges.



So, if you ever wonder what young people are thinking about climate change, and what they want to see happen to secure their future, then have a listen!

Visit <https://sustainablewarwickshire.podbean.com/> or search for Sustainable Warwickshire on Spotify or Apple.

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?

Good News

Stratford Climate Hub

The Stratford Climate Hub will soon be open at 30 Meer Street in Stratford Town Centre. The hub will provide reliable information on climate issues, offer advice on how people can take action, provide recycling opportunities, and host community events, talks and workshops. Volunteers could help by staffing the hub and talking to the public, or with back-stage support, such as research, etc. Training will be provided, and you won't need to be an expert.



See **Net Zero Stratford's** [Facebook](#) page for further information.

Rugby Eco Hub

Transition Town Rugby and Rugby Repair Cafe have joined forces with members of the community who are concerned about the future of the town due to the effects of climate change - to develop a new community centre: Rugby Eco Hub.



The hub will offer local communities and businesses a dedicated, shared space, focussed not just on raising awareness of the climate crisis, but providing a one-stop shop to help residents to reduce their carbon footprint, whilst also saving money and protecting themselves and their families against an uncertain future.



The plan is to host things such as the Repair Cafe, a Library of Things, seed and plant swaps, energy saving advice, as well as workshops, events and demonstrations. Working with local sustainable businesses, makers and crafters, the hub will also serve as an outlet for their work.

For further information see:

[Repair Cafe Rugby](#)

[Transition Town Rugby](#) [Transition Town Rugby - Rugby Sustainability Hub](#)

[Rugby Eco Hub group](#) | [Facebook](#)



10,000 Sunflowers launch

Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN), Lillington Makers and Leamington Sky Garden had a very successful launch day on March 17th. 150 people participated in a wide range of activities.

There is a short video on the [Low Carbon Warwickshire Network](#) | [Facebook](#) page.



Act on Energy

Act on Energy are looking for eligible properties and householders for this scheme in the Warwick and Stratford districts. The grant is for off-gas properties and will be able to provide a retrofit assessment and depending on the recommendations, insulations measures and/or renewable technologies. Any interested applicants can call Act on Energy on 0800 988 2881 to express their interest.



The Home Upgrade Grant is ready!



Warwick District Council is working with **E.ON** their TrustMark Certified delivery partner, and **Act on Energy** to help reduce your bills and make your home warmer and more energy efficient.

Warwick District Council has received government funding to pay for energy efficiency measures for eligible households. Depending on the type of fuel you use to heat your home and your property type, you could have energy efficiency and/or clean heat measures* installed.

All grants are subject to eligibility criteria, funding availability and technical survey.

*Clean heat measures refer to home-heating technologies (e.g., an air source heat pump) that produce less greenhouse gas emissions and can be more energy efficient compared to similar solid fuel technologies (e.g., a LPG-fuelled boiler).

To be eligible you will need to meet all the following criteria:

- ▶ you are a homeowner or rent privately,
- ▶ the property **does not** use mains-gas central heating - using mains-gas for cooking only is acceptable.
- ▶ the property has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D, E, F or G - if the property does not have an EPC, then one will be arranged free of charge.
- ▶ your household has a combined annual income of under £36,000 (gross) or you live in an income exempt area (please contact Act on Energy to confirm your eligibility).

Get in touch now!

0800 988 2881

advice@actonenergy.org.uk

www.actonenergy.org.uk



The Home Upgrade Grant is ready!



Stratford-on-Avon District Council is working with **E.ON**, their TrustMark Certified delivery partner, and **Act on Energy** to help reduce your bills and make your home warmer and more energy efficient.

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- ▶ your household has a combined annual income of under £36,000 (gross) or you live in an income exempt area (please contact Act on Energy to confirm your eligibility). Any savings are not relevant to this grant.

Get in touch now!

0800 988 2881

advice@actonenergy.org.uk

www.actonenergy.org.uk



[Energy Efficiency Grants | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

[Green Homes Grants - Energy efficiency at home - Warwick District Council \(\[warwickdc.gov.uk\]\(http://warwickdc.gov.uk\)\)](#)

UK net zero economy grows 9%, compared to GDP growth at just 0.1%

Parliamentary Constituencies (revised boundaries)	GVA		
Name	Rank (by proportion)	Proportion of local economy	Absolute Value (£m)
Warwick and Leamington	6	10.1%	465
Nuneaton	15	7.8%	150

From the Top 25 Parliamentary Constituency net zero hotspots in England and Wales (GVA)

[UK net zero economy grows 9%, compared to GDP growth at just 0.1% - EIBI](#)

Town and Parish Council News

The Great Collaboration – for Parish and Town Councils

There is a great deal of climate action already happening at parish and town council level, and by community groups, but the good practice needs to be shared more widely. Three things can help us with this:



1. Framework – an easily-searched data base of actions that can happen at the local level (sometimes referred to as “making the climate jungle more navigable”!
2. Network – exchanging good practice and requests for guidance amongst and between local councils and their local action groups.
3. Joined-up work – effective partnership working not just horizontally at local level but also vertically from local places up through higher-tier local authorities to Government.

Our starting point is the Great Collaboration website www.greatcollaboration.uk that allows people to choose from 60 climate actions and register by postcode their involvement or intentions. The website also allows local councils to gather information based on those postcodes to have an idea of what is or isn't happening in their council area.

This process has been piloted successfully for over two years by the Herefordshire Green Network who have developed the website and have been supporting a network officer to give talks to Herefordshire parishes. The Place-Based Initiative Ltd has taken over the website and will extend its use nationally while adding in the collective actions open to councils and community groups. There will also be a digital map of what is already happening by parish area.

Communication is the key to the next steps, and the aim is to:

- gather information from local councils and groups as to their information requirements.
- develop a county-based network for sharing good practice locally and nationally.
- incorporate these elements in a web-based portal that enables two-way exchanges.
- contact national bodies and funders to advise and support the initiative going forwards.



We have started this process by organising free weekly **Banter Sessions** with speakers on special topics followed by a wider discussion, and everyone is welcome! You can join these sessions via this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9t0GQ72fBJSFr9zzlDj>.

Please contact us via office@greatcollaboration.uk if you would like to:

- help us to develop new guidance and case studies, maybe sharing your own good practice.
- offer to be a point of contact for a particular type of action or expertise - whether climate or environmental action, nature recovery or supporting biodiversity
- support regular communication between ourselves and local communities.

Dealing with climate change to improve the future of our families and communities is now more important than ever. Let us work on this together – we look forward to hearing from you!

Andrew Maliphant, The Great Collaboration,

[The Great Collaboration - Environmental Commitments You Can Make](#)

Ted's Tech

Turning everyday items into energy

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could just drop our waste into a hole in our kitchens and it would disappear and at the same time provide some hot water into our house!

Well if Nik Spencer and his staff have their way this will soon become possible. Their company with offices in Bidford on Avon have prototype machines already installed in the Midlands doing exactly that, reducing the need for rubbish collection.

When on their website tap on. "Our story" for an interesting read.

[The Story Behind The HERU | MYHERU](#)

[Hybrid Heat Pump | Turn Waste Into Energy | MYHERU](#)

Thoughts - First turn off the Tap!!!

Many people at our various meetings concentrate on mopping up the problems caused by our warming atmosphere whilst forgetting to turn off the TAP!

The TAP is our removal and burning of Fossil Oil and Gas from out of the ground, releasing vast quantities of Carbon Dioxide and Methane into the air to satisfy the demands for our power hungry way of life.

Going back only 138 years, people had to walk everywhere, if they were lucky they could use a horse powered by grass. Today most journeys involve burning fuel that was stored in the ground millions of years ago, locking up carbon to give us the atmosphere and climate enjoyed for centuries. Now this massive release of Carbon and Methane into our atmosphere is causing it to warm very rapidly with frightening results.

It wasn't until 1859 that the first oil well was drilled and only 138 years since Carl Benz patented his first car in 1886. If humanity can produce millions of cars, lorries, tractors and power stations in such a short time span to gobble up such large quantities of Oil and Gas - - SURELY we can produce enough Renewable



Energy and Hydrogen in the next 10 years to prevent any more oil and gas being extracted just for the energy!

We have the technology, Let's do it, TURN OFF THE TAP before it's too late.

At COP28 the oil producers were asked to stop extracting oil and gas, surely it is up to us to stop using it ASAP and only then will they stop - - - when they have no one to sell it to.

What should we be concentrating on? That's for another time!

Ted Dowdeswell, Member of Harbury Energy Initiative, March 2024

The Electric Tipping Point- by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

A hint of good news in this blog, partially inspired by a talk I attended by Chris Stark, the Chief Executive of the Climate Change Committee. The falling cost of solar pv, wind and batteries will decimate the business models of fossil fuel electricity generation. Here is how this might play out.

We often hear of climate tipping points. Like a children's see-saw, a small change can tip the see-saw into a new state. Invariably climate tipping points are bad news, where a slow change suddenly tips or accelerates into an environmental catastrophe. However, there are also many technology tipping points; slow adoption of a new product, then acceleration until everybody takes advantage of the new technology. Mobile phones are a good example.



We are on the cusp of a global technology tipping point for renewable electricity generation. This will result in a rapid transition from fossil fuel powered generation to renewables.

The cost of solar pv, wind power and batteries has been declining at 10% per year for the last two decades. In recent years deployment of renewables has consistently been faster than predicted by the International Energy Agency. These cost reductions are expected to continue brought about by a mixture of innovative technology, supportive government policies, greater experience in deployment and manufacturing economies of scale as they are rolled out at an ever-faster pace.

Meanwhile the cost of fossil fuel is unstable, volatile and is subject to external shocks. Most is imported. After adjusting for inflation, the cost is not dissimilar to that of one hundred years ago. Improved efficiencies in extraction have been offset by depletion of the most productive and accessible resources.

Taking these two together, electricity generated by renewables will soon be much cheaper than that produced from fossil fuels. This is happening now. This is game changing given many politicians have told us that we must delay as we cannot afford green policies.

In broad terms there are four stages in this revolution:

1. Initially, new renewable technologies are subsidised, and this adds cost to bills
2. Subsidies are removed, and renewables compete on a level playing field
3. Renewables undermine the business case to invest in new fossil fuel power stations
4. Renewables undermine the business case to operate existing fossil fuel power stations

Examples of all four stages abound which shows how close we are to this revolution.

1. I bought 2.2kwp of solar pv for my roof in 2010 for £10,000, paid for by a generous feed in tariff subsidy. Today you can install 4kwp of solar pv for £5,000.
2. The last coal power station built in Great Britain was Drax, opened in 1974 and extended in 1986. In 2008, 80% of the UK's electricity was generated from coal; this will fall to zero in October 2024 when the last coal station is due to close. These closures were accelerated by carbon taxes but were inevitable over time in any case.
3. The last gas-powered station built was Keadby in 2023, and it is unlikely that any more will be built.

It looks like offshore wind will squeeze out gas over the coming decade. The operational running cost of renewables is extremely low (the fuel is free), therefore gas power stations are increasingly only deployed on days when it is not windy and to provide specialist auxiliary services. As more offshore wind is built, gas power stations will be paid lots of money to tick over for occasional use. This will continue until large scale storage is built (perhaps using hydrogen).

There is a strange situation today in the UK. No-one will invest in large scale electricity generation without a subsidy or price guarantee. On-shore wind is now the technology that requires the least subsidy which is a real and significant change. Meanwhile householders and businesses are choosing to deploy solar without any subsidy. 190,000 householders installed solar pv in the UK in 2023 and we are hardly the sunniest part of the world. With this glut of 'free' energy in the summer months the price of electricity can fall dramatically at times and further undermine the business models of fossil fuel generators.

But this is just the beginning. As the price of solar and wind continue to fall, coal and gas power stations will become hopelessly uneconomic across the world. The biggest impact may be in China and India with their large number of coal power stations. These will become a large, scattered herd of 'white elephants'. Some will limp on to provide power when it is not sunny, but most will close. Many will fall into bankruptcy – leaving a dirty legacy to clear up.

So why are global carbon emissions not falling when the deployment of electricity from renewables is soaring? So far, renewable energy is simply keeping up with the increase in global electricity demand. With continued accelerated deployment, renewable electricity will begin to displace fossil fuels.

But new coal power stations are still being built I hear you say. Yes, but I bet none are being financed fully by private investors as they are concerned that they will never be profitable. India is building coal power stations to enhance its energy security. Other countries still finance new coal power stations, but the main motivation is to help their domestic manufacturers of turbines and other components to export and win huge contracts. More hopefully, in 2022, China announced that it would no longer finance new coal power stations overseas. Another step forward.

Conclusions

The cost of renewable energy continues to fall and has recently become cheaper than energy from fossil fuels. Soon it will be much cheaper, which will undermine the business model of fossil fuel generators. This will happen at different times in different places but can be accelerated by supportive government policies.

The happy result, at last, will be a plateau, then a rapid reduction in carbon emissions from the electricity sector across the world. There will be a further benefit as falling electricity emissions will reduce the environmental impact of newly electrified sectors such as electric vehicles and the heating and cooling of buildings. Good news at last.

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 here [Buy \(carbonchoices.uk\)](https://carbonchoices.uk). I am donating one third of profits to rewilding projects. Follow me: @carbonchoicesuk ([twitter](#)) @carbonchoices ([Facebook](#)) @carbonchoices ([Instagram](#)).

[The Electric Tipping Point \(carbonchoices.uk\)](https://carbonchoices.uk)

Neil Kitching, the Electric Tipping Point, February 2024

Thoughts from an Organic Farmer – Trouble in the Shires

The Conservatives have traditionally been able to take the rural vote for granted. If you painted a sheep blue, most farmers would have voted for it. But polls now suggest the previously unthinkable: a huge swing putting Labour ahead in rural areas.

At the NFU conference in February, the union's outgoing president called the Conservatives' decisions on farming "morally bankrupt". She showed no sign of being reassured by our prime minister, who promised farmers: "I have your back."

So why are farmers blocking motorways, markets, and depots across Europe? For the most part, the answer is money – with a complex emotional backdrop:

1. Farmers are being treated unfairly by large retailers. Ruthless exploitation of market power has seen the proportion of food spend that's paid to farmers relentlessly falling, while food processors and retailers take more for themselves.
2. Costs and regulations associated with climate change and biodiversity loss are increasing, while fuel subsidies decrease. There is no question that farmers need to do better environmentally, but I am infuriated by how effectively the fossil fuel industry has shifted the climate change debate onto the shoulders of farming. An environmental NGO preparing for COP-28 told me that they had given up fighting the power of fossil fuel producers, so were focusing on farmers instead.
3. Climate change is already massively increasing risks and crop losses. Most notably droughts in southern Europe, but also extreme winter rainfall in the UK.
4. In the UK, Brexit has been disruptive and stressful – adding costs to trade, employment, and many farming inputs (such as fuel and fertiliser).
5. Rightly or wrongly, farmers feel undervalued, victimised, and confused as to their role. Do they grow food or provide environmental services?

Farming isn't paying. In many areas, it hasn't paid for years. Farmers have tightened their belts, drained their savings, borrowed, and sent their partners off the farm to work. There is nothing more to squeeze out of them. Knee-jerk calls to "ditch the green crap" can resonate with those who are isolated and desperate – and such calls are gaining traction.

The answer to all this is to pay farmers fairly and give them clarity and pride in the role they must play in a well-planned, well-regulated green transition. This has often been promised but is yet to be delivered.

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

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 \(repaircafe-kenilworth.org\)](#)
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 \(coop.co.uk\)](#)
8. [\(1\) Repair Café Southam | Facebook](#)
9. [Wellesbourne Repair Café | Facebook](#)

Other

[Climate Action Planning events for town and parish councils - Centre for Sustainable Energy \(cse.org.uk\)](#)

[Place Standard tool | Our Place](#)

[My Toolkit - Reduce Carbon Emissions - Save The Environment Now \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)

[Creative Climate Action Toolkit | Pervasive Media Studio \(watershed.co.uk\)](#)

[Climate Outreach](#)

[Britain Talks Climate: a toolkit for engaging the British public on climate change - Climate Outreach](#)

[Future Energy Landscapes \(cse.org.uk\)](#)

[neighbourhood-planning-in-a-climate-emergency-feb-2020.pdf](#)

[\(centreforsustainableenergy.ams3.digitaloceanspaces.com\)](#)

[Local Intelligence Hub](#)

[Messaging-this-Moment \(1\).pdf \(anglican.org\)](#)

[Tools for Councils • Ashden](#)



[Hubbub - Home](#)

[Gloucestershire Community-Based Regeneration | The Community Works](#)

[Possible \(wearepossible.org\)](#)

[Microsoft Word - climate-change-case-studies-14july.docx \(nalc.gov.uk\)](#)

[National Retrofit Conference 2024: Leading Change in Sustainable Building Solutions \(futurebuild.co.uk\)](#)

[240221 Open Meeting Recording.mp4 \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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 groups already in the Network?

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

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.

