

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network Newsletter

June 2024 – Issue - 39

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, Wellesbourne and the Lillington event on June 15th.

Straford Net Zero Climate Hub Launch – 15th May 2024

The Net Zero Climate Hub at 30 Meer Street, Stratford, has just opened. It will provide a central space for people in Stratford to learn about the climate and nature crises, and to get involved in shaping how Stratford responds to them. We will be providing information, workshops for climate action and business sustainability, Carbon Literacy training, TerraCycle recycling schemes, a meeting room for use for community groups, co-working office space, and much more. What we offer in the hub will continue to develop, and all volunteers will be able to get involved in shaping its development.



We will be open initially on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, but hope to find volunteers to help us open on other days too: if anyone is interested in volunteering for three hours a week, or has any other queries, please email info@netzerostratford.org.uk, or follow the hub's development on our website at [Net Zero – Stratford's home for community climate action \(netzerostratford.org.uk\)](https://netzerostratford.org.uk)



Stephen Norrie, Net Zero Stratford, May 2024



Kenilworth Eco Fayre – 18th May 2024

The purpose of the Eco Fayre was to inspire and encourage local people to engage with environmental issues and to live more sustainably. It went off very well with 170 adult visitors, 24 children and 3 dogs who were generally very interested and engaged and the stallholders seemed quite pleased. 13 new people signed up to the KATG mailing list. Louise Bowlt from Act on Energy signed up two households for retrofit assessments within the first six minutes of the event! Also, to our delight we had several local primary schools taking part in an art display.

Jan Burnell, Kenilworth All Together Greener, May 2024

Warwick Celebration of Bees Weekend – 18th and 19th May

Bee Friendly Warwick, Bee Friendly Kenilworth, Bee Friendly Leamington and Bee Friendly Cubbington

The 'celebration of bees' weekend held in Warwick was a great success. More than 800 visitors joined the activities to mark 'World Bee Day' which were held at Hill Close Gardens and Guy's Cliffe Walled Garden.

The events featured stalls, pollinator-friendly plants and gifts and information about bees and how to help them. At Hill Close Gardens there was a range of bee-friendly activities, knitted creations from 'Woolly Wonder's' knitting group, a 'bee safari' and pebble painting.



At Guy's Cliffe Walled Garden, which was dry enough to host the event after nearly five months of being water-logged, hosted children's activities and visitors could take home seed packets.

Over £900 was raised for Bee Friendly Warwick, ensuring a steady supply of seeds, insurance, and equipment for all our future activities such as our Plant4Pollinators Campaign. We hope people will get involved by letting part of their garden grow wild or planting at least one bee-friendly plant such as lavender, herbs or wildflowers. Register your 'action for bees' on our website [Bee Friendly Warwick \(google.com\)](https://www.beefriendlywarwick.org). For more information about Bee Friendly Warwick go to our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/BeeFriendlyWarwick

Sara Lever, Bee Friendly Warwick, May 2024

Kenilworth NatureWatch Week – 26th - 31st May 2024

As in previous years, this was targeted to maximise participation and interest from children. A total of 68 people registered on Eventbrite for the week's events which covered the following:

- Deep Time Travel Through Old Kenilworth
- Wildlife Walk at Parliament Piece Nature Reserve
- Discovering sandstone Remains on a Walk Along The Greenway
- Self-guided scavenger hunt at the Kenilworth Methodist Church
- Flora and Fauna at Knowle Hill Nature Reserve



- Early Morning Birdsong and Other Nature in Kenilworth Common Nature Reserve
- Nature Walk in Crackley Wood
- Bird Walk at Castle Farm



Despite promoting the events in Nub News, on social media, the KTC website, school newsletters, church congregations and at the Eco-Fayre which occurred the preceding weekend, we had quite a few no-shows across the events, in some cases resulting in no attendees on the day at all. This is disappointing, knowing the effort that goes into making these events happen and for those leading activities particularly. We will need to think about whether we revise the format or approach in 2025 or indeed continue with this activity next year.

Mark Stevens, Kenilworth Town Council Climate (KTC) Emergency Working Group Chairperson, June 2024

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 or wish to join the email address list to receive the Newsletter directly, please contact Bob Sherman 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 \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](https://harburyenergy.co.uk/LCWN-Newsletter-Issue-3-February-2021.pdf)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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. We have also enabled the opportunity to share **regular Parish Mag and other publications** between groups. Seven groups in the Network are now sharing their articles and a suggested communications plan has been developed. Get in touch with Jacky Lawrence for more details. email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

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](http://TheRSA-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.

Act on Energy

Would you like to make your home warmer and more comfortable through retrofit? Are you struggling with your energy bills?



We're here to help! www.actonenergy.org.uk Call **0800 988 2881** or email **advice @actonenergy.org.uk**

With over 25 years' experience, **Act on Energy** is an award-winning energy advice charity covering the West Midlands, including Warwickshire. Working in partnership with the **Local Authorities** and external organisations, we offer a range of services - from **free, impartial energy advice** and help with applying for **grants and funding** for energy efficiency measures through to financial welfare support for those struggling with the cost of living.

Diary Dates

JUNE

Restore Nature march in London on Sat 22 June 2024, 12:00 noon - Park Lane, Central London, W1K

The natural world is in trouble and we need to take action. We want to see UK politicians show strong domestic and global nature and climate leadership by:

1. Giving a pay-rise for nature
2. Making polluters pay
3. Delivering more space for nature
4. Putting a right to a healthy environment in law
5. Ensuring fair and effective climate action

[Restore Nature Now | Pledge to march on June 22](#)
[Restore Nature Now | The Wildlife Trusts](#)
[Aims | Restore Nature Now](#)



Join the March

There are coaches going from Stratford on Avon, Shipston and Warwick and Leamington. Look on Eventbrite to book your tickets.

[Restore Nature Now: Bus from Leamington & Warwick Tickets, Sat, Jun 22, 2024 at 9:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

[Restore Nature Now March, COACH from Stratford Upon Avon & Shipston! Tickets, Sat, Jun 22, 2024 at 8:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)



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 \(bidfordonavon-pc.gov.uk\)](http://bidfordonavon-pc.gov.uk)



Sustainable Wellesbourne, Open Gardens for Wildlife in Wellesbourne and Hunscore, Sunday 23rd June 2024, 11 a.m. till 5 p.m.

There will be over 15 very different gardens for you to visit on 23rd June in Wellesbourne and Hunscore.

It will be £5/head to find out where they are and to gain entry; under 16s go free.

The gardens range from the very wild – almost Nature Reserve – to the very formal all gardened with wildlife in mind.

Proceeds will go to Wildlife related local charities including the Warwickshire Hedgehog Rescue.

To get in touch, please email:

SustainableWellesbourne@wellesbourneandwalton-pc.gov.uk

or contact Sustainable Wellesbourne via the Parish Council Office at no2 School Rd.

OPEN GARDENS FOR WILDLIFE IN WELLESBOURNE

Sun 23 June 2024
11am – 5pm
£5 Entrance per person**

Pick up your Trail Maps from Chedham's Yard, Bowls Club*, Methodist Hall* in Wellesbourne or Twitey's* in Hunscore

For up to date information follow us on facebook:

See and share ideas for a Wildlife Friendly Garden. With over 15 gardens to see this is not to be missed!

Proceeds will go to local wildlife charities and/or a camera bird box for the local community to watch! More details on the day.

*cash only **under 16s go free

Let's Go Zero, Our Earth: Our Future – A Sixth Form Sustainability Conference at Keele University, Friday 28th June 2024

A group of Trusts in the West Midlands are joining forces on Friday 28th June to host **Our Earth: Our Future – A Sixth Form Sustainability Conference** at Keele University in memory of Sir Tim Brighouse. This initiative, part of the work Sir Tim was passionately involved in before his passing, reflects his commitment to shaping a brighter, more sustainable future for our students and communities.

The conference runs from 9am-3pm and will include key note speakers, breakout sessions run by Keele faculty and a panel Q&A.

Sessions will cover a range of sustainability topics including:

- Sustainable careers,
- Fast fashion,
- Eco films,
- Eco poetry,
- Action and activism,
- Renewable energy,
- Health and environment,
- Plus a Sustainability tour of Keele.

Breakout sessions will include activities that students can take back and implement at their schools as they feel they want a conference where they are active 'doing' and not just 'talking'.

For more information, contact James Leathem-Pugh, Deputy Headteacher/Academic Director of Sixth Form, Windsor High School and Sixth Form, email: jleathem-pugh@windsor.windsoracademytrust.org.uk

Sarah Mills, Let's Go Zero Climate Action Advisor (Midlands)

JULY

Kyoto Conference and Community Stalls, 6th July 2024, from 10:30 a.m.

On Saturday 6th July, we are hosting a programme of public events exploring the themes of Kyoto; the messiness of agreement, negotiation and hope. As part of the Kyoto Conference, we would like to invite our local community to be a part of the conversation and feel empowered to affect change in their town, in a series of events and workshops:

Events during Conference are open for anyone to attend, but please note that some require advance booking to reserve a free ticket and one event does have an entry charge. There will also be lots of non ticketed activities taking place throughout the RSC buildings and during the run of the show for 'delegates' - our audience members - to enjoy.

Nicola Salmon (she/her), Visitor and Community Programme Manager, Creative Learning and Engagement, Royal Shakespeare Company

[RSC Kyoto Conference | Royal Shakespeare Company](#)

[The People's Assembly | Royal Shakespeare Company \(rsc.org.uk\)](#)

SEPTEMBER

The autumn LCWN social plus bring and share lunch will be on Saturday September 21st 2024, 12:30 till 3 p.m. in Napton. Contact Jacky Lawrence for further details if you'd like to join us at

lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com



LCWN Schools Project Team – News and Useful Links

Kenilworth Schools Links

Having written earlier about the Eco-achievements of schools in the area it seemed a good idea to create a list of individuals and groups/organisations available or already working with schools on Eco-Awareness.

It is a more local and hands-on resource to accompany the Online and National list of organisations that is already available to schools through the LCWN. At present it is based mainly on those in the Kenilworth area, but we are hoping that other groups and schools within Warwickshire will add to the list and that it will become another part of the LCWN Resource Library.

Individuals and Groups available and already working with schools on Eco-Awareness:-

- Alison Firth: Plastic- Free Kenilworth : a_j_firth@hotmail.com
- May Lau: Recycle for Kenilworth: maylau@recycleforkenilworth.com
- Sheila Franks: Kenilworth Allotments: frankssheila43@gmail.com
- Jo Harper, Fern Arnold: Bee Friendly Kenilworth: bee.friendly.kenilworth@gmail.com
- Bob Shanks: bob.shanks@imagineering.org.uk
- Caroline Alliston: Technology for Fun: <https://www.technologyforfun.co.uk/> [Technology for Fun](#)
- Tom Fletcher: admin@imagineeringfoundations.microsoft.com
- Judy Brooks: Kenilworth Books: judy@kenilworthbooks.co.uk
- Nicola Perryman: Chair of CTKD Eco Church Group: ecochurch@leekwoottonchurch.co.uk
- Teresa Buckle (O'Connor): Creative Learning Project Consultant/Practitioner: TeresaBuckle2@hotmail.com
- Matt Black: Writer: Free Poetry Assemblies: matt.black@pop3.poptel.org.uk
- Jan Burnell: Kenilworth All Together Greener: katg@gmx.co.uk
- Repair Café Kenilworth: hello@repaircafekenilworth.org
- Andrew Milton, Alison Insley & Zoe Leventhal (Councillors): The Bike Gang at (Kenilworth School and Sixth Form) - and others.

The following organisations are also involved in various aspects of Climate Change Awareness and Eco-Education Awareness:

- The Lions, Kenilworth Rotary, Warwick Avon Rotary, Kenilworth Round Table, Soroptimists, Low Carbon Warwickshire Network, Warwickshire Wildlife.

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

Zero Carbon Schools Project

ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS

JOIN ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS TO HELP TRANSFORM
THE WAY YOUR SCHOOL RESPONDS TO THE CLIMATE
AND NATURE CRISIS

**SIGN UP HERE BY
FRIDAY 20TH
SEPTEMBER**

[Green Schools Project - ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS 2024-25 – SCHOOL AGREEMENT \(beaconforms.com\)](#)

[Zero Carbon Schools Information Sheet 2024-25 \(greenschoolsproject.org.uk\)](#)

[Zero Carbon Schools Taster Session Tickets, Tue 2 Jul 2024 at 11:00 | Eventbrite](#)



Let's Go Zero

Events and Campaigns:

- [Climate Action Countdown](#)
 - Sign up for lots of free resources and to take part in competitions where you could win more than £2,500 worth of sustainability prizes. Running until 5 July.
- [Clean Air Day](#): 20th June
 - [Clean Air Day - school resources](#)
 - [Action for Clean Air – additional school resources and actions](#)
 - Ties in with Living Streets campaign [Child-Friendly Streets – action to write letter to local MPs](#) ahead of election on 4 July
- **World Rainforest Day**: 22 June
 - [WWF – Live Lesson](#) – 20 June @ 10am – suitable for KS2 pupils
 - [Twinkl Resources](#)
- [What's Under Your Feet](#) – school citizen science biodiversity project running throughout June.
 - Lots of resources linking to Science and Environment and Society
- **Eco-Schools**: [Healthy Summer Toolkit](#)
- **Fairtrade**: [30 actions to celebrate 30 years of Fairtrade](#)
 - *Could tie in well with World Chocolate Day on 7 July*

Funding Opportunities:

- [Kew Endeavour](#) – various £1,000 competitions across a range of key stages, Deadline: 28th June
- [BUPA Green Community Grants](#) – up to £2,000 pots of funding for green spaces. Deadline: 30th June
[More info](#)
- [Energy Sparks](#) energy management tool and educational programme is offering a number of fully funded places (worth £525) for West Mids schools in the next school year and is inviting interested schools to contact them.
- The **average Energy Sparks primary school saves £3,000 per year and the average secondary saves £12,000.**
- Many activities and resources are free to use and download for non-members and you don't have to be a member to attend one their highly informative training webinars mentioned below.
- This video aimed at KS3/4 gives an overview of the tool.
<https://youtu.be/ykxpRnXOFew?si=lzpZTtUdZwKBdky7>

Staff Learning:

- [Pro Veg School Plates webinar](#) – learn more about plant-based cooking in schools and the School Plates Programme, 3 - 4pm - Wed 19 June
- [Training | Energy Sparks](#)
 - Pupils – 11 June
 - Facilities and estates staff – 12 June
 - School leaders and business managers – 14 June
- [Better Planet Schools webinar](#) - a quick guide to everything you need to know to take part in Better Planet Schools, 4 – 4:30pm – Thurs 13 June

Planning Ahead:

- **School Holidays – Power Down!** Did you know, up to 60% of a schools' energy use can be consumed when the building is empty! Plan ahead and ensure your staff are powering down everything before your school closes its doors for the summer holidays.
- [Useful info link](#) to support.
- [Woodland Trust – Free Trees for Schools](#)
- You can apply for free packs of trees, but these are only available until August or until stocks last – so register sooner to ensure you don't miss out.
- Trees are delivered in November.
- [Nationwide Trash Mob](#) – Plastic Free Schools event – 1 – 7 July

If you have not yet booked in an initial call with me to run through your school's sustainability work, please do reach out so that we can set up a suitable time.

Sarah Mills, Let's Go Zero Climate Action Advisor (Midlands), +44 20 7096 6120

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

[UK Climate Change • Let's Go Zero \(letsgozero.org\)](#)

www.letsgozero.org

[The Climate Action Countdown - Sign up! \(letsgozero.org\)](#)

Warwickshire County Council – Sustainable Warwickshire Podcast

Wellbeing and Biodiversity: The Impact of Warwickshire's Waterways

Did you know that nearly 1/4 of a billion years ago, Warwick was the site of a vast subtropical river floodplain inhabited by salamanders which were the size of crocodiles?

That's just one of the things you'll learn from listening to the latest edition of the Sustainable Warwickshire podcast, which focuses on Warwickshire's canals, rivers and waterways and their role in supporting our health, wellbeing and biodiversity.



Joining host Steve Smith to discuss the importance of our waterways is Dr Jon Radley, Curator of Natural Sciences at Heritage & Culture Warwickshire (part of Warwickshire County Council) and Matt Bishop, Director of Warwick Boats and the Leam Boat Centre. Together their conversation covers:

- The extent to which the soothing presence of water enhances mental health and promotes physical activity
- The diversity of wildlife that lives both in and around our waters, including plants, invertebrates, fish, birds and other animals
- The rich history of Warwickshire's waterways, which is also explored in the Market Hall Museum's current exhibition "Tales from the Riverbank"
- The critical role that rivers and canals will play in mitigating climate change impacts and supporting community resilience.

So, if you're interested in two different perspective on our waterways, from the joy of getting in a boat or standing up on a paddleboard to learning about the history and biodiversity of the canals and rivers all around us, listen to the latest episode here: [https://sustainablewarwickshire.podbean.com/The Impact of Warwickshire's Waterways | Sustainable Warwickshire \(podbean.com\)](https://sustainablewarwickshire.podbean.com/The Impact of Warwickshire's Waterways | Sustainable Warwickshire (podbean.com))

Ted's Tech – Low Carbon Air Travel

Short haul domestic air flights are being banned by some countries where the same journey by train is less than 2.5 hours, France being the first to pass it into law, Spain is probably the next. Short flights use more fuel and emit more CO₂ per mile because of the climb to a relatively short cruising distance.

Many companies are developing systems to overcome this, one such company with a base at Cotswold airport just south of Cirencester is Zero Avia, they have developed a Hydrogen Fuel Cell/Electric engine to retrofit existing aircraft. These engines are claimed to have 90% lower lifetime emissions than jet engines and could make short haul flight cleaner than railway.

[Home - ZeroAvia](#)

Another British company called Hybrid Air Vehicles are about to build a new factory near Doncaster where they will assemble airships using the inert gas Helium to carry most of the weight of the aircraft. The first model the Airlander 10 is designed to carry up to 10 tonnes of freight or 100 passengers, although slower in travel it is able to land on any flat surface and is not restricted to airports.

[HAV \(hybridairvehicles.com\)](#)

Many companies are researching smaller air taxis, one such company that recently announced their development of an unusual but very practical VTOL (Vertical take-off and landing) aircraft is Australian company Vertiia. Their machine will carry five people including the pilot up to 400 miles at 200mph powered by Hydrogen.

[Home | AMSL Aero Pty Ltd](#)



This is just a small sample of many organisations striving to make air travel more sustainable, exciting times!

Ted Dowdeswell, Member of Harbury Energy Initiative, June 2024

EV's – an honest assessment - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

Two years since my first experience of an electric car, what do I really think about it? Is it the right choice for all society?

I bought a second-hand Nissan Leaf in July 2022 to replace an older petrol car. The 2020 Nissan model has a 40kWh battery, which claims to have a range of 145 miles (more on this later). We retained our efficient diesel Skoda (98gCO₂/km) for longer journeys. There are three drivers in our family, and we juggle cars depending on commuting, work and social commitments.

[with special thanks to Mark W Tebbutt, IT professional and EV driver who checked over this blog and made suggestions. I met Mark on X. He tweets about all things electrical].

Which car do I prefer to drive?

Initially I found the electric car a bit tricky as I was used to gears and the EV had lots of new controls. Now, I have no doubt. The electric Nissan is my preferred car. You quickly get used to driving without changing gear and I like the 'e-pedal' which automatically slows the car down when you take your foot off the accelerator, and this helps to regenerate the battery. You rarely need to use the brake.

The Nissan is now our 'first car' that we use for short and medium journeys, with the Skoda only used for longer journeys.

The EV is quiet to run, and there are no diesel fumes when you de-ice the windscreen in the winter. You also know that you are not contributing to local air pollution or emitting carbon dioxide directly to the atmosphere.

Range

The screen on the dashboard shows you the miles per kWh you are achieving. The Nissan averages around 4 miles per kWh which means that each unit (kWh) of electricity can drive 4 miles. In theory the 40kWh battery would therefore take you 160 miles but I have never achieved this. The working capacity of the battery is a bit less than the claimed 40kWh. On a positive note, I have not noticed any change or deterioration in the battery (the car is now 4 years old).

The maximum I have driven in one charge is 124 miles. At that point there were flashing lights warning me of very low battery, although there may well have been a few miles left 'in the tank'. I have never run out of charge.

The range is highly dependent on your driving style and the weather.

It is very noticeable that the range drops dramatically on the motorway. When I assessed this, slowing down from 70 to 60mph increased the range by 30%. Saying that, this is similar to the effect of driving slower in a petrol or diesel car.

In cold temperatures the range drops substantially. The average of 4kWh varies between 3.4 in January and 4.4 in the summer. So, a 124-mile maximum range in the summer would drop by around 25% to 95 miles, and less if it is also windy, raining, dark or if you are going uphill. In the worst conditions you could lose one-third of the 'normal' range.

Charging

We are lucky enough to own our own driveway and we installed a Podpoint home charger. At 7kw it can fully recharge the battery in around 5 hours. It is also possible, but not recommended, to charge slowly from a standard 3-pin socket with the cable provided.

We can also charge at public charge points. The standard 'type 2' cable is 7kw which is a bit slow for longer day trips but is suitable for overnight charging at an hotel. The Nissan also comes with a CHAdeMO rapid charging socket which at 46kw can fully charge the battery in under an hour. Unfortunately for us, the CHAdeMO charging network is gradually being phased out across the UK and Europe in favour of the CCS rapid charger system. This means that it is more difficult for us (in Scotland) to plan a long journey in the



electric car as there is a nagging doubt about finding a working and available fast charger. Please note that this difficulty is only due to our model of car [the new 2025 Nissan Leaf model will not use CHAdeMO].

Across the UK the number of public charging stations continues to steadily increase. There are now 61,000 public chargers at 32,000 stations. The growth in fast chargers has been even more rapid, for example 12,000 'ultra rapid' 150kw chargers are now deployed.

Running Costs

Unlike petrol and diesel there is no standard cost per mile for EVs. Our running cost varies from 70p per kWh to almost free. Our standard cost is 12p per kWh. 70p per kWh equates to 18p per mile; 12p equates to a remarkably low 3p per mile. A petrol or diesel car costs around 15p per mile in fuel.

Rapid chargers tend to be more expensive, as do chargers on motorways. To use a CHAdeMO at a motorway service station could be 70p per kWh, whilst a type 2 charger at our local Tesco's is 40p per kWh. We mainly charge at home. Our standard tariff is 25p per kWh, but we charge using off-peak rates (Octopus Cosy tariff) at 12p per kWh. There are other even cheaper tariffs available. Octopus Intelligent is 7.5p per kWh overnight; EDF have an economy 7 tariff at 6p per kWh off-peak.

In good sunny weather we can charge almost for free by using a combination of our solar pv and battery.

A final thought on costs is that there is a conversion loss of energy of around 15% when you use any EV charger. If you put ten units in, the battery only charges 8.5 units. This applies to home chargers and public chargers. This is already built into the unit price of public chargers, but charging at home may be 15% more than you would expect.

Maintenance and Repairs

EV's have fewer moving parts. There is no engine, fuel tank, fuel pump, oil, alternator, valvetrain, hydraulics, clutch, gears, exhaust or catalytic converter. Due to regenerative braking the brakes should last longer too.

So, EV's should break down less often and be cheaper to service and maintain, with the caveat that if something does go wrong with the electronics then they can be expensive to repair. In two years, we have broken down once, and had one major fault, which cost £500 to repair.

Batteries

Batteries are expensive. Sourcing and processing the raw materials is environmentally damaging and, in some cases, can involve exploitive labour practices. There is currently an insufficient supply of lithium and China controls much of the world's supply. But I remember when the experts said there was not enough platinum to manufacture all the new catalytic converters required to clean-up car exhausts. Magically, new sources were 'discovered'. The same is likely to happen with lithium. New deposits are being found, lithium can be sourced from seawater, and, unlike the wastage from burning petrol or diesel, the batteries are recyclable.

Is there enough electricity? Is it green?

The UK's electricity grid is rapidly becoming cleaner. The last coal fired power station closes this year. Wind power, especially offshore wind, is booming and gas power is now declining. The target is to fully decarbonise the UK grid by 2035.



The National Grid estimate that a fully electrified car fleet will only increase the total amount of electricity required in the UK. And with smart charging tariffs an electric fleet will assist with grid balancing. Owners will be incentivised to charge overnight when there is often a surplus of electricity, and there will be a move to using the storage capacity of EV batteries to help balance hourly demand on the grid – car owners will be paid to provide this service to the electricity grid.

Roll out

The right-wing press are happy to publish critical articles and claim that the roll-out of EVs is slowing down. Their argument is that EVs are too expensive, they are not convenient and that once the early adopters have bought one the rate of deployment will slow down. This campaign has 'worked' as the UK Government has delayed the deadline for all new cars to be electric from 2030 to 2035.

The statistics show that there are now over 1 million EV's in the UK, with sales up 17% in 2023. Sales dipped slightly in March 2024, but in April, 17% of car sales were electric, up from 10% the year before. And all of this is happening when the Government has taken away any grant support for the purchase of new EVs. A new Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate is now in place, requiring 22% of new car sales in the UK to be EV in 2024, rising to 80% by 2030.

I think EVs are inherently better so the public will generally be happy to buy them. The purchase cost is falling, and the running costs are so low that anyone doing a medium to high mileage will already be better off. New models have a longer battery range. Second hand EVs are now coming onto the market.

A Problem to Solve

It's all very well to promote EVs when you are lucky enough to live in a suburb with space for a home EV charger and access to cheaper tariffs. VAT is charged on electricity from public chargers at 20%, but only at 5% for home chargers. This seems unfair.

If you live in a densely populated terraced street, tenement or in a block of flats then your EV experience might be very different from mine. However, if your urban driving is short distance, and you have a large battery, then you may not need to charge often. Chargers can be installed in pavements, with pop-up chargers to avoid trip hazards. But something more radical will still be required to make an EV convenient to charge in dense urban areas. This is something for the Government to think about now and encourage innovation.

I guess that cities will end up with a mix of charging at home, on the street, in public and private car parks, at work, at the supermarket and at dedicated fast charging hubs.

The Future

Electric cars are clearly the future. They are quieter and inherently more efficient (less waste heat). I do like our Nissan Leaf EV. It has a 'feel good' factor, although of course walking, cycling and public transport are much better when convenient. I have now reached the confident stage where I would buy an EV to replace our diesel Skoda once the current car reaches its end of life. All I need is a car with a range further than our current, old model, of Nissan Leaf.

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](#)).

[EV's – An Honest Assessment \(carbonchoices.uk\)](#)

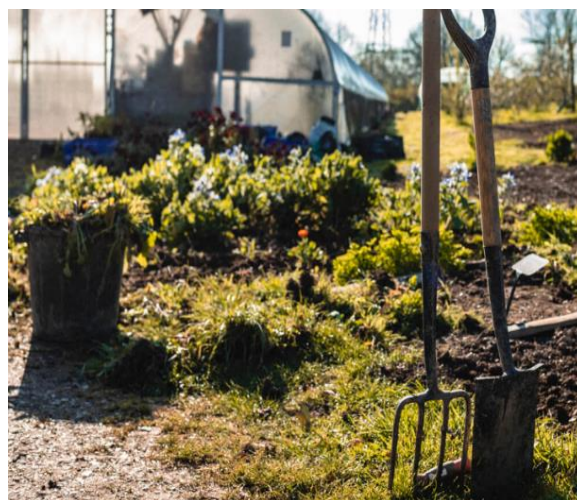
Neil Kitching, May 2024

Thoughts from an Organic Farmer –Glorious Awakening

Having caught up on rain-delayed plantings of cabbages, lettuce, and broad beans, we are now busy planting tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and chillies in our polytunnels, and squash, sweetcorn, and runner beans outside. The first April sowings of peas and broad beans have emerged so quickly that they have already surpassed those forced into a cold, wet seed bed in March. Farmers with the patience to wait for good soil conditions have once again been rewarded.

Our hedges have burst into life with a vigour that I always find uplifting – the only exception being the tortured ash trees, which are struggling with the now-ubiquitous fungal disease, ash dieback. We are expected to see losses of 80 per cent or more, with a massive impact on Devon's hedges and woods. There are still a few wych and English elms struggling on in their five-decade battle with the Dutch elm disease that swept across the farm in the 70s and 80s; they are now so rare that I had to use an identification app to recognise them. The gaps left in the hedges have largely been filled by sycamores and chestnuts – but the loss of these trees is a landscape tragedy that England will take a century to recover from. It makes me cherish our beloved beeches and oaks all the more.

Most of the crops we planted over the last month are doing well – but some of our perennial crops, like rhubarb and artichokes, are struggling. They have pale leaves, suggesting they lack nitrogen. Over winter, heavy rains beat down the soil and leach this highly soluble nutrient out of the reach of roots. But in spring, the soil warms up, and the bacterial and fungal community around the roots begins to recycle organic matter and release nutrients again. For reasons I don't entirely understand, cultivating (tilling) the soil between the rows of plants seems to accelerate this spring awakening, as well as helping with weed control. This year's rainy spring not only exacerbated the nutrient leaching, but also made inter-row cultivation impossible – and we are now paying the price.



Artichokes are recovering, but the rhubarb stalks are so slender that picking them is uneconomical. In difficult years like this, I almost long for the synthetic, highly soluble ammonium nitrate that is available to my non-organic neighbours – but until the weather dried up last month, most of their fertiliser would have just ended up washed into our waterways anyway..

Guy Singh-Watson, May 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 \(heartofenglandcf.co.uk\)](#)
- [Energy Efficiency Grants | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)
- [Green Homes Grants - Energy efficiency at home - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)

Repair Cafés

- [Repair Cafés – Sustainable Warwickshire](#), (Alcester, Barford, Harbury, Kenilworth, Leamington Spa, Rugby, Stratford, Wellesbourne).
- <https://www.repaircafe.org/en/cafe/repair-cafe-southam/>
- <https://www.repaircafe.org/en/cafe/budbrooke-repair-cafe/>
- Napton on the Hill
- [Visit a Repair Café Near You \(repaircafe.org\)](#)

The Great Collaboration (1 hour) Banter Sessions for Town and Parish Councils

- [Banter sessions \(inc table of all sessions\) | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 18: MotherTree, 08May24, Dan Sherrard-Smith | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 19: CCA workshop 15May24 Joolz Thompson | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 20: Food Security, 22May24, David Dixon | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 21: Child-led,Eco-refill workshops, 29May24, Lizzie Gimblett | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 22: Energy and Low Carbon activities, 05Jun24, Adam Birchweaver | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)

Other

- [UK climate - Met Office](#)
- [planning ahead on land and sea.pdf \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)
- [Link Briefing Permitting June 2024.pdf \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)
- [Environment groups challenge political parties' plans to halt wildlife decline \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)
- [Nature 2030 Campaign \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)
- [Nature groups launch legal challenge over England's wildlife loss - BBC News](#)
- [Main parties to go head-to-head on plans to recover nature and tackle climate crisis at major hustings event \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)
- [The Big Nature & Climate Debate: Environmental Hustings for the UK General Election | The Wildlife Trusts](#)
- [Game changers in giving nature a voice \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)
- [UK Biodiversity Indicators 2023 | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)



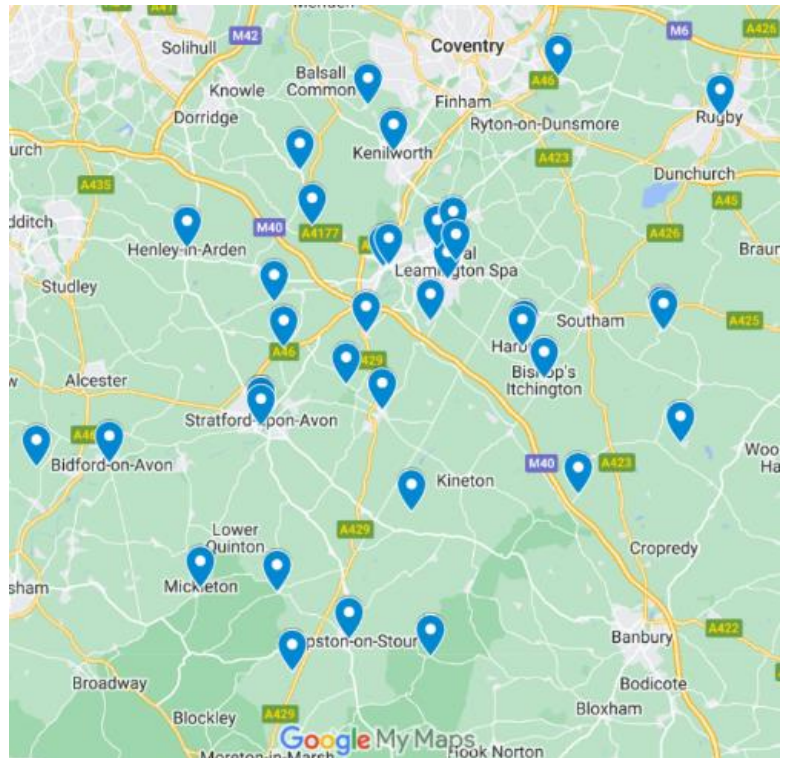
Want to get involved? – Warwickshire's Climate and Environmental Action Groups

LCWN Steering Group member, Ian Wood, has mapped the locations of all the Warwickshire climate and environment community action groups in the Network.

[LCWN Map - Google My Maps](#) (right click, open hyperlink).

If there are still gaps or errors in your entry, or if you have a question, please let Ian know.

email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com



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

[Low Carbon Warwickshire Network | Facebook](#)

Set up by Emma Powell for everyone to share useful things. Please like and follow it. Please send any comments to lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

(2) [Low Carbon Warwickshire Network | Facebook](#)

<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 let us know what you wish to see in your newsletter: 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.