

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network

July 2024 – Issue - 40

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 Lillington.

The CLEAN Green Bash – 15th June 2024

Saturday, June 15th, saw the highly successful CLEAN Green Bash in Lillington Club, with a wide range of environmental activities in the afternoon, followed by an evening cabaret of green-inspired entertainments.



Organised by CLEAN (Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now), aims of this interesting enjoyable, social event included: helping people to realise the urgency of the situation by winning over their hearts and minds so they find ways to do positive environmental work and to bring local environmental groups together, alongside having nice chats and fun – with tea and cake.

Over 160 people attended, including representatives from different local environmental organisations: Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council, Low Carbon Warwickshire Network, the Royal Society of Arts, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Napton Environmental Action Team, Bee Friendly Leamington, Cubbington Community Garden, Cycle Buddies, Expressway Litterpickers, Friends of Midland Oak Park, Leamington Skygarden, Act on Energy, Leamington In Bloom, Action 21, Harbury Energy Initiative and others.



The evening event included the launch of a green-themed poetry anthology, “**Batman’s Allotment**”, an Open Mic, a wonderful and powerful acoustic set from Stourbridge’s Rebel and the Banned, and an insightful and very funny set from celebrated climate change comedian Stuart Goldsmith. Stuart has performed around the world and grew up in Leamington Spa.

Stuart’s set explored the need for people to find ways to talk openly about climate change and how comedy can help to create those ways and included asking the audience to call out their carbon footprint “sins”.

When asked why comedy was important to the climate crisis he said: “It’s so hard to navigate between doom and blind optimism that something will save us. Comedy is amazing for helping people to find a third way, to share our fears and frustrations, and ultimately to feel united in the face of this threat.”

The evening also included the first performance by the newly formed Optimistic Opera Co. They performed a newly rewritten Habanera, the famous song from Bizet’s Carmen, with words that painted a picture of the year being 2065 and the climate and biodiversity crises have been solved, with net zero being successfully achieved thanks to actions taken urgently in 2024 and 2025.

The event was also a celebration of the 10,000 Sunflowers project, which involved over 200 people over the last 6 months growing and planting 10,000 sunflowers around Lillington, Cubbington and further afield – the furthest known planting has been in Aberystwyth. CLEAN ran this project in partnership with Leamington SkyGarden and Arty-Folks/Lillington Makers, and with fabulous help from the District Council, Warwickshire County Council, and from numerous local community organisations and allotment societies. The project was massively helped by the very generous three-month loan of an enormous polytunnel by Coventry University Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR) based at Ryton.

CLEAN are still actively looking for new members, from Lillington, Cubbington or the wider Leamington area. They hope that their activities can spread. CLEAN are planning a winter programme, including biodiversity plans for local green spaces, and supporting people in reducing their household bills by improving their insulation (using a thermal imaging camera), as well as further enjoyable social events.

The event was organised by Matt Black, poet, in partnership with Low Carbon Warwickshire Network and the RSA.

There are already plans for some kind of follow-up green social in September, and of course fingers crossed there will be a Green Bash ’25.

Matt Black, Chair, CLEAN, June 2024, 077656 84941, Matt.black@pop3.poptel.org.uk,

Photos by David Hastings

[Three Degrees by Rebel and the Banned \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...),

[Climate | Stuart Goldsmith](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



Open Gardens for Wildlife in Wellesbourne and Hunscore – 23rd June 2024

The weather was thankfully beautiful. We had an estimated 140 or more visitors and plenty of positive feedback.

“I had a wonderful day and saw some brilliant gardens. And everyone was so pleasant, it has restored my faith in human nature.” - Alison, who helped for an hour or so on the Plant stall, earning herself a free ticket.

Others said that they would like to take part in opening their garden next year. Many went away with new ideas and insights.

The event was about the gardens and engaging people in Nature, but we also managed to raise a little over £750 which was shared between Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Warwickshire Hedgehog Rescue and the Heart of England Forest.

Next time we want ideas for a local wildlife project to fund.



Lucy Hartley, Sustainable Wellesbourne, July 2024

Act on Energy Great Big Green Week and Diary Dates

June was busy with our attendances during Great Big Green Week and as part of the RSC Kyoto Conference, as demonstrated through our social media: [Act on Energy UK](#) | [Facebook](#)

Here is the latest programme of events for Act on Energy:

- 13th July 2024, Kind Communities - Kind Food, Stratford-upon-Avon
- 20th July 2024, Lillington Community Funday , Lillington
- 31st August 2024, Ecofest, Leamington
- 5th September 2024, Stratford District Councils People's Assembly

Louise Bowl, Act on Energy

[Act On Energy](#) | [Award-Winning Energy Advice Charity Warwickshire](#) | [Act on Energy](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/lillingtoncommunityfunday/>

[EcoFest 2024 - Warwick District Council. \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](https://warwickdc.gov.uk)

[Climate Assembly September 2024](#) | [Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)



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

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. 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](#)



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.

Organic v Sustainable – revisiting thoughts from 2011

Do the same arguments apply today? Funny how the same arguments appear all these years later. Not that funny though; I find it disturbing.

What do you mean 'sustainable'?

We buy organic food. Is that being 'sustainable'? What if it's not local by origin? Does that mean it's not sustainable – or just not local? Can I consider it sustainable because it is organic? And, while we are on the subject, is 'ecologically sound' better than 'sustainable'?

We are encouraged to live sustainably, be sustainable consumers, buy sustainable products, plan for a sustainable future but I have no idea if I mean the same as someone else when I say the word. It's a great



word but do we (those of us that aspire to be less burdensome to the planet) just slip it into our personal belief system and daily vocabulary without really having defined it?

There are a few that feel that the term 'organic' is now not helpful, too restricting. Personally, I still like it. It has been defined, has legal status and if I am not sure what it means in any given gardening circumstance, I can refer to my copy of The Organic Gardening Guidelines produced by Garden Organic and find out.



'Sustainable', on the other hand, has acquired more powerful, doom-breaking inference than simply meaning 'something that can be sustained for some (indeterminate) time'. It has become an apocalyptic word, signifying that which will save mankind and all biodiversity indefinitely. Either that or it just sounds right and invites grave assent and appreciative murmurs. It can be a bit vague.

I have to think hard about whether a locally grown non-organic product in a local shop is better bought than a similar product produced organically but grown under warmer foreign skies and shipped in to a more distant supermarket central distribution point. High winds of uncertainty sweep over the moral high ground. A simple purchase can become a paralysing moral dilemma. Shops, however, are purposeful places. You are either going to be confronted by someone eager to serve you and with no interest in your internal wrangling or you will stand, an indecisive bit of flotsam, amongst the focused and determined tide of shoppers and trolleys surging down the supermarket aisle.

I can sustain indecision for quite a while but is that sustainable?

Bob Sherman, revisited June 2024, originally 2011

[Garden Organic | Principles of organic gardening](#)

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

AUGUST

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.



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

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 - Green Schools Project](#)

[Environment Leadership | Our Programmes | Leadership Skills Foundation](#)

[Schools sign up | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

Henry Greenwood & Nell Byron, Green Schools Project Team, email: nell@greenschoolsproject.org.uk

JANUARY 2025

The 'Handprints for Action' project nears completion. All entries will have to be submitted by the end of January 2025 so that they can be assembled into collages. The collage on the poster was made from the



Handprints of students and staff of the Arc School, Napton, the collage on the right was made from the Handprints of members of Burton Green WI.



Rotary Handprints for Action Project

Our ecological or carbon footprint is a measure of our negative impact on the environment. What we do to help heal our environment – our positive actions are **Handprints for Action** – what we give, a helping hand, or a healing touch.

Draw around your hand, write on it a positive action that you are already doing – or one you would like to do to protect the environment where you live, then decorate your handprint in bright colours for flower petals or greens for leaves.

Your handprints will be assembled into a garden collage for display at Holy Trinity Church and other venues. Send your handprints to: Gabrielle Back, 3 Underhill Close, Finham, Coventry, CV3 6RB by the end of January 2025.

Savers Charity Number 1108191



LCWN Schools Project Team – News and Useful Links

Interview with Eco Council from Clinton Primary School, Kenilworth.

I met up with the Clinton Primary School Eco Councillors at the Kenilworth Eco -Fayre on May 18th. I was promoting the LCWN / Rotary / Savers Charity 'Handprints for Action' Project and they were running the Eco-Schools table with their Headteacher and colleagues.



Rotary Handprints for Action Project

Our **Handprints for Action** are what we can do to help heal our environment what we give, a helping hand, or a healing touch.

Teachers Encourage your students to:

- Draw around their hand
- Write on it a positive action that their family are already doing, – or one they would like to do to protect the environment.
- Decorate their handprint in bright colours for flower petals or greens for leaves.

Handprints will be assembled into a garden collage for display at Holy Trinity Church and other venues

Send your handprints to:
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Savers Charity Number 1108191

Impressed by their dedication and enthusiasm, I asked if I could interview them in their school so that they could share their thoughts with readers of the LCWN Newsletter.

I believe it is crucial that we listen to and think about how young people see the world.

Duly at 11.30 am on 6th June I arrived at Clinton Primary School and was introduced to a group of six pupils bursting to share their Eco Fayre experiences with me as their hands shot in the air.

Annabel: We have done a few things to upcycle. We asked the whole school to bring in a toy and a book that they were going to throw away. Everyone wore something green and brought something in.

Jessica: We chose to give the money we raised to Friends of the Earth.

Madison: We raised £182.70

Annabel: We wanted to help in some kind of way.

As they paused to take a breath I asked if they could first tell me how they became eco-councillors.

Edward explained: We ran for elections (in Year 6) and then had roles for the eco-council

George clarified the details: We have a chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer and we have class reps who support other years.

Madison: For the Eco-Fayre, we decided what jobs needed to be done and separated those out.

Edward: We didn't sell everything at the Eco-Fayre so we sold it after school and gave the remainder to charity. (Head, Mr. Pater, explained a parents after-school event had been held when the children wore something green).

Edward: We wanted to explain what we had a stall for – the 3Rs --Reducing rubbish, Reducing pollution and Raising money.

Madison: I had to write in the school newsletter about the Eco-Fayre and about the money we raised.

Annabel: We have written a Power Point Presentation about 'fast fashion' 'deforestation' and 'saving energy'.

Edward picked up on an earlier point: To get on to the Eco-council we had to write a speech and say it in assembly.

Jessica: If we didn't want to give the speech in front of the whole assembly, we could put our names forward and talk to people around the school. Then hope for the best.

I asked why they particularly wanted to be on the Eco-council.

Joey: I could see lots of rubbish everywhere and I wondered why they (people) did it.

Madison: I like the idea of being able to make a difference. The eco-council's ambition is to make Kenilworth the most environmentally friendly place to live in the UK.

Jessica: It's nice to feel you have achieved something.

Annabel: I think that each individual person thinks it's just them making a mess but it's a lot of people!

Maddison: We need to tell everyone about the problems to raise awareness, but we need to tell everyone about the positives as well.

Jessica: We need to make sure that we don't say 'You have to do this' but rather to say 'If you do this, the world will be cleaner'. Also, people might think it's just me trying to do something to help so I won't make a difference.

I asked what they would like to say to all other young people to encourage them to act.

Joey: A message you could say is: If one person would stop littering by one or two things each day, the world would be a lot cleaner.

Edward: People might think that if I pick up one piece of litter it's not going to make a difference but even if 100 people did it for a year, and they all got the message, it could make a big difference.

Madison: If everyone can just get out there and help, even just a little bit, it would make a big difference.

Annabel: I'd ask a rhetorical question. Do you want to live in a place which is clean and there's no rubbish or somewhere which is dirty and full of pollution? If you want a cleaner environment, then make it happen.

Jessica: I'd say to young people that we're the ones that can make a difference for the longest.

There were some quizzical looks at each other and nodding of heads in recognition.

All: The world is not given to you by your parents, it's loaned to you by your children. We like that quote.

What else could I do but thank them all for the privilege of talking with them and leave with my head buzzing, and excited about sharing this privilege as soon as it was viable.

Comment from Sam Pater, Headteacher Clinton School.

'It seems vitally important that we adults hear the thoughts of the next generation, who will be living most of their lives with the effects of climate change. We also need to give them a sense that they can do something about the challenges we face to make the world a greener place to live. Hopefully they take the experience they've had of doing something tangible and go on to make an even bigger difference in the future!

The children's comments are as written, having been recorded by me during the interview.

Teresa (O'Connor) Buckle, June 2024.

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 – Nature Recovery Strategy

Can You Help?

Warwickshire County Council in partnership with the Local Nature Partnership is seeking support from residents, businesses and community groups to shape the development of a new Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for the county.



The LNRS is a key strategy that will outline a roadmap for restoring and improving Warwickshire's natural environment ensuring that it is sustainable now and for future generations.

A survey is now live in which all the county's stakeholders – from businesses to schools – are being asked to give their overall thoughts on natural environments and biodiversity, to think about their local area and which areas of the recovery of our natural world that they think should be prioritised.

Complete the survey here: <https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/bi/nature-recovery/>

[Your thoughts on a Nature Recovery Strategy for Warwickshire - Completing this survey - Warwickshire County Council - Citizen Space](#)

News

The Grand Union Transfer Project

Water supply is under increasing pressure from population growth, more demand for water, the effects of climate change and the need to protect fragile ecosystems. Affinity Water provides on average 950 million litres of water each day to a population of more than 3.6 million people across the southeast of England.



But the UK's largest, water-only supplier must meet the challenge of a future water supply deficit in its supply area. The Grand Union Transfer Project is a joint water project between two water companies, Severn Trent and Affinity Water and the Canal & River Trust. This scheme will transfer up to 115 million litres of water along the Coventry, Oxford and Grand Union canals, owned and managed by the Canal & River Trust, from a water recycling centre in Birmingham in Severn Trent's supply area, to Affinity Water's areas of deficit in the Southeast.



[Home - Grand Union Canal Transfer \(guctransfer.co.uk\)](http://guctransfer.co.uk)

[Addressing water scarcity in Greater Cambridge: update on government measures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Poetry Corner

Warwick District Council seek local residents' opinions on No Mow May

No Mow May? You want my Opinion?
Let's restore nature to her own dominion,
We want long grasses and flowery feasts
For insects, birds and minibeasts

So beware the verges neat and trimmer,
Beware the mower, beware the strimmer,
Beware the wasteland Anthroscene,
We want a world alive and green

No Mow May a mess? Untidy? Wrong?

Try the mess when the insects are all gone.

Get your logic rearranged!

As Spock says – You humans, very strange!

We need wasps, ladybugs, zig-zag flies,
The Council (and us) to stop using pesticides,
So spiders can spin, bees buzz and suck
On clover, daisy, simple buttercup

Let's go wild, grow wild, rewild,
Let's No Mow May, No Mow June, July,

Make a future for my grandchild to remember

Let's No Mow from May until December

Let's do Grow More June, mini-Ardens,



Let green spaces become community gardens,

We'll gather, dig, spend joyous hours,

Grow cabbages between the sunflowers

No Mow Warwick District? Thanks a billion!

Let's No Mow from here to Swindon.

No Mow where? You want my opinion?

No Mow the whole United Kingdom

No Mow May, what's your position?

Not every verge needs a Brazilian.

If you want to survive, ask Gloria Gaynor,

No Mow May, it's a no-brainer



Matt Black

Chair, CLEAN, Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now CIC

India: The Climate Tiger? - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

My recent trip to North India got me thinking about the importance of 'developing' countries like India to our Earth's future. Optimism, or pessimism? Read on.

India has the world's largest population, 1.44 billion, over 20 times the population of the UK. It has the 3rd largest emissions of greenhouse gases in the world. India emits 3 tonnes of CO₂e per person per year, less than half the average of a UK citizen, but the per capita gap is

narrowing as our emissions fall and India's continue to rise. We can play a 'leadership' and new technology role in tackling climate change, but what happens in fiercely independent countries like India will really shape the Earth's future.



My mind (and my stomach) has a love/ hate relationship with India. It is a chaotic cultural melting pot – Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist; with the affluent living adjacent to subsistence farmers and the urban poor. My trip was to Delhi and Ladakh, a Buddhist province, revisiting my student adventures there in 1986. Ladakh is situated high in the Himalayas, bordering Pakistan and China. This blog is mostly based on my experiences in Ladakh, which due to its remoteness, may not be representative of the rest of India.

Communications

The 'capital' of Ladakh is Leh, which hosts a large airport used by military and civilian traffic. The number of tourist flights is increasing rapidly. India's domestic aviation industry has the fastest growth in the world.

The big change for me, is that in 1986 the tourists were 'westerners' travelling to Ladakh overland via Srinagar in Kashmir and the notorious Zojila pass which remained shut for six months of the year due to



snowfall and landslides. Now a massive road tunnel is being bored to bypass the treacherous pass. Today, many tourists arrive by air, although there is also an increase in Indian tourists driving their private cars to Ladakh or touring by motorbike. Until not long ago there were no private cars in Leh, just lorries, a few buses, and 300 taxis.

Road construction is rampaging across the landscape. New tracks, new tarmac roads, new bridges, and road widening schemes. Roadworks everywhere. Much of this is 'driven' by military necessity, India's need to defend its borders from its neighbours. A sad reality. Of course, roads also open up a new tourist market.

New roads, and motorways, are being built across India. These provide a rapid way to 'develop', but create an increase in the consumption of aggregates, concrete and asphalt, a rapid increase in private car sales and a new wealth 'lottery' arising from land speculation next to the new roads. New roads lead to rapid and irreversible social change, particularly in areas that previously relied on subsistence agriculture. They bring remote villagers into the market economy and create new consumer markets.

At least most of the cars are relatively modern and clean. Meanwhile the buses, and old lorries belch out black diesel fumes. Electric vehicles have not yet reached Ladakh, but there is an active programme to encourage electric cars and buses in Delhi (partly to tackle its dreadful air pollution).

And, even in some of the remote villages with no road, there was access to the internet (via satellite). Mobile phone reception was as good as in the Scottish Highlands.

Construction

Construction, construction everywhere. Traditional Ladakhi houses are built from local materials – clay bricks and poplar trees. Most new houses and other buildings are built of concrete. Concrete everywhere. Also new electricity pylons over the mountains and into remote villages (puts our Beauly-Denny transmission pylons into perspective). There is a tradition of starting to build a house as soon as you have some money, then putting it on hold until you save up more, so there are hundreds of half-built, empty buildings. And these take up land, usually on the outskirts of towns and villages and in a linear fashion along roads. Urban sprawl leads to more roads, more cars and more traffic congestion.

The construction sites are interesting to observe. There are men (mainly poor migrants) working with hand tools (chisel and hammer to split boulders), side by side with modern JCB diggers. No helmets, no safety warning signs. Labour, and life, must be cheap.

Across India, young people are abandoning their villages and flocking to the cities. The town of Leh has quadrupled from around 10,000 to 40,000 since my last visit. Access to boarding schools in towns drives this, with educated young people then choosing urban life with its social prospects and job opportunities. The villages become devoid of young people and are maintained by the elderly. There were many signs of abandoned fields.

Electricity

India is developing fast. Its electricity consumption is soaring as electricity is extended to outlying villages, as the middle class grows and becomes more prosperous, and as the demand for air conditioning rises. Coal provides the backbone to the electricity grid, with around 10% (52GW) from hydroelectric. Solar and onshore wind are growing fast, up to 84GW and 46GW capacity respectively. India is still building coal



power stations, but there is a hint of optimism that the falling cost of solar and wind will undermine the economic case for coal in the years ahead.

The Indian government has rolled out energy efficiency subsidy schemes, resulting in a rapid take up of LED lights and energy efficient cooling fans.

There is an active programme to connect remote villages to the electricity network, but in the meantime, I observed many solar pv panels, that combined with batteries, provide power to operate light bulbs, televisions, and water pumps. In other villages, the power was generated by dirty diesel generators, and only switched on between 7 to 10pm. Many places on the grid have diesel generators as a back-up due to the unreliability of electricity supply.

Consumption

India's middle classes are copying the 'western' consumption-based lifestyle. They are building bigger houses, buying more consumer products, driving cars, aspiring to more 'stuff'. Diets are changing, away from local and mostly healthy food to a more processed diet wrapped in plastic. In the remote areas there were no refuse collection facilities. Plastic bottles line the roads and lake shorelines, and any rubbish collected will be burnt locally or buried.

Tourism is booming. The tourists are mainly from the north of India, and huge cities such as Delhi or Mumbai. Many are here to escape the dreadful heat. The temperature in Delhi was above a stifling 45°C for much of June 2024. In Ladakh, at 3,500m, the temperature is a pleasant low 20's. It seems that everyone in Leh has opened to tourists, creating a dependency and a wealth disparity with those not involved in tourism. The remote lake of Pangong (on the Chinese border) featured in a Bollywood film, 3 Idiots, in 2009. This led to a sudden tourism boom which the area was not prepared for. There are now numerous tented, and prefabricated guest houses strung along the lakeside, spoiling much of the scenery in the process. Goodness knows how the sewage is treated (or not).

Climate Change

India is a large sub-continent, but it is easy to predict some changes and vulnerabilities.

- Increased temperatures (eg recent heatwave in Delhi) results in heat related deaths, power cuts, fires, droughts and water shortages;
- Rising sea-level around its extensive coastline;
- Flash floods, destroying infrastructure and livelihoods;
- Spread of tropical and sub-tropical pests and diseases;
- Potential changes to the monsoon, which is important for agricultural production; and
- Reduction in snowfall, and snowmelt in the Himalayas.

Our guide pointed out some high-level pasture and fields which had already been abandoned due to the lack of meltwater from snow patches. In the short term the glaciers are melting and continue to release summer meltwater into the rivers. However, there are 18,000 glaciers in Kashmir and Ladakh and around two-thirds may have disappeared by 2100. This will have a major impact on biodiversity, hydro-electric production and the crucial summer flow in rivers which flow across northern India and Pakistan.

India's Climate Targets

1. India committed to cutting its 'emissions intensity' by 35% 2005-30 under the Paris Agreement.



2. 50% electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
3. 30% of new cars to be EV by 2030; 100% of new urban buses.
4. More recently it pledged to achieve net zero by 2070.

Conclusions

What to conclude from all of this? Let me outline a pessimistic and an optimistic scenario.

Developing countries like India will prioritise traditional economic growth above all else. Cities will continue to grow fast, whilst rural areas may experience a drop in population. Urban sprawl will lead to more private cars and more congestion and pressure for further road building. The burgeoning middle classes will want to consume a 'western' diet of food and consumer goods resulting in more manufacturing, distribution and waste. Domestic tourism will grow strongly, as will the demand for flights. Emissions from industry and construction will continue to rise (steel, aluminium, asphalt and concrete). The demand for electricity will grow faster than renewables can supply, resulting in an increased consumption of coal (or at least not a sharp fall). Road traffic growth will be faster than the roll out of electric vehicles, resulting in an increase in demand for petrol and diesel.

Under this scenario the first three targets are achieved, but total emissions continue to rise due to population growth and economic growth overwhelming any emission cuts.

More optimistically, there is a huge potential to cut emissions given India's current dependence on coal. If there is a focus on energy efficiency, and solar energy can realise its true potential, then the demand for coal could soon fall. Investment in energy efficiency, and new lower carbon forms of concrete, will be required to cut emissions from industry. Targeted subsidies could result in a surprisingly fast roll out of electric vehicles, curbing the use of oil and petrol.

Whatever happens, it is clear to me that our planet's future lies in the hands of a handful of fast-growing economies – India, China, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey etc. At the moment, not surprisingly, they are promoting 'economic growth' to their growing populations. But, as they grow wealthier, and experience the adverse impacts of climate change, they will choose to seriously tackle their emissions. We should share our policy and experience in tackling our emissions, and be ready to support them with technology, innovation, and new ideas to cut their carbon emissions.

Carbon Choices: If you like my blogs, you might also enjoy my book, Carbon Choices on the common-senses 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](https://twitter.com/carbonchoicesuk)) @carbonchoices ([Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/carbonchoices)) @carbonchoices ([Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/carbonchoices)).

[India - the Climate Tiger? \(carbonchoices.uk\)](https://carbonchoices.uk)

Neil Kitching, July 2024

Thoughts from an Organic Farmer – Shorter days and briefer seasons

Planting, picking, weeding, and irrigating are all in full swing – making the next month our busiest, and the most critical determinant of a successful year.

Leeks, cabbages, caulis, kale, broccoli, radicchio, and lettuces, which will keep your boxes full from September right through to next May, must all be planted in the next four weeks. As the days shorten and temperatures drop in the autumn, growth rates slow – meaning that a day's delay in planting now will



delay maturity by a week in October, and by two weeks in December. Plant too early, and we have autumn gluts; a few days too late, and the chance of an economic yield is lost.

We do not expect anyone to work the 60-hour weeks that were the norm at busy times when I started farming – and, understandably, it would be hard to persuade our permanent team to do so. By contrast, the team who have joined us for the summer under the Seasonal Worker Scheme (including eight Kenyan agricultural students, and plenty of Europeans who return each year) are here to make and save money. They want the hours and, provided the weather holds, their long days and weekends will help us to get the plants in the ground on time, setting us up for the next nine months of harvesting and box packing.

In general, I lament that our industry has become so removed from the people we feed, and so dependent on migrant labour from low-wage economies (pay for the same work in Kenya would be less than £5/day). But in the short term, without that labour, an already diminished British horticultural industry would decline further.

We will pick our first Devon tomatoes this week, planted in early April. Each plant will produce around 2.7kg of fruit over their fleeting season, before slowing down in early October. This year, we are trialling grafted plants: the variety we chose for flavour, size, and so on is grafted onto a vigorous, disease-resistant variety. The plants cost twice as much, but the added vigour means that we can grow two stems from each, thereby halving the number of plants. Too often vigour and yield come at the cost of flavour, so we will be monitoring quality carefully.



Under glass heated to 20°C, they could have been planted in January, and picked from April to November – but growing tomatoes in the UK with artificial heat emits anything from two to 10 times more carbon than trucking them over from Spain. So, fill your boots with homegrown, low-carbon cherry tomatoes while their brief season lasts.

Guy Singh-Watson, 26th June 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 \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Local Energy Services & Funding | Heart of England CE \(hecommunityenergy.org\)](#)
- [Net Zero – Stratford's home for community climate action \(netzerostratford.org.uk\)](#)
 - [Rugby Eco Hub](#)



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 23 Friends of the Earth, 12Jun24, Toby Bridgman | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 24: Solar PV and batteries in your Parish, 19Jun24, Alex Templeton | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 25: Earthwatch Fresh Water, 26Jun24, Sam Frith | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)
- [Banter 26: Messages, 03Jul24, Andrew Maliphant | Knowledgebase \(greatcollaboration.uk\)](#)

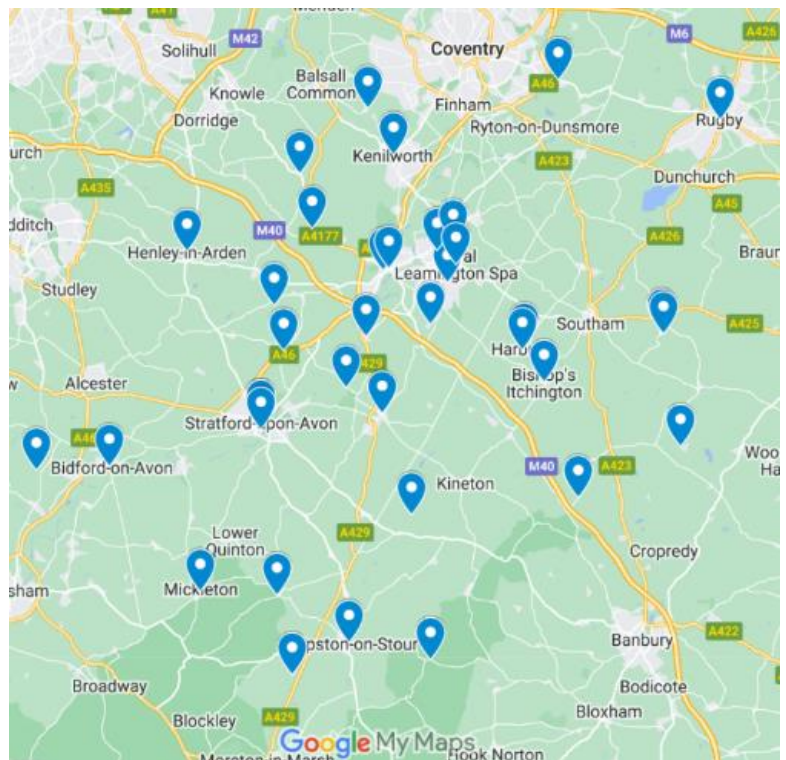
Want to get involved? – Warwickshire’s Climate and Environmental Action Groups

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](https://www.facebook.com/LCWN-Newsletter-May-2023-issue-27.pdf) (harburyenergy.co.uk)

LCWN Facebook group

[Low Carbon Warwickshire Network | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Low-Carbon-Warwickshire-Network-101562702401683/)

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/)

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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.