

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network

February 2025 – Issue – 46

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, Lillington and again in Wellesbourne. There may be a joint Act on Energy and LCWN event during Retrofit Action Week on 17th May 2025.

Tomorrow's Wellesbourne-Live Better for Less Event,

The event took place on Saturday 25th January 2025. Parish Councillor Anne Prior welcomed everyone and gave an overview of the climate emergency activities undertaken by Wellesbourne and Walton Parish Council (micro wood, other tree planting, orchard, bee hives, selective mowing, nature reserve meadowland, retrofitting a community hub – updating electrics and heating, adding insulation and fitting solar panels). The Parish Council aim is to be a carbon neutral Council by 2030 and a carbon neutral community by 2050.

[Climate Emergency | Wellesbourne and Walton Parish Council](#)

Bob Sherman, Chair of the LCWN, summarised the history of energy projects in Harbury leading to the formation of Harbury Future Energy CIC the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network. [Warwickshire Low Carbon Network – Harbury Energy Initiative](#)

Local Resident, William Howard, talked about his ten years + of carrying out retrofit actions to make his home more sustainable (solar panels, battery storage, air source heat pump). He also talked about his data collection and things he learned along the way – such as having to put wire mesh around his solar panels to stop the squirrels nesting.

Anne Marie Lambert gave a cookery demonstration which included yummy quick red onion, tomato & lentil soup and easy mini garlic breads. [Cooking Made Easy - Get Cooking!](#)

Claudine Pearson, Climate Officer from WALC, talked about Parish Power and the many climate and nature initiatives in South Warwickshire.

[Tomorrow's Wellesbourne: Live Better For Less - WALC - Town and Parish Council Support](#)

Tomorrow's Wellesbourne '25
Free event
Live better for less
Sat 25th January 2025, 10:00 - 1:30

Doors open 9:30

10:00 – 11:15 Session 1
William Howard: Retrofitting a home: highs and lows
Tass Smith: Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve

Refreshments and visit stalls

11:45 – 13:00 Session 2
Anne Marie Lambert: Cook more, waste less
Claudine Pearson: Learning from other local groups

Soup and bread (included)

St Peter's Church Centre, CV35 9LS
Park at Village Car Park, CV35 9NH, unless you have accessibility needs

Supported by: Advance booking (optional)

WELLESBOURNE AND WALTON PARISH COUNCIL



Needed - your help and support

The most powerful force for change in modern society comes from us, the people. We have a collective talent and a body of passion for our communities, which far surpasses the will of governments or giant corporations. It is people power that will prevail when our communities and nature are in greatest need.

As David Attenborough said “we now live in one of the most nature depleted places on the planet. Nature urgently needs our help to recover, and it can be done by joining up wild places and creating more.”

A Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve, supported by a team of volunteers, would create a network of many small green pieces of private gardens, allotments and window boxes with the aim of helping to stop the decline in wildlife populations in the County.

Let's Create a Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve - A Grassroots Movement for Wildlife Conservation

At the Wellesbourne event Tass Smith from the Grapevine Environmental Action Team (GREAT - which covers the parishes of Hampton Lucy, Charlecote and Loxley) proposed the creation of Community Nature Reserves in our local villages, towns and right across Warwickshire.



What is a Community Nature Reserve (CNR)?

Dr Adrian Cooper created the first CNR - the Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve in 2015. His Plan A was too difficult and expensive – so he went with Plan B.

- Plan A – raise the funds to buy up a large enough piece of land to create a community nature reserve, or
- Plan B – ask local people to set aside just 3 square yards (2.5 square metres) of their own gardens or allotments for wildlife. He worked out that for every 1,666 participants giving up 3 square yards for nature would be = 5,000 square yards. The size of a football pitch!

In every 3 square yard patch, people would be encouraged to grow wildlife-friendly plants as well as creating ponds, insect lodges, hedgehog houses and bird nesting boxes. For birds, bees and other wildlife, such a patchwork collection of small green spaces would be a wonderful new set of habitats in which they could find shelter. It could help provide connections between the larger nature reserves.

Let's think BIG and start small

Think BIG – create a Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve (WCNR)

- This will be an overarching network to support local CNRs
- Useful for sharing resources on how to garden for wildlife
- Helpful to feel our small contribution is part of something bigger
- May attract greater publicity

Start Small – each village or locality creates their own CNR

- local autonomy is maintained / existing networks utilised
- Local adjustments are catered for, such as involving residents without gardens
- Schools, businesses, interested groups can be drawn in
- Resources can feed up to the WCNR



Think BIG – taking the Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve (WCNR) idea forward

I'm fairly well connected but rather time poor!

Dr Cooper suggests having a small steering group:

- Someone with media experience / interest to run the Facebook group and other media engagement
- Someone with experience of gardening for wildlife!
- Schools / Youth ambassador
- Someone with an interest in Citizen Science

I don't think we need any £ at this stage.

I'm happy to act as a contact for anyone interested in being on this steering group as I'm keen to take the idea forwards. Just rather time poor!

Start small – create local Community Nature Reserves (CNRs)

Here's more information about how Dr Cooper started his Felixstowe CNR [The nature reserve that social media built - Positive News](#)

Over to all of you!

- Find some folk who are interested in the idea / find your local environmental action group
- Hook into existing, sympathetic networks
- Get some publicity out there
- Create a Facebook group or use other media options to share your progress
- Make a start....



Call to action!

If you'd like to make this happen and are interested in joining our Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve Steering Group, please email me tassie68@gmail.com

Or please just start / join your local Community Nature Reserve!

Thank you!

Tass Smith from GREAT
(Covering the parishes of
Hampton Lucy, Charlecote
and Loxley)



If you'd like to make this happen and are interested in joining our Warwickshire Community Nature Reserve Steering Group, please email me tassie68@gmail.com

Existing Resources

- <https://www.facebook.com/FelixstoweCommunityNatureReserve/>
Dr Cooper is happy for us to reuse any relevant content from this group
- <https://www.facebook.com/CalneCommunityNatureReserve>
- <https://www.facebook.com/naturereserveBL/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/556454126369621/>
(Emersons Green Town Council)
- [#TeamWilder | Warwickshire Wildlife Trust](#)

Hook into other networks

I'm quite well connected but time poor.....

- [Warwick University Institute of Engagement](#), (and other academic establishments), Citizen Science opportunities
- [Biodiversity - Warwick District Council / Stratford on Avon District Council](#), Tass works for Warwick DC, lives in Stratford DC
- WALC - [Warwickshire-Local-Nature-Action-Plans-guidance-for-town-and-parish-councils-DRAFT-September-2024.pdf](#)

Tass Smith, GREAT, February 2025

Warwickshire Wildlife Conservation Projects

Harbury Swift Village Project

Renovation work at an old property in Harbury which would destroy a decades-long established swift colony was the inspiration for this project to make Harbury one of only a very few Swift Villages in the UK. A Swift Village is a community made up of several groups of neighbouring houses, all with swift boxes, with the shared goal of supporting Swift colonies.



With generous funding and support from Harbury Parish Council, this community initiative captured the imagination of people living in this Warwickshire village.

It has been wonderful that so many have offered their properties to give Swifts a home, as well as purchasing additional boxes to help build a colony in their neighbourhood. Over fifty Swift nestboxes have now been installed and where a choice of sites had to be made, data from the RSPB's Swiftmapper website, and local knowledge of past Swift nest sites, helped inform the best place for the boxes.

Breeding adult Swifts return to the same nest site, year on year and it will be first time breeders that will be looking for a new home. Although a new nest box may attract a new pair of Swifts to breed if they discover it, Swifts can be slow to take up residence. The chances are greatly increased if Swift calls are played at or near the nest box, mimicking the effect of a colony! The 2025 breeding season will see half a dozen Swift Call Attraction systems strategically sited around Harbury, with the aim of encouraging newly mature birds to come and investigate the boxes and make their nests here.

This is a long-term project for Harbury: we very much hope that over the next few years, Swifts will select some of these boxes to nest in. If you are interested in joining the Harbury Swift Group, please email Amanda swifts.harbury@gmail.com

Amanda Randall, initiator of the Harbury Swift project, February 2025



Shipston Action for Swifts

We aim to help with the conservation of swifts and the restoration of their depleted population in Shipston and the Stour Valley.

We're all looking forward to warmer weather and the swifts' return this year.

I will be getting a friend to climb the ladder for me and take out the anti-sparrow plugs at the beginning of May.



During **Swift Awareness Week – 28th June to 6th July** – I will be leading my guided 'Swift Walks' on Friday 4th and Saturday 5th July. These have been very popular and successful over the past few years, and I will be advertising them nearer the time. They are free of charge, but booking is essential because space is limited. I'm always happy to give my illustrated talk "**Swifts are Making a Comeback!**" if any group or organisation would like to invite me at Swifts@2Jays.co.uk

Jacey Jackson, Shipston Action for Swifts, February 2025

Napton Swift Group

The swift is a long-distance migrant that chooses to nest amongst our dwellings. Breeding Bird Survey data shows that the population in the UK has dropped over 60% since 1995 and continues to fall. They have been on the UK birds of Conservation Concern Red List since 2021. [Swift | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology](#). We aim to get at least 50 new swift nest boxes up in the village, engaging villagers to install at least two swift nest boxes on their homes if they have a suitable next box site. We have been very lucky to get some funding from the Parish Council to help towards the cost of installing boxes at height.



If you live in the Parish of Napton and are interested in joining the Napton Swift Group, please email jackylawrence31@hotmail.co.uk

Jacky Lawrence, Napton Swift Group, February 2025

[Swifts Local Network – Google My Maps](#)

LCWN Steering Group

If you would like to join the Steering Group, please get in touch at lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

The Steering Group meet infrequently and only when we have something of significance to discuss. 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 \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

There is a **bring and share lunch time social gathering of the Steering Group and friends of the LCWN on February 22nd 2025 at 12:30 in Napton**, email: jackylawrence31@hotmail.co.uk for details.

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.

We are working with Act on Energy to develop a **ready-made retrofit roadshow** (presentations on the different technologies and notes to go with each slide) and hope to hold an event during Retrofit Action Week on 17th May 2025 possibly with a presenter from Act on Energy to deliver it– let us know if you’d like to try it out in your community on that day or later in the year.

The LCWN Steering Group have also started to develop an **event resource library** to support your event planning and even a ready made set of presentations. We can also enable the opportunity to share **regular Parish Mag and other publications** between groups. Seven groups in the Network have shared their articles and a suggested communications plan has been developed. Get in touch for more details. email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

The RSA

The post of Area Manager for the Central Area is currently vacant. [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.

Act on Energy

Warwickshire Household Support Fund has been extended and is open for applications while funds last. There is support available to help households with energy debt and with repairing and replacing heating systems. Anyone interested can call Act on Energy for free.



Radio Teleswitching Service is being turned off on 30th June 2025. This will affect anyone who currently has a cheaper energy price at night. Energy suppliers are currently contacting all clients with an RTS meter but, as of January 2025, it will be up to the client to make sure that they are prepared for the switch off and have updated their system to ensure that they can continue on a cheaper night rate.

With over 25 years’ experience, Act on Energy is an award-winning charity, delivering **free, impartial energy advice**. Working in partnership with the Local Authorities and external organisations, we offer a range of services such as help with applying for grants, access to funding for energy efficiency measures and in-home support for those struggling with the cost of living.

Free advice phone line: 0800 988 2881

Email: advice@actonenergy.org.uk **Website:** www.actonenergy.org.uk

Madeleine Avila-Thomas, Communications & Campaigns Officer, Act on Energy



Garden Organic – Rugby Community Champions

Garden Organic are working in partnership with Rugby Borough Council and aim to increase biodiversity in the area and get more people out in green spaces. As such, we are recruiting and training volunteer Community Champions. More information here: <https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/what-we-do/delivering-projects/rugby-community-champions>

[Garden Organic | Rugby Community Champions](#)

We aim to share suggestions of what growers can do in their garden each month. We will also share any upcoming events. Each monthly update includes some wording that can be shared on social media, if sharing it please tag us, using @GardenOrganicUK.

What to do in Garden this month:

As spring edges closer now is the time to think about what you want to grow this year and where, remembering to think about crop rotation. It's also a great time to put up bird boxes, give our flying friends time to find the boxes and move in. Removing dead or dying leaves can stop the spread of diseases. Good hygiene is an essential part of keeping the garden healthy.

Upcoming events:

Saturday 22nd February – Plan your garden year. Rugby Eco hub, 2-4pm

Join us to find out how to plan what to grow this year. Get ready for your growing year with our interactive workshop. The workshop will take place on Saturday 22nd February from 2-4pm, at the Rugby Eco Hub. The event is free. Please arrive around 1:45pm, so we get started at 2pm. Please register here - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/planning-your-growing-space-tickets-1152575677879?aff=oddtcreator>

Saturday 15th March – Soil Health. Hill Street Youth and Community Centre, 10-11:30am

Would you like to know more about keeping your plants healthy and happy? Soil health might be the answer! Join us on Saturday 15th March for a workshop on how important soil health is and how to maintain it. The workshop will be at Hill Street Youth and Community Centre from 10-11:30am. The event is free. Please arrive around 9:45am, so we get started at 10am. Please register here - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/soil-health-tickets-1235940514349?aff=oddtcreator>

Saturday 15th March – Rugby Community Champion in-person training, 12-2pm

Would like to become a Rugby Community Champion? Now is your chance! We are hosting our first in-person training session, to find out more, please email rugby@gardenorganic.org.uk or fill in the application form here [MyImpactPage - Application Form - Rugby Community Champions](#).

Heather Thomas, Rugby Community Champions, Garden Organic, February 2025



Transition Town Rugby – Thinking Thursdays

A few groups in Rugby are working together to organise some talks, films and discussions, under the banner 'Thinking Thursdays'. Details at <https://www.transitiontownrugby.org/initiatives/thinking-thursdays>. Booking not essential, but will guarantee a seat.

Thinking Thursdays is a series of events offering an opportunity to think about climate and related issues, and discuss solutions - local, national, international.

- Thursday 13th March 2025 - Recycling and Rugby Borough Council, [Thinking Thursday: Rugby Borough Council and recycling Tickets, Thu, Mar 13, 2025 at 7:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- Thursday 10th April 2025 - community energy, [Thinking Thursday: Community Energy Tickets, Thu, Apr 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- Thursday 8th May 2025 - green investment, [Thinking Thursday: green investment Tickets, Thu, May 8, 2025 at 7:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Eco Hub Repair Cafe

- Saturday 1st March, 10am - 1pm
- Saturday 15th March, 10am - 1pm

[Library of Things Events](#)

All events are at Rugby Eco Hub, Claremont Centre, Clifton Road CV21 3QE. Doors open 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Free, but suggested donation £2. In collaboration with Rugby Friends of the Earth and Rugby Green Christians.

Sign up for the Rugby Eco Hub Newsletter here: <https://rugbyecohub.org/RugbyEcoHub>

[Transition Town Rugby](#)

[Transition Town Rugby, Library of Things \(rugbyecohub.org\), https://rugbyecohub.org/repair-cafe](#)

Carrie Pailthorpe, Transition Town Rugby

Net Zero Stratford – Climate Hub

Free Carbon Literacy training for residents of Stratford-on-Avon district

Net Zero Stratford is now offering free Carbon Literacy Training at the Climate Hub, 30 Meer Street, Stratford-upon-Avon.



The next dates for training for residents in the district are:- Wednesday the 19th and Wednesday the 26th of February. [Carbon Literacy Training – Part One \(of Two\) – Net Zero](#)

[Carbon literacy training – Stratford Tickets, Wed 19 Feb 2025 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](#)

There is a maximum of twelve learners per course, so need to be signed up for early if you are interested.

If you have any queries, please contact Janet Palmer at janet@netzerostratford.org.uk

[Net Zero – Stratford's home for community climate action](#)

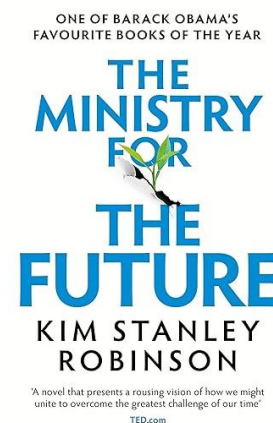
Janet Palmer, Net Zero Stratford



Warwick University Green Champions

Firstly, at work we have a green reading group. One book which I have just finished is, "The Ministry for the Future", by Kim Stanley Robinson. Set in the near future and an underfunded ministry has the near impossible job of trying to save the world's ecology for future generations. I enjoyed the style of writing, although it might not be to everyone's taste.

Spoiler alert: One of the few things which I could criticise it for is that it could be seen as being a bit cruel! The storyline is believable and it shows that a proper concerted effort by decent people (they do not have to be saints) in government, finance and in everyday life could vastly reduce our environmental impact without much of a difference in living standards. So although it is very doable, it is very likely never going to happen, which makes it so cruel!



Secondly, I encountered this group (Letters to the Earth) at the Net Zero Festival 2024 event in Islington. A bit different, but quite interesting.

Discover how you can be part of a growing movement of nature-connected change-makers by taking part in our creative activities, programmes and workshops. Either as an individual or part of a group, such as a school or other community activity (such as this one). Certainly worth having a look to see if you want to do anything as an individual, or seeing if it can be of use to a group, such as this one, or one in the wider world, or any outside groups which people might be aware of.

[Home](#) | [Letters to the Earth](#)

Finally another group, called Earth Pathways, invite individuals and groups to apply for funding for certain projects: [Earth Pathways Seed Fund - Earth Pathways](#)

Gary Stocker, February 2025

Diary Dates

MARCH 2025

CLEAN Spring Fayre, March 29th, 2pm – 5pm

Cublington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN) are holding an afternoon of fun and enjoyable activities, talks, tea and cake. Come and find out more from our friendly and welcoming group about how you can join in with local environmental activities around Lillington and Cublington over the next year.

The outline programme is:

ALL AFTERNOON (drop-in anytime)

- WELCOME DESK – come and chat to us about what we do.
- FAMILY ACTIVITIES – making bee hotels/ bee races/ be-a-bee selfies.
- FREE SEEDS – of all sorts, especially Sunflowers. Come and get involved in the second year of our 10,000 Sunflower planting dream.
- **MUSIC, TOMBOLA, TEA AND CAKES**

TIMED SESSIONS

- **2.00 - 3.00 PM** (at far end of the room). CLEAN AGM – hear what we've done in the last year, and have your say in our future.



- **3.00 PM – 4.00 PM** (at far end of the room). **BEES, POLLINATORS, AND VERGES** – talk and conversation led by Sara Lever, of Bee Friendly Warwick.

NO BOOKING REQUIRED – JUST TURN UP – DROP IN AND SAY HI

Cubbington Cliff Cleaver Pavilion
Off Stonehouse Close, Cubbington
Leamington Spa CV32 7LP

MAY 2026

Savers, Endangered Species Project

Endangered species project

The number of places where animals can live free and happy lives is shrinking. Global wildlife populations are in decline with some species under threat of extinction.

Teachers,

Encourage your students to research:

- ❖ The most endangered animals.
- ❖ Why are their populations declining?
- ❖ What is being done to protect them?
- ❖ What more could we do to help?
 - ✓ Then write and illustrate a poem about what they have found out.
 - ✓ Certificates for all and prizes for the best entries.
 - ✓ The winning submissions will be published in an anthology.



Please send entries by end of May 2026 to:
Gabrielle Back, 3 Underhill Close,
Finham, Coventry CV3 6RB



Savers Charity Number 1108191



Rotary



Warwickshire County Council – Sustainable Warwickshire Podcast - How are we reusing and recycling waste in Warwickshire?

Managing Waste in Warwickshire

In the latest episode of the Sustainable Warwickshire podcast, we uncover the journey of recycling and waste in Warwickshire. Listeners can hear about how materials are sorted, reused and recycled, both at a large scale and through local community initiatives.



Join Warwickshire County Council's Ruth Dixon, Commissioning Manager for Waste Strategy and Contracts, and Ivan Pointon from Kenilworth Lions, discussing the different ways in which waste is reused or recycled in the county. Some of the highlights include insights into the workings of the innovative Sherbourne Recycling Centre in Coventry, as well as the local efforts in Kenilworth to keep items in use via the Kenilworth Lions furniture shop.

This is the latest episode of the Sustainable Warwickshire podcast, which features conversations with local people about all things climate change and sustainability across the county of Warwickshire.

To listen, search for Sustainable Warwickshire podcasts on Spotify or Apple, or visit

<https://sustainablewarwickshire.podbean.com>

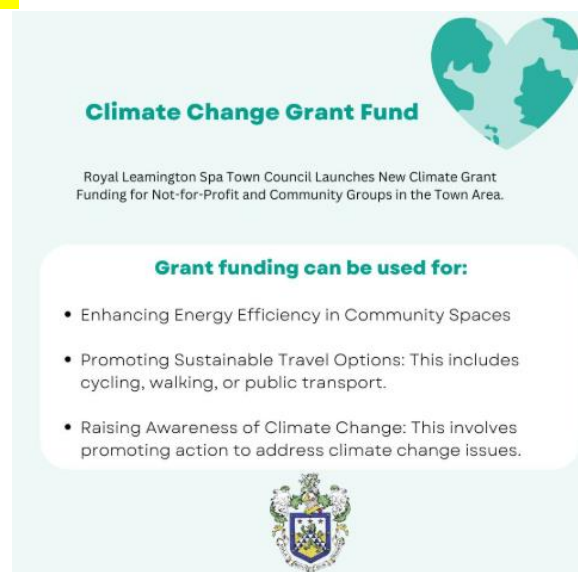
News

Leamington Spa Town Council Launches Climate Change Grant

Royal Leamington Spa Town Council has launched a Climate Change Grant fund to support local community groups to address the climate change challenge.

The grant fund is open to not-for-profit community groups located in the town, who wish to undertake activities to contribute to climate change objectives. Project ideas could include:

- Energy Efficiency – projects / works which seek to reduce energy use and carbon emissions through improving energy efficiency.
- Improvements to a community building.
- Projects which promote and increase the use of sustainable travel modes such as cycling, walking and public transport.
- Renewable / low carbon energy – projects / activities which seek to reduce energy use and carbon emissions through renewable energy generation and use.
- Awareness / understanding - Raise awareness of climate change issues – to assist understanding of climate change and to promote action to address it.



Further information about the grant fund can be found at

[Environment & Climate](#)

For more information contact Stephen Marks, Town Clerk, via clerk@leamingtonspatowncouncil.gov.uk;

Alcester Academy Careers Presentation

In January I was invited to a careers presentation at Alcester Academy School on Warwickshire. Some of the student's were enthralled by our technology and its applications for cleaner air in city centres and for constant electricity supply in villages across the developing world.



One boy said my country needs lots of these - he was from Ukraine!

Philip Mayer, Chairman, Kinder Energy Ltd

Stratford District Council Community Climate and Nature Fund – Phase 1 Case Study LED Floodlights at Napton Sportfield

PHASE ONE PROJECTS

Community Climate Change Fund



LED FLOODLIGHTING AT NAPTON SPORTFIELD

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Napton has a medium sized all weather football pitch and two tennis courts. Both are floodlit and were installed in 2004. In 2023, the old, inefficient metal halide bulbs began to fail. Not only did they require large amounts of energy to run, but they were proving expensive and difficult to maintain. The sports facilities in Napton have been well maintained. In the past 5 years, the Parish Council has part funded the refurbishment of both the astro turf and tennis courts. Therefore, apart from the lights, the facilities were of a high standard and well used. Installing more environmentally sustainable LED lighting was the natural next step in the refurbishment process, and SDC provided £10,000 in grant funding to make this possible.

“

"The Parish Council has been looking at ways to reduce its carbon footprint and improving the energy efficiency of our sports floodlighting has enabled us to work towards meeting our long-term climate related objectives. The funding from CCCF was vital in making this project happen. The sports clubs and Parish Council had a limited budget, but the CCCF grant was able to make up the shortfall and allow us to go ahead."

JAYNE WARMAN
Projects Clerk, Napton Parish Council

IMPACTS

The Parish Council, in conjunction with the Sports Association, carefully costed annual energy and maintenance charges and concluded that, within a 10-year period, installing new LEDs would pay for itself. They also predicted that installing LED floodlights would result in an annual CO2 emission saving of 1406 kg. The upgrading of the lights maximises the benefits of other investments previously made at the facility, such as the refurbishment of the astro turf and tennis courts. It also provides a long lasting, energy efficient facility for the community for many years to come.



Ted's Tech - concrete without the consequences

Concrete Production we are told creates almost 9% of the world's CO₂ emissions! one company is tackling this head on with a new type of concrete that actually absorbs CO₂ and makes use of the large quantities of waste Brine and Steel Slag produced in the world.

PARTANNA

This new type of concrete is blended at room temperatures, not requiring high heating that traditional Portland cement requires. It is also claimed to be superior to traditional concrete in many ways.

To find out more, search:- partanna.com

[We are Partanna, Building A World That Breathes | Carbon Negative Concrete](#)

To give us HOPE, 12 UK Companies working to STOP our use of FOSSIL FUELS.

1. Cph2.com. Membrane Free Hydrogen Electrolyser, Doncaster, England.
2. syngas-solutions.co.uk. Hydrogen from Wood Chip etc. Deeside, Chester, England.
3. Myheru.com. Gas and heat from Home Waste, Bidford on Avon, Warwickshire.
4. Oxccu.com. CO₂ + Hydrogen equals a Liquid JET Fuel, Oxford Airport, England.
5. Hvs.co.uk. Hydrogen powered HGV lorries, Glasgow, Scotland.
6. Riversimple.com. Hydrogen powered CARS, Llandrindod Wells, Wales.
7. Intelligent-energy.com. Various Hydrogen Fuel Cells, Loughborough, England.
8. Fuelcellsystems.co.uk. Energy from Hydrogen, Hungerford, England.
9. Zeroavia.com. Hydrogen powered Aircraft Engines, Cotswold Airport. England.
10. Hybridairvehicles.com. Nonflammable Helium supported Aircraft, Doncaster, England.
11. Marinepowersystems.co.uk. Floating Wind Turbines, Swansea, Wales.
12. Orbitalmarine.com. Floating Tidal Power Turbines, Orkney and Nigg, Scotland,

Ted Dowdeswell, Member of Harbury Future Energy, February 2025

Renewable Electricity in Scotland - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

To date I have neglected the exciting role of renewable electricity generation in Scotland. There is a lot of good news to share.

In 2022 Scotland, with its population of five million, generated more renewable electricity during the year than it used. In addition, there is still one operational nuclear power station and limited generation from gas. The last coal power station closed in 2016.



Scotland therefore generates more electricity than it uses (22TWh) so when the wind is blowing Scotland 'exports' to England, and on occasions when the wind isn't blowing 'imports' gas fired electricity from England. After all we are one UK wide electricity grid. This is a remarkable turnaround. In 2000 only 12% of our electricity was from renewables. So, what changed?

Sources of Renewable Electricity

Hydro-electric

Hydro-electric schemes were built across the Highlands of Scotland in the 1950's. New dams were built to raise the water level in existing lochs or to create new reservoirs. These schemes are large, but not large enough to satisfy a booming economy demanding ever more electricity. Two pumped hydro schemes were also built to work in tandem with nuclear power stations. At night, when demand is low, the surplus power is used to pump water up to an upland reservoir. The pumps are reversed to enable generation during times of peak electricity demand, e.g. during adverts for Coronation Street! Their combined capacity is 17Gwh, which may sound large, but could only meet Scotland's electricity demand for around 6 hours.

After a 40-year hiatus, there are now several new pumped storage schemes in the planning stage, for example Coire Glas, above the Great Glen. With an ever-increasing variability in electricity supply there is a renewed interest in the economic and environmental case for new pump storage schemes. Investors are currently waiting for the new Long Duration Electricity Storage investment support scheme to come into effect before committing to construction.

Onshore Wind

The first large scale commercial windfarm was built at Hagshaw in 1995. 26 turbines had a total capacity of 16MW. But technology keeps on improving. These 26 turbines are in the process of being replaced by 14 larger, more powerful 6MW turbines with a total capacity of 80MW. That is a 900% increase in power output per turbine.

Onshore wind is the main source of electricity in Scotland, with 9.5GW out of a total renewables capacity of 15GW. There are over 4,000 large wind turbines. Most of these windfarms were granted planning permission for 25 years, so there is the potential to gradually repower these existing sites, and perhaps double the generation capacity from the same area of land.

Whitelee, not far from Glasgow, is the UK's largest windfarm comprising 215 turbines with a total capacity of 539MW. There are plans to enhance the site with battery storage to balance the local grid; and a 20MW solar farm to power an electrolyser to create hydrogen for heavy vehicles. If you are interested, there is a visitor centre, coffee shop and exhibition to visit.

Offshore Wind

There are just under 500 offshore wind turbines in the seas around Scotland with a capacity of 4.3GW. There is a target to increase this capacity to 11GW by 2030, with a potential for 45GW if all sites under consideration are built.

Whilst a typical onshore wind turbine has blades 50 metres long generating 3MW, offshore there are fewer planning restrictions. There are working offshore wind turbines with 115m long blades, with a capacity of 15MW.

Most of the existing turbines are fixed to the relatively shallow seabed up to 50 metres deep, but this restriction is being eliminated by successful trials of floating offshore wind turbines. They can be sited in deeper waters, restricted only by the length of anchor chains to moor them to the seabed. The Hywind project off Peterhead was the first pilot offshore wind farm in the world.

Marine Energy

The Orkney Islands host the European Marine Energy Centre, a world leading test and demonstration centre for wave and tidal technologies.

The 400 MW MeyGen project being built in phases in the Pentland Firth is the largest tidal stream project in the world. The energy generated by tidal stream is highly predictable, but still more expensive than windfarms.

Despite early attempts to generate electricity from wave power, the engineering challenges to build reliable devices in remote and stormy seas have so far proved insurmountable at reasonable cost.

Solar

Solar energy at Northern latitudes is highly variable. It can be extremely effective in the summer months, but rather marginal during the winter. 420 MW has been installed in Scotland on domestic and commercial roofs, and at solar farms mainly sited towards the sunnier east of the country. There are significant plans for future expansion, particularly as solar power can complement wind generated energy.

Policy Issues

Constraint payments

If there is too much electricity being generated in a locality, for example on a windy day with low power demand, then electricity generators can be paid a 'constraint payment' to stop generation. This is a valid market mechanism to balance variable supply and demand but has become a bit out of control as windfarms have been built faster than the long-distance transmission pylons that are necessary to get the power to customers. This is well recognised, and plans are in place to build new transmission lines to England. New pumped hydro storage schemes could also soak up this 'excess' electricity.

Why did renewables surge?

UK Government policy combined with supportive Scottish Government planning rules led to the surge in renewable generation in Scotland. The Carbon Price Floor levied a tax on carbon emission from power generation alongside the Contracts for Difference which is an auction scheme to promote the construction of new electricity generation assets. Once the carbon price floor came into effect, building onshore wind turbines became the cheapest form of new generation. Contracts for Difference provide an incentive by offering the investor a guaranteed price (subsidy) for selling electricity. If the electricity price rises above the agreed bid price, then the windfarm operator actually pays money back to the Government which helps to stabilise and reduce our bills.

The Future?

Even allowing for the expected increase in electricity demand from electric cars and heat pumps, Scotland has the potential to generate far more renewable electricity than can be used or exported through existing transmission lines. Another option is to use renewable electricity to power data centres, or to produce hydrogen, perhaps to export to industrial users in Germany or convert it for fuel for shipping.

Scotland has shown how a region can rapidly decarbonise its electricity power grid. This revolution was led by wind power. In many other regions it will be solar that leads the way. All you need is supportive government policies and adaptable power companies. This can be achieved at an affordable price, with the bonus of ending our need to import fossil fuels from potentially unstable regions of the world.



Statistics Scot Gov website: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/energy-statistics-for-scotland-q3-2024/pages/total-final-energy-consumption/>

Offshore wind: <https://www.offshorewindscotland.org.uk/the-offshore-wind-market-in-scotland/>

You might also enjoy my book, Carbon Choices, on the common-sense solutions to our climate and nature crises. Available from Amazon or a signed copy direct from me. I am donating one third of profits to rewilding projects.

If you have any ideas for future blogs, then please contact Neil at carbonchoices@gmail.com
[Renewable Electricity in Scotland](#)

Neil Kitching, January 2025

Thoughts from an Organic Farmer - News from the farm: Going Soft

We returned in the new year ready to resume picking our purple sprouting broccoli, only to find that the pigeons had beaten us to it. About half the heads had been pecked. In my youth, I would have set up a hide, put out some decoys to draw in the unsuspecting birds, and shot them out of the sky; vermin and supper, both solved. After a few sessions, the depleted flock would move on.

But as much as I like eating them, and once enjoyed the sport (sorry), I have always loved pigeons; their flapping, dipping flight and orr orr orr – orr orr contented coo on a summer's day. Like the once-common starling and sparrow, their numbers are now much depleted; in some areas, they are already regarded as endangered. I finally relinquished my gun after watching a pair of wood pigeons raise their first brood in the japonica outside my office, then build a chaotic nest on top of the cistern of our outside toilet for their second, rendering it unusable for the rest of the summer.

Similarly, I used to catch rabbits and hares for the pot – but having found fluff-ball leverets (baby hares) nested in my artichokes, my blood lust evaporated. I enjoy sharing our farm with them more. Today, they are so familiar that when disturbed, they no longer sprint over the horizon but run thirty yards and sit watching you. Maybe I will go soft on rats next.

I could blame my wife Geetie's civilizing, environmental influence (she has even objected to my collecting winkles). Or, at 64, I could blame falling testosterone levels. But I suspect that I am not alone in a growing, self-conscious awareness of the precariousness of our natural world. As much as I enjoy gathering mushrooms, mussels, winkles, hares, or pigeons for my supper, there are now just too many of us, and too little nature left, to keep doing this in the manner of our forebears. Some traditions need to be re-examined in a changed world. The days of care-free plundering are over. We must all become ecologists, with our hands as well as in our heads and hearts.

Geetie says we can afford the lost broccoli. I'm not so sure that those who plant and pick it agree, but the pigeons certainly would.

[News from the farm: Going soft - Wicked Leeks](#)

Guy Singh-Watson, January 2025, farmer, founder and creator of Riverford Organic Farm



Useful Links

- www.harburyenergy.co.uk
- [Warwickshire Low Carbon Network – Harbury Energy Initiative](#) (please note, the web link for the LCWN still comes up as Harbury Energy Initiative, but HEI is now incorporated into Harbury Future Energy.
- 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 \(heartofenglandcf.co.uk\)](#)
- [Solar Soft Loans | Heart of England CE \(hecommunityenergy.org\)](#) HECE's Solar Soft Loans are a subsidised investment model. They are only available to schools and community organisations.
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme Newsletter - Issue Three](#)
- [Community Buildings: Help Tackle Climate Change and Restore Nature - WALC - Town and Parish Council Support](#)
- [Climate and Nature - WALC - Town and Parish Council Support](#)
- [Key Environmental Dates: 2025 Calendar - WALC - Town and Parish Council Support](#)
- [The Social Impact Academy](#)

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 49: 11Dec24 Really Helping and Enabling Personal Environmental Action, Bob Earll | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 50: 18Dec24 Food Resilience, Daphne Du Cros | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter51: 08Jan25 - DESNZ Call for Evidence | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 52: 15Jan25 Knowledgebase -what parishes need to know, how to create a climate change roadmap | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 53: 22Jan25 "Harbour Farm and LNRS" | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 54: 29Jan25 Climate Emergency declared 5 years ago in Charlbury - what has happened since? | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 55: 05Jan25 Wight Community Energy | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 56: 12Feb25 "Smart" Net Zero approach, with David Morgan-Jones | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)

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



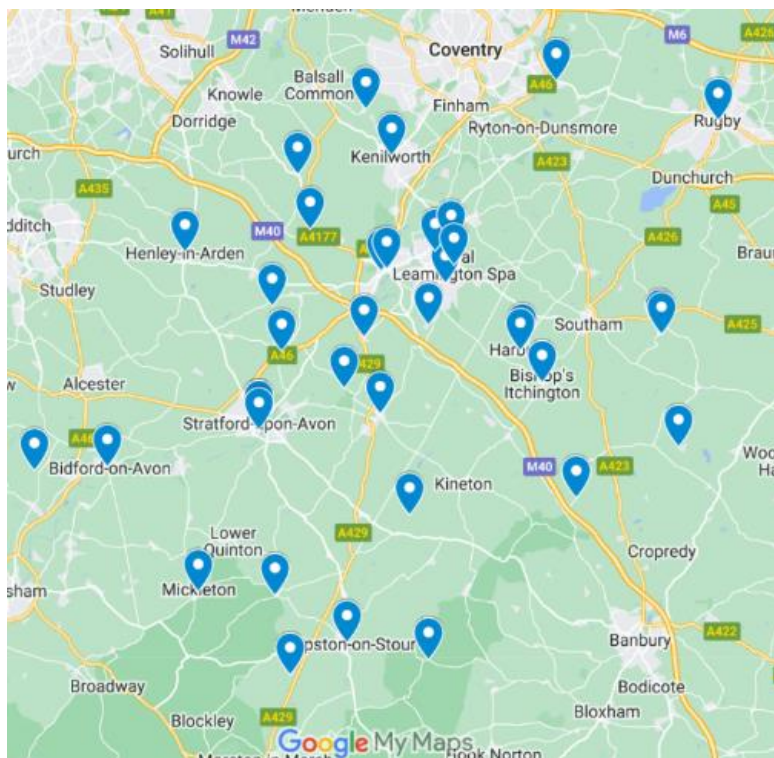
Want to get involved? – Warwickshire's Climate and Environmental Action Groups

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?





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.

