

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network

June / July 2025 – Issue – 50

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.

BBC Radio 4 Rare Earth Programme – Is Net Zero a toxic brand? Saturday 10th May 2025

The IPCC say the only way to stop global warming getting worse is if net zero is achieved. Unless the world reaches net zero emissions, global warming will continue to get worse. Bob Sherman from Harbury Future Energy and the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network joined Tom Heap, Helen Czerski and other panelists in a BBC radio 4 Rare Earth discussion on 'Net Zero'. The discussion started with a beginners guide on what net zero is. It moved on to UK legislation, carbon targets, the role of the Climate Change Committee and what other countries are doing to achieve net zero, then Bob talked briefly about the various projects community groups are getting involved with that will reduce emissions.

The panelists said that politicians massively underestimate public support on taking action on climate change. There is a long running survey asking how people feel about climate change resulting in data sets from large groups of people. Results show that the quiet majority ~ 80%+ of the population are concerned / very concerned about what is happening to the climate against a vocal, but miniscule 3-4% who are not at all concerned about the climate. A global survey found that many people would be willing to provide 1% of their income to support climate change work. People want to take action on climate change, be part of the solution as a collective endeavour, but this is not unconditional. They want politicians to provide leadership and the government to set the enabling frameworks so they can choose a low carbon option, such as transport systems. They imagined what it would be like in ten years time – with more renewables, electrification, ev charging infrastructure, heat pumps, better public transport, reduced miles in cars, better regulation, financial incentives, hydrogen and electricity becoming cheaper than gas.

No single solution will suit everyone and high tech options are often costly. It's not just about carbon, it's about affordable energy and healthy warm homes- a fundamental necessity for all people. There are millions of terraced houses that could benefit from street by street solutions. Bob referred to the Rossendale Valley Energy (RVE) Net Zero Terrace Streets programme which would decarbonise terrace houses in a one touch whole systems way (heat pumps, district heating, energy efficiency measures, renewables and flexibility). Net Zero Terrace Streets offers a no upfront cost solution ensuring people who need these benefits, get this solution first and fastest. The scheme is a high social, health and economic



impact model for underserved communities who are most at risk of Fuel poverty. The heat pump providers become the energy supplier for those who join the scheme. Listen to the whole programme at:

[Rare Earth - Is Net Zero a toxic brand? - BBC Sounds](#)

[Terraced Streets - Rossendale Valley Energy](#)

Summarised from the discussion

Climate Emergency UK – Scorecard Results for Warwickshire 2025

Jacky Lawrence, Napton Environmental Action Team and the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network, has been a volunteer Council Climate Action Scorecard assessor (Finance & Governance section) with Climate Emergency UK for two years and a volunteer auditor for one year.

The Council Climate Action Scorecards are an assessment of all UK councils on the actions they've taken towards net zero. The Scorecard assessment consists of 93 questions across 7 different sections and was created in consultation with over 90 different organisations and individuals including mySociety. The methodology can be found at this link [Methodology | Council Climate Scorecards](#).

Each council was marked against these criteria and given a right to reply before the scores underwent a final audit. This work was completed between July 2024 and March 2025. Unless otherwise stated, council climate action from 1st January 2020 up until 31st October 2024 was assessed.

Council	Warwickshire County Council	Warwick District Council	Stratford on Avon District Council	Rugby Borough Council	North Warwickshire Borough Council	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Section Questions	2025 versus 2023	2025 versus 2023	2025 versus 2023	2025 versus 2023	2025 versus 2023	2025 versus 2023
Buildings & Heating	54% ▲ 12	60% ▲ 5	60% ▲ 21	32% ▼ -18	23% ▲ 2	28% ▼ -11
Transport	13% ▼ -3	25% ▼ -2	15% --	0% ▲ 5	0% --	7% ▲ 13
Penalty marks	Warwickshire County Council incurred a penalty of 10% in this section	Warwick District Council incurred a penalty of 5% in this section	Stratford-on-Avon District Council incurred a penalty of 3% in this section	Rugby Borough Council incurred a penalty of 5% in this section	North Warwickshire Borough Council incurred a penalty of 5% in this section	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council incurred a penalty of 5% in this section
Planning & Land Use	0% --	66% ▲ 9	36% ▲ 11	32% ▼ -18	20% ▲ 2	5% --
Governance & Finance	36% --	40% ▼ -1	32% ▼ -17	11% ▲ 2	5% ▼ -8	10% ▲ 7
Biodiversity	40% ▲ 15	36% ▲ 26	18% --	23% ▼ -2	0% --	9% ▼ -1
Collaboration & Engagement	68% ▲ 6	65% ▼ -9	54% ▲ 21	17% ▼ -24	24% ▼ -24	7% ▲ 5
Waste Reduction & Food	42% ▲ 25	44% ▲ 8	47% ▲ 19	33% --	25% --	25% ▲ 10
Total score	35% ▲ 6	53% ▲ 6	42% ▲ 12	25% ▼ -8	17% ▲ 1	15% --

For the county of Warwickshire -

- Warwick and Stratford on Avon District Councils scored highest in the Buildings & Heating section.
- Warwick District Council scored highest in Transport, Planning & Land Use and Governance & Finance.
- Warwickshire County Council scored highest in Biodiversity and Collaboration & Engagement sections.
- Stratford on Avon Council scored highest in the Waste Reduction & Food section.

The UK average for single tier and County Councils was:

Council	Single tier average	County average
Section Questions		
Buildings & Heating	54% ▲ 5	69% ▼ -1
Transport	25% ▲ 3	20% ▲ 2
Penalty marks		
Planning & Land Use	43% ▲ 8	-26% ▼ -1
Governance & Finance	34% ▲ 7	38% ▲ 4
Biodiversity	32% ▲ 5	43% ▲ 13
Collaboration & Engagement	54% ▲ 1	63% ▲ 3
Waste Reduction & Food	48% ▲ 11	50% ▲ 20
Total score	41% ▲ 6	40% ▲ 5

[Council Climate Action Scorecards | Climate Emergency UK](#)

Jacky Lawrence, Volunteer Assessor and Auditor, Climate Emergency -UK



The LCWN Steering Group are recruiting

The LCWN Steering group steers and guides the direction of the LCWN and **we are very interested in recruiting members** from the north of the county and anyone who may bring different experiences, perspectives and skills. If you are interested, **please get in touch** at lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com. The Steering Group meet infrequently and only when we have something of significance to discuss and it is possible to join on-line. To find out a little more about the other 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 \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

- To date, the LCWN have secured funding for community engagement events at: Harbury, Napton on the Hill, Henley-in-Arden, Church Lawford, Boddington, Kenilworth, Brailes, Cubbington, Wroxall, Lillington and two events at Wellesbourne.
- The aim of all LCWN events is to inspire the formation of new environmental groups to start in rural areas and provide useful information to enthuse existing groups.
- The RSA have supported these events through funding room hire, creating an Eventbrite link, helping design posters and promoting all events through their Fellows Network.

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. Get in touch for more details. email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

The 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.

[Sustainability at RSA House](#)

[Sustainability Network - The RSA](#)



Act on Energy

Warwickshire Energy Advice – We are encouraging residents across all of Warwickshire to phone for full energy information, advice and guidance - call our expert advisors.



Radio Teleswitching Service is being turned off on 30th June 2025 and Warwickshire is a hotspot for people who are at risk. Call us or your supplier today to see if you will be affected. You could risk your energy bills doubling, or your heating being disconnected if you have an RTS meter and don't contact your supplier before the deadline.



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

Harbury e-Wheels

Diary dates - Open Gardens in aid of Harbury e-Wheels is on **29th and 30th June**.

[Harbury Garden Walkabout | the National UK Open Gardens Directory](#)
[Open Gardens in Warwickshire | town and village Open Garden events running in the county](#)



Harbury Garden Walkabout

- 20 plus gardens open, some with teas, coffee, cakes, lunches and art exhibitions
- Harbury Windmill Tour Saturday 28 June (separate ticket pre-booking only)

Saturday 28 June (11am-6pm)
Sunday 29 June (12noon-6pm)

Entry by **Programme (£5)**

Available Monday 23 June from Harbury Village Library, High Street CV33 9HW

Proceeds to Harbury e-Wheels

Garden Organic – Rugby Community Champions

The Rugby Community Champions are starting to get busy with lots of events and stands coming up in the summer months. We had a great training session and a very successful herb growing workshop on Saturday 14th June. With lots of questions and attendees leaving with their own newly propagated herb plants to grow at home.

Please follow/like our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/rugbycommunitychampions>

Garden Organic will be working in partnership with Rugby Borough Council to increase biodiversity in the town, through engaging local people in organic gardening, whether that be in a community garden, allotment or their own growing spaces.

What to do in your garden this month:

Early summer in the garden is full of colourful new growth. If your first sowings have failed replace them with seeds sow directly in the warmed-up ground. If you have a pond, create shelter round the edges with plants for visiting water-loving wildlife to climb in and out without exposure. Harvest comfrey leaves to make your own liquid feed for tomatoes and other container grown plants.

Upcoming events:

Tuesday 22nd July – Community Sow and Grow, 10:30am-12:30pm, Rugby Library

Join us at Rugby Library for a hands-on family gardening workshop with Garden Organic where you can get started with growing your own vegetables! We'll talk about where to start and what you need, along with how to look after your new plants - the perfect way to celebrate the Unearthed: The Power of Garden exhibition which will be travelling around our libraries this year. Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-sow-and-grow-with-garden-organic-tickets-1306912774289>

Tuesday 19th August – Family Fun Day, 2:30-4:30pm, Wolston Library

Join the Community Champions at Wolston Library for an afternoon of activities. Drop in and enjoy some fun activities and learn about simple ways you can help the nature in your garden! Fun for all the family.

Heather Thomas, Rugby Community Champions, Garden Organic

Transition Town Rugby – Eco Hub

Library of Things, Every Tues, Thurs, Fri and Sat, Rugby Eco Hub.

- **Repair Café** - First and Third Saturday of the month at Rugby Eco Hub, Betts Hall, Claremont Centre, 43 Clifton Rd, Rugby CV21 3QE (entrance on Bath Street, opposite Lawrence Sheriff School), 10am -1pm [Repair Cafe](#)
- **Knitting Classes**, 1st and 3rd Thursday, 7-9pm, Starting 5th June [Rugby Eco Hub Knitting Classes](#)
- Every Monday and Tuesday from 16th June to 15th July: **Sewing Class**, The Eco Hub, 7pm - 9pm
- Fri 4th July: **Green Drinks**, The Seven Stars, CV21 2SH, from 7:30pm
- Thurs 17th July: **Discover the Spirit Within** Event, The Eco Hub, 7PM - 9PM
- Mon 28th July: **Climate** Alliance Meeting, The Eco Hub, 7:30PM - 9PM
- **Gardening and Growing Group**, Saturdays, 10:30am -12:30pm at the Eco Hub



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

[Events](#)

[Home](#) | [Rugby Eco Hub](#)

Carrie Pailthorpe, Transition Town Rugby



Net Zero Stratford – Climate Hub

- [Climate Panel Meeting – Stratford District Council – Net Zero](#), Jul 01 2025, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, Stratford District Council Offices Council Chamber
- [Repair Cafe – Stratford upon Avon – Net Zero](#), **July 5th 2025**, at the Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford, 10am-2pm
- [Net Zero – Stratford's home for community climate action](#)

Events

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



Janet Palmer, Net Zero Stratford

Action 21 - Turning Waste into Worth: Action 21's Community

Impact

At Action 21, we are proud to promote sustainable living through grassroots action—empowering communities while protecting the environment. This year, thanks to the passion and commitment of our volunteers, we've diverted over 135 tonnes of material from landfill, preventing an estimated 250 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent emissions.



Our Reuse and Upcycling initiatives have transformed landfill-bound items into affordable, functional goods for local people—reducing waste, encouraging circular economy practices, and promoting responsible consumption.

We're also enabling sustainable mobility through our community bike workshop, where refurbished bicycles are made accessible to those who need them. This initiative supports low-carbon transport, encourages active lifestyles, and strengthens mobility equity across our region.

In addition, our regenerative community garden is flourishing as a space for learning, wellbeing, and biodiversity. It connects people to nature, promotes healthy food choices, and serves as a living example of how local action can restore and sustain our natural ecosystems.

Together, these efforts highlight how small actions—driven by volunteers and supported by our community—can lead to powerful environmental and social outcomes.

Action 21

Louise Haycock, Action 21

Sustainable Brailes – Repair Café, 6th September

We run a Repair Café more or less every two months. The next one is 6th September at the Pavilion in Brailes, 10-12. We usually have sewers, gadget menders, bike repairs and lots of refreshments.

Sustainable Brailes – Brailes Village



Sue Davies, Sustainable Brailes

The Bicycle Bus / Cycle Infinity - Sunday 29th June, 2 p.m.

Starting and finishing at the Stratford Greenway. Thanks to a grant from Stratford Town Trust, Cycle Infinity CIC proudly hosts this completely FREE 12 mile bike ride, showcasing the brilliant Stratford Greenway whilst highlighting the villages of Fernleigh Park and Meon Vale.

The entire route is off-road, demonstrating that people can enjoy a safe, sustainable mode of travel from Stratford to Meon Vale (or Meon Vale to Stratford!). The ride offers an opportunity to experience the great outdoors and a chance for a social catch up with friends and family whilst being active.

At the halfway point we will have a pit stop at the Meon Vale Pavilion cafe where we will hear about some of the sustainability work in and around the new village, reward yourself with a drink and a piece of yummy cake or ice cream. We will then return to the start point. Marshals will be riding along to help keep everyone safe.

For more information follow this link to the Facebook event page and to register interest –

[The Great Big Green Week FREE bike ride - Stratford Greenway \(12 miles\) | Facebook](#)

Garmin route: connect.garmin.com/modern/course/359537845



Sunday 29.06.2025
2pm from Stratford Greenway Car Park

An intermediate ride along the length of Stratford Greenway, including a stop at Meon Vale Pavilion 3pm.

Riders can also join us there for the second half. 12 miles total.

Garmin route:
connect.garmin.com/modern/course/359537845



We could help your school start a bicycle bus initiative. Get in touch at simon@thebicyclebus.co.uk

Simon Storey

Founder of The Bicycle Bus, Founding Director Cycle Infinity CIC, Bicycle Mayor Warwick District,

Savers / Rotary - 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



Rotary



River Hope

- ['Ocean' screening opens the 2025 Big Picture Film Festival - River Hope](#), Thursday 28th August 2025, 19:30 - 21:00, [The Bear Pit](#) Rother Street, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6LU
- ['Flow' screening in the Big Picture Film Festival - River Hope](#), Saturday 30th August 2025, 11:00 - 12:00, [Holy Trinity Parish Centre](#), 7 Trinity Close, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6BQ
- [Writing water - River Hope](#), Tuesday 16th September 2025, 10:30 - 13:00, [Brook Arts Hub](#), 24 Cottage Lane, Shotton, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 9HH, Warwickshire

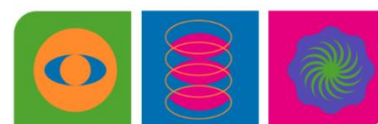
info@riverhope.org.uk

[River Hope | A community creative process in Stratford-on-Avon District](#)



Warwickshire County Council - Park Life Reads

Celebrate Summer at the Park Life Reads Festival with WCC!
Warwickshire Libraries Seeks Local Experts for its annual family festival.
Be part of something special this summer! Warwickshire Libraries invites passionate community members to join us for Park Life Reads – a free family festival celebrating the perfect blend of literacy, wellbeing, and sustainability..



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Warwickshire Libraries

August 9th, 2025, Riversley Park, Nuneaton

We're looking for enthusiastic individuals and organisations to enhance our festival atmosphere with:

- **Expert advice booths** - sharing knowledge with neighbours
- **Pop-up Repair Cafés** - giving treasured items new life
- **Green-themed activities** - inspiring eco-conscious fun for all ages

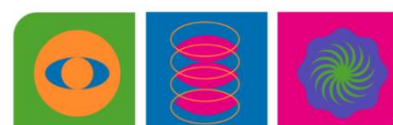
Your participation will help create a vibrant community space where families can discover the joy of reading while embracing sustainable living practices.

Have skills to share? This is your opportunity to connect with the community and inspire positive change. Ready to get involved? Complete our brief form at: [Park Life Reads 2025 Nuneaton](#). *Members of the LCWN will be there too.*

Join us in making Park Life Reads an unforgettable celebration of community, creativity, and care for our planet!

Green Libraries Week

Join Warwickshire's Green Revolution! **Calling All Local Sustainability Experts**



DISCOVER | CONNECT | IMAGINE
Warwickshire Libraries

This October, be part of something transformative. Warwickshire Libraries is searching for passionate sustainability champions to power our **Green Libraries Week Campaign running between 27th October – 2nd November, 2025.**

Your expertise could inspire an entire community to embrace greener living. We're seeking individuals as follows:

- **Repair café wizards** who can show others how to fix instead of discard
- **Energy advisors** offering practical solutions to lower bills and carbon footprints
- **Renewable energy enthusiasts** willing to share real-world experiences
- **Green speakers** for our community coffee morning series



Whether you have professional credentials or hands-on experience, your knowledge matters. Help us create a ripple effect of positive change across Warwickshire. *Members of the LCWN Steering Group will be there too.*

Ready to make a difference? Complete our quick form at: [Green Libraries Week](#)
Together, we can build a more sustainable future—one library at a time.

Listen to Sustainable Warwickshire podcasts on Spotify or Apple or visit
<https://sustainablewarwickshire.podbean.com/>

[Sustainable Warwickshire | Warwickshire County Council](#)

[Warwickshire Sustainability Newsletter - May 2025 Edition](#)

Sarah Stear, Head of Climate Change & Sustainability, WCC

South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme

In 2022, Warwick and Stratford District Councils set out the purpose of taking part in the South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme (SW LCEP) as follows:

“They were aware that they hear more from their urban communities, while the hopes, aspirations, barriers and support needs towards a just transition in their rural communities was less well sighted. They additionally acknowledged that rural communities face specific challenges and opportunities as they respond to climate change, so need specific support to enable a place-based, just, rural transition.”



SW LCEP will host an event on Friday 17th October 2025 at Leamington Town Hall. The event will bring everyone together to shape a coordinated, community-driven approach to climate and nature action.

- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme Newsletter](#) (issue One)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme Newsletter - Issue Two](#)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme Newsletter - Issue Three](#)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme Newsletter - Issue Four](#)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme Newsletter - Issue Four](#) (which links to issue 5)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme - Issue Six](#)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme - Issue Seven](#)
- [South Warwickshire: Council and Community Acting for Climate and Nature - WALC - Town and Parish Council Support](#)

Claudine Pearson, WALC

Ted's Tech - Storing intermittent Renewable Energy

To prevent us from burning more Fossil Fuels for Energy there is an urgent need to find low priced ways to store the excesses of intermittent Renewable Energy.

The wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine all the time, so we need to save the excess energy when the Grid doesn't need it for times when it does. Batteries are an excellent means of storing but they cannot efficiently do so for weeks at a time.

Pumped Hydro Storage, where surplus electricity is used to pump water up into a high reservoir and then released back down through turbines to generate electricity when energy is required is a good system but requires hills for the reservoirs! For efficiency the electricity needs to be generated close to where it is going to be used. A number of companies are working to do this.

High View Power we have looked at before, headquartered in London and now with offices in Australia and the Middle East have already installed a Grid connected long duration storage unit at Carrington near Manchester with one more planned in England and two in Scotland. Their system of storage is by compressing and cooling air until it becomes a liquid! It expands by 700 times when released through turbines, and requires only a small area of land for installation near a grid connection.

[Home | Highview Power](#)



Another long duration storage company, Gravitricity have a grid connected demonstration unit installed near Edinburgh. Their system can be installed in old coal mine shafts, winding up an extremely heavy weight using surplus renewable electricity and letting it back down to generate electricity when required, one being planned at Knapton in Yorkshire. (North Warwickshire has old coal mine shafts - do any of our groups have connections?)

They also have plans for the use of old mine shafts for Hydrogen storage.

[Gravitricity – Renewable Energy Storage](#)



Hydrogen as another means of long duration energy storage. A Glasgow based company Clyde Hydrogen has the potential to match Renewable Energy with Hydrogen production in a more productive way than currently possible. Their system produces and captures both Hydrogen and Oxygen, the Hydrogen being produced at high pressure, reducing the energy needed to compress it for storage.

[Clyde Hydrogen – Building better green hydrogen production systems](#)



Turn off the tap before you start mopping up! What Tap? This time it is our excessive use of Fossil Fuels - releasing carbon captured by nature billions of years ago!

Ted Dowdeswell, Harbury Future Energy

Ian's Tech - AeroBarrier

My son and girlfriend have gutted their new house purchase [built around 1940s/50s] with a view to renovation/ retrofit, making it as low energy as possible. They have currently laid pipework for underfloor heating but otherwise it's mainly bare brick walls!

AEROBARRIER.UK



In order to prepare for fitting a heat pump and MVHR [Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery] they have filled in all the obvious gaps in the walls and upstairs ceilings. The next step was to bring in a company called AeroBarrier, who I'd not heard of before so thought it worth a brief description.

Their process is to pressurise the property to measure its leakage in ACH [air changes per hour] and then to release an aerosol which will fill in gaps up to 12mm. They continue the process until the required ACH is achieved.

The product is described as a water borne organic acrylic compound on the AeroBarrier website, and several standards are quoted for use including schools and hospitals. The process isn't cheap, but my son's ACH was reduced from 10.4 to 0.4 according to their measurements. Wow, well into Passivhaus territory!

It will be a while before the whole job is completed and energy data becomes available but what an interesting (and hopefully effective) treatment for an older property. <https://www.aerobarrieruk.co.uk/>

Ian Wood, CLEAN

Funding Opportunities

Leamington Spa Town Council - Climate Change Grant

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

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](#)

[Climate Change Grants | Royal Leamington Spa Town Council](#)

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

Stephen Marks, Town Clerk, Royal Leamington Spa Town Council

Severn Trent Community Fund

The Severn Trent Community Fund is supporting local charities and community groups with £2million a year.

[Severn Trent Community Fund | About Us | Severn Trent Water](#)

[New project funding | Severn Trent Community Fund | About Us | Severn Trent Water](#)



Tomorrow's Climate Scientists

Schools can apply for grants of up to £3,000 to run investigative STEM projects in partnership with STEM professionals from academia or industry.

[Tomorrow's Climate Scientists | Royal Society](#)

The Big Bike Revival is an intervention for adults aimed at encouraging an uptake in cycling.

[How to deliver our grant funded programme The Big Bike Revival | Cycling UK](#)

The Naturesave Trust are looking for grant applications from charities, community groups, and organisations who are working to connect communities to nature

[The Naturesave Trust - Naturesave Insurance](#)

The Woodland Trust want to make sure everybody in the UK has the chance to plant a tree. So they're giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities.

[Free Trees for Schools and Communities - Woodland Trust](#)

Architectural Heritage Fund

[£5 million Heritage Revival Fund announced to breathe new life into historic buildings across England | The Architectural Heritage Fund](#)

This **Government Grant** is for state-funded schools and education institutions to install electric vehicle chargepoint sockets at their site(s).

[Workplace Charging Scheme for state-funded education institutions - GOV-UK Find a grant](#)

National Lottery Climate Action Fund

[Climate Action Fund - Our Shared Future | The National Lottery Community Fund](#)

Big Issue Invest is offering loan finance between £20,000 to £200,000 to social enterprises and charities in England, for energy efficiency and renewable energy installation.

[Big Energy Saving Loans - Big Issue](#)

Octopus Capital in partnership with Homes England, making it easier for SME developers to build high-quality, energy-efficient homes.

[Greener Homes Alliance | Octopus Capital](#)

The Stobart Sustainability Fund is aimed at supporting community-led sustainability projects and initiatives lead by non-profit organisations, community groups and educational facilities, such as schools and colleges, to help them transform their local community through projects that tackle climate change, reduce carbon emissions or that protect and enhance the environment.

[The Stobart Sustainability Fund - Stobart](#)

The Powering Communities Fund – gives grants of up to £3,750 to help turn community energy projects into reality.

[Grant Funding Support For UK Community Energy Group](#)

[Electrical Safety Fund | Electrical Safety First](#)

[Energy Resilience Fund - Power to Change](#)



Scotland: Beautiful but Ecologically Degraded? - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

Is this an accurate description of Scotland? Are we really one of the most ecologically degraded countries in the world? Does rewilding offer hope?

I keep reading references to Scotland being the 212th out of 240 least biodiverse countries and territories in the world; the UK being the worst country in the G7, worse even than China.

On further research, these statistics come from a study in 2021 by London's Natural History Museum. They attempted to measure a **biodiversity intactness index** which is the abundance of plants, fungi and animals today versus the abundance and species diversity that existed before human intervention. The global intactness was measured at 75% which doesn't sound too bad, but it is thought that you need over 90% to maintain properly functioning ecosystems and prevent species extinctions.



Of course, large areas of the world, away from intensive human impact, still score nearly 100% - the Northern Hemisphere tundra, many deserts and the remaining tropical forests. Clearly areas of urban development and intensive agriculture score much lower. The UK scored 51% (England 47%, Scotland 56%, Wales 51%). England was a bleak 233rd / 240.

The 2023 UK State of Nature Report seems to agree with this assessment. There are over 10,000 red list species in the UK (out of 70,000 known species) that are threatened with local extinction. Only 7% of woodlands and 25% of our peatlands are in good condition, whilst overall there has been a 19% decline in the abundance of terrestrial and freshwater species since the 1970s.

Is our ecology really degraded?

Let's look at our agriculture, woods, wetlands, peatlands and our rivers.

Intensive agriculture is the main culprit. There has been continued intensification of arable farmland, accelerated after the Second World War. More drainage, fertiliser, weedkillers, pesticides, fungicides and insecticides, and larger fields created by ripping out hedgerows. Weedkillers and insecticides are extremely effective at their job, but chemical droplets and dust can be blown by the wind well beyond their intended target areas, killing insects and causing stress to trees which weakens their resistance to pests and diseases. No insects, no birds, no food chain.

Almost all our historic woodlands have been destroyed by human activity over the centuries. Sheep graze approximately 45% of Scotland's land area (there are more sheep than humans in Scotland) and they effectively prevent woodland from regenerating alongside nearly 1 million deer. Pockets of 'natural' woodland exist but are often degraded, that is, there are few or no young trees that are required for the long-term health of the woodland.

Landowners have dug drainage ditches across huge swathes of the countryside. This includes the virtual destruction of all raised bogs (Flanders Moss is a tiny fraction of its former size). In the uplands of Scotland and northern England, drainage ditches have helped to dry out the extensive tracts of peat which once absorbed carbon from the atmosphere but are now disintegrating and releasing that carbon into the atmosphere.

14% of Scotland's land is used primarily for red deer to graze and a further 12% is managed specifically for grouse. Both are shot for sport, and for limited human consumption. Landowners regularly burn patches of heather moorland to encourage new growth to provide a better habitat for grouse. Few other species can live in this managed environment. Illegal persecution of raptors continues on some estates.

Our upland rivers have lost their crucial riparian woodland, whilst drainage speeds up run off and increases peak river flows. Farmers and Councils have canalised our lowland rivers to create more land for agriculture and to protect farms and towns from flooding. Rivers, like my local Allan Water, may look scenic but are prone to flash flooding with peat and silt creating poor conditions for fish.

Over the centuries, humans have hunted all our large predators to extinction – bear, wolf, lynx and sea-eagle. Many of our large herbivores are extinct too such as elk, auroch and bison. Basically, our natural ecosystems - the food chain or food web - are broken.

Invasive species can easily break into these broken ecosystems and run riot. Of particular concern is rhododendron ponticum which is established across Scotland, and in places has become the dominant species, shading out all others. Sadly, rhododendron is overrunning many of the pockets of remaining temperate rainforest in the west of Scotland.

Also, giant hogweed is marching up our riverbanks, again crowding out native species, but also creating a health risk to any humans or dogs that come into contact with it. There are many, many more invasive species of concern, too many to name here.

Yes, we have truly degraded our ecology.

But tourists flock to see Scotland's countryside?

We live in a green and pleasant land. Don't we?

This is the strange thing. Most tourists, in fact most locals, don't really perceive much of a problem. In fact, quite the opposite. They flock to Scotland, particularly the Highlands, to take photographs of our fantastic scenery, completely unaware of the underlying ecological degradation.

Our Highlands may look pretty but these purple clad heather moorlands, swathes of grass or bracken are not natural. Neither are the intensive sitka spruce plantations, or many of the fast-flowing rivers tumbling over a barren landscape.

The Scottish Highlands should be a mosaic of forest and clearings kept open by large herbivores, with meandering rivers full of salmon. In the west there should be the Atlantic rainforest, full of mosses and lichen, whilst the drier east would be more dominated by pine trees. The forest should gradually give way to heathland high up on the mountain tops. This transition zone still occurs in Norway but is virtually non-existent in the UK.



Rewilding creates hope

Rewilding, or regeneration, is an inclusive term that encompasses activities that help to restore functioning ecosystems. This includes action to rewet peatland, restore rivers, plant native trees, remove invasive species and reintroduce some lost species. The key to proper rewilding is to restore water into the landscape and introduce large herbivores and predators (or human induced control methods) to enable diverse woodland and clearings to thrive.

On farms, rewilding could include new ponds, hedgerows, native woodland, buffer zones along rivers and a reduction in fertiliser and pesticides.

There are certainly many examples of good rewilding practice across Scotland, but not enough.

The Scottish Rewilding Alliance estimates that around 2% of Scotland is undergoing some form of rewilding at present. They would like to set a target of 30% of our land and surrounding seas to be rewilded. On land, we probably can't rewild much more than 30% as we obviously do need land to grow food and timber intensively and to provide us with living space.

What about the economy?

Land managed for deer and grouse create relatively few jobs. Sheep farming is also an extensive activity. Forestry jobs are often filled by a mobile contractor workforce chasing the latest areas to be clear felled. Jobs have been lost in tourism due to the reduction in anglers catching fish caught from our rivers. But of course, rural jobs are locally important.

However, campaigners argue with some justification that rewilding initiatives create more jobs than are lost. I guess this will vary significantly from site to site. Rewilding certainly can improve land productivity which could increase tree growth, fishing and hunting opportunities. Rewilding initiatives directly create jobs, but the biggest job increases are likely to occur in rural tourism businesses and local crafts.

Nature Based Solutions

There is an overlap between rewilding and nature-based solutions which are actions to work with natural systems to benefit people and nature. Our water companies have undertaken many good projects. For example, paying landowners to protect peatlands to reduce excessive levels of particles in the water supply, or working with farmers to reduce phosphorus run-off from cattle farms by better control over silage and manure and creating buffer strips between fields and rivers.

Conclusion

Better education for children and adults would be helpful. For example, ecology should be taught at school, including visits to rewilding sites and farms. That is the best way to learn. Agriculture, forestry and land-use subsidies should be dependent on farmers and landowners undertaking good environmental practices. I know this is complicated, but this should be an overriding principle.

More effort should be spent on preventing the spread of invasive species. If we don't, we will regret it later. If you'd like to support rewilding, then please take a look at Scotland: [Rewilding for nature, climate and people | SCOTLAND: The Big Picture](#) or [Rewilding Britain | Think Big. Act Wild.](#)

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
[Scotland: Beautiful, but ecologically degraded?](#)

Neil Kitching, Carbon Choices

Thoughts from an Organic Farmer – News from the farm: Mesmeric machines & conflicted progress

Those who romanticise field work normally haven't done much. It can be brutally hard. Over the last month, we have been joined by 24 seasonal workers to help us through summer. Making the work attractive, so they will return next year, takes management, imagination, and planning. Machines need less encouragement – but after the initial wonder has worn off, they may impoverish as well as enrich us.



After many early winters spent kneeling in the mud pulling carrots by hand, the ingenious engineering and smooth-flowing efficiency of our first mechanical carrot harvester was mesmerising. The muddy, dusty, ever-changing environment has slowed the advance of technology in farm fields, but even here, GPS guidance, cameras, and AI plant recognition software are reducing the need for labour.

Steerage hoes, which sever weeds between crop rows, haven't changed much since the 19th century versions that were pulled by horses. Camera and computer guidance has made them faster and less demanding of the operator, but they have still been largely unable to control 'in row' weeds that grow between crop plants. This week, helped by a government grant, we have taken the plunge and bought an £81k tractor-drawn Lemkin weeder. This uses cameras and a computer to steer the machine down the rows with millimetre precision, and then sends sickle-shaped blades darting into the gaps between the plants to kill 95% of the weeds.

Long-hoeing weeds by hand is my favourite field task. At 65, I reckon I am still the best on the farm. Witnessing the machine work up and down the rows with tireless efficiency, I feel sad at my own obsolescence. One tractor can now do the work of 20 people, without fatigue. It even works at night. With GPS guidance, the tractor driver's days may also be numbered. If these developments continue, more people will leave the land, and the economies of scale will increase, making life for small growers even harder. However, food will be cheaper. Weeds are a major threat to organic crops, and controlling them manually is difficult and expensive.

The Amish believe that only inventions which benefit society (a hard judgement for anyone to make) should be adopted. I'm not sure what they would think of the Lemkin, but, in a world shaped by market forces, resistance seems futile.

[News from the farm: Mesmeric machines & conflicted progress - Wicked Leeks](#)

Guy Singh-Watson, 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.
- [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](#)
- [Biodiversity Spring 2025 Newsletter - Download - Warwick District Council.](#)
- [Biodiversity newsletter - Summer 2025](#)
- [Action 21](#)
- [#TeamWilder story: Kayleigh and Community Action | Warwickshire Wildlife Trust](#)
- [#TeamWilder story: South Warwickshire Area Network | Warwickshire Wildlife Trust](#)
- [South Warwickshire Area Network for Wildlife \(SWAN\)](#)

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 75: 24Jun25 Water Harvesting for Allotments, with Henry Clark | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 74: 18Jun25 Create your own Nature Reserve, Ben Wielgus | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 73: 11Jun25 Postcode Revolution \(reprise\) with Jack Cooper | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 72: 04Jun25 Emergency Resilience | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 71: 28May25 update on Great Collaboration, Andrew Maliphant | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter 70: 21May25 Community Climate Mural, Maddie McGregor | 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

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

<https://www.facebook.com/Low-Carbon-Warwickshire-Network-101562702401683/>

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).

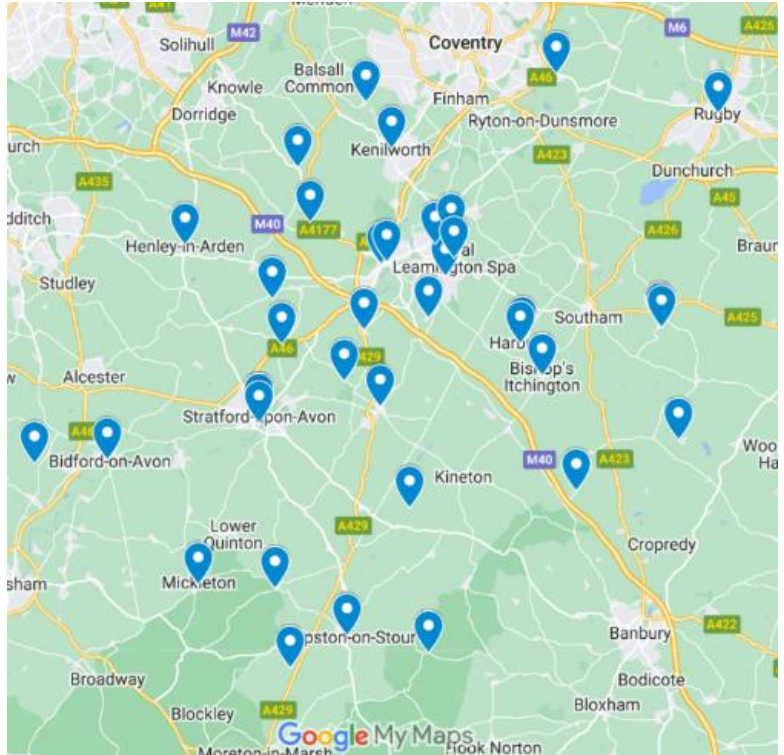
If there are still gaps or errors in your entry, or if you have a question, please let Ian know. email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

SearchOut Warwickshire is a mapping service run by Warwickshire County Council. You could register your group there too.

[Welcome to SearchOut – SearchOut](#)

SearchOut Warwickshire is there to help you find and access organisations, services and events that are local to you.

Things that will help you stay active, healthy, happy, and well. And make taking care of the health and wellbeing of you, your family, and friends a bit easier. [Environmental – SearchOut](#)



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.

