

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network

September 2025 – Issue – 52

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, two in Wellesbourne and Lillington with others being explored for Rugby and Bishops Tachbrook.

The Launch of the Handprints for Action Exhibition

The 'Handprints for Action' Exhibition was launched on Friday 5th September at Holy Trinity Church, Coventry by The Lord Mayor of Coventry, Rachel Lancaster. The launch was attended by visitors from Coventry and Warwickshire schools, Rotary Clubs, LCWN groups and the community. The handprint collages highlight the positive contributions people of all ages have made to help heal the environment in Coventry and Warwickshire. The collages will remain on display until the end of the year.



Jacky Lawrence, Savers environmental charity

Invitation to the LCWN Autumn Social, Saturday, October 4th, 2025, 12.30 p.m. till 3 p.m.

The Low Carbon Warwickshire Network Steering Group would like to invite you to a bring-and-share social lunch time gathering of community group members & friends of the RSA supported Low Carbon Warwickshire Network (LCWN). There is limited capacity so email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com for details of the venue. If you are attending, let us know what food you hope to bring and share and if you'd like us to try and arrange a car share for you.

The social will be an opportunity to chat to people about the LCWN, Harbury Future Energy project, Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN) the RSA, Let's Go Zero Schools, Action 21, the Warwickshire Climate Alliance, Tachbrook Residents' Action on Climate Change (TRACC), Napton Environmental Action Team, Napton Swift Group and Napton River Watch (NEAT), Savers charity, Shipston in Bloom, Stourvale for the Environment (SAFE), Make Stuff Happen, The Great Collaboration Banter sessions for Town and Parish Councils and hopefully the development of a Warwickshire Local Area Energy Plan.



Would you like to be a part of the LCWN Steering Group?

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 three 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](#)



Sustainable Wellesbourne - What's up with Fashion and Textiles?

Drop in or stay all day. Saturday 4th October 2025, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Wellesbourne Sports and Community Centre

Book tickets here: [What's Up With Fashion and Textiles!? Tickets, Sat 4 Oct 2025 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](#)

4th October 2025 Wellesbourne Sports & Community Centre, CV35 9RU PROGRAMME OF TALKS		
	10:00am	Doors Open
	10:15am	Introduction To The RSA Luke Dorian
	10:30am	Nothing To Something Ann McArthur from Crafternoon / Poppy Cascade
	11:15am	Patchwork With A Purpose Philip Anderson
	12:00pm	Eco-Fabrics Rosie Webb from Guthrie Ghani
	1:15pm	Brides To Babies Lynda Scriven
	2:00pm	A Stitch In Time Judith Chapman, Nicky Morley & Fizz Forbes-McGlen from Wellesbourne Repair Cafe



10am-3pm, Saturday, 4th October 2025
WELLESBOURNE SPORTS & COMMUNITY CENTRE
CV35 9RU

WHAT'S UP WITH FASHION & TEXTILES

FREE
EVENT



WORK-
SHOPS

TALKS

UPCYCLES

DEMOS

DROP IN OR STAY ALL DAY
FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES



Lucy Hartley, Sustainable Wellesbourne

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.



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, Act on Energy

Green Schools Project

The deadline for the Zero Carbon Schools 2025-26 programme was 26th September – so sign-up next year if you've missed out this year. Zero Carbon Schools helps schools transform the way they respond to the climate and nature crisis, putting climate education and action at the heart of school life.



The Nineveh Charitable Trust

The Nineveh Charitable Trust offers grants to UK schools, parent teacher associations and not-for-profit organisations for projects that help young people engage with the natural environment and develop a better understanding of the environment.



Projects include:

- outdoor learning initiatives (e.g. forest schools, farm visits, nature trails)
- school-based conservation activities (e.g. biodiversity projects, tree planting, school farms)
- eco-classrooms, sensory gardens, and activities that improve access to nature, especially for disadvantaged groups.

Grants can support both new and ongoing projects, and applications are accepted at any time, with quarterly review by the Trustees.

[Handout-v4b.pdf](#)

[THE NINEVEH CHARITABLE TRUST | THE NINEVEH CHARITABLE TRUST](#)

Generation Wild

WWT is a charity for wetlands and wildlife. Generation Wild has connected thousands of children and families with nature, improving well-being and increasing care and concern for nature. The first impact report outlines how and why the programme was developed, participant demographics and the impact the programme has had on the children, teachers and families that have taken part.



GENERATIONWild

[Our Impact — Generation Wild](#)

[GW-Phase-I-Report.pdf](#)

Tree Tools for Schools

Tree Tools for Schools provides resources to support a school's free Woodland Trust tree pack and inspire pupils with outdoor learning.



[Tree Tools for Schools – Woodland Trust](#)

[Activities - Woodland Trust](#)

[Free assembly download - Woodland Trust](#)

[Take part in the Green Tree Schools Award - Woodland Trust](#)

[Green Schools Project Autumn Term 1 News](#)

Georgina Belcher - Green Schools Project

Let's Go Zero Schools

Let's Go Zero provide free support to help schools in England create climate action plans in line with the DfE guidance to have these in place in all educational settings by 2025 – schools can register interest here: [Climate Action Advisors - Lets Go Zero](#)

[Join for zero carbon schools • Lets Go Zero](#)



- Hear from expert speakers on steps your school can take to become carbon zero. [Free online workshops and training for schools - Lets Go Zero](#)
- Let's Go Zero: Funding for nature projects is here Thursday, October 9, 2025, 3:45 - 4:30pm [Event registration form](#)



- Let's Go Zero: Save energy, save money, inspire pupils. Wednesday, October 15, 2025, 3:45 - 4:45pm
[Event registration form](#)
- Let's Go Zero Climate Action Plan creation workshop webinar for schools with colleagues from the DfE's Nature Park and Climate Ambassadors (date and time tbc but likely to be 22nd October 4-5pm).
- OVO foundation Nature Prize with LGZ [Our competitions - Lets Go Zero](#), **Deadline: 17 Nov 2025**
- Tree planting grants of between £250 and £2,500 from [Branching Out Fund - The Tree Council](#)
Deadline: 14 Nov 2025

CULTURE:

- Warwickshire Schools can get a funded place for Eco Schools (this covers the accreditation part of the process) via WCC apply here [Eco-Schools – Education and Early Years providers](#)
- Join the DfE's Sustainability Support for Education to access a network of sustainability resources to support your CAP. [Sustainability Support for Education](#)

CURRICULUM:

- ClimateEd are offering 5 x free 50 min sessions on climate literacy and action for Y6 or Y5 delivered by a volunteer with DBS clearance. It sounds like a really worthwhile programme having spoken to the local coordinator, Elliott. See flyer attached. Contact Elliott McDowell westmidlands@climateed.net if you'd like to know more.

Dear Primary School,

Climate Ed is a charity offering **free climate education to primary schools**. Since we began operating in the West Midlands region in September 2024, we have already worked with 26 primary schools and delivered our workshop programme to over 1600 pupils. You can learn more about us [here](#). You can also see some teacher testimonials provided after our workshops at the bottom of this email.

The programme we offer consists of five workshops spread over five weeks. The workshops are suitable for **Years 4** (in the summer term), **5 and 6**, and are **completely free**.

If you're interested in receiving our programme, or would just like to find out more, please get in touch through our [website](#) or by emailing westmidlands@climateed.net.

Best wishes,

Elliott McDowell

Programme Coordinator (West Midlands)

Climate Ed (Winner: Commitment to Climate Justice Award, Lambeth Civic Awards 2024 and Climate Champion Award, Southwark Civic Awards 2024)

*'The children were **thoroughly engaged and felt passionate about climate change**.'*
(Robin Hood Academy, Hall Green)

*'Climate Ed were fantastic and **inspired the class to care about climate change** even after the programme had finished.'*
(Christchurch CoE Primary School, Sparkbrook)

*'I enjoyed the group work aspect to the workshop, and that **the children had something to take home with them each week**.'* (Pegasus Primary, Castle Vale)

*'My class seemed to be fully engaged in the programme and could recall what they had learnt in the subsequent session, showing that **what they had learnt was embedded**.'*
(Chandos Primary School, Highgate)



Sarah Mills, Let's Go Zero



Solar for Schools

Solar for Schools was set up with the aim of educating the next generation on energy and decarbonisation. Putting solar panels on school rooftops and then using that solar - and the revenue from it - to enable that education, is the purpose behind Solar for Schools. The contact at Solar for Schools working with Warwickshire schools is Tom Darby tomd@solarforschools.co.uk
[Homepage - Solar for Schools UK](#)



Net Zero Stratford – Climate Hub

Net Zero Stratford is running another free Carbon Literacy course in October, with the support of the RSA. The course will take place at the Baptist Church in Payton Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6UA, on Saturday 18th October and Saturday 25th October, from 10am-2pm on both days. Participants must attend on both days to qualify for a certificate from the Carbon Literacy Project. Register on Eventbrite: [Carbon Literacy Training - accredited by the Carbon Literacy Project Tickets, Sat 18 Oct 2025 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](#)



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

- SDC Climate Panel Meeting – Stratford District Council, Nov 4th 2025 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, [Climate Panel Meeting – Stratford District Council – Net Zero](#)

Janet Palmer, Net Zero Stratford

South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme

The SWLCEP event at Leamington Spa Town Hall on Friday 17th October 2025 is designed to bring us together and shape a coordinated, community-driven approach to climate and nature action across South Warwickshire. The doors open at 9am for a 9:30am start. Close: 3pm.

There is a choice of three workshops.

1. Biodiversity
2. Adaptation/Flooding
3. Energy Efficiency/Retrofit



The keynote speaker will be sharing insights and inspiration from [Green and Healthy Frome](#), a partnership of Frome Medical Practice, Frome Town Council and Edventure Frome CIC. The project is funded by the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund.

Book your tickets here: [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Event Tickets, Fri 17 Oct 2025 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](#)

[South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme - Issue Nine](#)

Claudine Pearson, Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils

Rugby Eco Hub

- 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) [Repair Cafe](#)
- Every 1st and 3rd Thursday: Knitting Classes with Irina, The Eco Hub, 7pm - 9pm, [Rugby Eco Hub Knitting Classes](#)
- 4th October - Apple Pressing/ Apple Treats, The Eco Hub



- 15th October - Rugby in Bloom award ceremony (The Pleasance Herb Garden is nominated)
- [Library of Things](#)
- Volunteer opportunities [Live Volunteer Bulletin.docx - Google Docs](#)
- [Rugby Eco Hub Newsletter 4th September 2025](#)

Carrie Pailthorpe, Transition Town Rugby

Climate Emergency UK

Attendance at the Local Climate Report Launch & On- Line Conference is **£33.22**, Tuesday, November 4 · 12:30 - 3:30pm. The [Council Climate Action Scorecards](#) are a unique tool designed to inform citizens on local climate action

and encourage participation in democratic processes. The report details the state of local climate action, demonstrating where progress has been made and where councils are struggling to reduce emissions.

Paid tickets: While this event is paid for, if costs are a barrier, or you have previously been a volunteer with Climate Emergency UK, please select the **pay as you feel** ticket and offer any donation amount.

[The Local Climate Report Launch & Conference Tickets, Tue, Nov 4, 2025, at 12:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)



Sustainable Brailes – Repair Café, 6th September

We run a Repair Café more or less every two months 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

Kenilworth All Together Greener

KATG's next meeting is on Wednesday 15th October 2025, 7:30 p.m., at The Kenilworth Centre. It is on food and we will be looking at it with the help of local volunteer Food Champions who are trained and supported by Warwickshire County Council. They'll be telling us about WCC's Food Strategy and their role in its implementation. We expect discussion to range over affordability, access, education, choice, health and sustainability. So, if you are interested in any of these aspects - or just like food - please come along!

**Kenilworth
All Together
Greener**



Kenilworth All Together Greener	Food: affordability, access, education, choice, health, sustainability
	• What is the County Council's food strategy? • How can 'Food Champions' help realise its aims here? • Join us for a talk and discussion with Kenilworth's Food Champions
7.30pm Wed 15th Oct in the Kenilworth Centre All welcome! Free entry, donations appreciated	

[Kenilworth All Together Greener – The Kenilworth Centre](#)

Jan Burnell, Kenilworth All Together Greener

The Bicycle Bus

It is Cycle to School Week '25 from 13 - 17 October. Join thousands of families and schools pledging to swap the school run for pedal power. Find out everything you need to know:

[Cycle to School Week - Bikeability](#)

[Facebook](#)

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



Napton Environmental Action Team – Napton River Watch

CLEAN WATER IS PRECIOUS – Why test for pollution levels?



In recent years there has been a growing awareness and calls for action about the levels of pollution in our rivers, lakes and seas. There are widespread causes – but a core reason has been and is the quality of effluent both ‘processed’ and from spills into our rivers from sewage works – owned and operated by water companies.

In Warwickshire, Severn Trent is the responsible company both for the supply of clean water and the treatment of effluent. Publicly available data shows that their record of effluent spills both during extreme weather and at other times is very poor. As a result, a community led Citizen Science group – ‘Safe Avon’ was created in 2022 to start monitoring the river water quality at Tewksbury and upstream along the Warwickshire River Avon and its tributaries – the data from which is being used to challenge Severn Trent and help hold them to higher standards.

Currently there is weekly testing at over 40 locations. Napton and Stockton are in the headwaters of the River Stowe, which flows into the River Itchen (west of Southam), thence to the River Leam at Marton and the River Avon at Warwick.

Weekly testing at two local locations below Napton Sewage Works (since January ‘25) and off Welsh Rd East Southam (since March ‘25) consistently show ‘high’ or ‘very high’ levels of pollution from phosphates and to a lesser extent nitrates.

The following are extracts from the ‘Clean Water for Wildlife Technical Manual’ published by the Freshwater Habitats Trust.

“In the human modified environment, nutrients tend to be present in substantially greater abundance than would occur naturally. Over the last century, human derived nutrient sources have increased to such an extent that they dwarf natural nutrient.”

“In the United Kingdom around 90% of lowland surface freshwaters like rivers, streams and ponds have ecologically damaging levels of either nitrogen, phosphorus or both “

When we add more nutrients to water, we cause profound changes to the freshwater environment and many kinds of plants and animals cannot cope with these changed conditions. In summary, excess nutrients cause algae, fungi, bacteria and some tolerant water plants to grow more rapidly and become more abundant than they would naturally. The consequences of this are that intolerant species are smothered, outcompeted or directly poisoned resulting in many species becoming rarer. Often, high levels of nutrients lead to the loss of whole communities of large water plants, which has important knock-on consequences for animals that would normally live amongst those plants: their habitat and food sources disappears, and therefore so do they.

Locally, our polluted waters join with that from other tributaries with polluted waters downstream to Leamington (where there are efforts to achieve ‘Bathing Water Quality’) and beyond. Local efforts to improve water quality for wildlife diversity – would also help benefit leisure activities downstream (as well as fishing, kayaking etc).



The tables below show the number of spills from Severn Trent facilities into the River Stowe over for the five years 2020-2024 and the Napton River Watch test results. In 2021 effluent spills from Napton Sewage Works were the highest of any sewage works in England at 279 spills for a total of 6,046 hours. Thankfully matters have improved significantly since then.

HOW HAS NAPTON SEWAGE WORKS PERFORMED?

Published data does not include information of volume of effluent spilt or its composition

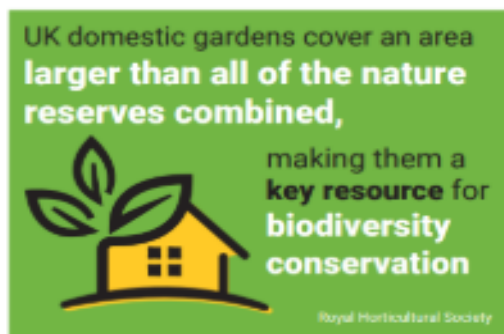
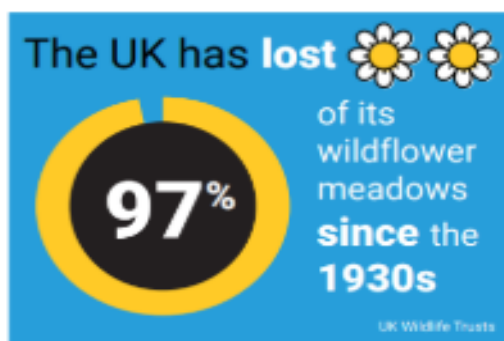
RECORD OF SPILLS FROM SEVERN TRENT FACILITIES										Source: Top of the Poops - based on Environment Agency Data	
Published data does not include volumes of discharge.	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		5 yr totals
	DUMPS	DURATION	DUMPS	DURATION	DUMPS	DURATION	DUMPS	DURATION	DUMPS	DURATION	DUMPS DURATION
River Stowe - 'Source to conf R Itchen' (DEFRA)											
Napton STW	Permit number: S/12/25765/R										
# Sewage Dumps	175		279		43		58		60		615
Total Hours Duration		3,959		6,046		466		324		507	11,302
Stockton SPS	Permit number: S/12/25046/O										
# Sewage Dumps	47		51		55		19		73		245
Total Hours Duration		n/a		386		395		445		955	2,181
Southam Banbury Rd, CSO	Permit number: S/12/07887/O										
# Sewage Dumps	n/a		9		11		14		19		53
Total Hours Duration		n/a		5		6		7		23	41
Southam SPS	Permit number: S/12/25045/O										
# Sewage Dumps	NOT	MONITORED	NOT	MONITORED	14		25		50		89
Total Hours Duration	NOT	MONITORED	NOT	MONITORED		93		184		588	865
			339	6,437	123	959	116	960	202	2,073	1,002 14,389
					Equivalent to ...			months >>>>>		2.84	19.7
					Averaging ...			times a week >		3.9	3.85

Separately, occasional river water testing by residents takes place at Long Itchington and Marton – and conversations are being had to see if these can develop into weekly testing.

RIVER STOWE WATER TESTING RESULTS March-August 2025	Electrical Conductivity micros µS/ cm	Electrical Conductivity micros µS/ cm	Nitrate ppm	Nitrate ppm	Phosphate ppm	Phosphate ppm
DATES	measured	measured	subjective ass't mt	subjective ass't mt	measured	measured
30/03/2025	864	796	2	2	0.31	0.41
06/04/2025	845	838	5	2	0.75	0.20
13/04/2025	813	780	5	5	0.53	0.18
20/04/2025	845	missed	5	missed	0.49	missed
27/04/2025	868	760	2	2	0.64	0.25
04/05/2025	862	800	5	0.5	0.43	0.32
11/05/2025	840	750	5	0.5	0.37	0.36
18/05/2025	897	772	5	0.5	0.51	0.29
25/05/2025	832	missed	2	missed	0.51	missed
31/05/2025	797	738	5	0.5	0.71	0.36
08/06/2025	870	730	5	2	1.01	0.34
15/06/2025	884	missed	5	missed	0.96	missed
22/06/2025	766	728	5	0.5	0.60	0.38
27/06/2025	938	710	10	0.5	0.74	0.31
06/07/2025	892	709	10	2	0.83	0.36
13/07/2025	862	783	10	2	0.69	0.33
20/07/2025	859	782	5	0.5	0.92	0.33
27/07/2025	821	756	10	0.5	0.95	0.34
03/08/2025	827	768	10	2	0.87	0.33
10/08/2025	855	774	10	0.5	0.74	0.23
17/08/2025	848	784	10	0.5	1.00	0.26
24/08/2025	714	853	10	0.5	0.67	0.25
31/08/2025	812	812	10	2	0.54	0.24
RANGES @ 31/08/25	714-938	709-853	2 to 10	0.5 to 5	0.31-1.01	0.18-0.41
AVERAGE / MEAN	844	771			0.69	0.30
MODE			5	0.5		

Jonathan Horsfield, Napton Environmental Action Team (NEAT)



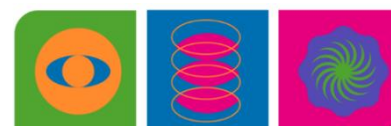


[Warwickshire County Council Makes Strides Towards Net Zero – Sustainable Warwickshire](#)

Green Libraries Week

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

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**.



DISCOVER | CONNECT | IMAGINE
Warwickshire Libraries

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

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 - August 2025 Edition](#)

Sarah Stear, Head of Climate Change & Sustainability, WCC

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



Savers Charity Number 1108191

Rotary



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

The Future is Bright - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

Solar power is cheap and clean. Solar pv is the fastest growing energy source on the Planet and will soon become ubiquitous. In this blog I explain why.



Falling Costs

The cost of electricity produced by solar power has been falling for the last two decades. This trend is likely to continue due to the increased efficiency of panels, lower cost of silicon, improved manufacturing techniques, and economies of scale – the higher the demand and deployment, the lower the cost. Costs have fallen by 80% in the last 10 years.

In the UK, electricity from solar farms can be sold for as little as 5p per kWh. In sunnier countries it can be produced at even lower prices – cheaper than any other renewable or fossil fuel competitor.

Solar Panel Efficiency

In the early days, standard silicon panels could convert around 6% of sunlight into useful electricity. By the early 1990's this had increased to 15%, which along with falling costs made them commercially competitive for the first time. Solar panels are now around 22% efficient. These improvements have been achieved through research and innovation into new materials, and cells that capture a wider range of the light spectrum. Innovation continues, for example, perovskite cells may capture even more than the current silicon-based panels.

Where can Solar be Deployed?

To maximise solar radiation at mid-latitudes, solar panels are best deployed at an angle, either placed on the ground or, in the northern hemisphere, on a south-facing sloping roof. Nearer the equator they can be deployed horizontally on roofs or laid flat on the ground. I have also seen solar panel arrays in Spain that track the sun during the day, increasing their output by 30%. Although not as efficient, they can be deployed vertically, for example on walls.

Solar is very compatible with offices, schools and other public buildings which are mostly occupied during the day. It is also compatible with the global increased demand for air conditioning which often coincides with hot and sunny weather.

Traditionally there were two main categories: solar farms and rooftop solar - sub-divided by commercial and domestic roofs. Now there are far more options:

- Floating solar panels on reservoirs can supplement hydro-electric power.
- Solar panels above irrigation channels help to reduce evaporation.
- In arid regions, solar panels power irrigation water pumps to replace diesel generators.
- Railway companies are deploying solar panels alongside their tracks, and they can be deployed along road verges to double up as sound barriers.
- Solar panels on the bonnet and roof of an electric vehicle can increase its range.
- France requires the owners of car parks to deploy solar panels above car park spaces, to feed into electric vehicle charging points or to the grid.
- Solar panels can be installed on multi-ownership apartment blocks with the electricity supplied to each apartment.
- Germany allows residents to deploy vertical plug-in solar panels on apartment balconies without any complicated electrical connection.

Innovation

Solar panels lose efficiency when they overheat under a hot sun. At the BE-ST innovation centre in Hamilton, water is circulated under the solar panels to reduce this overheating and increase the panels' efficiency. Then this warmer water is used to pre-heat a heat pump which also increases its efficiency for space heating.

Bifacial solar panels on solar farms capture sunlight on the front and rear surface, taking advantage of reflected sunlight.

Roof tiles can function as solar panels which enable all the roof area to generate electricity, also avoiding the extra weight of panels on a roof. Solar windows can generate electricity whilst allowing light to pass through. Imagine this deployed in every skyscraper.

An important new development is solar cells made from perovskite. This enables thinner and lighter panels and can use a wider range of the sun's rays. These ultra-thin and flexible panels can be integrated into clothing and fabrics for a wide range of new uses.

Manufacturing

Solar panels are primarily made of silicon, which is a semiconductor material that converts sunlight into electricity. Other key components include glass, which protects the cells, and aluminium, copper, and silver, used for the frame, wiring, and electrical contacts. Silicon is an abundant element that comes from sand and quartz of which there is no global shortage.

Global Growth

Electricity supplied by solar is growing exponentially. Rising from less than 1% in 2010, to 3% in 2020 to 7% in 2024. In 2024 solar generated 8% of electricity in China, 7% in the USA, and even 5% in the cloudy UK. The highest penetration of solar in the world is currently Namibia (38%), followed by Lebanon (31%) and



Hungary (24%). Sunny Saudi Arabia has a paltry 2%, with Algeria by the Sahara desert only 1%. There is clearly scope for much more growth. [Source: [Our World in Data](#)].

China has been adding solar capacity at an impressive rate. In 2024 it installed more new solar capacity than the rest of the world combined. There is a 'glut' of solar panels manufactured which they are now selling cheaply to countries like Pakistan.

Pakistan is one of the fastest growing solar countries in the world. Solar generation increased from 4% to over 10% in the 3 years to 2024. In 2024 alone, new solar added an additional one-third to its entire generating capacity.

In the UK 1.5 million homes have solar panels, around 5% of all houses. Solar farms take up around 0.1% of UK land which may increase to 0.4% in the coming decade to help meet the UK's net zero electricity target.

Limitations

All solar farms have an impact on land-use and habitat, and I do sympathise with not blanketing the countryside around villages. Solar farms have, quite correctly, been criticised for spoiling the countryside and taking away prime agricultural land, or for destroying rare desert habitat. However, if wildflowers grow beneath the panels, then they can increase pollinators like bees and moths. They can also be integrated with agriculture – agrivoltaics – providing a diversified income for farmers. Sheep can graze beneath solar arrays. In hot countries some crops grow better under solar arrays as the shade reduces harsh day time temperatures and reduces evaporation.

Of course, solar panels only operate during daylight hours and generate far less electricity when it is cloudy. For this reason, they work best in tandem with battery storage. The cost of batteries continues to fall, but that is for another blog.

At high latitudes there are extremes of daylight and hours of darkness which undermine the ability to rely on solar panels. Snow can also prevent solar panels from operating. Areas exposed to violent hailstorms are also at risk as hail can damage panels.

My Home Experience

In 2010 I bought twelve 175w solar panels generating a maximum of 2.1kW for £10,000, subsidised by a generous feed-in-tariff. In 2022, I bought a further ten 250w panels, generating a maximum of 2.4kW for £4,150.

- Allowing for inflation, this is a 74% reduction in cost per unit of electricity generated,
- The more recent panels, at 22% efficiency, generate more electricity from a smaller roof-space than my original 15% efficient panels.

I generate around 3,200kWh per year, more than the 2,900kWh an average household uses in the UK. Of course, I use more than this as our household is highly electrified with a heat pump and an electric vehicle.

The exciting development is that the second set of solar panels didn't require a subsidy to encourage me to buy them. If you have a south-facing roof they are now a worthwhile investment.

Solar Equity

Solar panels use energy directly from the sun. They are more efficient and cleaner than other forms of energy. Fossil fuels are produced indirectly from photosynthesis from the sun and millions of years of geological processes. When you burn fossil fuels, most of the energy is 'wasted' as heat and harmful gases are released. Reliance on fossil fuels has created a world of energy 'winners' and 'losers' and huge geopolitical instability. Solar will be more democratic. It is available in every country, and can be harnessed at scale by multi-national corporations but also by schools, community groups and individuals in their own homes.

The Future

Electricity direct from solar cannot be relied on 24/7. Gas or even hydrogen could provide back-up power, but if a country wants to rely on a near 100% renewable supply, then there are four possible courses of action:

1. Build long distance inter-connectors to import/export electricity.
2. Demand management services.
3. Storage.
4. Build over capacity.

Options 1, 2 and 3 will always have a limited duration and capacity. Historically most storage has been pumped hydro, but the cost of lithium-ion batteries keeps on falling and has become viable. A surprising conclusion is that building massive over capacity is a realistic proposition. If solar becomes so cheap to generate, then why not build sufficient capacity to supply our demand on cloudy days.

A combination of these 4 options will be the most cost and resource effective.

Conclusions

We have recently entered a 'new world' where solar is the cheapest form of electricity generation. This will speed up decarbonisation in wealthier countries and provides a golden opportunity for every citizen in less wealthy countries to access electricity including those living in remote rural areas.

I don't have many recommendations from this blog. Solar growth is happening through market economics without the need for further policy interventions. But I do hate to see new buildings constructed without any solar panels, or even worse, a couple of 'token' panels mandated to meet a minimum building regulation standard.

In the UK, all new homes should be built with the maximum number of solar panels. Also, subsidies, loans or an easy to access installation service should be offered to help those on lower incomes install panels on existing social and private houses.

The future is bright!

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 rewinding projects.

If you have any ideas for future blogs, then please contact Neil at carbonchoices@gmail.com

[The Future is Bright](#)

Neil Kitching, Carbon Choices



Thoughts from an Organic Farmer – News from the farm: Nutty project goes surprisingly well

In early 2022, we planted 1588 nut trees across four farms. Riverford customers who introduced their friends through our Refer a Friend scheme contributed to getting our inaugural agroforestry project off the ground – the money we would have spent on marketing to find new customers went instead towards planting trees, making us all winners.



We've since planted over 16,000 trees – a mixture of woodland and agroforestry – to help sequester carbon, improve soils, and boost biodiversity. Nut trees reduce the need for soil disturbance by moving from annual to long-term, perennial cropping; they also facilitate the move to a locally grown, plant-based diet and increase the total food production per acre. Economically it was risky and even this bold, environmentally committed farmer needed your support to take the plunge; a new crop grown in a new way brings a mountain of lessons to learn on site selection, varieties, protection from livestock, deer, hares, and squirrels, best methods for weed control, how to install irrigation, and how to harvest economically.

For the most part it's gone remarkably well. Despite two very dry summers, most of the trees have established with over half looking great and already starting to produce nuts. The big question now is how to harvest mechanically and at a cost that will enable us to be competitive (and maybe even persuade a few more Brits to eat a few more nuts along the way)? Most nuts are grown in drier climates, in monocultures sprayed with fungicides, insecticides, and herbicides, allowing them to be swept, blown, or sucked into crates or a trailer. A perennial crop that should be benefiting nature has been reduced to one that destroys it in a bid to reduce harvest costs and boost yields. Can we do better without becoming prohibitively expensive? It's unquestionably a challenge, perhaps involving smart engineering to shake the trees and catch the nuts before they touch our rough, damp ground.

We'll share more on how we crack the harvesting dilemma as things progress.

[News from the farm: Nutty project goes surprisingly well - Wicked Leeks](#)

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

Ted's Tech – An Impossible Dream – but it should be possible

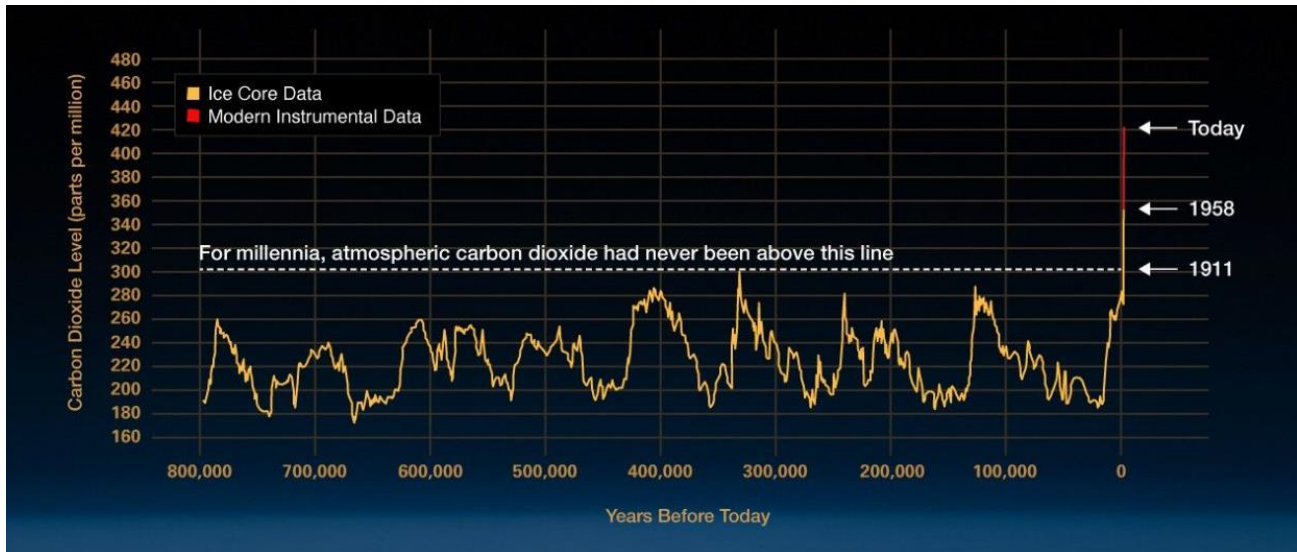
I dream that our leaders, politicians, scientists and entrepreneurs recognise the emergency of climate change, postpone going to the Moon and Mars and stop using fossil fuels in fighting wars until climate conditions have been stabilised and life on Earth has a future to look forward to.

Besides the overuse of fossil fuels, the scientific expertise could be deployed developing renewable energy technologies and possible removal of some CO₂ from our atmosphere. The thawing of the permafrost is releasing methane in vast quantities increasing the damage to our atmosphere. We need to devise a means of capturing as much as possible to convert to hydrogen for use as clean fuel and carbon to add to soil or other uses.

Since the start of the Industrial Revolution in the 18th Century the levels of carbon dioxide have rocketed up by 150 per cent since we started burning coal, oil and fossil gas in a big way, releasing CO₂ and methane, stored in the earth for millions of years.



Look at this graph provided by NASA showing earth's atmosphere over the last 800,000 years to see how urgent all "Net Zero targets" are.



<https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/carbon-dioxide/?intent=121>

If we caused the increase in temperature, do we have a chance of influencing it in the future? In my humble opinion I say yes! from all I have learned over the last 20 odd years since I retired but how?

Eliminate our use of Fossil fuels ASAP.

It is of little use telling the oil/gas companies to stop producing it, it is up to us to stop using it, if we do they will have no one to sell it to.

Our societies use vast amounts of energy but it will have to be from a renewable source with the possible exception of Nuclear which I understand causes little pollution of our atmosphere. Let's try and think of as many renewable energy sources as we can.

Hydro power turbines, wind turbines and PV panels are the obvious ones. Then there's geothermal heat from deep underground. Ground source heat pumps absorb heat from the ground. Air source heat pumps remove heat from the air and blow out cold air to be warmed again by the sun.

Some of the less obvious ones I think are walking and cycling using our renewable food sources for energy. Before fossil fuels were discovered we used horses powered only by renewable grasses, any others???

A useful and easy to understand App for keeping track of the renewable inputs to our electricity grid can be found at "Mclean Electrical/grid status". [Grid Status iOS App | Mclean Electrical](#). It is possible to keep track of our local West Midlands or see Northern Scotland where hydro and wind supply 100% of their power most of the time! At the moment it tells me Great Britains supply is 48% zero carbon, I have seen it as high as 80%.

In the future I believe hydrogen from underground sources will replace fossil fuels. It is already being found in various parts of the world in larger and larger quantities. Hydrogen when used produces power without emitting any CO₂ or Methane. It is strange that it has been ignored when companies have been drilling for

fossil fuels Just like in Mali, Africa 12 years ago they were drilling for water when only air gushed out of the hole - it was not air, it was later discovered to be hydrogen, since then the local village of Bourakebougou has been using electricity from a source emitting zero CO₂.

In many parts of our world there are strange small areas where nothing will grow known generally as “Fairy Circles” it has eventually been realised that growth has been prevented by natural Hydrogen seeping out from underground sources and escaping invisibly up through the air - lets get drilling!



[ASX:GHY - Fairy circles link to natural hydrogen](#)

Ted Dowdeswell, Harbury Future Energy

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](#)
- [Action 21](#)
- [Biodiversity newsletter - Autumn 2025](#)
- [LNRS | WCS LNP](#)
- [South Warwickshire Area Network for Wildlife \(SWAN\)](#)
- [South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Event Tickets, Fri 17 Oct 2025 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](#)
- [The Local Climate Report Launch & Conference Tickets, Tue, Nov 4, 2025, at 12:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- [Rugby Eco Hub Newsletter 4th September 2025](#)
- [Banter 88: 24Sep25 Local Partnerships, with Paul Bourgeois | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)

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 \(repaircafe.org\)](#)



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).

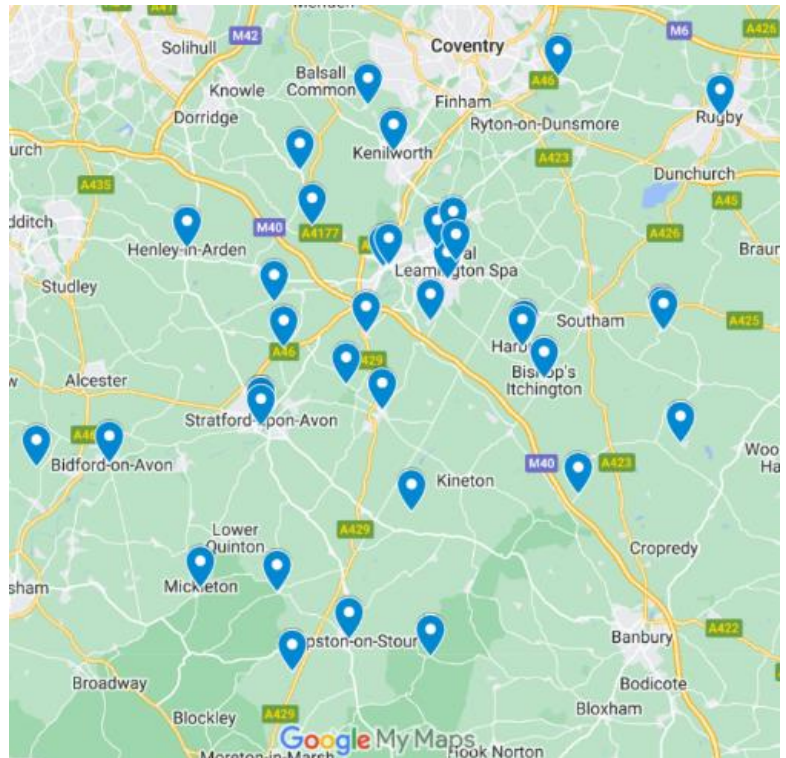
If there are still gaps or errors in your entry, or if you have a question, please let Ian know. email: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

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.

