

CONNECTING LOW CARBON GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network

June 2026 – Issue – 59

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.

LOW
CARBON
WARWICKSHIRE
NETWORK

Warwickshire Low Carbon Network – Harbury Energy Initiative

Welcome to the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network (LCWN) Newsletter.

The LCWN aims to provide guidance, information and inspiration for new and existing community groups. '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, Lillington and Alcester.

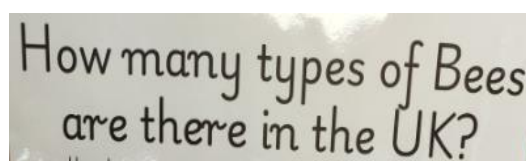
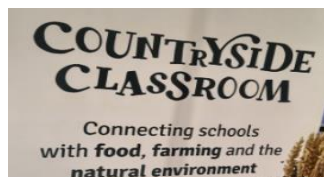
Alcester Town Council Climate and Nature Family Day

The Climate and Nature Family Day on Tuesday 9th June was an enjoyable and informative event with a chance to chat to friends old and new including: Low Carbon Warwickshire Network, Garden Organic, SWAN For Wildlife, Repair Café Alcester, CPRE, WCC Composting, Countryside Classroom, Alcester community fridge, River Arrow & Alne Revival (RAAR), Flood Action Group, Alcester Town Council, LEAF, Let's Go Zero, Act on Energy and Heart of England Community Energy.



I particularly enjoyed the engaging talk by Jo from Haven 4 Wildlife about plants in a changing climate and what they do (capture carbon, produce oxygen, cool urban areas, filter pollution, mitigate flooding, hold water in soil, insulate buildings, filter noise tolerate drought). [Facebook](#).

One of the craft activities for children was pebble painting. A large box of yellow painted pebbles and lots of paint pens were available to turn the yellow pebbles into bees. A great idea.



Jacky Lawrence, Napton Environmental Action Team



Sunflowers, Cake and Creativity:

A few thoughts on setting up a community environmental group

I was encouraged by Bob Sherman of Low Carbon Warwickshire Network to organise a public meeting (June 2023) to try and start an environmental group in my local community. I reached out and found a few first local supporters, who were brilliant, and together we put on an event which over 70 people attended and this led to the formation of CLEAN CIC (Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now) by the end of December 2023.



Since then, we have planted a community orchard, organised a thermal imaging camera loan scheme, set up a Friends of Mason Avenue Park group to improve biodiversity in a local park, and are about to adopt our relatively unplanted local library garden to make it into a garden of biodiversity.



These are all community driven projects which now each have their own WhatsApp groups and are largely community led and organised. We have also organised a couple of well-attended, green-themed educational and social events, and various spin-off environmental groups have resulted from our community.

Here is a summary of the happy accidents, the things we learned on the way, and some principles I'd learnt from my previous work as a poet and poetry activist. I hope something is useful for someone. Apologies for those things that seem blindingly obvious!

- Don't assume you're the first in your area or community to be doing environmental work. There will inevitably be others who are already active - or are trying to be. Reach out and invite them into your project and be ready and happy to work with them.
- Try and find at least 2 or 3 other people to help you through the first stages – so you can sit together round someone's kitchen table thinking about what you could do. This will be immensely encouraging.
- Try and think up (or Google search) one or two activities that will be eye-catching/ headline catching or that appeal to a wide range of people. This is especially handy near the start of a project as it will attract attention and get you known in the area.
- Try and think up a project that can be joined in in numerous different ways - in a green space, at home, in a school or old people's home etc. Growing 10,000 sunflowers was good in this respect - people could join in at our events, at home, in schools etc.
- Always make events family friendly, or include elements in your event that will suit families, and provide facilities for them, and make this clear in your publicity. Young people and families are the future after all. There are dozens of interesting ideas for sustainable/ environmental family crafts and games activities
- When your group formalises itself, in whatever way, try and find fabulous people for your Steering Group or Board and consider their range of skills and experience.
- If you can, try and use the arts in your events in some way - they are a joyous and powerful way of enlivening events as well as conveying messages and experience. Many people are tired of hearing all the facts, or find them confusing, but they might be moved by stories or experience.
- Let there be cake and provide for vegans and vegetarians. May your food always be labelled with ingredients lists.



- Find ways to make your events fun and joyous.
- Find ways to develop the project as a community as much as you can.
- Let there be a chatty WhatsApp group and try to avoid policing it in any way.
- Think of your benchmark as “professional” even though you’re doing it out of love and belief. Your project will earn a wider audience and greater respect if it is professional. Create professional looking publicity whenever possible.
- Don’t be British about publicity - that is, don’t be shy and reserved and worry about overpublicising. The rule of thumb used to be that you need to see publicity **seven times** to remember it - with our current busy screens many people think it’s now **10-15 times**.
- Find your allies and friends in councils and other organisations but respect everybody. Many want to help but are too busy, or their hands are tied by forces or policies beyond their control - if you work together you can help to untie them.
- Allow all partners time to get to know you, and to establish that you are committed, reliable and a stayer - they see lots of local initiatives come and go.
- Go rogue or guerrilla gardening if you wish — but it may make it more difficult for those in power to help you, and it’ll be a different journey you’ll be on. It may also be harder to include a wider community. But it could be equally valuable and fun!
- Do some bright and breezy networking - wander unannounced through doors into local projects with a big smile and if they’re not looking too busy say breezily “Do you fancy doing x together? We’re a local group who like doing stuff etc.
- Involve the community in decision making at the bigger level (what activities people want etc) but be bold enough to take micro decisions yourself. Be aware that quite a lot of people do simply want something provided as a nice environmental activity ready to do and don’t want to be too involved in the minutiae (and hours) of organising stuff.
- Appreciate and respect that volunteer enthusiasm is completely genuine even if volunteer time might be hard to find. Many may want a project to happen, and love the idea, but when it comes to it few may have time. Don’t worry. This is standard. Be endlessly encouraged by the enthusiasm and endlessly not put off by the reality that people have busy lives. Tell people not to worry and see you soon.
- Use local press whenever you can. Use social media as much as you can.
- If you’re an expert, be discreet or humble with your expertise - there are a lot of environmental/ gardening experts out there – so I reckon advise others at your own risk. Or advise with a light touch and don’t take issue if you are corrected. There are many versions of the truth!
- Recognise that not everyone may believe in your cause as strongly as you do but welcome them equally. Be careful to remember that everyone is at a different stage of their environmentally active journey - if you’re only just starting out you will want to feel even more encouraged and welcomed.
- Always be enthusiastic, even when your back is feeling sore or you’ve drunk too much the night before.
- Don’t think there are shortcuts for the investment of time. Everything good takes a lot of time. If you can, find other people with time who can help you.
- Always thank people warmly after events and celebrate with photos (making sure that due safeguarding and permissions have been done).
- Be serious about your work and your intent. But don’t always be over serious. Don’t be over earnest.
- Find a climate change comedian if you can. Confess your climate change sins together. Laughter is the best medicine.
- Be aware of who your local demographic is and ignore this at your own risk.



- Try and find some funding.
- Take all the advice you can from WCAVA and others.
- Ignore all these things. Feel free to do it in whatever way suits you. Work to the strengths of your personality and interests. If you love butterflies concentrate on butterflies. If you have a local community group that is 65 + talk to them about what they'd like etc., if you want to just do something with 1 or 2 people that is an equally wonderful thing. When a lot of people do a little then a little quickly becomes a lot.

GO ECO

(Please join in)

If you think dolphins are fantastic
Don't fill the seas with plastic
Go Eco

If you think Planet Earth's a treasure
Make looking after it your pleasure
Go Eco

If you love elephants and emus
Campaign for wildlife issues
Go Eco

Walk more, bus more, leave your Porsches
Save more natural resources
Go Eco

Eat more local fruit and veg
Wear solar panels on your head
Go Eco

Plant trees, turn off taps and lights
Try to make fewer flights
Go Eco

Buy less stuff, and less stuff in packets
Wear more twice recycled jackets
Go Eco

If everyone does their bit
Together we can save the planet
Go Eco

If you've time, please sign petitions
Put pressure on those politicians
Go Eco

If you want to be cool and trendy
Be environmentally friendly
Go Eco

CLEAN (Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now) always welcomes new members -for more info, or to join our WhatsApp group, please message Matt on 077656 84941



Matt Black, CLEAN CIC



Come & Plant

flowers and herbs

Lillington Library Community Garden

LAUNCH EVENT

Sunday 28th June 10.30am - 2.00pm



Launch moment 10.30am
 Free drop-in event for all ages.
 Stay 10 minutes or longer
 All equipment and plants provided
 Free refreshments
 Children must be accompanied

Any more info?
 Ask Matt
 077656 84941

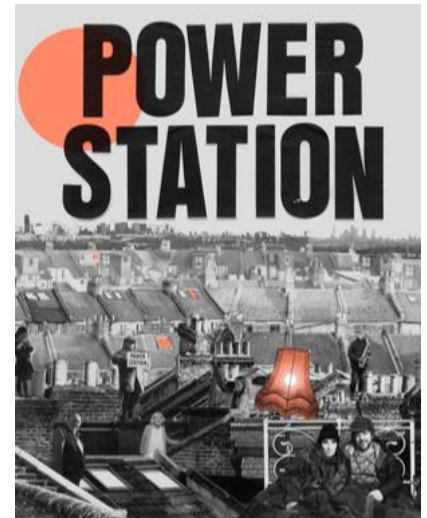


Stratford Climate Action, POWER STATION film showing at Talton Lodge — Thursday 4th June 2026 – part of Great Big Green Week 2026

What motivated a couple of artists to sleep on top of their terraced house in Walthamstow (not in the house, but actually on the roof)?

We found the answer during a recent screening of the documentary “Power Station”, directed by Hilary Powell and Daniel Edelstyn. The idea was to raise enough money to bring solar panels to the whole street and subsequently help their local primary school by installing solar panels there too. They succeeded in doing this, but not before a lot of bad weather (it’s very cold and wet on a roof in November) and by encouraging the local school to record a Christmas song to raise funds.

Although many of us feel frustrated when policymakers aren’t acting fast enough in the face of the climate crisis, Dan and Hilary show how communities can act together and start to sort things out for themselves. Hopefully politicians will follow.



After watching “Power Station”, we spoke to Daniel Edelsteyn on Zoom and asked questions about the making of the film and his future plans. Here is a summary of a few of the questions posed by members of the audience and Daniel’s answers:

Q: What sort of set-up do you have?

A: We run a community interest company (CIC) to organise our cultural work of making art and films, but we’ve also set up a community benefit society, a type of co-op. Local people can buy shares in the community benefit society and vote on decisions. Money is raised that is then invested locally. It’s a very democratic form of business. 130 streets, apart from ours, are now interested in becoming “power stations”. We’re going to be applying to Great British Energy as a way of innovating or testing out various concepts, and so we’ll probably do that through the community benefit society.

Q: How do you and Hilary keep yourselves motivated?

A: What gives us the impetus to carry on? Well, I mean if I’m completely honest, first of all we set ourselves a job, then we film that we’ve decided to do a job, and then it becomes too embarrassing to go backwards...! And inviting others to observe an event changes the nature of the event itself. It’s important to live outside of your comfort zone, for the times we’re in now, because there’s too much risk. In fact, it feels as if the greatest risk for our future is that we don’t radically change the way we think and live, and actually I think it was having kids that really changed the way we saw ourselves.

Q: How did you get on with the local Distribution Network Operator (DNO) when you put solar panels on all those houses and the school?

A: Mostly it was pretty simple and straight forward. There was one house that had some difficulty with the DNO, but I think Solar for Schools sort of dealt with the school, and Octopus mainly dealt with the street.

Q: What was it like to work with Octopus?

A: They basically project managed it and it was great, lovely to work with the Octopus team. I don’t know if we got a bulk discount, but I think they gave us a fairly good price. It was quite a basic installation; the first wave didn’t get batteries. We didn’t get any panels on the flat roof part of the houses, only on the



sloping bit, so not all the houses that we wanted to include in the first wave were eligible with Octopus, so that was a bit of a pain. We did think that Octopus would have helped us with the distribution of the film, so I was disappointed that they didn't. We've had funding before from the British Film Institute (BFI) for our last film before this one, but this time they said it was going to be too local a film, and no one would ever want to watch it, so not only did they not fund the post-production of the film, which was really needed, but they also didn't fund any of the distribution, which has ended up costing us a massive amount of money, because just getting the film into cinemas costs £30,000 or £40,000, most of which is usually covered by the BFI for independent films that have a distribution.

Q: How did you manage to fund your family while you were doing so many activities?

A: I really got quite obsessed with digital marketing. We built a big mailing list, and we have a membership site, and we have hundreds of members who pay a relatively small amount to keep us going, and that accumulates and really helps. Then we also got some grants that came in, and so that was really it. But overall, for the entire film, getting the film finished and everything, and paying ourselves, it really is hard, it's exhausting, and it isn't really what you're supposed to live like, is it? You're supposed to have a job and find some stability. Neither of us has a pension or anything like that, so fingers crossed something will happen soon to kind of stabilise everything.

Q: Are you making another film?

A: Yes, a film in Clacton. We're calling it basically What Next? We're trying to figure out if we can work with communities, one or two in England, one in Scotland, one in Wales, and just work to try and do streets in each of those and paint a sort of portrait of Britain through those streets. So that's the project which has got the most substance and the most work in it so far. We'd like to make a fiction movie as well. I'm also singing live because I was going around doing all these Q&As in these amazing theatres all over the place, and it was just like, God, I wish I had my guitar on me.

Q: There's a tiny scene where you do the washing up. There are all these heaps and dirty dishes and your wife goes, why are you filming this?

A: I like that scene as well. Has anyone seen Withnail and I? Because we're really inspired by Withnail and I, we love that kind of British comedy, sort of slightly decaying, and our street is very much like that. I think the other thing about that scene is it shows we are just normal people, far from perfect, not a couple of people on a soapbox telling others what to think.

Q: Who did the music for the film?

A: I part wrote the music along with two of my friends. There are a few cover versions as well, produced by us. "Your Voice" is a cover version. Hilary really wanted "Bread and Roses" as well, that's based on a poem, and it's also in the movie "Pride" if you have seen that. It's a really moving scene of solidarity when these two oppressed groups in the eighties come together. If you haven't seen "Pride" you should go and watch that as well!

Many thanks to Olivia Hatch at Talton Lodge for providing the venue (and delicious food) for this fascinating event.

We hope to show "Power Station" again in Stratford during Live and Local's Big Picture Film Festival at the beginning of September.

Janet Palmer. Stratford Climate Action, June 2026



Every year since 2021 Harbury e-Wheels, the local free transport charity, has hosted a weekend of open gardens. It is an important part of the funding to keep the service free. Other charities also benefit from it. In 2026, learning from Wellesbourne's scheme, we are introducing a gardening for wildlife theme in some of the gardens.

[illegible]

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My organically managed garden will be open, so come and say hello.

Bob Sherman, Harbury e-Wheels

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, People's Emergency Briefing – film showing

As some of you may know, Sam Loughrey Black from Leamington Eco Hub and I have been hosting a series of screenings of the People's Emergency Briefing at Temperance. We also supported a screening in Coventry on Saturday 30th May.



We are now planning a larger screening and discussion at All Saints' Parish Church, Leamington on Tuesday 7th July at 19:15 and would like to ask interested groups involved in climate, sustainability and nature to have an information table at the church, so that anyone interested can come to chat to them after the discussion. As it will already finish fairly late, we are not suggesting a full-blown events table, but just some essential information and ways for people to sign up/leave contact details as a way of prompting more local action.

I also attach the Eventbrite link for anyone who would like to attend. Do feel free to circulate the information for this screening among your friends, neighbours and group members.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-special-community-screening-the-peoples-emergency-briefing-pebuk-tickets-1989907701502?aff=oddtcreator>

[A special community screening: The People's Emergency Briefing #PEBuk Tickets, Tuesday 7 July • 7:15 PM - 9:45 PM | Eventbrite](#)

We will also hold further screenings at Temperance later in the summer.

There is a petition to secure a prime-time, televised National Emergency Briefing by independent experts to try to increase informed discussion and support for the action that is needed on climate change. It seems this petition is struggling to get sufficient numbers, so please share far and wide.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/767687>

If you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Please let us know if you would like to contribute to one of these tables.

Many thanks and best wishes,

Jo Harper, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust



The LCWN Steering Group

We began the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network in April 2019, mainly to support action in rural communities. Since then, despite the inconvenient interruption by Covid lockdowns, we are now connecting over 50 separate organisations, rural and town community groups, church groups, local authorities at all three tiers, have supported 13 successful events and enabled showings of the film 'Power Station'.

This has been achieved informally with a light touch by a small group of volunteer steering group members who meet only when there has to be something of substance to discuss. In most years we have met just twice and held two socials. There are no formal roles apart from Bob as Chair and Jacky producing the brilliant newsletters.

To find out a little more about the other steering group members see their '**who are we?**' answers:-

Bob Sherman FRSA - [LCWN-Newsletter-Issue-3-February-2021.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

Jacky Lawrence FRSA - [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 FRSA - [LCWN-Newsletter-February-2023-issue-24.pdf \(harburyenergy.co.uk\)](#)

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

Sarah Mills, Let's Go Zero - [Sarah Mills | LinkedIn](#)

The LCWN aims to build trust-based connections and create more and better opportunities over time for the mutual benefit of all involved.

If you want to find out more, drop us an email at: lowcarbonwarks@gmail.com

Bob Sherman, LCWN Chair

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

Our event checklist covering what you may need to consider in organising an event is on the web site.

[RSA-LCWN-event-checklist.pdf](#)

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.



[Circle | Our Online Community | The RSA](#)

<https://youtu.be/eUh-TXKIdiE>, RSA Minimate: Climate Change and the Future of Humanity

[Sustainability Network - The RSA](#) [Climate change Archives - The RSA](#)

[SDGs and beyond: UK climate leadership on the global stage - The RSA](#)

[The future of sustainability: regeneration rising - The RSA](#) [Luke Dorian - The RSA](#)



LCWN Schools

There are many organisations who are able to support schools. There is a list of the resources we are aware of on the web site. [LCWN-schools-List-of-Resources.pdf](#) plus

[Home - Gateway Alliance](#), [Courses - Gateway Alliance](#), [Courses - Gateway Alliance](#)
[zero carbon schools - Green Schools Project](#)

Green Schools Project

We are currently [recruiting schools for our Green Schools Programme](#) for the next academic year (September 2026–27. [zero carbon schools - Green Schools Project](#)

The programme (formerly known as [Zero Carbon Schools](#)) supports schools to embed high-quality climate education across the curriculum while empowering pupils to take meaningful action in their school communities.



Through a four-stage journey, pupils build understanding of the climate crisis – including climate justice in the UK and globally – and work together to design projects that make a real difference in their school or local community.

With a strong focus on collective action, pupil voice and hope, the programme helps young people feel empowered rather than overwhelmed.

Over 450 schools and 20,000 pupils have already taken part, with 98% of teachers recommending the programme.

We're also pleased to share our latest [Impact Report \(2024–25\)](#), which highlights the outcomes, learning and reach of our work with schools, pupils and partners across the UK.

Some highlights from the report include:

- 126 schools delivered the programme in 2024–25
- 7,696 pupils took part directly, with nearly 70,000 pupils reached across participating schools
- 97% of schools reported taking action to reduce their carbon footprint
- Schools with comparable data reduced emissions by an average of 10.2 tonnes (4%)
- 95% of teachers reported pupils felt more positive about their role in tackling the climate crisis.

The report also shares stories from classrooms and communities, showing how climate education can build knowledge, confidence and agency while supporting schools to turn learning into meaningful action.

[Please find linked a comms toolkit](#) with suggested copy and images for newsletters and social media. It would be hugely appreciated if this could be shared as much as possible between now and mid-July.

Schools can **sign up here by 17th July**: <https://www.greenschoolsproject.org.uk/programme/>

Cathy Wentworth, Green Schools Project



Endangered birds project

Teachers, encourage your students to research:

- ❖ Bird populations that continue to decline.
- ❖ How local communities are helping raise awareness of some of Britain's most threatened birds.

What to create - artwork featuring one or more endangered bird species.

Any size, any medium welcome.

Exhibition – Certificates and prizes for the best entries which will be exhibited at Holy Trinity Church, Coventry.

How to submit – send entries by the end of March 2027 to:

Gabrielle Back, 3 Underhill Close,
Finham, Coventry CV3 6RB



What Can Communities Do to Tackle Climate Change? - by our guest blogger Neil Kitching

Tackling climate change is often seen as the responsibility of governments, businesses and individuals. However, communities also have an important role to play — one that is sometimes overlooked.

Communities can take direct action themselves, but perhaps their greatest strength lies in influence. They can shape local behaviour, support practical solutions, and influence decisions made by councils, businesses and other organisations.

In this blog, I set out practical climate actions that community groups can lead, using examples from my local area around Stirling and Dunblane where possible.



Supporting Local Food

Buying local food can reduce transport emissions, support biodiversity and strengthen local economies. Growing your own food connects you to the soil, the weather and perhaps to your neighbours and community if you share.

In Dunblane, the Allotment Group successfully campaigned for new allotments [DUNBLANE ALLOTMENT GROUP - Home](#), giving local people the opportunity to grow their own fruit and vegetables. These allotments, and the surrounding area, have also become a haven for biodiversity.

Across the UK, traditional orchards can be extremely biodiverse, yet many have been abandoned or lost. In my local Laighhills Park, I helped to plant two new community orchards [Creating a Heritage Orchard for](#)

[Laigh Hills Park | Greenspace Scotland](#). Within just a few years, the 300 fruit trees are producing an abundance of fruit, some of which is collected and pressed into apple juice.

Farmers' markets [Farmers Markets in Scotland - try and buy local Scottish produce](#), and locally produced vegetable box schemes are another simple but effective way for communities to support locally grown food.

Reducing Consumption and Waste

Reducing consumption and buying fewer new goods is one of the most effective ways to cut emissions, and community initiatives can make this easier and more social.

There are now around 400 repair cafes [About Repair Café - Repairing for a Sustainable Future](#) across the UK, including one in Stirling and a new one emerging in Dunblane. These are welcoming spaces where people can bring items such as clothes, furniture, electrical appliances, bicycles, crockery and toys to be repaired with the help of skilled volunteers.

The Stirling Reuse Hub [Transition Stirling | Building a Sustainable Future](#) is another excellent example. It is a warehouse selling second-hand items at affordable prices, preventing reusable goods from going to landfill and reducing the need to buy new. It sells furniture, clothing, toys, books and building materials, and also collects old laptops and mobile phones for refurbishment. Many local charity shops provide similar benefits while raising funds for good causes.

The Reuse Hub also runs a “library of things”, sometimes called a tool library. This allows people to borrow equipment for occasional or one-off jobs, such as household tools, garden equipment, party items and sports equipment. It gives access to high-quality tools without the cost, storage or maintenance burden of owning them.

Climate cafés are community-run spaces where people can talk openly about the climate crisis and how it makes them feel. A host usually introduces a topic and facilitates discussion. The nearest climate café to me is Climate Café Crieff [Climate Café® Crieff – Climate Café®](#).

Recycle-a-Bike Stirling [Recycle-a-bike | Cycle Repairs, Training & Outreach](#) is a charity that repairs donated bicycles, restores them and sells them back to the public. It also provides training, volunteering and employment opportunities, often for people facing barriers to work. In 2024 alone, 1,200 bikes were refurbished and sold.

In Dunblane, Weigh Ahead [Weigh Ahead – Zero Waste Shop Dunblane](#) is a zero-waste shop offering food and household products without plastic packaging. Customers bring their own containers to refill to buy items such as flour, nuts, shampoo, toothpaste tablets and washing-up liquid. Wherever possible, the shop stocks local goods.

A guide to local shops [Shops & Businesses – Dunblane.info](#) has also been published on the Dunblane community website, helping people to buy local more easily.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

Communities can play a key role in encouraging walking, cycling and public transport.



Producing local cycle maps [stirling-city-cycle-map-2013.pdf](#), campaigning for good-quality cycle lanes, and improving bike parking can all help more people feel confident about cycling. Communities can also work with councils to identify, signpost and maintain networks of local footpaths.

Engagement with councils and bus operators can improve public transport, for example through clearer timetables, better bus shelters and priority bus lanes. Bridge of Allan Community Council helped install bus shelters [Climate and Biodiversity Update - Bridge of Allan Community Council](#) with green roofs, which are beneficial for pollinating insects.

Communities that own buildings can also consider installing electric vehicle chargers for local use.

Protecting the Environment and Boosting Biodiversity

Many communities own land, and even where they do not, they can influence how land is managed or volunteer on nearby public or private land, such as council-owned parks.

Tree planting is an obvious climate action, with additional benefits for biodiversity, public access and local wellbeing. Communities can also campaign to clean up, restore or rewild local rivers, and work with councils to make parks more nature-friendly through wildflower meadows, reduced fertiliser use and the creation of ponds.

Tackling the scourge of invasive species can be led or supported by community groups [Invasive Species - Community Action](#) and volunteers. There are dozens of problematic species, but the most common are rhododendron ponticum, Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed, Himalayan balsam and grey squirrels [Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels – Transforming hope for Scotland's red squirrels](#). All of these threaten local biodiversity and they require long-term perseverance to tackle effectively.

Organising community litter picks is another simple but effective action, especially when supported by councils that can provide equipment and arrange free disposal of collected waste.

Taking Action on Energy

Some communities go further by developing renewable energy projects such as wind, solar or hydro schemes. These require significant effort and long-term commitment but can generate income that is reinvested locally.

A simpler alternative is to work with commercial renewable developers to maximise community benefits from projects they develop and manage.

Community organisations can also act as trusted partners to promote energy efficiency in homes, for example by providing access to thermal imaging cameras [Community Heat Team — Climate Action East Linton](#) to identify heat loss. More ambitious projects might involve working with delivery partners to offer heat pumps, solar panels or batteries to residents at scale [Levenshulme Area Based Retrofit Scheme | Carbon Co-op](#), making it easier for the residents, securing better prices and enabling households to learn from each other.

In Dunblane, the Development Trust, supported by Local Energy Scotland, has installed solar panels and heat pumps in the community owned Braeport Centre, replacing gas heating. This is reducing energy costs and helping to secure the centre's long-term financial sustainability.



Influencing Planning and Policy

To have wider impact, communities can engage with local planning processes. However, too often this is reactive, responding to individual planning applications and being labelled as opposing all development.

A more effective approach is to engage early with councils when they prepare strategic plans, such as Scotland's ten-year Local Development Plans. Communities can campaign positively for green infrastructure, including new cycle routes, community woodlands and better public spaces.

More ambitious groups might lobby councillors for reforms to planning and building regulations that can make it difficult to install measures such as double glazing, solar panels or heat pumps.

Engaging the Wider Community

Public engagement is vital, including work with schools and young people.

In Dunblane, the annual EcoFest [Facebook](#) is organised by a local church and community volunteers. It includes talks, films, children's activities and an open day where public and voluntary organisations can showcase their environmental work. This year, I am presenting a session on "how you can cut your carbon footprint".

Conclusion

Let's be honest: local community action alone will not "save the planet". That requires systemic change, led by government policy and regulation.

However, local action can make a huge difference to your quality of life, your local environment and community spirit. "Local action" can include lobbying and objecting, but also practical action that will make a difference on the ground that changes what people see and experience each day. It may also help to build the public support needed for wider systemic change.

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
[What Can Communities Do to Tackle Climate Change?](#)

Neil Kitching, Carbon Choices

Thoughts from an Organic Farmer – News from the farm: Humbling river pebbles and devolution

In the 1960s & 70s, my father's ploughman, who claimed to have ploughed most of the parish, initially with a horse, would occasionally catch a granite boulder in one of the lower fields with the tip of his plough shear. These "river pebbles", weighing a ton or more, originated on Dartmoor and were rounded in their millennia-long journey down the River Dart, before being stranded and buried as the river changed course. A team would be sent with iron bars, shovels, and tractors to extract the beast like a reluctant wisdom tooth. You can still see many egg-like "pebbles" incorporated into walls mixed with the farm-quarried slate.



Last week, while ploughing for purple sprouting broccoli, the shear caught a giant lump of limestone. After a day of digging, we gave up and ended up covering it with what little soil we could find. Perhaps we will plant a tree to celebrate the land's rare, intransigent triumph over our hubris. When I asked the previous farmer why the field was called "two parts", his reply was "you will know when you plough it." He was right but I would have called it 10 parts – the soil changes every few metres. To stand any chance of feeding ourselves sustainably, farming practice and the government policies that guide it must respect local variation in soil and topography and the practices that evolved to accommodate them. Riverford's farmland is also classified as 3b by Defra, meaning it's deemed largely unsuitable for horticulture. But with local knowledge and a bit of ingenuity, it can be highly productive (and biodiverse & beautiful).

Later in the week, my brother and I found ourselves in Bristol with 20 policymakers, environmental lawyers, and regulators, discussing the basis for food and farming policy. Despite the best of (mostly shared) intentions, we were like oil and water. Bringing local knowledge and practice together with policymakers seeking universal solutions – that also meet the broad demands on land of our small island – is a colossal and underestimated post-Brexit challenge; thus far defeating Defra and leaving farmers in frustration and despair. The recently published Land Use Framework for England might offer some hope, but without a devolution of Defra's powers to local bodies with a closer connection to our hugely varied soils, climate, topography, and people, I fear it will result in further misguided concentration of power in Westminster. All wealth and culture started with the soil, which is as varied as we are.

[News from the farm: The 170-year squeeze that led to cheap food and Grievous Biological Harm - Wicked Leeks](#)

[News from the farm: Humbling river pebbles and devolution - Wicked Leeks](#)

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

Want to get involved? – The groups / organisations associated with the LCWN

Links to the following groups / organisations is on the web page. This was last updated in January 2026.

[LCWN-group-names-and-links-Jan-2026.pdf](#)

Group / Organisation Name

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Achieving Results in Communities (ARC) | 14. Clean Air Warwickshire |
| 2. Act on Energy | 15. Coventry and Warwickshire Co-operative Development Agency |
| 3. Action 21 | 16. Cubbington and Lillington Environmental Action Now (CLEAN CIC) |
| 4. Alcester Town Council | 17. Energise Leamington |
| 5. Avon Dassett PC | 18. Garden Organic |
| 6. Bar Zero | 19. Gateway Alliance |
| 7. Bee Friendly Warwick | 20. Grapevine Environmental Action Team |
| 8. Bidford Climate Action | 21. Green Schools Project |
| 9. Binley Woods PC | 22. Greening Mickleton |
| 10. Bishops Itchington PC | 23. Ilmington 20:20 |
| 11. Bishops Tachbrook Resident's Action on Climate Change (TRACC) | 24. Wolverton Parish Council |
| 12. Boddington Parish Council, Sustainability Group | 25. Harbury Future Energy |
| 13. Claverdon Harnessing Alternative and Renewable Green Energy (CHARGE) | 26. Hatton Extinction Rebellion |
| | 27. Henley Climate Action |



28. Kenilworth All Together Greener
29. Kenilworth Town Council
30. Leamington Library of Things
31. Let's Go Zero
32. Let's Make Stuff Happen
33. Mancetter Parish Council
34. Napton Environmental Action Team
35. Net Zero Stratford
36. Pillerton Hersey PC
37. Rugby Eco Hub
38. Rugby Transition Town
39. Savers charity
40. Shipston in Bloom
41. Shrewley & Wroxall Environment Action Team
42. Snitterfield Actioning Climate Change
43. Stourvale Action For the Environment
44. Stratford Climate Action
45. Stratford Friends of the Earth
46. Stratford Methodist Church Eco Congregation
47. Stretton on Fosse Parish Council Sustainability Initiative
48. Sustainable Brilles
49. Sustainable Wellesbourne
50. Warwickshire Climate Alliance

Other Groups

1. Burton Green Parish Council
2. Friends of Radford's Green Environment
3. Harbury e-Wheels
4. Leamington Eco Hub
5. Leamington Spa Library of Things
6. South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme
7. River Hope
8. Rubbish Friends
9. South Warwickshire Area Network for Wildlife (SWAN)
10. The Bicycle Bus
11. The Great Collaboration
12. Warwickshire Cycle Buddies

The Low Carbon Warwickshire Network (LCWN) aims to connect environmental groups across Warwickshire primarily in rural areas, sharing ideas and supporting new activities. The network encourages collaboration among local community groups to develop projects that reduce carbon emissions, produce climate change strategies and promote sustainability. [\(1\) Low Carbon Warwickshire Network | Facebook](#)

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

Useful Links

- Heart of England Community Energy [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.
- Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils LTD (WALC) [Climate and Nature - WALC - Town and Parish Council Support](#)
- [South Warwickshire Area Network for Wildlife \(SWAN\)](#)
- [Welcome! Find out more about the Great Collaboration and the Knowledgebase | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)
- [Banter sessions \(inc table of all sessions\) | The Great Collaboration Knowledgebase](#)



- The Great Collaboration [Newsletter Sign-up Form](#)
- Warwick District Council's [Biodiversity newsletter - Summer 2026](#)
- [Free climate education programme - sign up now for 2026-27](#)
- [Rugby Eco Hub Newsletter March 2026](#)

LCWN Facebook group

[Low Carbon Warwickshire Network | Facebook](#)

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

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

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



Have your say— What do you want to see in future editions?

This is your newsletter and only as good as you make it – it is your opportunity to let us know what you wish to see in your newsletter: publicise any on-line events you are holding, let other community groups know what you are currently up to, share your experiences, let others know of interesting low carbon news .

Ideas, requests, offers, Q & A, hints & tips

Please send all copy (by around 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.

