



Issue One - September 2024

Avoiding the worst effects of climate change will be the biggest challenge in human history. Local authorities and partnerships will play a key role both in getting the UK to net zero and ensuring their areas are ready for changing conditions. To do this in a way that is effective and fair, they will need to engage the public. How has South Warwickshire risen to this challenge?

Introducing: South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme

The [Local Climate Engagement \(LCE\)](#) is an innovative programme that uses a combination of training, mentoring, peer learning and hands-on support to assist local authorities in engaging communities on climate decision-making.

In 2022, Warwick District Council, in partnership with Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils (WALC), was one of only five UK local councils to successfully [secure 'project group' funding](#).

The first phase of the project was a training programme delivered by [Involve](#) together with [Climate Outreach](#). This helped to build capacity within the two District Councils and partners to deliver a new engagement infrastructure directed by a Steering Group made up of District Councillors, Officers, Parish and Town Clerks and Councillors, Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) and community climate action groups.

Last year, South Warwickshire's pilot [with three rural communities](#) implemented different public engagement activities in Alcester, Henley-in-Arden and Marston Sicca. You can see more about this in the video below.



What now for South Warwickshire LCEP?

The Steering Group continues to work with its initial pilot communities and has set out its ambitions for the next two years:

- To work with community groups/town and parish councils to develop projects or action plans which incorporate community engagement with emphasis on reaching those not usually involved in the community/climate change
- To showcase good practice and develop networks to allow community groups/parish and town councils to work together and share experiences. To assist them to turn plans into reality by helping community groups/parish and town councils to make the connections or seek out technical expertise, funding opportunities or case studies required.

Currently, Officers from the SW LCEP are working with two additional parish councils – Wellesbourne and Burton Green in Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District respectively - to assist the council and its community to develop climate and nature projects. This will involve community consultation, technical expertise, and an engagement event in each, assistance in development of a plan, advice on funding/fundraising, ongoing support.

If you'd like to have a conversation with the team to find out about support resources available including best practice, templates, funding advice and case studies, email climateofficer@walc.org.uk

South Warwickshire Climate Champions

South Warwickshire's Climate Champions are residents, community groups or businesses that are doing their bit – no matter how small – to reduce their carbon footprint.

If you are running a local repair café, encouraging a plastic-free community, planting pollinator patches, activating active travel – whatever you're doing, we'd love to hear about it and champion it, so we can encourage and motivate others as individuals or as part of a collective action to tackle climate change.



[Submit your story](#)

Earn rewards and win prizes for sustainable travel

Record your active and sustainable travel through the BetterPoints app as part of the 'Choose How You Move in Warwick District' challenge, and you'll be rewarded with BetterPoints that you can spend on the high street at your favourite local stores, or donate to charity.

You'll also have the chance to be entered into prize draws for rewards including European city breaks and more!



Join the Choose How You Move challenge

Biodiversity across South Warwickshire

Warwick District Council's first Biodiversity Action Programme was developed following its Ecological Emergency declaration in October 2022.

[Watch the short video](#) that explains why we need a Biodiversity Action Programme, how it will help us, how we'll measure its success, and how you can join us on this journey - plus [sign up to the quarterly newsletter](#).

Alcester Town Council has launched a new project to encourage more pollinator friendly planting in and around the town with a project called Bee Squared, originally developed by [Hazlemere Parish Council](#). Find out more about the [Alcester campaign](#).

Feed into Warwickshire's Nature Recovery Strategy and [book your place](#) at a free workshop open to Councils and community group representatives on Friday 13 September designed to help you develop, consult on, and deliver your own Local Nature Action Plan (LNAP). Hear from South Gloucestershire Council's Biodiversity Assets and Commons Manager on the widely disseminated [step-by-step guide](#) developed specifically for town and parish councils to help them act on the ecological crisis the world is facing.

[Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Nature Partnership \(LNP\)](#) is a partnership of local organisations with the purpose of facilitating delivery of benefits for nature.

Local events

Date	Event
16 September	Leamington & Warwick Climate Action, Warwickshire Climate Alliance
21 September	The Big Save , Mancetter Memorial Hall
23 - 27 September	Net Zero Business Webinar Week
26 September	Carbon Cost of the End of Life: Natural Burials , Stratford Climate Hub

5 October

[Bidford-on-Avon Clothes Swap](#) (first Saturday of every month)

Resources for community facilities from the Centre for Sustainable Energy

[Solar Wizard](#) calculates the potential to generate electricity from rooftop solar panels for homes in England, Scotland and Wales. It provides quick and independent predictions about the viability of solar PV on single buildings or groups of buildings.

A [DIY energy survey](#) identifies heating, lighting and insulation improvements that can be made to facilities such as community centres, village halls and other shared spaces. This is essentially a checklist combined with guidance notes. You can use it as the basis for a carbon reduction plan for the building (which could include a whole range of free, low cost and higher cost measures) or to decide what improvements you want to install or to identify measures you may be able to obtain funding for.

The Centre for Sustainable Energy has developed a spreadsheet to document the [latest funding opportunities](#) for charities and community groups and update it every six months.

There is also a page on funding for [community energy projects](#) for more information about different types of funding, what it can help with and tips for how to apply.

Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull LNP

Project funding

Warwick District Council operates a [Rural/Urban Initiatives Scheme \(RUCIS\)](#) which gives grants (£1,000 - £20,000) to locally led and run, not-for-profit, community organisations towards capital projects such as property or equipment' and include energy efficiency and renewable energy technology such as insulation, LED lighting, solar panels and heat pumps.

Town Councils Community Grant Fund from Leamington Spa and Warwick help Community and Voluntary groups with projects that are of benefit to the wider community. [Download the flyer for detail.](#)

If you represent a local community organisation with a brilliant idea for a project that will benefit both your community and the environment, contact [Heart of England Community Energy](#), based in Stratford-upon-Avon, The not-for-profit community benefit society uses in using surplus income to support local community organisations in community carbon reduction projects. HECE also offer [“Solar Soft Loans”](#) for community organisations and schools to help organisations that would not have the funds to do it themselves, to install solar panels, LED lighting and other energy saving measures.

Local and national grants available

