



Issue Nine - September 2025

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 is South Warwickshire rising to this challenge?

South Warwickshire Climate Engagement event

Book now! Friday 17 October - Leamington Town Hall



Tickets are now available! Join us for the first event of its kind, designed to bring us together and shape a coordinated, community-driven approach to climate and nature action across South Warwickshire.

Date: Friday 17 October 2025

Time: Doors open at 9am for a 9:30am start. Close: 3pm

Venue: Leamington Spa Town Hall

We are delighted to announce our keynote speaker, Becky Lovegrove, 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.

During the morning session, delegates will have a choice of three workshops:

- Biodiversity
- Adaptation/Flooding
- Energy Efficiency/Retrofit

These workshops will be repeated, giving delegates the opportunity to attend at least two.

After lunch and networking, delegates will be able to speak directly with Council Officers, Green & Healthy Frome and the Local Climate Engagement Programme.

Limited tickets available, so [book your free ticket now!](#)

South Warwickshire updates

Stratford-on-Avon Community Climate Change and Nature Fund

Stratford-on-Avon District Council introduced The Community Climate and Nature Fund (CCNF) in November 2023 and has since enabled the funding of a multitude of climate and biodiversity initiatives across Stratford on Avon District. Funded projects include the installation of solar panels and air source heat pumps, to pond restoration and flood prevention projects. [See some case studies here.](#)

Round three of the CCNF opened in May 2025, and £150,000 has been made available to successful applicants. The first of four assessment periods ended on 30th July 2025, and a total of 8 applications were approved. The following projects have been funded:

- £750 to Alcester Town Council to deliver low-cost, nature-based interventions to support habitat recovery along the River Arrow
- £3,900 to Ilmington Parish Council to deliver a pond restoration project
- £8,000 to Compton Verney House Charity to install a large air source heat pump at Compton Verney's Learning Centre
- £2,400 to Pillerton Priors Village Hall to install a battery storage system to complement their existing solar panels
- £1,234 to Bearley Parish Council to finish the upgrade of their village streetlighting to LED
- £4,715 to Tysoe Village Hall to install a battery storage system to complement their existing solar panels
- £10,000 to Alcester Town Council to fund a number of biodiversity related initiatives, including the rewilding of community green spaces, the enhancement of hedgehog habitats, and community engagement events.
- £7,600 to Bidford Parish Council to enable the continued provision of the Bidford Community Fridge and Café

Round three will be open until April 2026, and applications will be assessed on a quarterly basis. [Find out more about the eligibility criteria and apply.](#)

EcoFest 2025

EcoFest 2025 was held on Saturday 30 August in Leamington's Pump Room Gardens, bringing together community groups, charities, businesses and communities to inspire and take local action on climate change.





Biodiversity

CPRE's "Hedgerow Heroes" call for sites



[Hedgerow Heroes](#) is a wider CPRE project launched in 2021 to support the national campaign to increase the hedgerow network by 40% by 2050. Last year, CPRE planted over 1000 metres of new hedgerow. Organisations involved ranged from University of Warwick, estate agents Sheldon Bosley to Tysoe United Football team. Myton School's Head of Year 7, James Hibbard, organised a competition to submit a design for the hedgerow.

In 2025/26, CPRE Warwickshire has set an even more ambitious target of planting and restoring 3000m. If you know of a local site, contact the branch at office@cprewarwickshire.org.uk or 01926 494597, should you wish to get involved and help out.

Hedgerows provide vital resources for mammals, birds, and insect species. As well as being an important habitat in their own right, they act as wildlife corridors allowing dispersal between isolated habitats. Resources and further reading [from Hedgeline](#).

Wilder Communities

Both Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Council have provided funding to support the Wildlife Trust's Wilder Communities project. Support is provided to develop schemes for the planting of trees and hedgerows, and the establishment of wildflower meadows. Funding is also available for the delivery of projects. For more information and the eligibility criteria, [see the Wildlife Trust website](#).

Energy

The Great British Energy Community Fund

The Great British Energy Community Fund is a government programme which specifically funds community energy projects to do feasibility and development. £10m was made available through the fund initially in 2023 and the government has recently announced another £5m.

The aim of the fund is to help kickstart projects including small-scale wind farms and rooftop solar partnerships, as well as battery storage, rural heat networks, electric vehicle charging points, and fuel poverty alleviation schemes - all proposed, designed and owned by local people.

The project is administered by the regional Net Zero Hubs. They can offer advice on applying for funding. From [Midlands Net Zero Hub](#): "The Community Energy Fund is fully allocated this year. Community energy groups can contact the Hub if they want to discuss a project for next year's pipeline." Email CommunityEnergyFund@NottinghamCity.gov.uk

Reminder: National Grid Midlands Community Energy Conference open to all interested, regardless of experience. September 18, 2025 [Register for your free ticket.](#)

Citizenship

Citizen Science: monitoring the state of our rivers

During the Great UK WaterBlitz this Spring, Earthwatch analysed 43 data points from Warwickshire. 86% showed unacceptable levels of nutrient pollution. This compares to 74% in England overall, meaning that Warwickshire had worse than average water quality.

You can explore all of the datapoints from England and the whole of the UK on [the interactive WaterBlitz map](#).

Many villages across Stratford District are testing regularly as part of the SafeAvon project. Find out more about [locally led citizen science testing](#).

Healthy Living

Sport England Movement Fund - Webinar

Wednesday 10 September 2025, 2pm - 3pm

Learn about Sport England's Movement Fund and how it supports projects to improve physical activity opportunities and tackle inequalities. This webinar will outline the Movement Fund, including who can apply, what can be applied for and how to give yourself the best chance of applying successfully. [Book your place](#).

Litter

World Clean Up Day



The UN General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed September 20 as World Clean Up Day. You can register a clean with Surfers Against Sewage [Million Mile Clean](#) to receive free litter picking equipment for up to 30 people, as well as public liability insurance and guidance.

A data collection sheet is provided to help you tally items and brands you find; submitting your results will help to build a picture of plastic and other forms of physical pollution.

You can also borrow equipment from your District Councils:

- [Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)
- [Warwick District Council](#)

Marine

The Big River Watch

The [Rivers Trust Big River Watch](#) takes place **19 - 25 September**. Just spend 15 minutes watching your river, and answer the questions in the survey. You can complete the Big River Watch at your favourite local spot, or get to know somewhere new.

The survey will ask you about what you see, from wildlife and plants to any signs of pollution. Not sure what you're looking at? The in-app pollution and wildlife guides can help you make an identification.

Timed to coincide with the **Great UK WaterBlitz**, if you've [signed up for your kit in advance](#), you can also test the water and monitor nitrate and phosphate levels between 19 - 21 September.

Community Facilities & Grounds

Southam Churchyard Biodiversity and Heritage Project

A "Brilliant Butterflies" event was held at St James' Church, Southam and included arts and crafts, Southam in Bloom and the Warwickshire branch of Butterfly Conservation as well as a butterfly-themed dance by Love Ballet dancers and an opportunity to join in with the [Big Butterfly Count 2025](#).

Transport

Cycle September

Cycle September 2025 is a fun, free, and friendly challenge that’s open to riders of all levels. By logging trips on the Love to Ride app, riders can win prizes, including £2,000 cash. Cyclists of every ability can sign up - even a 10-minute ride around the park will enter you into the draws.

In the last Love to Ride event – May’s Bike Month Challenge – a cyclist from Warwickshire won the grand prize: a £4000 holiday! [Help spread the word](#) in your community with posters for your noticeboard and social media.

Waste

Plastic Free Kenilworth: Gold Award for Business Champion

Recycle for Kenilworth lead, May Lau, is a true Plastic Free Champion. May’s Home Shopping was [awarded Gold status this June](#), having worked to remove all single-use plastic from the business, and by supporting both local initiatives and national campaigns.

May’s local action includes holding presentations and playing plastic free games with the school pupils in Kenilworth. This has made them Community Allies for Plastic Free Kenilworth and linked them to the Plastic Free Schools campaign. Her group have worked with Plastic Free Kenilworth and their town council, passing a Plastic Free Motion in 2024, and have linked with Warwick District Council’s plastic free initiatives.

Businesses have a pivotal role in the fight against single-use plastic. The Plastic Free Champion award is specifically for independent, locally owned businesses or social enterprises. Share how to apply for the free [Plastic Free Business Toolkit](#) with your community.

Water

Introducing Water Literacy

Changing how we value water will save individuals money on bills, protect the environment and alleviate some of the threats of climate change.

The course has been put together by the water industry’s leading experts and funded by [Ofwat’s Water Breakthrough Challenge](#), [Northumbrian Water](#), [Groundwork East](#), [Waterwise](#) and partners. You will learn about the value of water, the need to save it and vitally, how we can do this as individuals, organisations and communities.

It is like Carbon Literacy in that you will undertake 7-8 hours of learning, then pledge to act. The first two modules are packed full of knowledge and research and the final module of the course provides you with actionable ways that you can make a difference by saving water and spreading a vital message.

The first 2,000 places on this course are fully funded, and upon completion you will have the opportunity to become accredited as water literate. Over 200 individuals have already achieved full accreditation. [About the Programme](#).

Further afield

Birmingham City Council's "Full of Beans" campaign

The Local Government Association shone a spotlight on Birmingham City Council’s Full of Beans Campaign, working to increase supply, demand and consumption of beans and pulses in schools, with families and in food businesses across Birmingham.

This [case study](#) highlights lessons learned and next steps for the campaign.

Dates for your diary

Sustainable Wellesbourne: "What's up with fashion and textiles?"

Saturday 4 October, 10am – 3pm
Wellesbourne Sports & Community Centre

Drop-in for short talks, workshops and fun activities with plenty of information on sustainability and the fashion industry.

Funding

Project funding

Warwickshire County Council's Eco-Schools Green Flag

Less than 25% of the schools in South Warwickshire have not signed up to the national Eco-Schools programme and its comprehensive resources to support environmental sustainability. Can you find a way to support your local school in their journey?

Find out more about how the [Seven Steps](#) Eco-Schools programme and visit the [Warwickshire Eco-Schools website](#) for details on how to sign up.

The National Lottery: Environment Fund

"The climate and nature emergency affects us all, but local action can make a real difference."

A new fund from the National Lottery is looking to fund community-led projects that improve the environment and help people connect with and enjoy nature where they live. Grants are available of £300 to £20,000 for up to two years. [Find out more](#) about the kinds of projects that will be funded. You can also view a [summary of the questions](#).

Warwick District: Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme (RUCIS)

Warwick District Council operates this capital improvement scheme which gives grants (£1,000 – £20,000) to locally led and run, not-for-profit, community organisations. Applications for capital projects must make every effort for the environment:

- to minimise impact on existing biodiversity / trees.
- to ensure appropriate safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- To investigate and consider the most environmentally friendly option available

See [case studies](#) and [recent awards](#).

Warwickshire Highways Community Action Fund (HCAF)

[HCAF](#) focuses on capital investments, ensuring lasting improvements to Warwickshire's highways, including:

- Road resurfacing and pavement improvements
- Safer routes to schools and speed reduction measures
- Environmental enhancements like signage and wayfinding
- Flood prevention through improved drainage

Free Access to Grants Database

Warwickshire & Solihull Community & Voluntary Action's new funding database will help you find grants to support your organisation, or fund to kickstart a new project. Idox Open4Community will help you filter through what's available, and keep you updated on funding pots that might be relevant for you. [Register](#).

South Warwickshire Climate Champions

South Warwickshire's Climate Champions are residents, community groups or businesses that are doing their bit 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.

Tell us what you've been doing the local community and we'll feature your story!



Submit your climate champions story

If you'd like to have a conversation with the South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement team or want to find out about support resources available including best practice, templates, funding advice and case studies, email swclimate.engagement@warwickdc.gov.uk.

Community groups, Councillors and Clerks can also contact climateofficer@walc.org.uk directly.

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