



Issue Twelve - December 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?

Call for content! We are looking for your climate and nature positive stories across South Warwickshire – what place-based action are you taking, what hurdles are you facing, what will help your community adapt and thrive? Take our newsletter survey.

Goodbye and good luck, Claudine!



The South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme team this month bids a fond farewell to Claudine Pearson from the Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils (WALC). Since the programme began in 2022, Claudine has expertly brought together councils and communities, uniting them with the shared ambition of local, grass roots climate action.

Claudine leaves behind a strong foundation for the Programme and we would like to thank her for her time, dedication, passion and energy. We wish her all the best for the future!

National Community Action

NALC's Annual General Meeting

[NALC's Annual General Meeting](#) put the climate emergency centre stage, underlining the vital role of parish and town councils in driving local action and national momentum towards net zero.

Keynote speaker Simon Oldridge, organiser of the [National Emergency Briefing](#), warned of the accelerating climate and nature crisis and outlined a forthcoming Westminster briefing designed to match the clarity and urgency of COVID updates. He stressed councils' unique position to engage the public.

Council and Community Action

Kenilworth Mayor hosts World Café

The [World Café](#) is a creative way of facilitating conversations among larger groups. Developed by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs, it is based on the principle that people generate collective wisdom when they talk about issues that matter to them.

This approach has been widely used in community engagement, and at the Mayor's Reception it provided the perfect format to explore the future of Finham Brook. In September, the Mayor hosted a Clean and Green Kenilworth Reception where residents, councillors, and environmental representatives shared experiences, concerns, and ambitions for Finham Brook.

Ideas generated ranged from practical suggestions to ambitious visions. Follow up emails added further contributions, leading to a shortlist of ten possible projects. [Read the full article](#) to view the Council resolution and the list of projects.

South Warwickshire updates

Stratford celebrates Carbon Literacy Action Day

On 13 November, Stratford Climate Action marked Carbon Literacy Action Day with a gathering at the Royal Shakespeare Company's PACCAR room. The event followed two half days of accredited training at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, where participants learned about climate science, impacts of global heating, and practical ways to cut emissions. To gain certification, each learner makes two pledges = one individual and one group - supported in the months that follow.

This year, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) joined the initiative, led by trainer Andrew Andersen. After the final session, learners from Net Zero Stratford and SBT came together to celebrate achievements and share ideas for building a low carbon culture. Trainers highlighted pledges already achieved, from home energy improvements to cycling instead of driving and volunteering at the Stratford Repair Café.

Thermal imaging camera loan scheme in Warwick District

A free [thermal imaging camera loan scheme](#) is available for residents to check the efficiency of their homes and identify any areas that require insulating or improving.

The Council has provided seven thermal imaging cameras to six local community groups including parish and town councils, in a bid to support residents with understanding the thermal efficiency of their homes, with further community groups planned to take on more cameras in the coming months.

Leamington Eco Hub

The Leamington Eco Hub is now open thanks to funding from Royal Leamington Spa Town Council and support from other hubs in Rugby and Stratford – with a 'Library of Things' on the way. [Find out more.](#)

Bee Friendly Warwick sparkles at Christmas Tree Festival



At the St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival in Warwick, [Bee Friendly Warwick's](#) tree sparkled with handmade bee baubles, mushrooms, twig stars, pine cones, moss decorations, and a scene of hibernating queen bumblebees - all celebrating nature and forest life. At its heart are eight large, hand painted bee baubles, each representing a rare or unusual bumble or solitary bee.

The Gathering: for Water and Nature

Save the date: 6 to 15 March 2026

Join [River Hope](#) and partners to “see water differently” - not just as a resource, but as a living presence connecting people, place, and Nature.

Communities across South Warwickshire are invited to join River Hope and partners for a co-created programme leading up to the International Day of Action for Rivers. Events will include panels, workshops, exhibitions, film screenings, and hands on activities at venues such as the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Stratford upon Avon.

Contact: riverhopeinfo@gmail.com for volunteering, exhibiting, or sponsorship opportunities.

Biodiversity

Local nature action planning resources

On 17 November, over 20 organisations joined a webinar on creating Local Nature Action Plans. Speakers from the Local Nature Partnership and Wildlife Trust highlighted priorities from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy - hedgerows, ponds, and wildlife sites - alongside practical tools like mapping apps and hedgerow surveys.

Case studies included Leamington’s hedgehog friendly streets, Harbury’s swift boxes, and Nuneaton’s wildlife watchers. WCAVA shared how collaborative funding bids can strengthen projects, offering support with governance, volunteering, and funding databases.

Parish councils were encouraged to make biodiversity visible through pledges, website statements, and Neighbourhood Development Plans, with templates and guidance provided.

[View slides, summary, and recommended actions.](#)

Energy

Free energy advice for community facilities

Act on Energy is helping organisations and charities cut rising energy costs through free support. Every participant has saved money - collective savings already total hundreds of thousands of pounds.

In partnership with Omnium, the scheme offers price checks and a free energy health check to ensure non-profits aren't overpaying on rates, VAT, or Climate Change Levy charges, and even reviews kVA capacity.

Eligible groups include village halls, sports clubs, and churches. Contact Paul Muckle pmuckle@actonenergy.org.uk

Community Energy GO

Free, tailored support to community groups just starting out or recently formed, aiming to develop renewable energy or low-carbon projects.

This is a joint venture between [Ashden](#), the [Centre for Sustainable Energy](#) and [Community Energy England](#), launched in October 2025 for support until May 2027.

Town and parish councils and a range of community-based groups may apply - see [more information on the website](#).

Find the right energy efficiency measure for your home

Warwick District Council is delighted to announce an exciting new pilot, in partnership with Go Renewable, designed to help local residents adopt low-carbon technologies and make the switch to clean energy.

Go Renewable is a new online service developed by the Energy Saving Trust and MCS (the quality mark and standards organisation for renewable technologies).

The service makes it easier for households to explore renewable energy options such as heat pumps, solar panels and battery storage.

By simplifying the process of finding trusted technologies and installers, it empowers residents to make informed decisions about the future of their homes.

[Find out more about this exciting pilot.](#)

Citizenship

Why 'Friends' groups must respond

The UK Government has asked the University of Sheffield, working with NFPGS, to carry out the largest ever survey of Friends Groups across the country.

This is your chance to show the impact of community action in parks, nature reserves, rivers, and other green and blue spaces.

Every response strengthens the case for better recognition and resources. Please [complete the survey and share it](#) with other groups before Sunday 7 December.

Healthy Living

Warwickshire Club on the world stage

Fillongley Cricket Club was featured at the United Nations COP30 climate conference in Belem, Brazil this November.

Following regional and national awards for sustainability and the 2024 award of the UK's Greenest Ground, the club was invited by the team organising the UK's contribution to prepare a "best practice" video of how local sport can contribute.

This [90 second video](#) was shown "on loop" on the large video screen, part of the UK 's stand at the conference.

Litter

Making 'Rubbish Friends' in Southam



Southam's "Rubbish Friends" collected 12 bags of waste plus car parts and builders' debris in November.

Their next pick is a festive gathering on Sunday 14 December at the Graham Adams Centre, followed by mince pies and hot drinks.

Marine

Tackling plastic waste in Kenilworth



Article by Kenilworth All Together Greener

At the November Kenilworth All Together Greener speaker meeting our topic was plastic: plastic pollution and single use plastics, and we celebrated the achievements of Plastic Free Kenilworth and Recycle for Kenilworth with the help of Alison Firth and May

Lau.

Alison kicked off by reminding us that Plastic Free Kenilworth started at a Kenilworth All Together Greener meeting back in 2018 when she recruited some volunteers to run a mass unwrap. As mayor that year she was able to promote the initiative and nudge the Town Council to get itself accredited as plastic free.

Gaining Plastic Free status for the town was a much bigger task. This involved the group in persuading local independent businesses and retailers to each find sustainable replacements for at least three single use plastic items regularly used in the business. It involved working with local primary schools, brought together by Sam Pater, the headteacher of Clinton School, to take their message into all the town's primary school children and their parents, as well as to their MP in the form of letters from all the children. Each school had to rid themselves of three types of single use plastic and also form an "Eco Council" at each school.

It involved Alison giving talks to organizations and community groups and the Plastic Free group running stalls at street festivals, the Eco Fayre, the Lions Grand Show, Clean Air Day, etc. The Plastic Free group also regularly teamed up with the local litter picking group Trash Mobs - a group formed by the local schools - followed by a social gathering in a local Plastic Free pub.

Faced with a vast Covid-related tide of single use plastics, it took until 2024 to achieve the Plastic Free Kenilworth accolade. But it hasn't stopped there.

The group continues to recruit a growing band of Plastic Free Allies in the shape of Plastic Free supportive businesses, community groups, organizations, clubs etc. With Alison's recent election as a Warwick District Councillor they now have their sights on embedding plastic free thinking into all district council events.

May Lau gave us a potted history of her Recycle for Kenilworth initiative which owes its origins to a Terracycle feature on CWR radio. She identified the need for a home collection service for a range of hard to recycle items which could be recycled via Terracycle, and she worked out how a collection and sorting service could be used to raise money for youth work at the Kenilworth Centre.

At its peak the volunteer sorters included a youngster working for their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award who sorted up to 21 different types of items.

However now that the Sherbourne Recycling Centre has come on stream and the scope of the kerbside collection has increased, Terracycle Free Recycling Programmes closed, the need for collection and sorting has all but disappeared. May's experience though had demonstrated that better regulation could result in more recycling and she figured lobbying at every level would be needed to achieve that.

Soon she had completed both speaker and lobby training with Greenpeace and was arranging for primary school children to design posters conveying a specific request to our MP. These she delivered in person. To keep parents informed Sam Pater (Heads

Together) has asked for a WRAP poster in their weekly newsletters to remind pupils and parents of the items that can be recycled at kerbside.

Thanks to the age profile in Kenilworth the disposal of blister packs is a sizeable problem and a topic in which May is now expert. She explained that their design and variability means that recycling them doesn't make money, it costs money. Whereas medicinal blister packs may be necessary, many used for nutritional supplements for example are not.

Yet they are still favoured particularly by US companies. The 'Extended Producer Responsibility' (EPR) reporting that started January 2025 shifts the responsibility for (the cost of) collecting, sorting and recycling product packaging to producers. But medicinal packaging was not included.

So in July this year May met with Sir Jeremy Wright MP as part of a mass parliamentary lobby, to try and change this. On 1 August, blister packs were added to the scope of EPR packaging assessment for payment. Unfortunately those which are deemed 'essential packaging' will still be exempt, but the price of non-prescription products in blister packs are expected to increase to cover the cost of recycling, so it's hoped that sales of these will fall to signal to the producers to use more sustainable packaging.

The event came to a close with lots of recycling related questions and suggestions, and a brilliant idea for spreading recycling knowledge: provide local pub quizzes with a round of questions on recycling.

Community Facilities & Grounds

Small grants now available for village halls

[Small grants](#) (£2,000 – £5,000) are now available for rural village halls to support projects such as disability access, toilet upgrades, and new kitchens. Match funding of 80% is required, with projects completed by March 2026.

Free community tree packs

The Conservation Volunteers are offering [free packs of 50 trees](#), with mixes including Pocket Forest, Pollinators, The Big Five, Hawthorn Hedge, Wildlife Booster, and Traditional Woodland.

You can also register interest in fruit trees. Trees must be planted on publicly accessible land (not private gardens).

Transport

Promoting sustainable travel

Shakespeare's England partnered with You.Smart.Thing to help event organisers and delegates to plan journeys to Warwickshire with personalised low carbon active travel plans, which include public transport, electric vehicle charge points and accessible parking.

Anyone can use the free low carbon journey planning tool to help them plan their journey to Warwickshire. Help to spread the word and encourage visitors to travel in a more sustainable way by sharing the link to the [Travel Information page](#) on your website.

Waste

Slim Your Bin

Did you know that residents in Warwickshire can sign up to a free [Slim Your Bin scheme](#)? Regular emails are sent with practical advice such as cutting food waste and getting the right thing in the right bin.

Each suggested activity is worth points and if you track your activities, you could be given a £20 voucher at the end of the month. Points also contribute to donations to good causes chosen by residents to a value of £650.

Water

River Alne & Arrow

Around 90 people gathered from Alcester, Stratford, Henley, Bidford, Studley and nearby villages. The Mayor of Alcester and Cllr Susan Juned opening the meeting showing strong local support.

Speakers included: Manuela Perteghella, MP, Dr Mary Manandhar ([River Hope](#)), Ed Noyes ([The Wild Trout Trust](#)), Cllr Michael Chapman-Pincher, [Persore Town Council - Sister Rivers](#) and Dr Geoff Sallis - Safe Avon.

The group has already undertaken work to clear Himalayan Balsam, a non-native invasive species. Plans for the winter include fundraising, coordinated water testing, and habitat restoration using the recent Wild Trout Trust advisory recommendations.

Funding

Stratford-on-Avon: Community climate change funding

The planting of trees and hedges is an important adaption measure as both provide cooling. £50,000 has been allocated by Stratford-on-Avon District Council to fund the planting of trees for parish and town councils. Contact climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk for details.

Community Climate and Nature Fund Round Three: if you are a community group or Parish Council with an idea for a green project, contact climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk and the team will guide you through the application process. Next appraisal date: 14 January 2026.

Project funding

South Warwickshire: enhancing public spaces for nature and wildlife

A new opportunity is available to town and parish councils and community groups for the planting of trees and hedgerows, and the creation of wildflower meadows. Over 2025/26, the Wilder Communities Project is being funded by Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council. [Find out more about the project](#) or email Olivia.Williams@wkwt.org.uk

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

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!



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.

Keep in touch with us



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[Warwick District Council social media](#)

[Warwickshire Association of Local Councils website](#)

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