



## Climate Action Stokesley and Villages update January 2022

Happy New Year to you all!

We hope that you had a good festive time and have started 2023 with even stronger resolutions to work together locally, nationally and globally to raise awareness of climate change and to take action to reduce carbon emissions.

Here are some of the actions that have been going on and what is planned over the coming weeks.

### Monthly meeting



Community Library @ Stokesley

The first whole group meeting of the year will take place on Tuesday **17<sup>th</sup> January** in The Globe Community Library, North Road, Stokesley from **7:30 – 9:00pm**. All are very welcome so please spread the word to anyone you think might be interested in attending.

### Current news / campaigns

#### **January's Darlington & Stockton Times monthly article – what we can all do now**

This month our regular monthly Darlington and Stockton Times column will focus on actions that individuals can take and we have recommended the [list of actions](#) put together by the UK's independent Climate Change Committee plus writing to your MP, encouraging local politicians and businesses to act and joining a local group working on the climate and nature emergencies.

#### **New Cumbrian coal mine**

In early December it was announced that the UK will build its first new coalmine for three decades at Whitehaven in Cumbria to produce coking coal largely for steelmaking, despite objections locally, across the UK and from around the world. The vast majority of the coal produced will be for export, as most UK steel producers have rejected the use of the coal, which is high in sulphur and surplus to their needs.



The mine will produce an estimated 400,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions a year, increasing the UK's emissions by the equivalent of putting 200,000 cars on the road.

More information about environmental concerns [here](#)

At our meeting in December we drafted a [letter](#) to our MP Rishi Sunak asking him to reverse the decision giving the go-ahead for the coal mine in Cumbria.

We received this unsatisfactory [reply](#); going forward we need to consider how best to respond to this.

We have shared this reply with Friends of the Earth who are pursuing a legal challenge against the Government, more information [here](#).

## **News from the sub groups**

### **Transport**

#### **Zero Carbon- 20s Plenty**



Stokesley Town Council have started discussing, in their recent meetings ([8th November](#) and [13th December](#)), whether to support the 20s Plenty for North Yorkshire campaign.

CASaV sent them the 20s Plenty Town and Parish Council briefing and attended their meeting in December. They have also been approached by the Stokesley Conservation Area group.

Here is the appropriate section from their [draft minutes](#) for 13th December:

"RESOLVED that the additional information from Stokesley Residents requesting the High Street become a 20mph zone circulated on 6.12.22 and the request from another resident circulated on 8.12.22 be received. The Clerk confirm that the Town Council are minded to support the proposal but would like clarification on exactly where the 20mph zone would run from and to. The Town Council support the 20's Plenty initiative around the Estates."

We will put forward suggestions as to where a 20mph zone should run.

### **Energy**

**George's action on energy** - George Carter was interviewed on Radio Tees following receiving a £600 contribution to winter energy costs from the government George says: "I like many I know can cope without it. I would like to see my £600 used to reduce CO2 emissions In Stokesley." He talked about his plans when interview by [BBC Radio Tees](#) (starts at 1.30min). George is looking to help somebody locally, possibly by helping fund a solar installation with a company such as [Solar Sense](#) it would be great if others wanted to do the same locally or to donate to a national charity such as the [Renewable Energy Foundation](#) As George says solar panels and other energy measure are long term ways of reducing energy bills, however many people still need help now whether for energy costs or through food banks.

George is also excited by 3 items of **environmental energy good news:**

1. In some days in December the CO2 emission for the national grid electrical generation were just [50 gms per kWh](#) Gas as ever remained at 182 gms per kWh. If you are lucky enough to heat by heat pump – then on those days you are emitting only 7% of

the CO2 of your neighbour emits who still uses gas. (Heat pumps are up to 400% efficient - gas condensing boilers are up to 85% efficient).

2. The wholesale price of grid electricity is now nearly back to crisis levels. The price of wholesale gas is dropping but still at [twice crisis levels](#)

3. When Hinckley Point comes on line we could hit zero CO2 emissions on a windy sunny winter's for our national grid electrical system. (Let's congratulate the wind turbines) - sadly gas will always remain at 182 gram per kWh . I shall celebrate the zero emissions day with a bottle of champagne but unfortunately the bubbles are CO2!"



CASaV are working with a number of local schools to see if any can take up the offer from [Solar for Schools](#) or other similar organisations.

## Nature

### **Update on COP15 UN Biodiversity Conference**

We asked for an update from Friends of the Earth on what had happened at COP15 and received the following update from the lead on nature policy within Friends of the Earth.

*Representatives of Friends of the Earth International were at the Biodiversity COP15. Our 12 person delegation included colleagues from Friends of the Earth Europe.*

*In the run up to the COP, Friends of the Earth England Wales and Northern Ireland worked with Friends of the Earth Europe to help influence the European Union's stance (see [FoE Proposal ahead of COP15](#))*



*The final agreement of the new post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) is a mixed bag. On the plus side:*

*1. the target to halt loss of nature by 2030 - this is important, but the question now is how to do that for real rather than fooling ourselves into thinking progress is being made when the role of industrial agriculture and the dependence on 'false solutions' such as biodiversity offsetting will be allowed to count as legitimate practices.*

*2. part of halting biodiversity loss is the headline pledge to designate at least 30 per cent of land and seas as 'protected'. This is good (and it builds on the Leaders Declaration for Nature which the UK signed up to a few years ago) but it is, again, down to what governments decide how to define a protected area.*

*For example, in the UK, National Parks are 'protected' to some extent, but as they are not explicitly managed for nature simply designating more National Parks, as the UK government has talked about, may secure a percentage increase in the area ostensibly allocated for nature, but could mean little or no gain for nature in practice.*

*Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in England are also not in good state (and have not been for many years) when they should be one way to focus positive conservation effort for species and habitats.*

*3. The recognition in the GBF of the pivotal role of indigenous and local people (and their rights, which have tended to be trampled in the colonial-style pattern of land grabs, the acquisition of resources and knowledge e.g. of the medicinal properties of plants) is also important, although here again it's now a matter of what this means in practice, and whether behaviours and activities will be changed.*

*4. Switching subsidies - the ending of perverse subsidies is also important with an aim to reduce subsidies that harm nature by \$500 billion (£350bn) a year. Again, how this is accounted for and properly measured is key.*



*5. Funding for nature - a Global Biodiversity Fund has been established to boost finance for nature conservation and restoration starting with a target of £20 billion by 2025 and at least £30bn by 2030 - relatively small amounts for a global fund and, again, if that money is channelled into biodiversity offsets or carbon markets then it won't be money well spent, for all the reasons we set out in the Dangerous Distractions report in Nov 2021.*

*6. Reporting - as with carbon disclosure, the tracking and auditing of biodiversity impacts has shot into view. Again, this can be good, but as with all such processes it all depends on the transparency, accuracy, the checking, and the means of remediation and how this is all set out and stress tested.*

*As we know with the testing of net zero claims that corporates are making, we're already seeing a spectrum of poor to moderately okay, but nowhere what's needed to hit what's needed in the time available.*

*Moving on to what this all now means in 2023, now that we have had both the climate and the biodiversity COPs the UK will need to show how it is making good on the deals. In the first instance, for England the government has to produce the Environment Improvement Plan (EIP, i.e. the post 2020 update to the 2018 25 Year Environment Plan) by the end of January. Given that the government is in go-slow mode on most things whether it will meet that deadline is anyone's guess. Also, given how backward the final Environment Act targets are (especially weak on air pollution, water quality, tree and woodland cover), there could well be a lot of fudging and filling to show how the target and EIP starts conforming to what the UK has both agreed to in Montreal, and what is now in law under the Environment Act 2021.*

*Although the EIP update will be mostly about England the UK wide picture is also affected because, as is obvious, species cross boundaries as do rivers and landscapes / habitats etc. So a UK wide picture is needed and to then know what each UK nations is contributing, and where it needs to improve - not unlike on climate. So, lots to do to follow through on both COPs and to know how they add up across the UK. On the whole it has been felt that the UK was helpful at the COP, but we will need to look into the detail of that (as the EU's position) as part of following up.*

Carbon Brief has an extensive summary of the outcomes of COP15 [here](#)

## **Waste**

We are hoping 2023 will see step changes which will set England on a path to substantial reductions in waste - it should do - the government is starting to target insulation to reduce energy waste, and we expect definitive delivery dates in 2023 for extended producer responsibility, deposit return scheme, food waste collection, .... These schemes were all first put forward in the Government's "Our waste, our resources: a strategy for England" [white paper](#) in 2018 which gives a good overview of how real waste reduction and a more circular economy will happen.

## **Stokesley and Villages Repair Cafes**



The most recent Repair Cafe was held in the Globe Community Library at Stokesley on Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup>. A merry band of Christmas Repairer elves tackled nearly 50 items in need of repair including a singing reindeer who'd lost its voice brought in by a child whose parent was almost happy to see it swiftly repaired to full singing order.



The majority of the other items brought in for repair were fully restored to working order or where this was not possible, advice given to the owner on what action could be taken. Equally importantly the message was spread on the importance of reducing waste going to landfill or incineration and so tackling climate change.

The next Repair Cafes will be held:

- at Swainby Village Hall on **Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> January** from 10am to 12pm
- at the Globe in Stokesley on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February** from 10am – 12noon.

Please come along and bring your household items in need of repair e.g. electrical appliances, mechanical equipment, furniture, clothing, crockery, laptops, smartphones, etc to extend the life of your items, save money, learn repair skills, prevent landfill waste and help fight climate change!

Further details here on our [website](#)

## **Food**



While still pursuing the idea of a community garden, we have started some 'free gardening' near the Globe Community Library, Stokesley, planting blackcurrants and raspberry canes as well as some bulbs.

We will have a stall giving away free seeds at the March Stokesley Farmers' market. Packets or packs of your own saved seed can be left at both the Globe and Discovery Centre Great Ayton seed banks.

In January many people choose to eat more vegan food (Veganuary) which can positively impact on climate change but it is useful to be aware that some vegan foods, like any foods, may be highly processed. It is Veganuary but be aware that some vegan foods may be highly processed. However they apparently compete well with the real thing, one member having enjoyed vegan salmon at Xmas!

Better still, why not make your own, try [this](#) vegan 'faux gras' made from walnuts, lentils and cognac!

Some vegetable gardening tips:  
Farmyard muck, rich in carbon, spread on the land greatly decreases the amount of nitrous oxide (a very potent greenhouse gas) given off.



Raw bread dough is highly attractive to slugs (but you still have to remove them). One member placed them in the top of her compost bin and they stayed there, not appearing in the compost extracted from the bottom.

Good [news](#) from 2022 is that there has been real progress made in the reduction of food waste for example through the use of [Olio](#)



## **Other news**

### **CASAV signs new Friends of the Earth charter**

Climate Action Stokesley and Villages is a currently a non-affiliated group of Friends of the Earth (FoE), which means we get support from FoE to reduce climate change, the support

includes insurance, banking facilities, mailing list systems, campaigning and scientific support.

FoE also has local FoE groups in some areas, with the only real difference being that that are called for example Thirsk FoE use the FoE brand, but otherwise like us have a lot of autonomy.

FoE is asking both types of groups to sign a single local action group charter to make administering the groups simpler allowing FoE to support all groups more effectively and for FoE to have more impact in reducing climate change. The CASAV steering group has agreed to sign this charter and this will not change our name or fundamentally change our relationship with FoE, but we hope amongst other things make it easier to work with other local groups as we are already starting to do through the North Yorkshire Climate Coalition ahead of the operation of the unitary North Yorkshire Council.

The charter lays out what FoE will do for the CASaV and what CASaV will do. The charter items are: Must actively participate in: a Friends of the Earth campaign OR a local campaign OR a local campaign organised by another group in the network; Access to Friends of the Earth events and online webinars and trainings; Access to website resources, campaign guidance, group development and general guidance; Support opening a Co-op bank account; Access to grants; Must keep record of finances; Action Network account and support; Regular email communications; Keep Friends of the Earth staff informed of ongoing campaigning, activities and more – at least twice per year excluding the annual ring-round; Promotion on our website through interactive network map, news feed and Friends of the Earth Community Twitter account; Must engage with and be open to welcoming new members; Tailored support from regional staff; Public liability insurance; For groups in England: at least 5 group members; For groups in Wales and Northern Ireland: at least 3 group members.

As you will see the charter is very flexible and is only rigid over governance issues such as the need to be welcome and opening to new members, keep financial records and campaigning in some way, all of which are already part of CASaV's ethos.

An example of the training they offer is the upcoming course – [Build Power and Campaign More Effectively](#) The course is an eight week (1 evening plus homework) course which explores the opportunities to develop a positive group culture, remove barriers to participation and to develop and deliver impactful and inclusive campaigns.

FoE campaigns widely across climate change and the environment, with examples of current campaigns being for [warm homes for all](#) and stopping the development of the new Cumbrian coal mine (see start of this update) both areas CASaV would like to be active in.

### **North Yorkshire County Council Climate Change News**

NYCC produces a regular newsletter, Climate Change News, with updates about what actions the council is taking to tackle climate change. By this coming April there is planned to be a direct newsletter subscriber button on their website but if you would like to be added to the email list now to receive regular newsletters please email Jos Holmes, Climate Change officer at NYCC at [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk) to ask for your name / email to be added to their email subscriber list.

### **Social Media**

Love it or hate it, social media is still an effective way of promoting our group, raising awareness of our climate action events, sharing relevant news items and wider climate action activities and we currently reach 327 members on our Climate Action Stokesley and Villages Facebook page (more than our email list). If you have any climate action news or want to promote an activity and you are not a Facebook user please email me

([climateactionsav@gmail.com](mailto:climateactionsav@gmail.com) headed FAO Kate Gibbon) and I will post this on our Facebook page. I can also promote / share news and events via the CASAV Instagram.

**Hope to see you at the next monthly meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> January at the Globe Community Library 7.30pm.**

Kate Gibbon On behalf of the Climate Action Stokesley and Villages Steering Group Steering group: Bridget Holmstrom, Caryn Loftus, Jack Turton, Ron Kirk and Simon Gibbon