

### **Zero Hero!**

Our new monthly profile of a Zero Carbon Shropshire Volunteer starts this month with Helena Hale. Read the full article on our [blog](#).

Where in Shropshire do you live? *"I'm in South Shropshire in Oretton".*

Why did you get involved with Zero Carbon Shropshire? *"I felt I wanted to do something and be part of a partnership that was about working to solve the problems we face with the climate emergency."*

What have you done since joining? *"I take simple notes for the weekly Energy Group. I talk to my friends and neighbours about the partnership. I'm trying to change my dreams of travelling to far flung places."*

What do you do outside of Zero Carbon Shropshire? *"We have a garden and some land that we try to cultivate with fruit, veg and flowers. I am learning to play piano. I play bridge online several times a week. I've also started Couch to 5K with a neighbour".*

What do you do to reduce your carbon footprint? *"Shop locally, recycle and mend and I've always shopped in charity shops. I have recently invested in an electric bike with the savings I have made over the last year".*

Have you noticed changes in the natural world since you were younger? *"When I moved to Shropshire 20 years ago, the curlew was very evident, there were many breeding pairs. Last year I'm told we were down to no successful fledges".*

What's the most important thing people can do to reduce their impact on the natural world? *"Be mindful of what we use and how we use it, resources are precious. Put pressure on our politicians to listen to the scientists and environmental evidence".*

[Sign the pledge](#) to support Zero Carbon Shropshire and think about how you can be part of the plan.



### **Generation Zero Carbon Shropshire Group is looking for new members**

We are a small group of enthusiastic, friendly young people who are aiming to get Shropshire completely 0 carbon emissions in the next 10 years.

Our group is made up of 5 young people. So far, we have been having online meetings each week to discuss and develop our ideas to help achieve our goal. At the moment we are creating a website and getting it up and running.

We have decided to create this young team so that we can have a bright future to look forward to. To us, being involved isn't so much a choice, it is a must as we need to act now!

In this group we have roles for every type of person. We have opportunities for people to really get involved within the group and be assigned specific jobs, but we also have the opportunity for someone to just watch and observe the group and chip in with occasional suggestions. This group is a collection of positive people who are all striving for the same goal.

We are really keen to have new ideas and energy into the team.

To join us, visit the zero carbon Shropshire website, sign the pledge, then scroll to the bottom of the page and comment to be part of the generation zero carbon group.

We would all be so pleased to meet you!

If you've been inspired by Helena, here are some more hints and tips on how you can help Shropshire achieve net zero carbon sooner...

**Money makes the world go round..... So find an ethical bank and divest your pension from bad companies**



photo by Rudy & Peter Skitterians on Pixabay

Our economic system depends on money so one of the most effective things you can do as an individual is to use yours wisely. Banks like Barclays and HSBC are notorious for flagrantly flouting the 2016 Paris Agreement and continuing to fund the climate crisis to the tune of literally BILLIONS - this is OUR MONEY that they are pouring into coal, oil, biomass and dirty companies to line their own pockets while the going is good. Move your money elsewhere and they will get the message. Without a doubt, Triodos is the most ethical bank available to us in this country. <https://www.triodos.co.uk/> but alternatives include the building societies like Nationwide and Principality who are good too as they are owned by their investors so are more responsive to what real people want, rather than what the stock market wants.

It's a bit more complicated when it comes to your pension as you may well not know which funds your provider is investing in on your behalf, but it's well worth finding out. Contact an Independent Financial Advisor. To find one who you can trust, have a read of Martin Lewis's MoneySavingExpert site first: <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/savings/best-financial-advisers/> Don't forget to insist that you want your money invested ETHICALLY and not in fossil fuels. These investments have been doing much better than traditional ones recently and are set to continue doing so - it's a WIN WIN for both you and the environment.



photo by Tina Teearu

**Allow Your Garden to "Rewild"**

A saying that has always resonated with me is that "gardening is the only hobby that gives back more over time than you put into it" and sometimes all that is required to improve the wildlife value of your plot is to ease off on the management. Don't mow the lawn as much as you used to, raise the blades on the mower by an inch or so to let the little flowers bloom underneath and feed the bees. Stop using fertilisers and pesticides (our bee-friendly native plants get overwhelmed by too much other foliage around). Definitely NEVER EVER use slug pellets - the dying slugs get eaten by birds and

hedgehogs and then the birds and hedgehogs die too. Don't dig - let whatever comes up come up - it will help your soil stabilise too. Put in a pond with gently sloping sides, no matter how small or modest - all life on earth needs water in one way or another and you will soon have a thriving ecosystem in your back yard supporting all sorts of wildlife from plants and insects to amphibians, birds and mammals. Cut a hole in the bottom of your fence to allow hedgehogs to roam freely. Above all, be tolerant - let the "weeds" be - they are there for a reason and although they're not as pretty as some garden flowers, they have their own charm - encourage your children to find as many different flowers and leaves as they can from your garden and learn to identify them, find out more about their old uses and their vernacular names - it's a fascinating subject in itself! I guarantee you'll become more connected with nature and going for a walk with your children will become an adventure every time, wherever in the world you go.

Shropshire Climate Action Partnership is co-ordinating a collaborative Shropshire-wide community response to the climate and ecological crisis and overseeing the creation of a Zero Carbon Shropshire Plan (ZCSP) that provides an adequate response to the emergency. Please help us by encouraging your friends and family to sign the Pledge on our website at [www.zerocarbonschropshire.org](http://www.zerocarbonschropshire.org) and connecting with us on social media

