



ACT Newsletter January 2021

A Happy New Year to all, hopefully the 21st Century has now come of age.

This time last year it was said that 2020 was to be a “big year for the planet” but Covid put this on hold and so 2021 has to be even bigger. The hope is that with the pandemic having raised people’s awareness of the important things in/for life (as well as its non-essentials) messages on climate and nature may now fall on more fertile ground.

Following our call, in the last newsletter, for help in “getting the message out”, keep an eye on your inbox for a questionnaire asking whether you might be able to devote an hour or two to ACT, there’s no need for any sort of expertise, just enthusiasm for the planet and its nature.

And so to the news:

Say hello to Flavio

My name is Flavio and I am helping to coordinate ACT’s Teignbridge Wildlife Warden Scheme. For those of you who may not have heard about it, here is a brief description of the scheme.

Our wildlife is dwindling - good habitats have disappeared because of agricultural intensification, new development and because we like our environment to be 'tidy'. [Audrey Compton](#)* (Ecology and 3Fs group leader) launched the scheme last September with the aim of training volunteer Wildlife Wardens in the skills required to reverse these declines. At the time of writing, we have almost 50 Wildlife Wardens signed up to the scheme, representing 23 of the 54 parishes in Teignbridge! 19 have received their introductory training and are already working hard to get local wildlife back on track.

We don't expect anyone to be an expert naturalist when they join, because ACT will provide training in many areas, including wildlife gardening, wildlife identification, how to monitor the 'health' of habitats and how to ensure that development does as little damage as possible.

If you would like to find out more about the scheme, please [email me](#) or leave a comment on [this page](#) of our website.



*For an insight into Audrey's journey through the natural world, culminating in the establishment of the Wildlife Warden Scheme, have a listen to her recent talk for Dartmoor National Park [Saving our Wildlife - Parish by Parish](#).

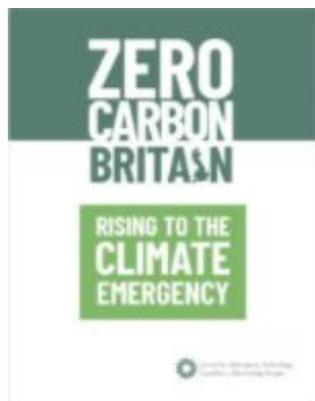
Zero Carbon Britain

Our [John Watson](#) reports back on the online course he attended with [The Centre for Alternative Technology](#) (CAT)

I was feeling the need to significantly extend my somewhat shaky understanding of how to respond best to the climate emergency so decided to enrol on this course last November.

I am very pleased I did because it proved to be very thorough, well structured and authoritative. It also provided lots of information as well as stimulating many ideas. It took place over two hard-working days with

a good mixture of presentations by leading climate change figures, small group “face to face” work and responsive exercises



The course was centred round the latest CAT report “Zero Carbon Britain” (ZCB) which advocates radical but achievable actions to achieve Zero Carbon Britain. It is detailed, very meticulously researched and well argued based around the concepts of “powering up and powering down”. A good introduction to it is given in this [ZCB link](#) and particularly in the short video.

I found the course very stimulating and worthwhile.

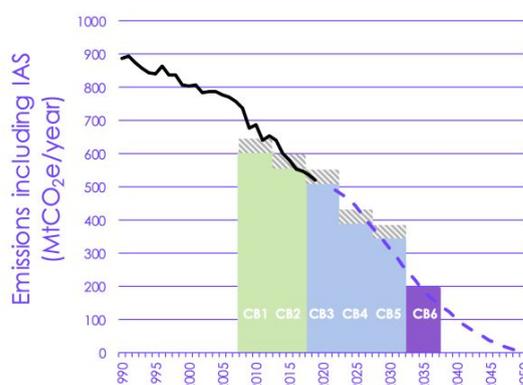
Issues which stood out for me were:

- The importance of helping everyone, including ourselves, to understand that a low carbon future can provide much more fulfilling lifestyles.
- The need to be creative and imaginative in doing this. One course member said “Make zero carbon fun”.
- The scale of action needed at all levels but that there are ways of doing this using existing methodologies and technologies.
- A “toolkit” for assessing the value of government proposals for combating climate change.

Other carbon news

On 9 December the *Climate Change Committee* (CCC) released its [6th Carbon Budget](#) (CB6) for 2033 to 2037, which now takes into account the UK’s pledge to “net zero” by 2050 (previously to reduce by 80%) and determines that emissions must drop by 78% of 1990 levels by 2035.

For the first time the CCC is calling on the government to formally take account of the UK’s share of aviation and shipping emissions in its plans. These are now shown in the CCC’s pathway to 2050 as are the levels of carbon removals needed to cater for



aviation's emissions predicted to still be around in 2050.

Much of the UK's emission reductions so far have been invisible to the public, mainly due to changes in the way the country generates energy, i.e. in switching away from coal to gas and renewables. This element will still represent over 40% of continued reductions but now the public and business need to make up the balance with the adoption of low carbon technologies, such as electric vehicles and heat pumps, and with behavioural changes, such as flying less and moving away from meat-based diets.

The CCC has broken down the report into a series of bite sized presentations on its [Youtube channel](#) covering Energy, Transport, Buildings etc as well as the [Net Zero Pathway](#) itself.

We await the government's formal response in advance of [COP 26](#) this November.

ACT is in the Mid-Devon Advertiser

Since November 2020 the Mid Devon Advertiser has been publishing articles from us on all things environmental, [here's one](#) from 19th November. So keep your eyes out for the next edition and let us know what you think.

Greta Thunberg

Greta turned eighteen on 3 January. In 2018 a student filmmaker heard about a girl protesting outside the Swedish parliament and started to film her, and didn't stop for over a year. The result is an intimate documentary *I am Greta*. It's airing on BBC 1, Wednesday 6th January at 10:45pm, but is already available [here on iplayer](#) and is well worth a watch to see the girl and young woman behind the headlines and myths.

