

Welcome to March's Update

from Climate Action Stokesley & Villages

Supporting local action for a sustainable, greener and more resilient Stokesley & surrounding villages



Diary 1: CASaV / local (details below in newsletter)

Tuesday 17/3 19.30 Talk by Seed Sovereignty & whole group meeting at Stokesley Community Library

Monday 9/3 17.00 - 19.00 Stokesley Mending Circle, Stokesley Town Hall

Tuesday 10/3 13.30 - 15.30 Yatton House Community Garden Working Party

Tuesday 10/3 19.00 - 20.30 Rethinking Resources (Waste) group meeting by zoom

Saturday 14/3 10.00 - 12.00 CASaV info & activity stall with focus on energy at Great Ayton Methodist monthly community hub

Thursday 19/3 15.00 Nature group meeting Stokesley Community Library

Thursday 19/3 18.00 - 20.00 Sustainable Fashion Week: Future Citizen Fashion Show & launch of Preloved Fancy Clothes Boutique Stokesley School

Saturday 21/3 10.00 - 12.00 4th birthday Repair & Reuse Cafe with focus on growing your own, Swainby Village Hall

Thursday 26/3 19.00 Food group meeting by zoom

Saturday 25/4 CASaV Event - Stokesley Town Hall

Save the date!

Saturday 25/4 'Greener Together' day event, Stokesley Town Hall

Saturday 6/6 - Saturday 14/6 Great Big Green Week

2: Regional, National & Global (follow links)

3/3 World Wildlife Day [wildlifeday](#)

9/3- 15/3 The Big Plastic Count [thebigplasticcount](#)

9/3 - 13/3 Food Waste Action Week [food-waste-action-week](#)

Complete a survey on food waste and enter a prize draw - [survey](#)

13/3 - 29/3 Great British Spring Clean (litter picking & landscape clean up) [great-british-spring-clean](#)

16/3 - 27/3 Big Walk & Wheel (sustainable school transport) [big-walk-and-wheel-2026](#)

18/3 Global Recycling Day [globalrecyclingday](#)

20/3 World Rewilding Day [world-rewilding-day](#)

28/3 Earth Hour [earthhour](#)

30/3 International Day of Zero Waste [international-day-zero-waste-2026](#)

Tuesday 17/3 19.30 Seed Sovereignty Talk & whole group meeting at Stokesley Community Library



Seed
SOVEREIGNTY

THE GAIA FOUNDATION

This month we have a talk on 'Seed Sovereignty' by Catherine Howell from the Gaia Foundation & co-ordinator for northern England. Seeds are kernels of life. They support our entire food system: providing sustenance and nutrition for all those we share the living world with. For millennia, small-scale farmers have freely cultivated, saved, and shared a vast diversity of seed, the source of the majority of food on our plates, and those of our ancestors. But today seeds have become one of the most controlled commodities in the world. Come and find out what seed sovereignty is and why it matters. More info here [seedsovereignty](#)

Followed by short meeting with feedback from the sub groups.

Monday 9/3 17.00 - 19.00 Stokesley Mending Circle, Stokesley Town Hall

All are warmly welcome to join the Mending Circle which meets every second Monday early evening. Learn sewing / mending super powers from scratch or get help and inspiration with your current sewing project. Mending clothes has a significant positive climate impact by reducing waste and conserving resources, as extending a garment's life by just nine months can lower its carbon, water, and waste footprints by 20–30%.



Tuesday 10/3 13.30 - 15.30 Yatton House Community Garden Working Party



Last month we moved some of the perennial veg plants into a border so that they are easier to maintain and be more obvious for picking. The plants include Welsh Onions which make a great winter alternative to spring onions, Turkish Rocket which has leaves you can use like spinach and Common Sorrel with leaves that add a lovely lemon flavour to dishes. This month we will create a 'pot luck' area to sow the seed from the out-of-date packets from the Discovery Centre Seed Share Box. It will be interesting to see which are still viable!

Saturday 14/3 10.00 - 12.00 Great Ayton Methodist Community Hub CASaV information & energy activity

Every second Saturday each month there is a gathering in the methodist church hall serving refreshments and a source of local information, guidance and support. CASaV have been invited to showcase what we provide for the community and how people can take part in our activities. There will be a special focus on home energy saving and a hands on activity. Pop along to find out more.



Saturday 21/3 10.00 - 12.00 4th Birthday Repair & Reuse Cafe with focus on growing your own - seed swap, gardening tools swap, gardening books & magazines to take away

casav.uk/repaircafe



This month we celebrate four years of our Repair Cafe - reducing waste and extending the use of what you already own instead of buying new. Come along for a slice of birthday cake whilst our friendly pink T-shirted volunteers show you how to fix your beloved household items - electrical appliances, toys & bikes, wooden furniture, clothing & textiles, clocks, glass & ceramics, electronic items including laptops and phones as well as sharpening household and **gardening blades**.

This session there will be a focus on growing your own fruit, veggies and flowers with a seed swap, garden tools swap and free gardening books and magazines to take away. Please bring along any surplus seeds you have to swap for ones you need, also bring any gardening tools you don't want - trowels, forks, secateurs - and swap for tools you do need. Our trusty blade sharpeners will be on hand to ensure all your gardening tools are sharp for the job and you can take away (preloved) gardening books and magazines for free.

Our February Valentine's Repair Cafe at Stokesley was full of love with our popular sustainable living goody bag giveaway, dozens of people bringing lots of items to mend and many enthusiastic volunteers assisting & refreshing our visitors and fixing their items.

This is a great opportunity to meet with friendly, like minded people and learn new repair skills. New volunteers are always welcome - come along, have a cuppa and a chat or email [Simon Gibbon](mailto:Simon.Gibbon@casav.uk). If you are not sure come and / or bring an item to be repaired to get a feel for the Repair Cafe.

Thursday 19/3 18.00 - 20.00 Sustainable Fashion Week: Future Citizen Fashion Show & launch of Preloved Fancy Clothes Boutique Stokesley School - FANCY CLOTHES NEEDED!!

A vibrant, multi-colored poster for a 'Fashion Show!' event. At the top, it says 'Fashion Show!' in large, bold letters. Below that, it specifies 'Thursday 19th March 6-8pm Stokesley School'. A green recycling symbol is prominent on the left. The ticket price is listed as 'Tickets £5'. The poster lists several activities: 'Licenced Bar', 'Raffle', 'Snacks provided', 'Sale Rail', 'Jewellery making', 'Student-led fashion show', 'Pre-loved Boutique on show', and 'Bring along items to donate if you have them!'. A QR code is provided for tickets. At the bottom, there are logos for 'ITFA' and 'Stokesley School & Sixth Form College' with the tagline 'Being the best we can be'.

Stokesley School students and their teachers are organising a Fashion Show for Sustainable Fashion Week: Future Citizen Week as a launch for the school's Pre-loved Fancy Clothes Boutique which will allow all students to have the opportunity to borrow 'fancy' clothes for proms, dances and work and university interviews.

They need smart dresses, separates, trouser, jackets and suits as well as accessories so please give your wardrobes a spring clearout and donate towards this great sustainable cause. Clothing can be dropped off at school reception.

Coming up - save the date!

Saturday 25/4 'Greener Together' day event, Stokesley Town Hall

CASaV are holding an all day event to showcase what we can all do together for nature and the planet, locally and globally; if we all act, no matter how small, we can make a big difference. There will be displays, hands on activities and illustrated talks covering the key areas of energy, food, nature, rethinking resources and transport. We would love to hear what you are already doing, share ideas and discover how together we might do more. More info coming!

6 - 14/6 Get Involved In Great Big Green Week



Get ready for Great Big Green Week (GBGW), the UK's largest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature, returning this year from the 6th to the 14th of June! This year's inspiring theme is "Together for good," highlighting how everyday, collective community

actions create real, practical benefits for our planet and our shared future. Whether you are an environmental expert or just want to make a local difference, there are endless ways to get involved—from organizing a simple clothes swap, community walk, or a local climate conversation cafe, to simply bringing an existing sports club or choir event under the GBGW banner. By hosting an activity, no matter how small or "low effort," you will be joining a massive national movement to show politicians that we urgently care about a greener, fairer world. Start thinking now about what fun, local activities you or your community groups could organize to help us come together for good! Our Repair Cafe on 13th June will be part of GBGW activities. Please get in touch if you want to help

or have another event you want to come under the GBGW banner -
[gbgw@casav.uk?link_id=13&can_id=196a2141f0bbd19766a806e17c973e05&source=email-climate-action-stokesley-and-villages-february-update-and-whole-group-meeting-tuesday-172-repair-cafe-saturday-142&email_referrer=email_3111075&email_subject=climate-action-stokesley-and-villages-march-update-and-whole-group-meeting-tuesday-173-repair-cafe-saturday-213&&]gbgw@casav.uk

News, campaigns & subgroup dates

Friends of the Earth - challenging climate disinformation



CASaV is affiliated to Friends of the Earth. They have recently published some useful articles considering the evidence and challenging widespread disinformation about climate breakdown. Read more here [challenging-climate-disinformation](#)

Brighten Up Great Ayton group

Following a discussion with Great Ayton Parish Council and CASaV's steering group, the Brighten Up Great Ayton group will become a sub-group of CASaV to help formalise its status. There will be a re-launch of the group in April to hopefully attract a few more volunteers.



Great Ayton Station Wild Space



There are now two interpretation boards at the Great Ayton Station [Wild Space](#) highlighting the butterflies that it might be possible to spot in the picnic area and showing the life-cycle of butterflies to highlight the management of the picnic area including patches of nettles, brambles and long grass. The panels were funded through the [Bug Trail](#) that CASaV manages and thanks go to Martin Partridge,

Butterfly Conservation Yorkshire Branch for the design. Find out more about [butterflies](#) on our website.

Ideas & news from the groups: Rethinking Resources (Not the Time to Waste) including Repair & Reuse Cafe

<https://casav.uk/waste>

This subgroup focuses on rethinking resources: rethinking & reducing consumption; repairing, repurposing and recycling materials that might otherwise go to landfill or incineration.

Please join us at this month's zoom meeting on Tuesday 10/3 19.00 - 20.30: contact email [Simon Gibbon](mailto:Simon.Gibbon@casav.uk) for a zoom link

What's in a name? Group name change from 'Waste' to 'Rethinking Resources'

Initially we focused on waste management as a means of climate action e.g. by promoting local opportunities for recycling but have now expanded activities to move towards the more preferred options of the 'waste hierarchy' through circular management so it is time to rename the group!

For four years we have run **Repair Cafes** (and for most of that time we have been the top Repair Cafe in the UK for the number of items fixed per year!), saving thousands of items from landfill or incineration and saving thousands of pounds in cost of buying new for our local community.

We have been providing opportunities

for **reusing** items e.g. the 'Halloween Switch' and 'Xmas Xchange' where people donated or swapped specialist clothing items which might otherwise have been used once and then discarded. Our collaborators have run successful Clothes Swap events where people have exchanged good quality clothing, **reducing** the need to buy new.

We have run crafting workshops to show people of all ages how to **repurpose** materials (which might otherwise have gone to waste) saving people the cost of buying new and saving the earth's limited resources from manufacturing new.

We have now extended the successful Repair Cafes into being Repair & Reuse Cafes. We regularly fix broken and unwanted electrical and electronic items which the original owners donate to local communities in need to be **reused**. In addition to fixing broken items we have **repurposed** waste fabric into free draught excluders to not only save textiles from landfill but also save our community's energy bills. Waste fabric has also been **repurposed** into free long lasting shopping bags to prevent plastic bag waste and plastic pollution. Unwanted books, magazines and crafting materials have been given



away to be **reused**. This month we will be extending this to gardening equipment **reuse** and in April we will focus on kitchenware **reuse**.

Local recycling / repurposing collections



Medication blister packs - collection boxes now at **Stokesley Community Library & the Discovery Centre, Great Ayton** collected for recycling at Boots stores in Northallerton and Guisborough (or better still use the recycling points in Boots directly).

Since restarting the collection box in Stokesley Community Library last November our group has ensured that twenty standard bin bags full of blister packs have now been saved from waste.

Plastic milk bottle tops - Rea Funeral services, Stokelsey, raises funds for cancer research

Spectacles - Cooper & Barr, Stokesley collects unwanted spectacles to repurpose for good causes

Bras - donate usable condition bras to raise funds for breast cancer research, collection boxes at Hutton Rudby GP Surgery as well as Mowbray House Surgery, Northallerton. **We are hoping to launch a bra collection point in Stokesley or Great Ayton soon so look out for updates!**

Used postage stamps, used but clean aluminium foil, children's wellies, good condition underwear - all being collected locally for good causes contact [Louise](#)

Small electrical appliances - the Mind charity shop, Stokesley collects these for sale after safety testing

Ideas & news from the groups: Nature Group

This subgroup focuses on discovering more about and supporting biodiversity and our living environment. Face to face meeting Thursday 19/3 15.00 at Stokesley Community Library, Stokesley. Contact [Bridget Holmstrom](#) for more information.

River Leven Himalayan Balsam project

This project has been set up to control the invasive species Himalayan balsam which is destroying biodiversity on the river Leven and tributaries from its source in Kildale to Crathorne. People are already working to reduce the extent of balsam on the river but there are significant areas of balsam for example between Great Ayton and Stokesley that need to be worked on.



Those of you who have managed to dodge the rain since the beginning of the year and get down to the riverside will have noticed that things are beginning to stir. Balsam seedlings have already been spotted on the Leven and the group is working with the Tees River Trust to deliver training on species identification prior to 'balsam bashing' sessions - dates for both coming soon!

If anyone is interested in joining the group please contact balsam@casav.uk.

Cod Beck Project 2026

The Nature Group are starting a larger project at the Cod Beck Reservoir and events held throughout 2026 may include bat walks, butterfly and moth walks, and fungus forays.

We will be giving a training session on using the iNaturalist app with the help of representatives from the wider Cod Beck Discovery Project. More details will be given on Facebook and through the Balsam group. If you want to find out more please contact balsam@casav.uk

Ideas & news from the groups: Food Group

This subgroup focuses on food & its impact on climate change - from growing your own and eating seasonally to reducing food going to waste. Meetings held bimonthly, next meeting online will be 26/3 19.00 contact [Wendy Smith](#) for a link to join



Foodshare - nightly food redistribution

Foodshare is a joint initiative by the Food and Waste groups and is organised by Jenny. EVERY evening at 9pm a volunteer collects surplus food from the Ayton Coop and Premier supermarket

and both Stokesley Coops and takes it to various distribution centres (often in Middlesbrough) such as Nitelight (for homeless) for use/distribution to those in need. This is fresh food such as fruit, veg and bread, NOT tins and dried food that are needed by Food Banks.

Our group collects 40-60 kilos of food every day with a value of approx £250, worth £78,000 every year.

What can I do now? Jenny is always keen to recruit more volunteers to support the foodshare so if you feel this is something with which you could help, please contact Jenny here [Jenny Earle](#).

Growing your own - good for you and the planet

Try growing something new this year. There are lots of vegetables that are not often seen in the shops yet are not difficult to grow. [Salsify](#) is a root sometimes called the vegetable oyster. [Chicory](#) is grown in the ground one season but then brought inside over winter and is currently producing beautiful chicons for fresh salad.



Wendy has been busy stocking up the Seed Share at Stokesley Community Library - pop in to pick up free flower and vegetable seeds. Growing your own not only benefits you physically, it's also good for your mental health too, read more here [why-gardening-is-good-for-your-mental-health](#)

There is also a Seed Share / Swap at the Discovery Centre, Great Ayton.

Ideas & news from the groups: Energy

This subgroup focuses on using sustainable energy sources & energy saving in the home

Help Us warm Up Our Community!

Do you have an eye for detail and a passion for planet-friendly living? Climate Action Stokesley and Villages (CASaV) is launching an exciting new project to help our community beat the chill and lower their energy bills. We are planning to apply for a National Lottery "Awards for All" grant to fund a thermal imaging camera,



allowing us to show residents exactly where their homes are leaking heat. By identifying these "cold spots," we can provide practical advice on making local homes cosier, cheaper to run, and much greener.

Before we hit "send" on our grant application, we need you!

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our Energy sub-group to help coordinate and carry out these surveys. You don't need to be an energy expert or a tech wizard—we are going to be learning from other areas' local groups, who will provide all the training you need to use the camera and interpret the results. Whether you can spare a few hours a month to visit homes or prefer to help with the behind-the-scenes organising, your contribution will make a tangible difference in our community's fight against climate change.

If you can help please email energy@casav.uk

Powering Stokesley and Villages: Now is the Time for Community Energy!



Recently, CASaV attended the "[Seeing is Believing](#)" community energy event hosted by the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub. The event brought together experts and local groups to showcase how ordinary communities are taking control of their local energy systems—and the main takeaway is that there has never been a better time for us to launch our own local energy initiatives.

Why Now? The national momentum behind community energy is growing at an unprecedented rate. Through the recently announced [Local Power Plan](#), the government has pledged £1 billion to support over 1,000 local and community energy projects. Additionally, there is now an abundance of tailored support, one-to-one expert surgeries, and grant funding specifically designed to help community groups get their ideas off the ground.

Successfully setting up community energy projects allows us to generate clean, renewable power, but it also does so much more. It keeps financial benefits circulating within our local economy, builds community resilience, and significantly lowers energy bills for vital community buildings.

What Are Our Next Steps? We already have great local ambitions. We want to acquire thermal imaging cameras to help residents identify heat loss in their homes, and we are eager to get solar panels installed on the roofs of our local schools. While we have

faced some roadblocks in the past—such as navigating school trusts and Church of England approvals—the event opened new doors. We have connections to specialised net-zero officers and successful sustainability groups from nearby areas who are ready to help us break through these specific barriers.

The key lesson from the event is that we don't need to start with anything big. Other highly successful community groups started with something as small as two solar panels on an allotment. Starting small builds confidence, allows us to test our ideas, and proves to future funders that we can deliver.

Get Involved! We are looking for enthusiastic community members to help us turn these energy ideas into reality. Whether you have professional experience in planning or finance, a bit of spare time to help with community engagement, or simply a passion for making Stokesley and our villages greener and more resilient, we need you.

Let's harness this momentum together. Please get in touch with CASaV today to find out how you can get involved in shaping our local energy future! energy@casav.uk

Ideas & news from the groups: Environment & Climate Osmotherley (ECO) Group



Environment Climate Osmotherley (ECO) meets regularly and holds events which raise awareness and address local environmental issues such as becoming a Dark Skies Village and increasing local biodiversity.

Contact [Becci Wright](#) for more information

Signing off

If you have any news or any event / activity you would like promoting on next month's **(April's)** update please email [Kate Gibbon](#) by **Thursday 26/3**

Hope to see you at the Seed Sovereignty talk & whole group meeting Tuesday 17/3 19.30 at Stokesley Community Library