

Emergency on Planet Earth

The whole area of Planet and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are coming more and more to the fore.

The SDGs set a goal to protect the planet 'so it can support the needs of the present and future generations'.

Various reports make clear that we need to increase urgency and ambition on climate change and environmental protection.

Some of the projects on which we have worked which come under the related SDGs are detailed on the following pages. Some projects would obviously contribute to more than one SDG!

The projects detailed in the next few pages certainly show that we are following President Margaret's goals of 'Be Bold and Mind the Gap'.

Once again, thank you to all Clubs in Midland Chase Region for sharing the work currently being done in relation to Planet and for providing information to be included in this newsletter.



You Must Be
The Change
You Want to
See In The
World

- Mahatma Gandhi

**12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION**



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

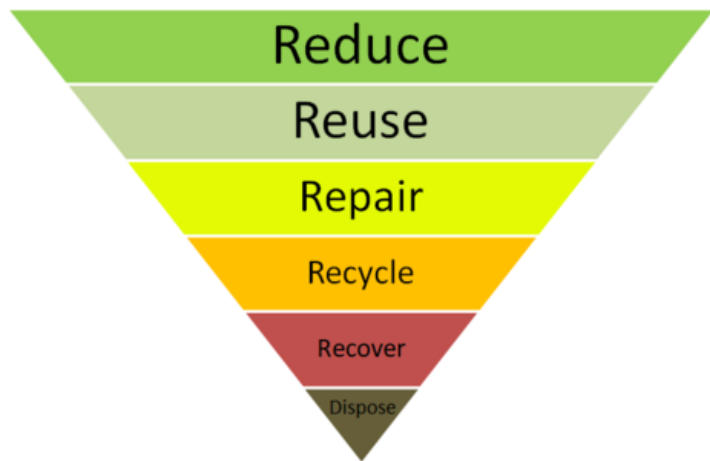
A growing global population combined with the unsustainable use of natural resources is having a devastating impact on our planet – propelling climate change, destroying nature and raising pollution levels.

The majority of our work which comes under SDG 12 involves the Waste Hierarchy.

Along with just about everything else in the last year or two, changes are afoot in the recycling world.

Most of us are well used to what we can put in our recycling bins, although very little of it is standard all across the country. Given that we have now been doing it for a very long time, you would think that the same rules would apply to all local authorities – how much more efficient it might be if they did.

In the meantime, we've been finding different outlets:



Single use plastics **SI Stafford**

Before the first lockdown, club members had been working hard to reduce their consumption of single use plastics. We'd found it increasingly hard to be less reliant on them, in part because many members had opted for a regular supermarket home delivery.

So we have re-launched our appeal to renew our efforts. There is nothing like a bit of friendly competition to spur us on! Members are now divided into six teams, each tasked with posing an interesting monthly challenge to encourage our efforts. Group 2 kicked off with an excellent presentation to challenge us to try to buy fruit and vegetables that are free of plastic wrapping... So watch this space to see who has the best challenge and what we are planning to do next!

Various items

SI Tamworth members continue the recycling theme, with collections of spectacles, stamps, printer cartridges, ring pulls, bits of jewellery, bottle tops and crisp packets to name a few going to benefit various charities. The last batch of crisp packets went to helping a girl guide company, club members being pleased to hear the income from the TerraCycle collections had kept the company going through the pandemic.



SI Burton have sent bras for recycling and printer cartridges have been posted to support the Fibromyalgia charity

Blister Packs

SI Wolverhampton

Following the initiative started by SI Preston, SI Wolverhampton approved a club project in June to collect empty blister packs and donate them to the Wolverhampton Superdrug Pharmacy where they will be sent to TerraCycle for processing into recycled products such as outdoor furniture, decking, storage containers and bins.

Not only that, but TerraCycle offers 100 of their recycling points to Superdrug for each kilogram of empty medicine blister packs. These points can then be redeemed into financial donations for Marie Curie which is the charity Superdrug has chosen to receive them.



SI Sutton Coldfield

Members, family and friends are collecting empty Medical Blister Packs as part of the Superdrug recycling project with money raised being donated to Marie Curie Cancer. 2 large bags of packs have been collected and delivered.

SI Lichfield & District

Until very recently one routinely forbidden category of waste has been empty medication blister packs. They still aren't accepted for recycling by local authorities but some businesses and organisations have now agreed contracts with TerraCycle, who deal with many of the items local authorities won't accept. The most accessible place for recycling blister packs at present is Superdrug, but, even then, it isn't every store that will accept them, only those with a pharmacy counter.

SI Tamworth

Members have recently added to their recycling efforts with empty blister packs which seem to be coming in from all directions to the two members who have taken responsibility for collection in conjunction with Superdrug.



1.3 billion tonnes of
food are wasted each
year

The global 'material
footprint' increased by
70% between 2000
and 2017

IT

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted many gaps in our society, not least the Digital Divide. Home education during lockdown placed a huge strain on families where several children of different ages either had no devices on which to do their school work, or alternatively had to share one device. This led to children falling even further behind in families who simply cannot afford the high cost of internet-connected devices.



We decided to help tackle this Digital Divide and our first project with The Den 101 in Rugeley involved the donation of 7 refurbished PCs and a wide variety of "pre-loved" office furniture/equipment to the Youth Centre to help create an internet quiet room to enable teenagers to carry out their school work/homework in a calm environment.

Our second Club IT project was with Spark Children's Centre in Burntwood - which is one of our key service areas in 2021-2. Here we worked with charity FreeIT Staffordshire who installed 2 PCs and 3 laptops and donated 3 brand new Hudl tablets. The equipment will be used by the children and parents who use Spark in a wide variety of settings and activities.

In both cases this valuable IT equipment was enabled to live a second life in a new home. Its life cycle has been extended by at least another 5 years, and while it will ultimately be recycled properly, the longer the life it has in use, the better it is for the Planet.

SI Lichfield & District



Single use plastics

SI Tamworth



SI Tamworth continue to support the Number Eight and Home Start Tamworth Charities with huge recycling efforts, from actual furniture and white goods to kitchen utensils, as well as a multitude of general purpose items, basically ensuring items will be reused and not go into landfill.

Baby clothes and items, if surplus to the need of the young mums in the mother and baby units, are sold in the Tamworth Charity Shop, with all funds going to the charity.

Children's clothes and toys

SI Sutton Coldfield

Members donated children's clothing and toys to 'Up Creative' which are being distributed to families in need in the Sutton Coldfield and Erdington areas. Toys and books were also donated to Falcon Lodge Community Centre in Sutton Coldfield.





Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Climate change is a proven fact.

Global warming has caused serious changes to the planet, such as rising sea levels, extreme weather events, deforestation, disappearance of species.

Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities and countries dearly today and even more tomorrow. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, weather events are becoming more extreme and greenhouse gas emissions are now at their highest levels in history. Without action, the world's average surface temperature is likely to surpass 3 degrees centigrade this century. The poorest and most vulnerable people are being affected the most.

Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economies. The pace of change is quickening as more people are turning to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emissions and increase adaptation efforts. Climate change, however, is a global challenge that does not respect national borders. It is an issue that requires solutions that need to be coordinated at the international level to help developing countries move toward a low-carbon economy.

<https://sigbi.org/ukpac/2020/05/16/6-actions-to-fight-climate-change/>

As individuals we can slow down global warming by implementing small more sustainable actions within our community – should we all be setting ourselves a challenge to reduce our carbon footprint?

2020 was the first year in which the annual values for rainfall, temperature and sunshine were all in the top 10 in the same year in the UK.

2020 was third warmest, fifth wettest and eighth sunniest on record for the UK.

Conference – Global Challenges, Local Action

SI Lichfield & District

We are aware that we are facing serious environmental issues and concerns and there is an urgency to speed up and scale up our actions. The aim of the conference was to educate ourselves & others and to empower all of us through the provision of thought provoking and enlightening information related to environmental matters with a greater understanding of the issues surrounding environmental concerns such as climate change, emissions, single-use plastic and what we can do about these issues.

There is much to be done by 2030 in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and we aimed to raise the profile of the problems we are facing and inspire people to take action and do something about these issues.



Soroptimist International
of Lichfield & District

Women inspiring action,
transforming lives

Online Planet Conference via Zoom:
Global Challenges, Local Action

5th June 2021 to celebrate
World Environment Day
9.30am - 2pm

Speakers from:

- Greenpeace
- The Carbon Buddy Project
- The Woodland Trust
- Woodhouse Farm & Garden CIC
- Transforming the Trent Valley
- WASUP World Against Single Use Plastic

£5 pp voluntary donation welcomed. All donations will be shared equally between the causes represented by our Conference Speakers.

All welcome.

To reserve your place/donate please email
planet@silichfield.org.uk

We had six impressive & passionate speakers:

Woodhouse Farm - overview of development of community farm, crops grown organically.

Carbon Buddy Project - inspirational talk on actions to contribute to reducing the climate change problem. Colin stressed that if we really want to make a difference, we need to focus on our personal emissions and our pollution as individuals.

Woodland Trust - heard about the benefits of woodland, both in terms of health and climate and also the urban benefit.

Greenpeace - frightening statistics with potential effects. Humans are cooperative, compassionate and innovative – we need to act! Hayley's presentation was wholly science-based and her slides were quite frightening in many ways. She went to great lengths to contextualize how climate change across the globe is having a massive impact on human health, especially on that of women and children.

Transforming the Trent Valley - local project working to restore and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the Trent Valley. Nicola explained how the Trent Valley is being developed to enable nature connection for all.

WASUP - set up to raise awareness of single use plastic locally, now working in other countries. Message 'Be a catalyst for change'. Like Dr Hayley Pinto, he also made clear links between climate change and human health.

Action on Climate Change

SI Cannock & District



Transform Our Future On The Earth
SIGBI Day of Action - 17 July 2021

Be a Flexitarian

- Eat less red meat
- Include plant-based protein
- More fruits & nuts
- Less starch foods

let's unplug!

- Choose renewable energy
- Cut food waste
- Unplug computer and any appliances
- Walk or cycle rather than use the car
- Minimise the use of plastic and dispose responsibly
- Replace inefficient light bulbs
- Plant trees
- Bring your own reusable bottle or mug
- Use the UN Carbon Footprint Calculator

Bring in →

Circular Economy

carbon footprint

July 17th was the annual Day of Action for Soroptimists in this country; the theme this year was 'Climate Change'. Cannock Soroptimists launched a week long campaign on that day, revisiting several aspects of the theme they are working to support.

They considered again their Green Pledge, introduced following an inspiring presentation by an 11 year old, which amongst other things asks for inclusion of a vegetarian day each week – or, for those already doing that, two meat and fish free days.

They considered the amount of emails we all send: emails come at a cost, every scrap of energy and the associated greenhouse gases emitted with each online activity, adds up. If we all sent just one fewer email a day, we would reduce our collective carbon output by the equivalent of 81,152 flights to Madrid or of taking 3,334 diesel cars off the road! That is an amazing statistic! Club members have now unsubscribed to all those emails you get every day but don't need and would encourage others to do the same.

Most people know that we need to reduce our use of unsustainable resources like plastic – which causes other problems for our planet in any case. There are many things we can do to stop using single use plastic – bags, bottles, takeaway cups, food trays – every change is a step in the right direction.

They highlighted teabags which have no plastic – those such as PG Tips, Teapigs, Twinings pyramid range; Waitrose Duchy range - and ask for people to think about changing their brand: suppliers may then change their use of plastic.

Everyone is urged to consider our planet now and help to slow down the problem of Climate Change.



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Fitting perfectly under this SDG is our Centenary Project, 'Plant Trees for a Brilliant Future' and many of our clubs have adopted this and are in the process of planting trees, both locally and internationally.

According to a report by the International Resource Panel (IRP), a global scientific panel hosted by the United Nations Environment Program, well-planned reforestation and related land restoration activities have a cross-sectional benefit. Planting trees helps all 17 Sustainable Development Goals according to the charity One Tree Planted.

The Woodland Trust produced a very comprehensive report in 2021, [The State of the UK's Woods and Trees](#) and the findings were very clear: we need many, many more native broadleaf trees in the United Kingdom. What we don't need are any more conifers. We need joined-up thinking to create joined-up habitats, and we must make sure that everything we do helps with increasing the numbers of home-grown native trees.



Beekeepers Educational Project

SI Burton upon Trent and District

After a talk given by a member of Burton Beekeepers, as part of their Environmental work SI Burton upon Trent and District decided to support the Beekeepers and their Educational and Environmental work projects. We have donated money for wildflowers and visited the new education area.



Tree Planting Projects

SI Bilston & District



Bilston members decided to make tree planting a project, not just planting one tree. We contacted Wolverhampton City Council to seek information about their Tree Strategy and from there our story began.

An enthusiastic group of members held Zoom meetings with the Wolverhampton City Council Officer and a local Councillor who were involved with a project in a local Bilston secondary school already developing an allotment with special needs pupils. After much discussion the school identified the need for a 'Statement Tree' to take centre stage in the allotment and our Tree Guru, President Elect Cherril, researched suitable trees from which pupils could make a choice.

When restrictions allowed, the Tree Group visited the school to see the work already carried out by the students. In order to raise money President Elect challenged members to take £5 and make it grow which has raised over £800. Members' enthusiasm for the Tree Project went up a gear when it was suggested that members could donate money in memory of a loved one to buy fruit trees for the school. Over half the club opted to participate.

The chosen tree is a Himalayan Birch which is to be planted in the Autumn along with many apple and pear trees.



Tree Planting Projects

SI Sutton Coldfield

New Hall Primary School

The Club is in partnership with New Hall Primary and the Lottery. Members are planting a tree in September to mark the centenary of SI in the school outdoor learning area. Discussions have been ongoing for over a year but owing to lockdown and visitor restrictions, dates have slipped.

Small Fruit-farm in Naic, Manila

To mark both SI's Centenary and SI Sutton Coldfield's 75 years since their Charter, a donation of £1,200 (including Gift Aid) was made to Purple Community Fund to fully fund the development of a small fruit-farm in Naic, near Manila. 75 fruit trees will be planted shortly:

- 20 cacao
- 20 satsuma
- 10 pomelo
- 15 jackfruit and
- 10 mango

A ceremony is being arranged by Marcel, Jane Walker's Deputy in Manila, to enable local Soroptimists from SI Makati, SI Malabon together with the District Director to represent the Club and SI. Filming of the planting ceremony and plaque is planned to enable us to share with our members. Photos of the planting and farm will be available shortly.

The farm will create a livelihood project for the families enabling them to provide for their own families with the possibility of generating an income from selling the fruit produce to others.



Nature-based climate solutions can
contribute about one third of CO2
emissions by 2030

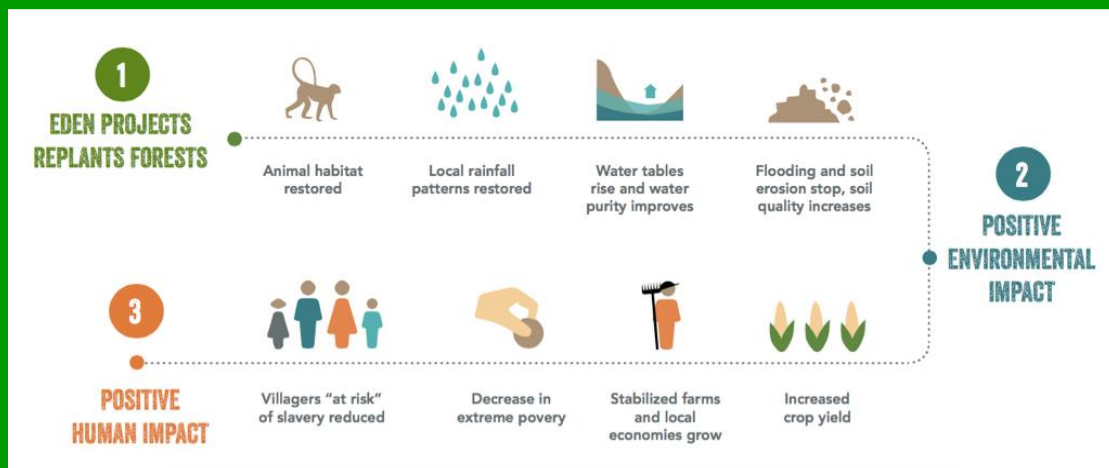
Tree Planting Projects

SI The Wrekin

SI The Wrekin Planet focus over the last few months has been Tree Planting.

Our first decision was where and how. We decided to go for Tree Planting both at home and abroad:

- The first is in Nepal where our donation of £80 to the Eden Reforestation Project, Ecologi, has meant the planting of 565 trees. Ecologi aim to protect and restore forests.



- Our next focus is at home and we are currently working again with Ecologi and the Future Forest Company in Scotland with each tree costing £20. Barren land will be reforested.
- Finally, we are contributing to a very local project to develop a Community Orchard with the Friends of Holmer Lake in Telford, Shropshire where we aim to donate £300 for 10 trees. It is hoped to extend the orchard with more fruit trees, such as plum, gage, pear, etc. This will be available for the local community to enjoy, especially school visits to see where fruit comes from, before being wrapped in cling film! It is planned to have a noticeboard in the area describing the trees and acknowledging donors of any grants towards their purchase. This is local; the donors are publicly acknowledged; the trees will be tended by a dedicated volunteer group - with this project led by our very knowledgeable Environment Officer; and they will provide a local amenity.

74% of the poor are directly affected by
land degradation globally

Gardening Projects

SI Lichfield & District

One issue discussed in our Planet sub-group was the decline in the number of pollinating insects and ways in which we might help to reverse this trend in our local area. We soon identified projects that we could get involved in.

Cathedral

We approached Lichfield Cathedral with an offer of tidying the coffee shop garden and making the planting more attractive to pollinators and of course to the visitors who use the coffee shop and its secluded garden. The Cathedral had recently registered as an Eco Church so was very enthusiastic in accepting our offer.

Pathway Refuge

We also raised money to pay for 5 planters to be based at the Pathway Refuge and regularly check on the herb and flower beds to ensure the residents can enjoy the smells, colours and wildlife they attract.



City Centre planters

Finally we have also taken over two city centre planters in Lichfield, close to the main train station. They had been neglected for many years and it took us quite a while to get to this standard:-



We always get comments from those who walk by saying how much they appreciate what we do and it gives us the opportunity to help the local community engage with nature, encourage wildlife, as well as talk about Soroptimism!

Between 2010 and 2015, the world lost
3.3 million hectares of forest areas

Litter Picks

SI Lichfield & District



Over the last 12 months Lichfield & District Club has carried out 5 litter picks within our district. We identified this activity as a practical way of giving service safely during the CV-19 pandemic while getting out into the fresh air, doing some exercise and enjoying some (very) socially-distanced interaction with others.

Brereton – on 2 occasions supported Brereton Million, a local group who aim to bring together all local talent, ambitions, skills and energy from individuals, groups and organisations to make the area a better place to live for everyone.

Rugeley – worked with other community groups organised by Rugeley Voluntary Litter Champions through local councillor Olivia Lyons.

Burntwood - with Burntwood Litter Legends. This was around a precinct of shops.

Hammerwich – a team of 12 members and friends volunteered to clear a local park as part of the Great British Spring Clean.

As a Club we are keen to work in partnership with local community groups and have worked hard to identify suitable groups with whom we could partner.

We were thanked by members of the public during most of the picks and the events also raised our club profile in the locality.

The club has recently benefited from the donation of 10 free litter pickers and a supply of bio-degradable bags from The British Mountaineering Council – ready for two further litter picks organised for Shenstone in August 2021.

Upcoming Planet Events



This year COP 26 'Conference of the Parties' is taking place in Glasgow from 1st-12th November.

Delayed from last year, it is under the presidency of the UK Government in partnership with Italy. The theme is 'Uniting the world to tackle Climate Change' and the talks will bring together heads of state, climate experts and campaigners to agree co-ordinated action to tackle climate change and inspire action. It is expected to be the biggest summit the UK has ever hosted and attended by countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – a treaty agreed in 1994.

Schools across the UK are being encouraged to start a conversation on climate change with their students and COP 26 has launched environment education packs for schools and students <https://together-for-our-planet.ukcop26.org/schools-pack-resources/>



The 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women 'CSW66' will take place from 14th-25th March 2022. The priority theme will be 'Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes'.

Your Regional Programme Action Team



**Edna Schafer-
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