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HEART Community Group Newsletter #7

April to June 2023

Hello to our Community!

As the Summer of '23 continues to challenge us here in the UK with cost-of-living increases, heatwaves, droughts and even wildfires, the climate news from Europe and around the world grows ever more catastrophic.

It's been a busy time for us in HEART Community Group – our newsletter is getting longer and longer! And you'll notice a clear theme running through this one, which is Food Security.

Kate and Chantal continue to be busy with Sopwell Eco-Stars and other local projects.

We also continue to facilitate many events across Hertfordshire including webinars and retreats – supporting those who have woken up to the Polycrisis we face.

Do contact us if you'd like to get involved!

Recent Climate News

UK has made no progress on Climate Plan

The UK's Climate Change Committee has just published a report saying that "*UK has made no progress on Climate Plan*".

The government's plans to hit Net Zero have been comprehensively criticised in a withering report by its own advisers that says targets are being missed on nearly every front.

theguardian.com/technology/2023/jun/28/uk-has-made-no-progress-on-climate-plan-say-governments-own-advisers

Arctic Tipping Point Crossed.

Sadly, a new stage of abrupt climate catastrophe has begun by crossing Arctic tipping point.

We've entered a grave new era for humanity - the era of accelerating climate breakdown. This can no longer be avoided: the task now is to adapt, mitigate, and do as much as we can to transform our systems so that we can begin to restore and regenerate.

Global average temperatures of 1.5C are supposed to be the upper limit beyond which the climate enters a dangerous new phase which risks catastrophic outcomes. But new scientific evidence has just been announced showing that this 'safe limit' is too high, and that we have already moved into this phase.

A shocking new study concludes that summer sea ice in the Arctic - recognised as a major stabilising force in the earth's climate system - is inevitably going to disappear in coming decades and could disappear as early as the 2030s. The study finds that this is now inevitable, and will happen even with a dramatic reduction in carbon emissions.

"World has lost battle to stop glaciers melting and sea level rising" UN meteorological chief says.

You can watch [Sir David King - Antarctic Warming and the #cop28 Nightmare](#) [13 min summary version] on ClimateGenn.

References:

[Observationally-constrained projections of an ice-free Arctic even under a low emission scenario | Nature Communications](#)

[Too late now to save Arctic summer ice, climate scientists find |Climate crisis | The Guardian](#)

[First stage of abrupt climate catastrophe has begun by crossing Arctic tipping point \(ageoftransformation.org\).](#)

El Nino is back, and it's brought the threat of extreme weather with it.

"World climate is entering a new phase of global record heat with average daily temperatures worldwide and the average sea temperatures at their highest levels on records.

"The now official ENSO +/Niño will just drive these new records higher and higher."

twitter.com/extremetemps/status/1668019136474038274

Europe Keeps Breaking Heat Records as Fastest-Warming Continent.

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continent warmed to 2.3C above the pre-industrial average in 2022...”

[bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-19/europe-keeps-breaking-heat-records-as-fastest-warming-continent](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-19/europe-keeps-breaking-heat-records-as-fastest-warming-continent)

To pick one more really important piece of recent news, Richard Heinberg and others from the Post-Carbon Institute have just published a report (June 2023).

‘Welcome to the Great Unraveling: Navigating the Polycrisis of Environmental and Social Breakdown’ seeks to build a coherent narrative about the roots of the polycrisis, the signs of its arrival and evolution, and why we should be thinking differently about the future.

[Welcome to the Great Unraveling: Navigating the Polycrisis of Environmental and Social Breakdown - Post Carbon Institute](#)

Update on Climate Majority Project

As many members of our community will know, we have been supporting the Climate Majority Project (CMP) spearheaded by Professor Rupert Read.

Calling on the hidden majority waking up to our climate reality, here’s their new website, and we’re looking forward to the official media launch on 29 June in London.

climatemajorityproject.com/

Here’s Rupert Read talking with Dave on the “Your Brain on Climate” podcast:

[Honesty, with Rupert Read - Your Brain On Climate | Podfollow](#)

Out And About in Hertfordshire

“Food Security in a Changing Climate – Can Britain Feed Itself?”

On 15th June, Kate Swindells was a panel speaker at a session hosted by Daisy Cooper MP as part of SustFest 23 in St Albans, together with Andrei Lussman, owner of Lussmans restaurant and Stuart Roberts who runs Hammonds End Farm and was former Deputy President of the NFU.

Kate spoke about the role of community gardens and wider food security issues, with her [‘Grow Community - Sopwell’](#) community gardening hat on.



“The Edge” Retreat May 2023

For the first time, Professor Rupert Read came along as a guest facilitator.

Next dates are 21 – 24 October 2023, and you can find out more [here](#).



Rothamsted Climate & Sustainability Conference 9 June

Kimberley Hare of HEART Community Group was one of several presenters and workshop leaders at this all-day Climate & Sustainability Conference held at Rothamsted Research Centre, and organised by the Scholars' Education Trust. Good news was how engaged the students were in the whole subject.

Less good news was how ill-informed many of them still are. They get the importance of recycling, and realise that plastic is a problem – and that's about it.



Baldock and Knebworth (May and June)

HEART Community Group had a stand at Baldock Eco-Fest, and we also gave a talk at Knebworth's Festival called "Climate Change: What Matters Most Now?"

Webinars And Conversations Recorded This Quarter

We're delighted to have hosted some really significant conversations and webinars this quarter! If you missed them, you can watch the recordings on our [YouTube channel](#).

Food Security- how secure are our food systems?

As part of our series Adapting to Uncertain Futures, we hosted a Food Security session in the context of climate change with guest speaker Rebecca Gibbs from Cadence RoundTable. She presented an in-depth review of key facts and drivers of the food security threats and issues both at home and worldwide. We explored some of the policy measures that might be required as well as what we as citizens can do in our own communities to address what will undoubtedly become increasingly urgent. If you want access to the various links and resources mentioned after watching this, just email us with subject line: food security resources.

youtu.be/oRYJ_ueYJsc

Nick Drew: Communities Prepared

youtu.be/vjoJwileOF8

Steph Killingbeck:

youtu.be/_OdKqhA1viM

Kate Swindells: Sopwell eco-stars

youtu.be/m5IBW6IP6cw

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New Blogs from HEART

20-minute neighbourhoods: Just what we need or a threat to your freedom?

By Chantal Burns

You may have noticed there has been some push back about the 20-minute neighbourhood scheme that's gaining popularity in several cities in the UK and globally. Here where we try and bring a more balanced perspective.

[20-minute-neighbourhoods-just-what-we-need-or-a-threat-to-your-freedom/](#)

Purple Bins

By Nicky Clark

heartcommunitygroup.org/purple-bins/

Getting Off the Hamster Wheel

By Kimberley Hare

heartcommunitygroup.org/getting-off-the-hamster-wheel/

You can find our earlier blogs on our [website](#).

Upcoming Events with HEART Community Group

Do join us if you can!

Find out more about our events on [our website](#).

Every Other Wednesday: Witness Calls

We continue to offer these Witness Calls to our community and beyond.

It can be tough to find places where we can share authentically about what's going on in our hearts and minds at these times. We often go hungry for the depth of conversation that can be lacking. Many people say that it's like living in two different worlds – the 'normal' world where everybody continues to go about business as usual as though nothing is wrong, and the world that opens up for us as we wake up to the truth of the meta-crisis facing us.

These calls allow us to:

- Witness and connect with our emotional responses to the polycrisis we face
- Explore what might be our own personal 'thread' to pick up – what is ours to do?

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for an invite and the zoom link.

Wednesday 12th July: Conversation with Meghan O'Neill of "The Week"

The Week's mission is to mobilise "the broad middle" in Europe and in the US – the vast majority of the population who is aware of the climate crisis to a certain degree, but have not yet taken action or gotten engaged. The Week is a tool to create space for courageous conversations about the climate among friends, students, colleagues, neighbours, or communities. By focusing on what's likely to happen to us, and the people we love, over the next 10 to 20 years, The Week empowers groups with the energy, hope, and concrete next steps to act for the climate.

Register your free place on Eventbrite here.

[conversation-with-meghan-oneill-of-the-week-tickets-666343129237](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/conversation-with-meghan-oneill-of-the-week-tickets-666343129237)

Tuesday 8th August: Ruth Clarke and friends, Sir John Lawes School Climate Action Group

Ruth is an inspiring 16 year-old, and will speak about her concerns about the future, as well as what she is doing, with friends from school, to make a difference.

[how-does-it-feel-to-be-a-teenager-who-is-awake-to-the-polycrisis-tickets-667462798197](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-does-it-feel-to-be-a-teenager-who-is-awake-to-the-polycrisis-tickets-667462798197)

Wednesday 20th September: A Conversation with Bel Jacobs on Sustainable Fashion

Bel Jacobs is a former fashion editor turned speaker, writer and campaigner on climate justice, animal rights and alternative systems in fashion. She is founder of Fashion in Schools, speaking to secondary school pupils about the impact of the fashion industry and different ways to engage creatively with fashion; co-founder of Fashion Act Now, a campaign group standing against the industrialised fashion system; founder of The Empathy Project, an online platform seeking to heal the broken relationship between humans and animals; and co-founder of The Islington Climate Centre, a hub for social and environmental groups in North London.

[sustainable-fashion-with-bel-jacobs-tickets-667469979677](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sustainable-fashion-with-bel-jacobs-tickets-667469979677)

Thursday 12th October: "Sustainable Eating Out" with Andrei Lussmann

A conversation with Founder and Owner of Lussmann's Restaurants. Andrei is passionate about making eating out truly sustainable.

Booking details coming soon.

Thursday 19th October: A Conversation with Rachel Donald, Founder of Planet: Critical

Rachel is the host of a truly brilliant podcast about the polycrisis. Planet: Critical provides a systems perspective on the climate crisis, mapping the energy, economic

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Booking details coming soon.

21 – 24 October: “The Edge” – A 4-day Retreat

New dates just published! Contact us to set up a conversation on how good a fit this might be for you.

“If you feel a burning desire to contribute but are unsure ‘what is mine to do’ ‘The Edge’, with Kim’s expert guidance is the place to find the answers. I couldn’t recommend The Edge more.” Steph Killingbeck

heartcommunitygroup.org/the-edge-a-4-day-retreat/

Wednesday 1st November: A Conversation with Climate-Scientist-turned-Activist Jen Newall

Jen is a young and wise force of nature who holds a strong, well informed vision of the future we need to build and isn’t afraid to speak truth to power. A former climate scientist, she spent almost a decade working at the forefront of climate research. In 2021 Jen left her position at Stockholm University upon realising the science alone was not going to deliver the behavioural and mindset change required to save our species. Since then she has devoted herself to empowering radical climate action at all levels and embracing her creative side to communicate the truth with compassion. Jen feels extremely grateful to have found her place, and people with the Climate Majority Project.

Booking details coming soon.

Featured Group

Sopwell Eco-Stars is an environmental and local resilience group in St Albans, Hertfordshire. Kate and Chantal of HEART Community Group are two of the co-founders.

This small group are moving on from the simple Net Zero narrative to highlight the need to prepare for impacts from our polycrisis and build local community resilience - as well as making it easier for the neighbourhood to tread more lightly. Saving people money along the way too.

They put on community events like Repair Fairs, Sustainable Clothing, Energy & Insulation Information, and Seasonal Cooking. As much to bring the community together as to reduce environmental impacts, and always promoting their core messages.

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groups to discuss these issues and to form a Community Network – aiming to spread the message wider and deeper, celebrate small wins and hopefully work together on collaborative projects.

Joint projects agreed upon so far are to encourage more active transport, raise awareness of heatwaves and support local vulnerable people affected by extreme heat.

Find out more in our [conversation with co-founder](#) Kate Swindells.



Good reading and watching

Breaking Together

by Jem Bendell

Jem's latest book is subtitled "A Freedom-Loving Response to Collapse".

Beyond Fed Up: six hard trends that lead to food system breakdown.

by Jem Bendell

It analyses six hard trends that are already happening, and lead to food system breakdown.

Free to download. insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/6927/

"This is a prophetic book" Satish Kumar, Founder Schumacher College

"The mother of all mic drops on the myth of sustainable development" Katie Carr, Deep Adaptation Forum

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youtube.com/watch?v=ndONvFIRJFU

Fascinating to get his insights as somebody on the inside of UK politics on how climate campaigners could wield greater influence. By the way, we're excited to have scheduled a conversation with Rachel Donald in October (see Upcoming Events).

We like this 'cropped' version of Carbon Brief's newsletter. You can sign up here and receive a fortnightly round up of all things climate related – bringing the context behind all the headlines.

carbonbrief.org/cropped/

And again, we'd recommend this podcast: Honesty, with Rupert Read
[Your Brain On Climate | Podfollow](#)

That's it for this quarter!

Sending love from Kim, Chantal, Nicky and Kate
HEART Community Group



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