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## WMCA Environment and Energy Insights

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### We're Greener Together!

Hello, and welcome to the summer Edition of our Environment & Energy Insights bulletin.

In the bulletin, you'll find coverage of the diverse work underway across the region, including past and upcoming conferences, award-winning programmes and developments on the natural environment.

We will be continuing to bring you an edition every other month, so please let us know if you have got any stories or news you would like to share in a future edition of the Environment & Energy Insights. Get in touch at [environment@wmca.org.uk](mailto:environment@wmca.org.uk)

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## News from WMCA

### Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation

The WMCA is currently working with key regional stakeholders to develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The strategy will outline the regional ambitions around nature and its recovery across the West Midlands, highlighting the priority areas for nature recovery.

The LNRS represents an exciting opportunity to shape regional priorities for nature and the draft of the strategy is now available for public consultation - available to access [here](#). Nature is under-threat, both nationally and regionally, making the development of the LNRS an important moment for reversing biodiversity decline and building climate resilience.

The consultation is for everyone to contribute to, from environmental NGOs to members of the public. To complete the consultation and find out more, visit [www.wmca.org.uk/LNRS](http://www.wmca.org.uk/LNRS).



The LNRS represents an exciting opportunity to shape regional priorities for nature

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### Free West Midlands Climate Adaptation Literacy course - available now

Since April 2024, the WMCA has been piloting an approach to industrial symbiosis in the region through the West Midlands Resource Reuse Network (WMRRN). Industrial symbiosis refers to an approach to industrial decarbonisation which involves matching businesses together so that waste products can be reused in other sectors and industries.

The climate is changing - and even if we achieved net zero emissions tomorrow, the effects of decades of past emissions are already locked in.

This means we're facing a future of warmer, wetter winters; hotter, drier summers; and, more frequent extreme weather events. The impacts are already being felt across our region. Birmingham (1st) and Coventry (14th) fall within the UK's top 30 local authorities with the greatest number of neighbourhoods in need of heat-related climate adaptation.

Heat-related deaths are projected to rise by 150% in the 2030s and by a staggering 1,200% by 2070. Events like Storm Doris (2017), the 2022 summer heatwaves, and flash flooding have already cost the region (collectively) around £21 million, through transport disruption, damaged infrastructure and, tragically, lost lives. So, the question is: are we designing our projects, programmes, systems, services and places to be resilient to these changing conditions?

Take the WMCA's new [Climate Adaptation Literacy course](#) to better understand the climate risks facing our region - and discover practical adaptation measures you can apply in your work to help future-proof our communities. The course is:

- CPD accredited
- Self-led
- Available for free online

Complete the three modules and online assessment at your own pace and obtain your Adaptation Literacy certificate and digital badge today by accessing the training [here](#).

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## West Midlands Air Quality Conference

This summer, the WMCA hosted the West Midlands air quality conference in Birmingham. The conference was the culmination of a two-year Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) funded programme, bringing key national and regional stakeholders together to take note of the progress made and look to the future.

During the day, the conference covered key air quality topics such as behaviour change, transport, air quality policy and indoor air quality, with experts in each area offering their insights.

To celebrate the progress made, the WMCA published a summary [report](#), covering the wide range of projects carried out during the project. These included behaviour change trials and the installation of a sensor network (also supported through funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). The network comprises 90 low-cost sensors, making it the largest regional sensor network outside London. A public-facing data platform has also been launched to provide near-real time data on air quality for residents, which can be accessed [here](#).



Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands, opens the conference

With regional targets and plans set out within the Air Quality Framework, the event looked forward to the future and explored how we will continue to collaborate with regional partners to improve air quality for everyone in the West Midlands.

To find out more about the progress made in the West Midlands on air quality and read more about the West Midlands air quality conference, visit our website [here](#).

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## Community Green Grants Programme 'highly commended'

The WMCA was delighted that the Community Green Grants Programme was awarded 'highly commended' under the Best Practice Large-scale Practical Nature Conservation Project at the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) awards 2025.

Community Green Grants (CGG) has been commended for achieving significant environmental, social and economic benefits, with the programme funding projects that enhanced 64,764m<sup>2</sup> of habitat - including woodlands, wetlands, meadows, and ponds - and restored 1 km of the River Cole through naturalisation efforts. More than 2,000

trees and shrubs were planted, and accessible green spaces were improved within a 15-minute walk for over 325,000 people, representing 11% of the WMCA population.

Economic evaluation estimated that for every £1 invested, the projects returned £4.12 in social, environmental, and economic benefits, including £2.2 million in recreational value and nearly £184,000 in health savings over five years. Read the full impact report of the CGG programme [here](#).

To see the full list of award winners, view the [2025 CIEEM Awards Booklet](#), and to find out more about our natural environment work, visit the WMCA website [here](#).



One of the projects of the award-winning Community Green Grants programme, Feeding Coventry

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### West Midlands Plan for Growth

Mayor of the West Midlands, Richard Parker, has unveiled the West Midlands Plan for Growth. At a launch event at the University of Wolverhampton, the Mayor spoke about his vision to unlock growth to raise living standards in every part of our region.

Environment and Energy feature throughout the Plan for Growth: our Local Nature Recovery Strategy is identified as a key strategy for identifying the region's most valuable areas for nature and helping prepare people and places for climate risk, while the next Net Zero Five Year Plan will underpin how the region can achieve growth while continuing to reduce carbon emissions. The region's Smart Energy Systems Cluster – recently showcased in the Government's Industrial Strategy – also features heavily as a regional strength and a sector with high growth potential.

You can read the full Growth Plan and find out more at [growth.wmca.org.uk](https://growth.wmca.org.uk).

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### Energy Capital Conference

Registration is now live for Energy Capital's Annual Partnership Conference. This year the event will take place on Wednesday 10th September at Millennium Point, Birmingham. Sponsored by Lovell, Mixergy, Daikin and Broadoak Group, up to 300 attendees are expected to join for panels and workshops on how the West Midlands is putting people and place at the heart of the energy transition.



[Sign up for free here](#), or if you are interested in sponsorship and exhibition opportunities, please email [Laurie Duncan](#).



Images from our 2024 Partnership Conference in Wolverhampton.

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## News from Partners

### Nature Towns and Cities Programme

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has launched its Nature Towns and Cities Programme, with a number of West Midlands local authorities successfully being awarded funding to deliver nature projects.

Birmingham has been recognised as the first [Nature City](#), with its ambitious 25-year City of Nature Plan providing the framework for improving nature and access to green space. The city plans to create up to 400 new green spaces, focusing on communities with the least access to green space. Find out more about this fantastic recognition on Birmingham City Council's [website](#).

In addition, Walsall Council has secured nearly £1 million from the Nature Towns and Cities Programme, which will go towards developing a 'Nature and Health Strategy 2040'. Working with the University of Birmingham, research and mapping will identify disparities in green space provision between the east and west of Walsall, in part helped by microbiome assessments. Find out more about this exciting grant-funded programme on Walsall Council's [website](#).

In further good news for the region, Coventry City Council have also secured almost a £1 million from the Nature Towns and Cities Programme. This funding will focus on Coventry's 'Green for All' scheme and will help revitalise parks, create new community gardens, restore waterways and develop natural corridors, bringing accessible green spaces closer to where people live. As part of the scheme, new green spaces will be co-designed with under-represented communities, empowering local people to be involved and gain the benefits from being part of nature. Find out more about this ambitious grant-funded programme on Coventry City Council's [website](#).

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### Business Energy Advice Service success stories

Business Growth West Midlands' Business Energy Advice Service (BEAS) continues to support thousands of businesses to better understand their energy use and access funding to reduce energy bills, cut carbon emissions and drive growth of SMEs in the region.

One business to benefit from the service offered by BEAS is 'Performance Through People', a training provider based in Walsall, [who will save an estimated £15,000 every year](#) with match-funded insulation and energy efficient lighting. Thanks to BEAS, [Tender Years Day Nursery in Solihull](#) could save more than £2000 and two tonnes of carbon every year by installing an air conditioning system with reverse heating, LED lighting and upgrading to more efficient appliances.

To find out more about BEAS, including if your business could benefit from this programme, access the BEAS website [here](#).



Businesses receiving advice and support through the Business Energy Advice Service: Performance Through People (left), Tender Years Day Nursery (right)

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## Events

There are a number of events taking place in the West Midlands this summer, with a selection of the best events outlined below:

- **21st August:** As part of the WM-Adapt Project community “world cafe” events are being held across the region to to share experiences of extreme weather and its impacts. Register [here](#)
- **29th August:** Recognition Circular are hosting a ‘repair workshop’, sponsored by Veolia, in Hay Mills, Birmingham. Register [here](#)
- **3rd September:** Cenex Expo – an event which focuses on the cooperation of innovative technology and net zero goals. Register [here](#)
- **10th September:** Energy Capital Partnership Conference. Register [here](#)
- **16th September:** The University of Birmingham are hosting ‘Birmingham: Growing a climate resilient city’, an event exploring how nature can improve Birmingham’s resilience to climate impacts. Register [here](#)
- **17th September:** Resource Waste Management Expo, an annual event dedicated to discussions on critical waste management and innovative green technologies. Register [here](#)

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Thank you for reading this latest edition of the Environment & Energy Insights bulletin. If you would like to hear more about our work, get involved or have any stories or news you would like to share in a future edition, please get in touch at [environment@wmca.org.uk](mailto:environment@wmca.org.uk)

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