## News

**July 2024** 



What is Sustainable Schools Leicester? Leicester City Council has a dedicated Sustainable Schools team based in the Energy & Sustainability team who provide free support to schools to help them become more sustainable in all that they do.

As well as one-to-one support and environmentally linked projects, schools can engage through bi-annual #EcoTeachMeets, staff training, resource planning & projects, workshops, assemblies, **Eco-Schools** conferences & celebration events and can keep up to date through dedicated social media, monthly eBulletins and termly newsletters. The Eco-Schools programme provides exciting opportunities for students in curriculum time as well as outside the classroom. Learning outside the classroom (LOTC) has been identified as 'memorable activities leading to memorable learning contributing to pupil safety'. LOTC provides positive benefits to all groups of young people and supports a rich, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum.



#### How to find out more **Sustainable Schools Team**

City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

- eschools.leicester.gov.uk/eco-schools
- EcoSchoolsLCC
- EcoSchoolsLCC
- **f** EnvEducationLeicester
- © 0116 454 6746



Welcome to the July 2024 Leicester Sustainable Schools newsletter. We hope you are all having a smooth end to the school year!

We have been delighted to hear that some of you have already submitted your Green Flag applications. A gentle reminder that the deadline for this academic year is 31st

This term has been very busy with several celebration events, which marked the end of the Wildlife Friendly Schools project, as well as our annual Eco-School celebration last week.

We hope you all have a well-deserved break over the summer holidays and we are looking forward to working with you again in September.

As always, get in touch if you need any support - Marc, Laura & Jas.





**Photos from the Wildlife Friendly Schools** celebration at Highfields Adventure Playground

#### **Eco-School Awards**

Schools can register for Eco-Schools for free at <a href="https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/register">www.eco-schools.org.uk/register</a>

Green Flags are renewed on an annual basis with an application window open from 1 May until 31 July every year.

Applications are **completed online.** They are designed to showcase your environmental efforts across the academic year. You can have **multiple staff** members working on the application form at once. When renewing your application from the previous year, the process is streamlined to support schools in applying annually.

However, we are pleased to confirm that we can subsidise (via sponsorship) all Eco-Schools Green Flags in Leicester City this academic year. We have been able to cover £150+VAT, therefore leaving a cost of £50 per school. We hope that this will help you to achieve the award.

More information on the award is available online at <a href="https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/the-eco-schools-programme-is-changing">www.eco-schools-programme-is-changing</a>

If you have any questions or need support please contact Laura, at Laura.Barke@Leicester.gov.uk





#### Newsletter

Our newsletters are published 4 times per year. If you would like to submit an article for the next newsletter, the deadline is **Thursday 29 August 2024**. We ask for around 200 words, at least 1 photo and contact details e.g. name and email address to: SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk







## **Eco-Schools and Less Litter Celebration**

Sustainable Schools LEICESTER



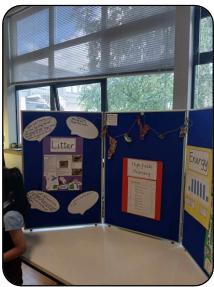
Last week we held our annual Eco-Schools celebration, this time at the University of Leicester. 6 schools attended, who were: Scraptoft Valley Primary School, Montrose School, Millgate School, Ellesmere College, Highfields Primary School, and Castle Mead Academy. All of the schools created wonderful displays to showcase their work from this last year, and judges were blown away by Eco-action happening across the city.

Congratulations to Millgate School, who won the overall Eco-School of the Year, Ellesmere College who won the Eco-Factor Award (voted by other schools), and Castle Mead Academy who won the Judges Special Award.

A huge thank you to Central England Co-op, Helping Hand Environmental, and Twycross Zoo for the donation of prizes. Thank you to Roots & Shoots for the signed copies of Dr Jane Goodall's book, and The3Engineers for signed copies of their Adventures of Scout books.

We were very pleased to have representatives from different areas of Leicester City Council, and lots of environmental organisations attend as judges and to find out about some of the wonderful work happening in schools across the city! Thank you to everyone who came along to judge the displays.













The **co-operative**Central England Co-operative

## Our School, Our World







Thanks to funding from Let's Go Zero, Leicester City Council will be working in partnership with Brighton and Hove City Council and 3 other Local Authorities on a transformative whole authority approach to sustainability and climate change in schools.

We are offering **20 primary, infant or junior schools** the opportunity to be involved with this pioneering work, named "Our School, Our World" for the 2024-25 academic year

Alongside free bespoke training for school staff, access to resources and support, schools will also benefit from a robust framework co-developed by schools.

New to Leicester for 2024-2025, Our School Our World will support primary schools to further their work on sustainability and climate change by providing bespoke training, resources, and support. This approach differs from other sustainability projects as it ensures that it becomes a whole school agenda as it is initiated by the headteacher and governors alongside a senior leader programme. The aims of the project are:

- Develop an integrated environmental education curriculum gradually and systematically 'greening' the curriculum and supporting the development of green skills.
- Enable children and young people to develop a close connection with nature to support health & wellbeing and develop pro-sustainability behaviours.
- Develop school organisational systems and practices which support sustainability and local Net Zero targets.
- Empower children and their families to become changemakers both personally and collectively and develop climate leadership skills in young people.

An information session is taking place on Wednesday 3 July from 4.30-5.30pm, which can be accessed using the Teams link

Please forward to headteachers and SLT. Other school staff are welcome to attend.

To register interest or find out more please email Marc.Tench@leicester.gov.uk.





Supports multiple Eco-Schools topics

## Good Life Schools

We are very excited to be working with Global Action Plan on a brandnew education programme for secondary schools and colleges.

Leicester is one of only 6 local authority areas to benefit from the National Lottery Community Funded programme with a dedicated community engagement lead who will work with schools alongside support from the Sustainable Schools team. 5 schools or colleges in Leicester will take part in 2024-25, and a further 5 in 2025-26

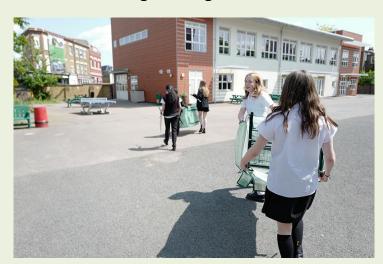
Good Life Schools is a student-led programme working with 11–18 year olds to strengthen the relationship between schools and their local community to support a low-consumption, low carbon culture.



Students will explore the impacts of high consumption, identify the pressures that this creates and develop a Good Life Charter for their school community, with the aim of creating a culture of positive environmental changemaking.

#### Why get involved?

- Empower students to make sustainable choices
- Enhance well-being through mindful activities
- Support the planet by reducing carbon footprints and embracing sustainable living
- Join a network of schools dedicated to creating a positive impact on the environment and



Find out more on Good Life Schools website

To sign up, please email <a href="mailto:Jasmine.Walker@leicester.gov.uk">Jasmine.Walker@leicester.gov.uk</a>



















# Leicester's Mealbarrow Extravaganza!

(part of the Grow Your Own Grub competition for schools)



Saturday 6 July 2024

11am - 3pm



FREE event at Abbey Pumping Station Museum Corporation Rd, Leicester, LE4 5PX











Come and view the mealbarrows created by local schools and vote for your favourite!

Railway Day — enjoy a ride on the train!

Visit the new electric book bus and enjoy some free activities!

Free entrance to the museum

### Tiny Forests in Leicester





We are up to 26 Tiny Forests in Leicester, 25 in schools and our first in a public space — Willowbrook Park. These forests, including 600 trees in a space the size of a tennis court, provided multiple benefits for the sites including carbon storage, flood management, thermal comfort and biodiversity. Tiny Forests provide a fantastic educational resource for the schools with an outdoor classroom space built in.

For those of you who do not have a forest on site, there are still lots of different ways for you to get involved!

#### **Tiny Forest Sites in Leicester**

Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School **Barley Croft Primary School** Beaumont Leys Specialist Science School Braunstone Frith Primary School **Buswells Lodge Primary School** Ellesmere College

> English Martyrs' Catholic School Fullhurst Community College

Hope Hamilton CE Primary School

**Linden Primary School** Merrydale Junior School

Mowmacre Hill Primary School

Nether Hall School

New College Leicester

Queensmead Primary School

Rolleston Primary School

Scraptoft Valley Primary School

St Mary's Fields Primary School

West Gate School

Whitehall Primary School

#### **Recent Updates**

Schools have noticed a huge number of weeds growing within their Tiny Forests due to the wet Despite this, weather! trees are strong across the city. Just look at these pictures taken at Barley Croft, only in its second growing season!



May 2023!

#### New for 2023/2024

The City of Leicester College **Gateway College** Inglehurst Junior School Judgemeadow Community College **Tudor Grange Samworth Academy** Willowbrook Park



We are always exploring the possibility of new Tiny Forest sites within Leicester. This can either be within a school boundary or in a local park if more suitable. For any enquiries, please contact Laura Laura.Barke@leicester.gov.uk.









Supports the Eco-Schools School grounds and biodiversity topics





A Tiny Forest is a dense, fast-growing, native woodland about the size of a tennis court. They are nature-rich places for wildlife, they improve people's welbeing by reconnecting them with nature, and also help to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Are you interested in weeding, litter-picking and maintaining a Tiny Forest?

# Volunteer as a Tiny Forest Tree Keeper!



Or are you a people's person, wanting to engage your local school and community in the Tiny Forest? This is a very independent volunteering opportunity. You can choose the activities you want to do and how often you want to offer them, either on your own or along with your fellow Tree Keepers.

Would you like to help us measure trees, count bugs and butterflies?

If you want to become a Tree Keeper, then email us at tinyforest@earthwatch.org.uk



To find your nearest Tiny Forest, please visit https://tinyforest.earthwatch.org.uk/tiny-forest-sites



#### **Becoming a Tree Keeper!**

If your school does not have space for a Tiny Forest, or you are not sure whether to take the plunge, you can always sign up as a Tree Keeper for one of the forests within Leicester. This way, you can be involved in looking after the site and gain access to a wealth of knowledge from Earthwatch! There are educational resources available on the portal and updates are shared around the Tiny Forests and other environmental work which is always worth a read!

If you would like to find out more about the role of a Tree Keeper, or would like to sign up as a Tree Keeper for one of our sites, please contact Laura.Barke@leicester.gov.uk.







Supports the Eco-Schools School grounds and biodiversity topics







## House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee Youth Engagement Programme

The <u>House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee</u> is a cross-party group of Members of the House of Lords appointed to consider the environment and climate change.

The Committee is offering schools and colleges the opportunity to work with the Environment and Climate Change Committee and advise on the issues the Committee should look at and the questions it might ask, as part of a youth engagement panel.

This opportunity is ideally suited for schools/colleges that teach 14–18-year-olds.

A small number of schools/colleges will be selected for the programme. Successful schools/colleges will be expected to commit to the youth engagement programme for a period of one academic year, running from September 2024 to July 2025. The core part of the programme is expected to run from September through until April.

<u>Apply here</u> for your school to take part in the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee Youth Engagement Programme. Find out more about previous years here.

Additionally, UK Parliament Week which is all about pupil voice is running in November and free resource packs are sent out to schools. Apply here: <a href="Home">Home</a> | UK Parliament Week</a>

## Wildlife Friendly Schools Celebration Event

We had an amazing time at our celebration last month for our Wildlife Friendly Schools project. We had approximately 300 people attending from the local community who took part in many different environmental based activities. It was great to see so many people out supporting environmental work in Leicester! The event was hosted at the Highfields Adventure Playground, and without the support of their team, the event could not have gone ahead. A particularly big thank you to Kevin and his team for helping to set up and manage the day.

A huge thank you also goes to the stall holders who came along on the day and helped make the event such a huge success! This included the City Wardens and Waste Management team from Leicester City Council who were there to raise awareness about the work they do. We also had Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire sharing environmental work taking place in Leicester, and Insecta Collective, Buzzing Roots and Friends of the Earth running craft activities. Bev Leicestershire Hedgehog Rescue was sharing about the amazing work they do. The Home Energy team from Leicester City Council were discussing how to improve energy efficiency in homes. Miles of Smiles and Butterfly Effects face painting both brightened up the day by painting lots of faces!

Leicester's Urban Nature Project is funded by WWF and Airwick.





















## Ellesmere's Sunflower Showcase

# **Ellesmere**College

Massive well done to the eco group at Ellesmere College who created sunflower growing kits for all 42 classes. Each class was sent a PowerPoint with students explaining what to do. Each month the eco group checked how the classes were doing and used the opportunity to talk about the benefits of growing flower and plants to support bees and pollinators.

The kits contained sunflower seeds, dried coconut coirs, and were made with recycled paper.

Brilliant job Ellesmere!











## Leicester's Wildlife Friendly Schools project update





We are coming to the end of our Wildlife Friendly Schools project during which we have worked with 13 schools across Leicester and Leicestershire to create habitat for wildlife. Changes made include:

- Hedgerows planted in eight schools with 895m of hedgerow and 3600 trees planted
- Three new ponds created
- Five ponds which had maintenance work
- Two schools received pond dipping resources
- 34 nest boxes to be installed across eight schools including swift, tawny owls, grey wagtails, sparrow and bat boxes
- Three hedgehog champion schools carried out interventions including hedgehog nesting boxes, planting flowering plants, identifying hedgehog highway locations and litter picks
- Hedgehog information evening at Lancaster Academy with guest speaker Bev Hart who volunteers at a local hedgehog rescue, and displays from Friends of Wash Brook Nature Area, and students from Lancaster Academy and Sir Jonathan North
- Hedgehog family event at St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy with hedgehog activities including seed bombs, planting a seed in a newspaper pot, decorating a hedgehog drinking bow, hedgehog masks, and a nature trail



















Supports the Eco-Schools biodiversity topic

#### **Less Litter for Leicester**







The Less Litter campaign ran from April to June 2024. It aimed to engage with as many schools as possible - running litter awareness assemblies or sessions and carrying out litter picks in their school grounds or local area. It was designed to be a self-contained project to complete 1 of the topic actions needed for the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award

17 Schools across Leicester and Leicestershire took part including primary, secondary and SEND schools, helping to keep their school grounds and local area free from litter. A total of 460 kg of litter was picked throughout the duration of the campaign!

Well done to all pupils and staff who were involved. A special shout out to the following schools:

- Hallam Fields Primary School who were inspired to recycle plastic bottles and create a mural of their school logo
- Lancaster Academy who collected an astonishing 66kg of litter
- Nether Hall Special School who carried out twice the number of litter picks they needed to
- Stokes Wood Primary School for holding an event where families joined in and litter picked in the community to collect over 16kg of litter





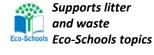




Congratulations to Ellesmere College and Highfields Primary School for winning the competition!

A BIG thank you to Helping Hand Environmental for donating prizes and to Wombles In Litter Education (WILE) for running awareness assemblies.

This project was kindly funded through Community Ward Funding from Beaumont Leys, Humberstone & Hamilton, and North Evington. Thank you for making this project possible.



Supported by
Beaumont Leys
Ward Councillors
(Community Ward Funding)

Supported by
Humberstone & Hamilton
Ward Councillors
(Community Ward Funding)

Leicester
Cty Council

Supported by
North Evington
Ward Councillors
(Community Ward Funding)

Leicester
City Council

#### BESS Energy Core 2024-25 12 Month Subscription



Worried about increasing energy costs? Wanting to save money and improve your environmental credentials?

Energy makes up one of the biggest spends for schools after staffing. Leicester City Council has worked closely to develop an offer as part of BESS schools to develop tools and reports to empower staff and students to take control of their energy use.

This offer is open to all schools in Leicester City at cost price as part of our Climate Emergency Declaration commitment

#### What is included in the service:

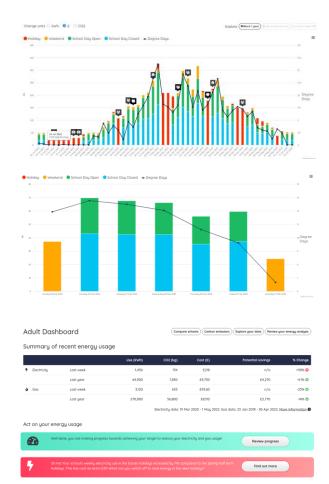
- Online monitoring of gas and electricity via Energy Sparks.
- Wrap around support by the Sustainable Schools' team for onboarding, general advice, educational and energy specific support
- Regular updates via email
- **Provision of data** for school's preferred DEC provider

#### **About Energy Sparks**

- An online energy analysis tool and energy education programme specifically designed to help schools reduce their electricity and gas usage through the analysis of smart meter data.
- Using a school's electricity, gas and solar data, shows staff (and pupils) how much energy the school is using. The online tool presents bespoke analysis of the energy data with suggestions of actions the school could take to save energy and reduce carbon emissions.
- Provides adult and pupil dashboards tailored to meet the specific needs of the students and staff at a school.
- Automated alerts to let schools know when energy use changes

This service will start in September 2024

Priced at £795



For more information please contact: The BESS Energy team

- **⋈** BESS.Energy@leicester.gov.uk
- © 0116 454 6746
- schools.leicester.gov.uk/BESS-Energy

Sign up to BESS Energy by 31 July 2024 by completing our online form



#### BESS Energy Enhanced 2024-2025 12 Month Subscription



Worried about increasing energy costs? Wanting to save money and improve your environmental credentials?

Energy makes up one of the biggest spends for schools after staffing. Leicester City Council has worked closely to develop an offer as part of BESS schools to develop tools and reports to empower staff and students to take control of their energy use.

This offer is open to all schools in Leicester City at cost price as part of our Climate Emergency Declaration commitment

#### What is included in the service?

All the benefits of BESS Energy Core:

- Online monitoring of gas and electricity via Energy Sparks.
- Wrap around support by the Sustainable Schools' team for onboarding, general advice, educational and energy specific support
- Regular updates via email
- Provision of data for school's preferred DEC provider

#### **About Energy Sparks**

- An online energy analysis tool and energy education programme specifically designed to help schools reduce their electricity and gas usage through the analysis of smart meter data.
- Using a school's electricity, gas and solar data, shows staff (and pupils) how much energy the school is using. The online tool presents bespoke analysis of the energy data with suggestions of actions the school could take to save energy and reduce carbon emissions.
- Provides adult and pupil dashboards tailored to meet the specific needs of the students and staff at a school.
- Automated alerts to let schools know when energy use changes



#### Plus BESS Energy Enhanced:

- Identification and reporting of excessive use/wastage (including visits)
- Provision of your annual DEC certificate (or subsidised 7 year DEC certificate)
- Online or face to face training termly
- 10 hours of bespoke support per school (including technical, analysis and education support for staff and pupils) – see our separate flyer on next page

"Through monitoring our electricity we discovered our thermal heater timers had a fault, meaning that they were being left on at the weekend - once resolved, this saved hundreds of pounds over the school holidays" **Business Manager, Leicester** 

For more information please contact: The BESS Energy team

- **⋈** BESS.Energy@leicester.gov.uk
- © 0116 454 6746
- schools.leicester.gov.uk/BESS-Energy

Priced at £1195

This service will start in September 2024

Sign up to BESS Energy by 31 July 2024 by completing our online form





#### Individual support in BESS Energy Enhanced

Schools and academies that sign up for BESS Energy Enhanced will received up to 10 hours of bespoke support. This time is allocated and agreed on an individual basis depending on the needs of your school.

Below are examples of bespoke services which can be provided:



#### **Technical Support**

- Work with individual school or academy staff:
  - Premises team walk round to identify heat/energy wastage
  - o ICT shutdown procedure and/or software shutdown

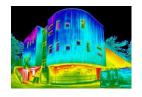
#### **Analysis Support**

- Working with the business manager, finance officer and/or premises officer to:
  - Evaluate utility bills for value for money, climate levy and VAT rating
  - Provide advice about changing and comparing tariffs
  - Provide advice and support around historical FIT tariffs
  - Detailed analysis of Energy Sparks data and graphs (daily, weekly) to identify excessive use (e.g. during the day), wastage (e.g. high baseloads overnight and weekends) or leaks (e.g. water).

#### **Educational Support**

- Working with whole school staff:
  - Deliver twilight, inset or staff meetings (typically 30-45 minutes) on energy savings
  - Energy Sparks training (data analysis with departments or teams)
  - Develop mechanisms for reporting problems with classroom heating/lighting
- Work with individual classes, your school council and/or Eco-Schools team:
  - Active labelling of lights and equipment that can be switched off/remain on
  - Active thermometers in classrooms and offices to report temperature extremes
  - Assemblies on saving energy
  - Designing of posters or 'corporate' posters displayed around schools
  - o Developing whole school policy and shutdown procedure
  - Energy monitoring job descriptions
  - o Curriculum activities and quizzes
  - Switch off hour/day campaign
  - Detailed analysis of Energy Sparks graphs (daily, weekly, monthly, annually)
  - Energy Sparks training
  - Campaign and/or national awareness day activities
  - Energy walk around using thermal imaging camera/s (iPad and Android tablet)
  - Audits and competitions (class or department focused)









#### Built Environment School Service (BESS) **Energy Academies 2024-25** Annual Energy and Carbon Report



From 1 April 2020, academy trusts will need to report on environmental reporting regulations. Regulations require large companies that consume more than 40,000 kWh of energy in a reporting period to include certain information about energy efficiency measures. Large companies are defined by sections 465-466 of the Companies Act 2006 as companies which meet 2 out of the following 3 criteria:

- Gross income of £36 million or more;
- Balance sheet assets of £18 million or more; and
- 250 employees or more

The reporting period for academy trusts will be 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-reporting-guidelines-including-mandatorygreenhouse-gas-emissions-reporting-guidance

Academies in Leicester City that also subscribe to BESS Energy Core or BESS Energy Enhanced will receive a discounted rate of £160 (instead of £175) per academy.

What is included in the service?

#### Reports which covers:

- Annual carbon and energy usage reports
- Analysis of energy trends/patterns of usage
- Identifying the impact of energy efficiency improvements
- Data in a format required as part of Energy and Carbon Reporting regulation (from September 2020):
  - UK energy use (in kWh) including purchased electricity, gas and transport fuel
  - · Associated greenhouse gas emissions (in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)
  - At least one 'intensity ratio' that expresses the academy trust's annual emissions in relation to a quantifiable factor associated with its activities
  - Information about energy efficiency action taken during the year
  - Methodologies used in the calculation of disclosures
- Provision of a collated MAT report provided
- Provision of data for school's preferred Display Energy Certificate (DEC) provider

This offer is open to all Multi-Academy Trusts in England

Priced at £175 per academy £160 for Leicester BESS schools

For more information please contact: The BESS Energy team

☑ BESS.Energy@leicester.gov.uk

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schools.leicester.gov.uk/BESS-Energy

Sign up to BESS Energy by 31 July 2024 by completing our online form



This service is available from September 2024

To provide Leicester with a high quality, efficient, effective and sustainable built environment

## Carbon Literacy Training for School Staff and Governors



In February 2019, Leicester City Council declared a climate emergency. We are working to develop a climate emergency programme of action to reduce carbon with the aim of the city becoming zero carbon.

In order to raise awareness of the climate emergency, we are using the Carbon Literacy Project as a way of accrediting school staff in becoming Carbon Literate. By 2025, the DfE have said that each school will have a sustainability lead who will have taken part in Carbon Literacy Training. By joining us, you will help put your school ahead of the rest!

#### In Person:

Dates: Thursday 10 October; Tuesday 4

February; Friday 16 May

Time: 9:00 - 4:00

Location: City Hall, Leicester Sign up using the <u>eForm</u>.

Who would benefit from this project: All school staff, including premises officers, and governors with an interest in becoming carbon literate, especially those involved in teaching about climate change and the climate emergency.







#### Why participate?

- Gain a better understanding of how climate change will affect you and those around you
- Become an accredited Carbon Literate individual
- Acquire knowledge and skills to develop your own responses to lowering your carbon footprint, and the carbon footprint of others

#### Your commitments

- Create at least **one significant action, as an individual**, to reduce your own personal carbon footprint
- Create at least one significant action involving other people to reduce the collective footprint of your workplace, community or place of education
- Encourage your school to participate in Carbon Literacy

Carbon Literacy Training - 2024/2025







The cost of the training course is £50 for school staff/governors or £70 for non-school staff and staff outside of Leicester City. This includes the individual and course accreditation fees from the Carbon Literacy Project.