Cumbria's Youth Climate Summit 2023

Energy and Biodiversity carbon reducing solutions

6th July 2023

Venue: Queen Katherine School

Hosted by: Matilda (Cockermouth School)

Livi and Jonah (Queen Katherine School)

Liza (Kendal College)

"I hope we will be able to make a difference before it is too late"

Contents

Report of the Youth Climate Summit 2023.

1. Background to the Summit page 3

2. Attendance page 4

3. Aims of the Youth Climate Summit page 4

4. Summary of the event page 5

- An opportunity to find out more about Zero Carbon Cumbria and how young people can be involved. page 10

5. Workshops page 19

6. Closing and pledge/actions page 21

7. ZCCP Social media and website page 23

8. Film of the event page 28

9. Report for the National Lottery page 30

1. Background to the Summit:

In 2019, Robert Ferguson Primary School organised the first Youth Climate Summit in Cumbria. Its success and the interest from schools and young people in climate action meant that when Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS) were developing a funding bid for a National Lottery grant, continuing the summits was written into aspects of the youth strands of work. The Youth Climate Summits are now part of the ZCC programme and are funded by the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund.

The Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership (ZCCP), is a large, Cumbria-wide partnership of more than 80 organisations with an ambition to make Cumbria the first carbon-neutral county in the UK (by 2037), in a way that benefits communities and is led by them. It is a community-led programme which will tackle some of the main sources of carbon emissions in our county, with a particular focus on food, energy, transport and the goods we buy.

2023

Schools across Cumbria were invited to attend the 5th Youth Climate Summit for Cumbria. CDEC worked with young people from various schools as well as with the Queen Katherine School (QKS) Eco Group to plan, design and deliver the 2023 Youth Climate Summit. This involved a series of meetings with the whole QKS eco group and a series of online meetings with a core team of young people to decide:

- the theme/s
- the workshops
- the discussion questions for the ZCC activities
- format for the day
- who would host and facilitate the youth led workshops

Following consultation with young people and linking with the ZCC sector groups, the overall theme for the 2023 summit was energy and biodiversity.

It was supported by a range of organisations and individuals, including:

- Rebecca Slack, Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre
- Roisin McLinden, Lakeland Arts
- Geoff Norman (Nature for Children) and Rachel Lightbird
- Chris Eastman, Dominic Hayward, Sarah Sigsworth and the students of QKS
- Claire Gould, Beth Middleton, Alex Downes- Westmorland and Furness Council
- Anna Clapp, Rebecca Stacey, John Forbes, Nick Lancaster, (CAfS) Natalie Naisbitt, (Westmorland and Furness Council), Susanne Walley (Sustainable Staveley) - Zero Carbon Cumbria
- Dan Jeffery, Debbie Watson, Hugh Pottinger and Laura Goad - CDEC

A special thanks goes to The Queen Katherine School for providing the venue for this year's event

2. Attendance

15 schools participated in the event, bringing 75 young people and 20 teachers

Schools who attended	
Ghyllside Primary School	**Castle Park Primary School**
Hawkshead Primary School	**St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School**
Heron Hill Primary School	**St. Martin & St. Mary CofE Primary School**
Queen Katherine School	**St. Patrick's RC Primary School**
Sandgate School	**The Lakes School**
Selside Endowed CofE School	**Whitehaven Academy**

Age range: 8/9 years through to 17 years

3. Aims of the Youth Climate Summit:

1. To provide young people and schools across Cumbria with the opportunity to learn about climate change and what action they can take locally and globally

2. To provide young people with the opportunity to share what they have already been doing and be inspired with new ideas

3. To provide the ZCCP partnership the opportunity to raise awareness of the programme and how schools and young people can get involved

4. To be as youth led as possible - in planning content and facilitating the event.

4. Summary of the event

The programme was as follows:

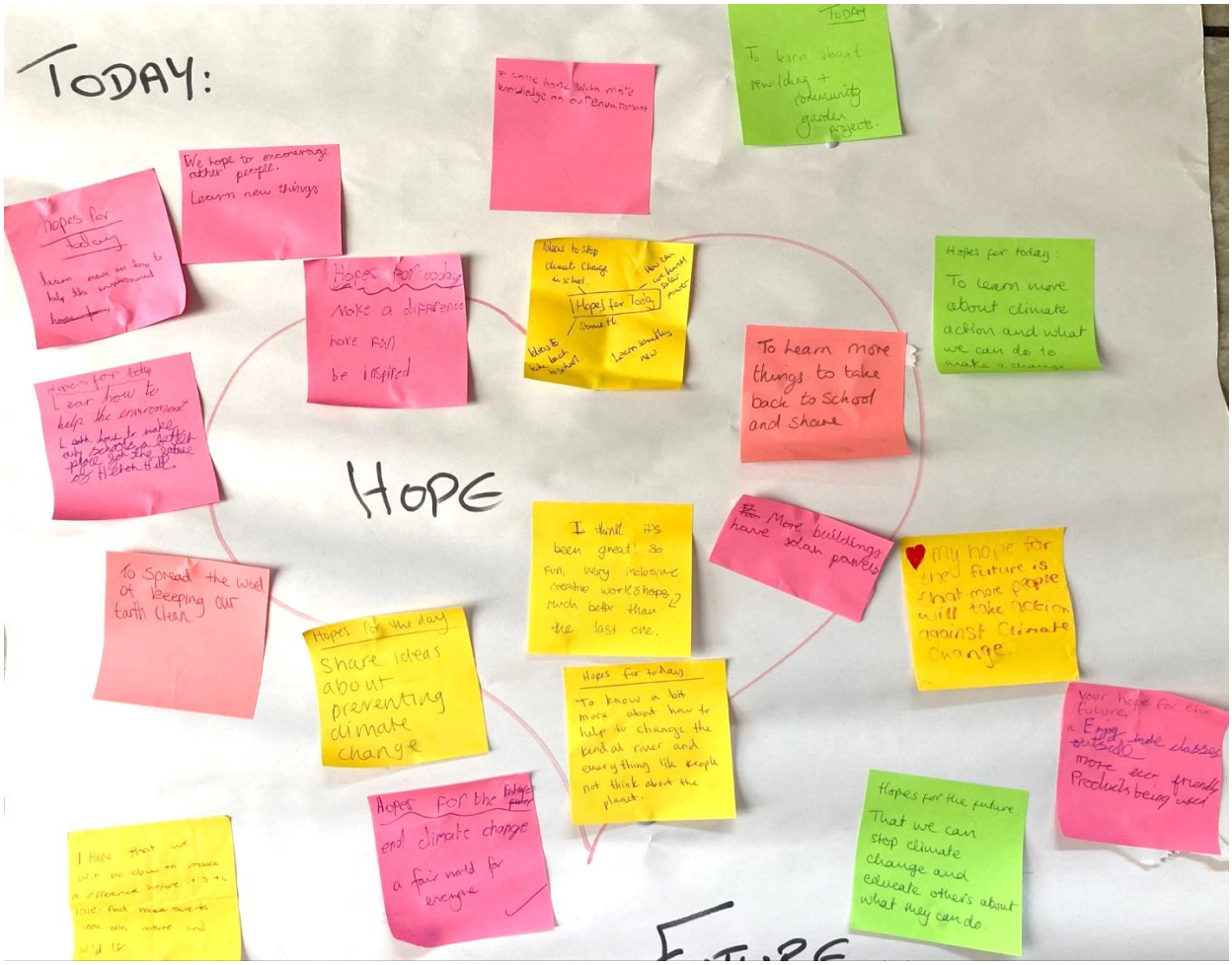
Welcome and opening
Connecting and sharing: meet pupils from other schools and share what have you been doing or what you'd like to do for climate change
BREAK
Zero Carbon Cumbria sector groups: what are their plans **Discussion of the Zero Carbon Cumbria plans: what is it young people think?**
LUNCH and Marketplace **An opportunity to meet a range of organisations who could support your school**
Workshops of 45 minutes (pupils will go to 2): **Buggingham Palace:** build a bug hotel and take some ideas away for how you create one back in your school **CliMART**- a creative workshop exploring how we can communicate our message about energy or biodiversity **Biodiversity recording**- learn how to record biodiversity in your school grounds and local community and help create a picture of how biodiverse Cumbria is. **Energy audit**- learn how to audit your school's use of energy and begin finding out about renewable energy sources your school could have **SucSEED**- a youth led project focused on rewilding. Find out about how they set it up and how you could also do something similar **Nature Journalling-** get outside, connect with nature in a creative and different way.
Closing and pledge/actions

Welcome and opening

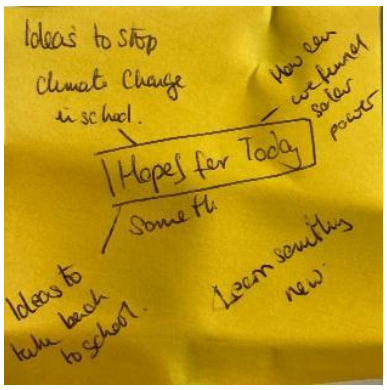
The hosts, Matilda, Livi, Jonah and Liza welcomed the schools to the summit and opened by asking pupils to reflect on:

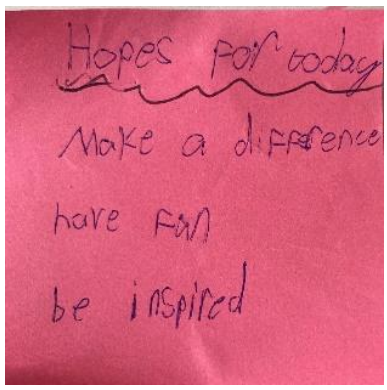
- your hopes for today
- your hopes for the future
- what questions or topics you'd like answered today
- what questions you have for Tim Farron MP (who joined later in the day)

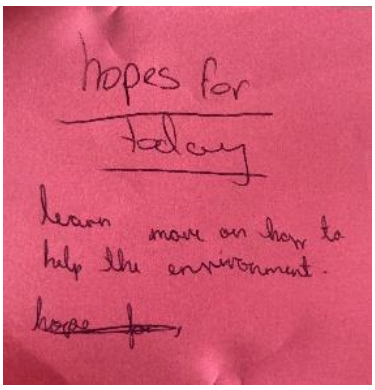
Some of the responses:

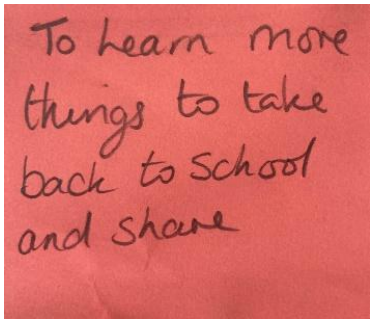


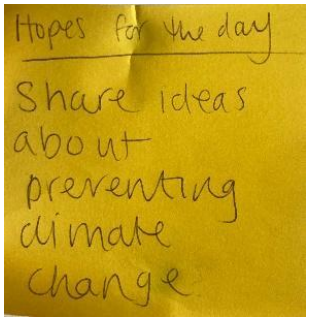
Hopes for today



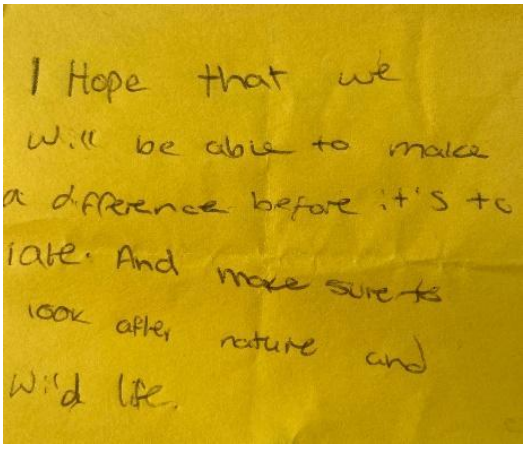


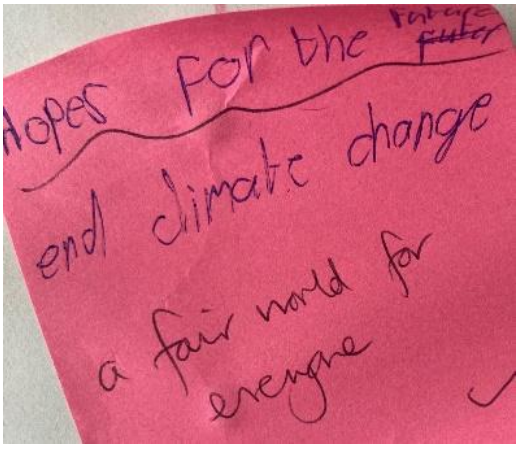


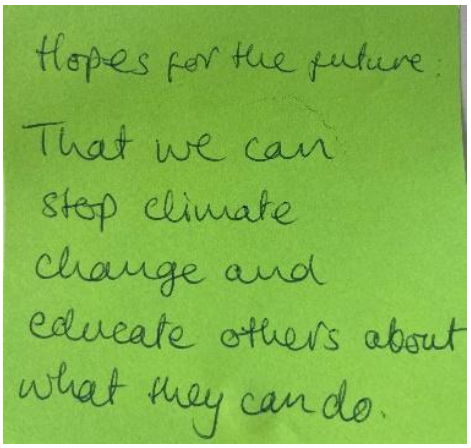


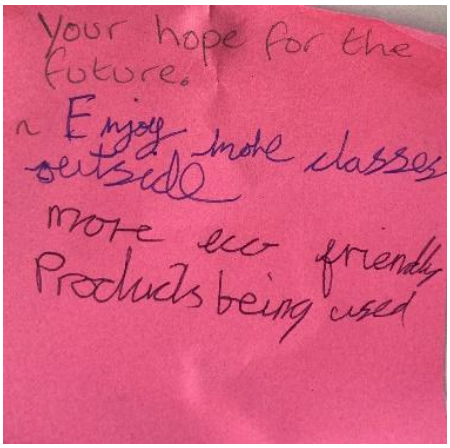


Hopes for the future









What questions or topics you'd like answered today?

- What local activities can we join in with to help our area fight climate change?
- How can we get more people involved and aware of climate change?
- Can we replace plastic with a new material?
- What can we do to stop climate change?
- What can our schools do to help?
- How can we get money to have things to help the planet- like heat pumps and solar panels?
- How can we reduce carbon?
- How to come together to solve it as young people?
- What are the best and most effective steps to rewilding school grounds?

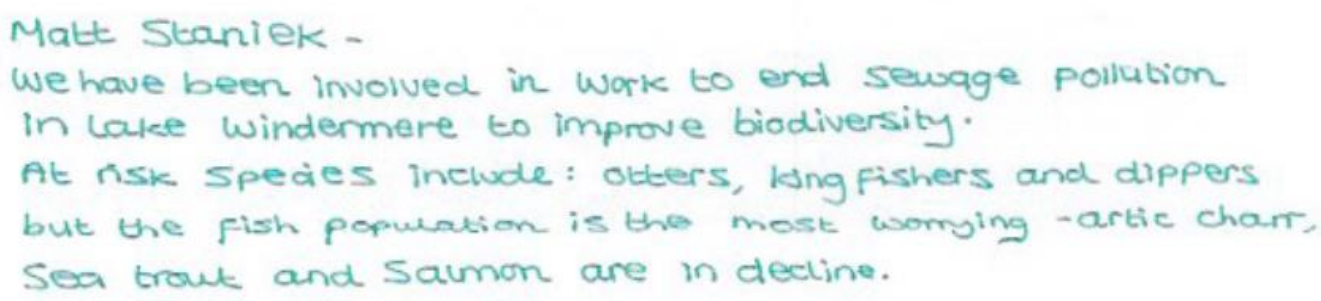
School report: what have you been doing in your school and community in the past year

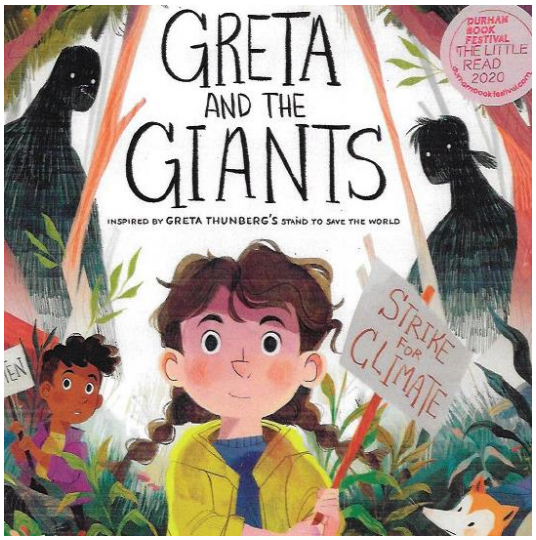
This year, schools were grouped together so they could have a conversation about what each other's school is doing. We then asked them to share what each other is doing with all the other schools.

We found out the following:

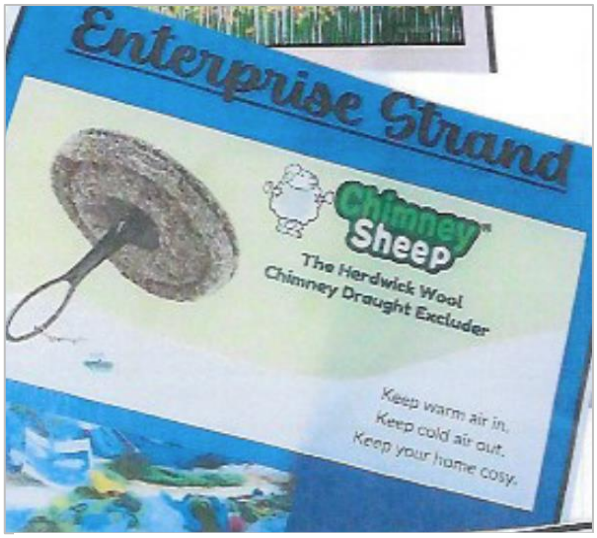
- Lots of planting and growing of food on our school grounds
- Some of us have ponds for wildlife
- Some schools have installed solar panels
- We have more lessons about protecting the environment and climate change
- Reducing resources we use (eg: using both sides of a piece of paper)
- Wildflower planting in school grounds to promote biodiversity
- Water awareness workshops
- Energy saving
- Improved recycling around school (batteries, pens, glue sticks)

St Martin and St Mary School


Matt Staniek -
We have been involved in work to end sewage pollution in Lake Windermere to improve biodiversity.
At risk species include: otters, kingfishers and dippers but the fish population is the most worrying -artic charr, Sea trout and Salmon are in decline.

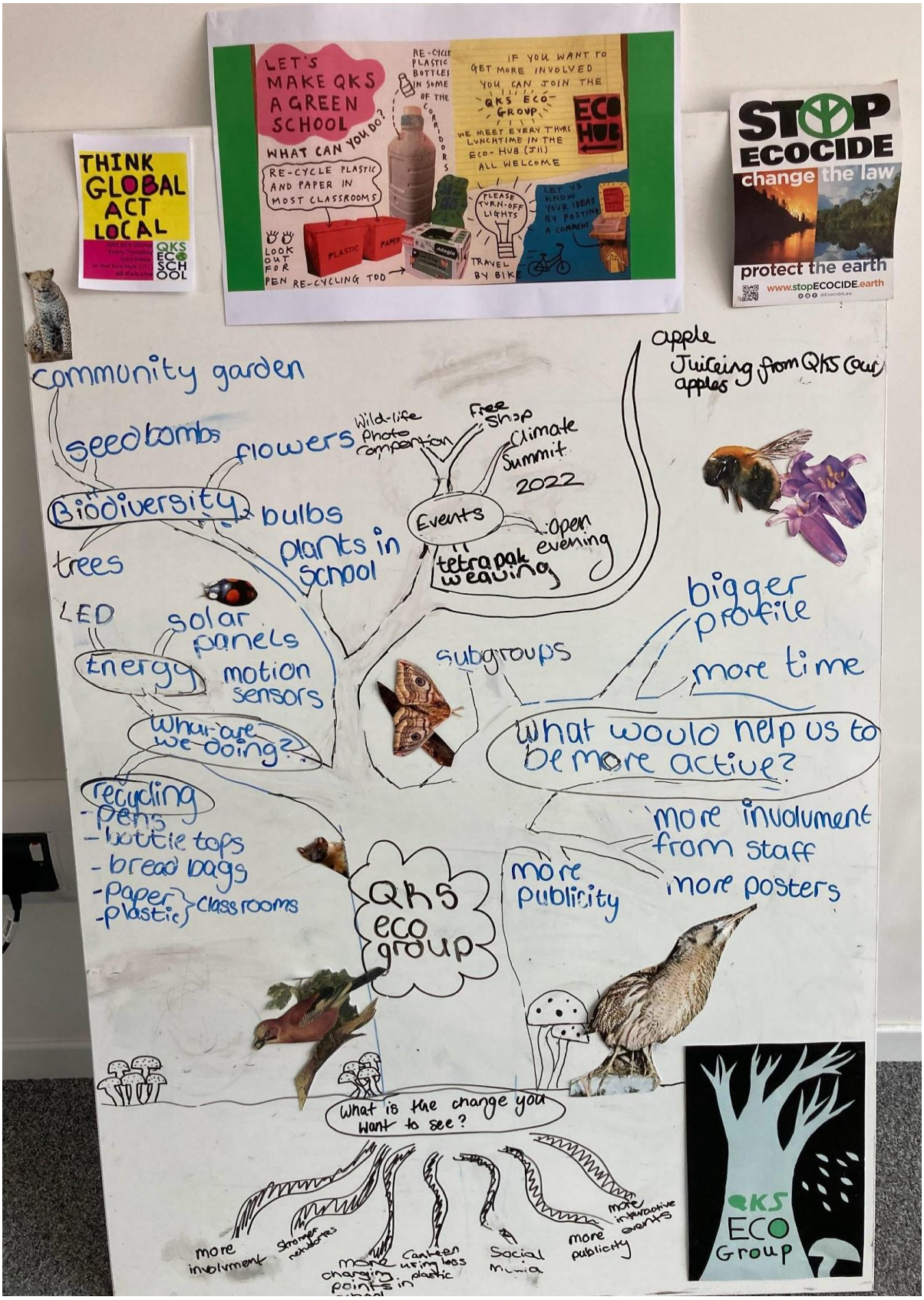


St Martin and St Mary have also been inspired by this book to take action



St Patricks RC School linked with a local business- using sheep's wool to improve heat efficiency in homes

Queen Katherine School's Eco Group shared their work



An opportunity to find out more about Zero Carbon Cumbria and how young people can be involved.

The next session started with an introduction to the Zero Carbon Cumbria

The pupils were then invited to talk to members of ZCC, representing the 4 sector groups and feed in their idea for the sector group priorities.

Buildings – this group will focus on the energy used in buildings, particularly on the opportunities to insulate buildings and technologies such as heat pumps.

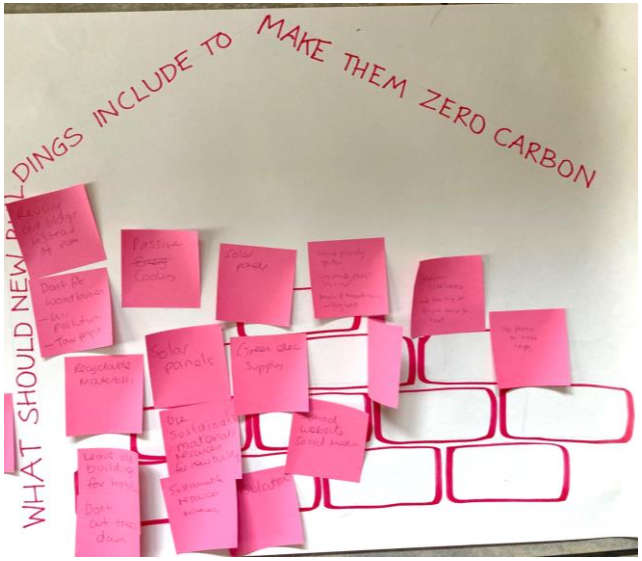
Consumption, waste and the circular economy – this group will focus on the things we buy including food, drink and other products.

Transport and mobility – this group will focus on the emissions associated with all aspects of transport

Farming and other land use - this group will focus on the emissions associated with farming and other aspects of land use including the opportunities to restore peat bogs and plant more trees.

BUILDINGS

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN WITH EXISTING BUILDINGS LIKE YOUR SCHOOL TO HELP REDUCE THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINT ???


WHAT SHOULD NEW BUILDINGS INCLUDE TO MAKE THEM ZERO CARBON

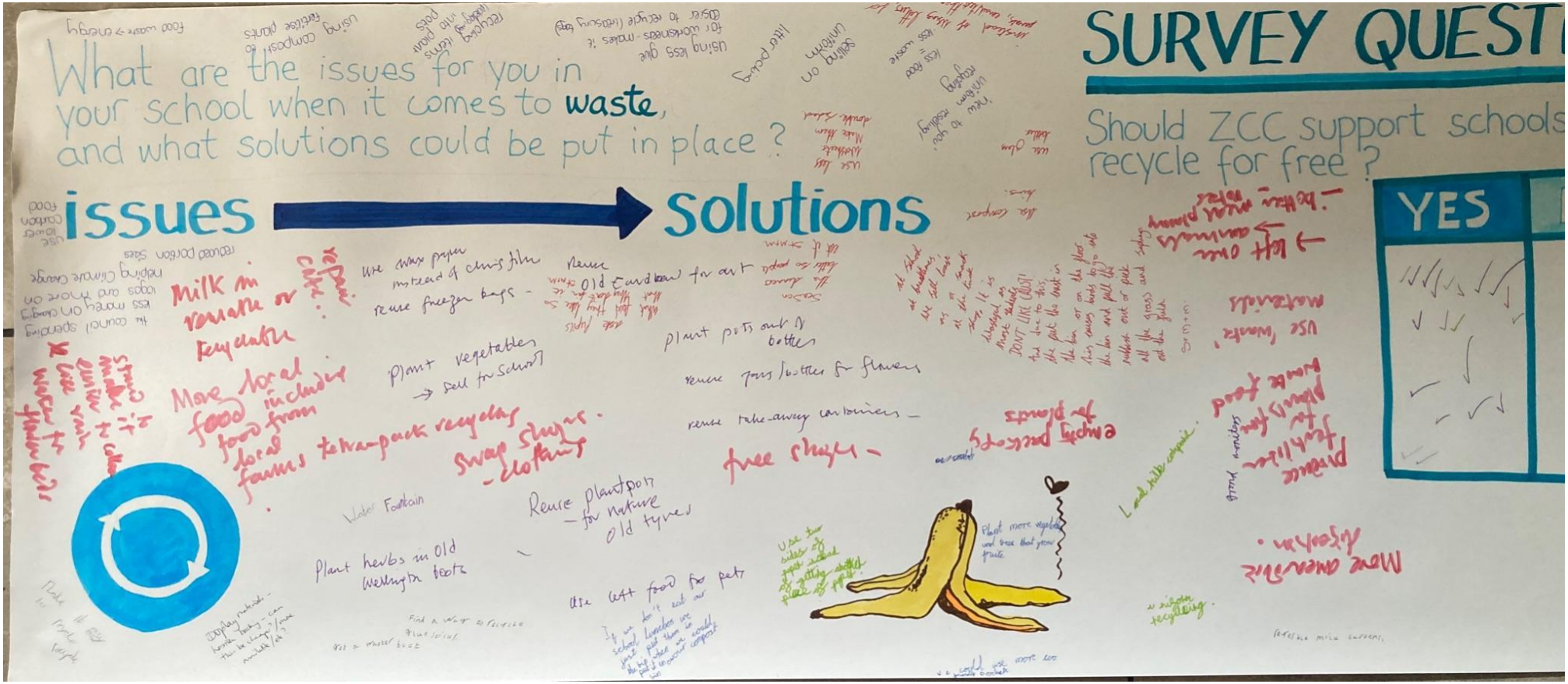
OUR SCHOOL
WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN WITH EXISTING BUILDINGS LIKE YOUR SCHOOL TO HELP REDUCE THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINT ????????????????

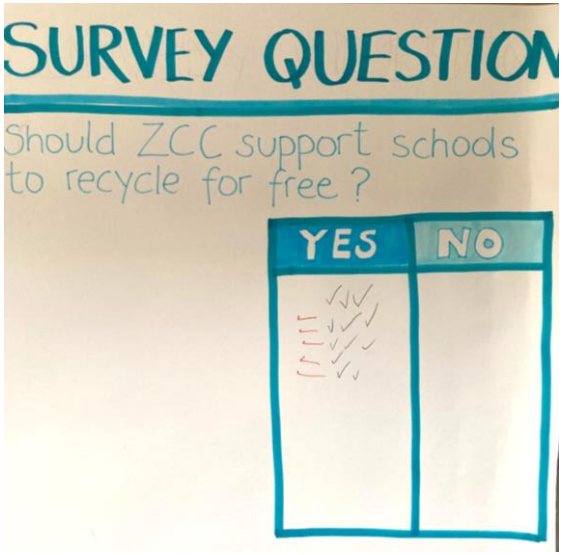
WHAT SHOULD NEW BUILDINGS INCLUDE TO MAKE THEM ZERO CARBON
Solarpanels
Insolation

Note: ideas in red came up multiple times

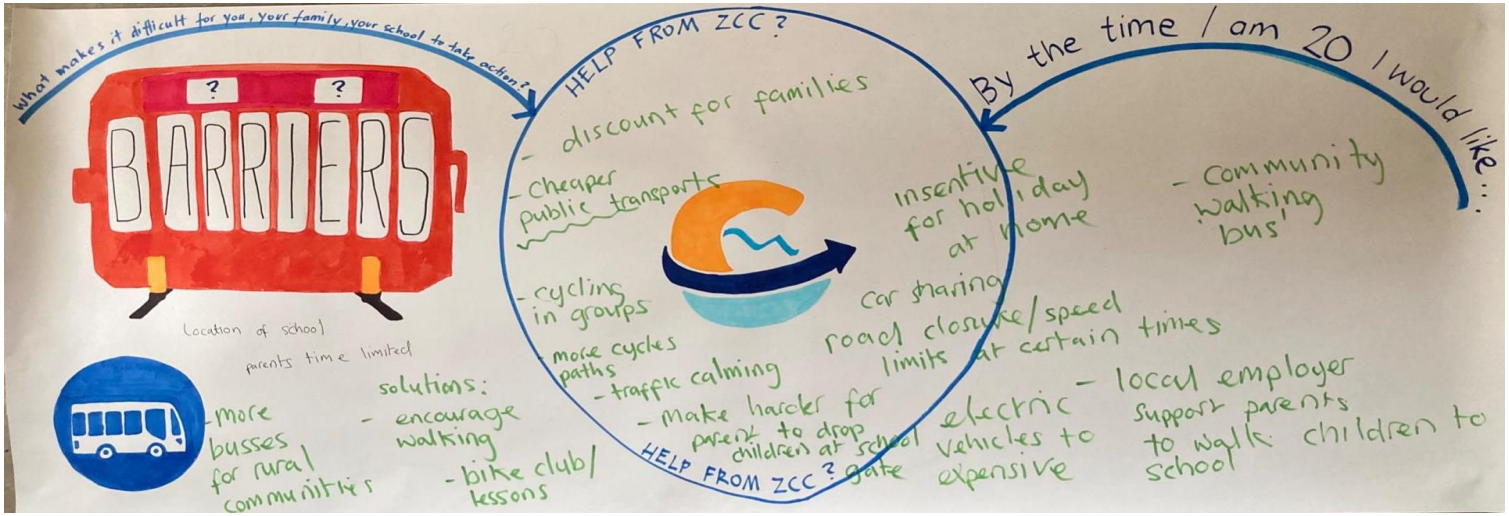
What should all buildings include to make them zero carbon?	What needs to happen to your school to help reduce its carbon footprint?
✓ Solar panels ✓ Insulation ✓ Heat pump ✓ More windows for natural light ✓ Reuse old buildings before building new ✓ Passive cooling ✓ Use recyclable materials/ use sustainable materials for new buildings ✓ Green electricity supply ✓ Leave old school buildings for new use ✓ Don't cut trees down ✓ Nature friendly grounds/ gardens planned in ✓ Limit homes that are large- make medium sized houses ✓ Use plastic to make houses. ✓	✓ Better insulation ✓ Solar panels ✓ More up to date heaters ✓ New boiler systems ✓ Turn off lights and whiteboards that aren't in use ✓ Funding/reduce cost of solar panels ✓ Plastic tax ✓ Less digital energy ✓ Double glazed windows ✓ Shut down coal mine/ less nuclear ✓ Green electricity supply: more wind farms/ using tidal and water energy ✓ Recycling and composting ✓ Skills, training, research ✓ Raise awareness- bring in parents and wider community, use school assemblies

CONSUMPTION, WASTE AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY


What are the issues for you in your school when it comes to waste, and what solutions could be put in place?
issues
solutions
SURVEY QUEST
Should ZCC support schools recycle for free?
YES
Milk in reusable or recyclable
Plant vegetables → sell in school
Reuse plantpots for nature
Plant herbs in old Wellington boots
Use left food for pets
Water Fountain
Swap shops - clothing
Reuse plastic bottles for flowers
Reuse take-away containers
Reuse old cardboard for art
Use less plastic
Use less water
Use less food
Use less energy
Use more renewable energy
Use more sustainable materials
Reduce plastic for plants
Reduce food waste
Use less energy
Use less water
Use less food
Use less plastic
Use less energy
Use less water
Use less food
Use less plastic
Use less energy
Use less water
Use less food
Use less plastic

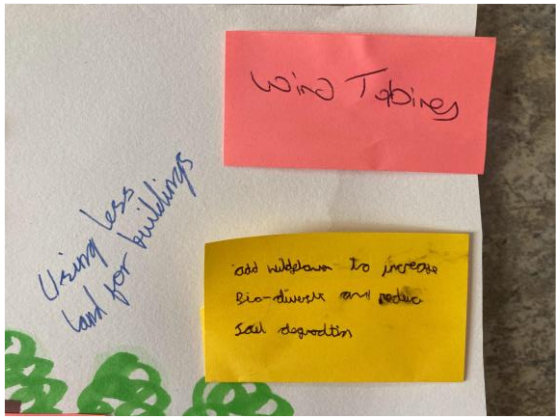
What are the issues for you in your school when it comes to waste and what solutions could be put in place?	
Issues	***Solutions***
• Food carbon footprint • The council spending less money unchanging logos and more money on climate change • **Food waste** • The wrong sort of food being served in schools • What to do with gluesticks? • Lots of rubbish in our schools • Too much plastic packaging on food  	✓ Get more local food, including from local farms (source local milk) ✓ Tetra pack recycling scheme ✓ Swap shops- eg: clothing (drop and swap uniforms) ✓ Plant food (herbs, vegetables) in things that might be thrown away (eg: old wellie boots, tyres ✓ Grow food to income generate for schools ✓ Use wax paper instead of cling film ✓ Collect rainwater to water gardens ✓ Make it easier to recycle; Reuse cardboard ✓ Source more eco friendly display materials for schools (eg: hessian) ✓ Reduce portion sizes/ Better meal planning ✓ Use lower carbon food ✓ Turn food waste into energy ✓ Use less glue on worksheets makes them easier to recycle (use treasury tags) ✓ Plant more food plants and trees- use seeds we collect ourselves ✓ Change food at snack times (eg toast) to reduce waste and knock on effects (food that is thrown away becomes litter because birds pull it all out of the bins) ✓ Season food better- will result in more being eaten ✓ **Compost** ✓ More anaerobic digestion ✓ Produce fertiliser for plants from waste food ✓ Left overs- give to animals ✓ Get better educated ✓ Raise money and awareness through sponsored events

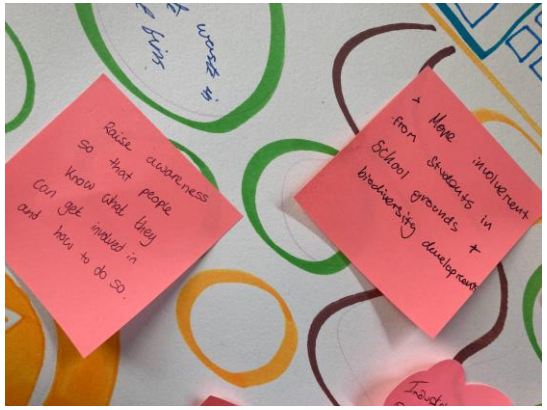
TRANSPORT and MOBILITY



What makes it difficult for you, your family, your school to take action	*Help from ZCC/ By the time I am 20 I would like…*
× Location of school × Lack of buses in rural communities × Electric vehicles are expensive × Bus timetables- don't match with start and end of school day × Unsafe roads	✓ Discounts for families ✓ Cheaper public transport ✓ More buses for rural communities ✓ Bike club lessons/ all children to have lessons ✓ More cycle paths ✓ Car sharing ✓ Incentives for holidaying at home ✓ Local employers to support parents (with time) to walk their children to school ✓ Community walking bus ✓ Road closures/ speed limits at certain times ✓ Every child to have a bicycle ✓ Public transport can go to more places ✓ Everything is electric and FREE for all ✓ Able to buy a bicycle and ride it wherever we like ✓ Remote working to be the norm ✓ Individual automated vehicles ✓ More bicycle shops and easy access to get to them

FARMING AND OTHER LAND USE



School Grounds	Green Spaces
✓ *Sensory gardens* ✓ *Less plastic, more bins* ✓ *Grow more vegetables/ salad* ✓ *Composting: fruit, vegetables, weeds, cooked food* ✓ *Green roof* ✓ *Higher biodiversity and more pollinators* ✓ *More hedges* ✓ *Peat free compost* ✓ *Better ways to school* ✓ *Put rubbish and waste into the right bins* ✓ *More involvement from students in school grounds and biodiversity development* ✓ *Raise awareness so that people know what they can get involved in and How to do so* ✓ *Bee blocks in roof of building* ✓ *School kitchen garden* 	✓ *Reducing building to leave nature alone* ✓ *Tree planting* ✓ *Permaculture* ✓ *Brown seaweed farms* ✓ *Agro forestry* ✓ *Phyto plankton cultivation* ✓ *Reduce eating of things that impact the environment* ✓ *Rain gardens to produce drought resisting ecosystems* ✓ *Add orchards to produce food* ✓ *More wild spaces/ more rewilding* ✓ *More woodland* ✓ *Less houses, more plants* ✓ *More flowers- change mowing* ✓ *Use space for renewable energy (wind, water solar)* ✓ *Better ways to use machinery on farms- eg: electric* ✓ *Farmers being paid to manage the land in a more environmentally friendly way* ✓ *Government funding to support better land management* ✓ *Grow own food* ✓ *Reduce use of industrial waste products* ✓ *The hanging gardens of Whitehaven* ✓ *Raised beds* ✓ *Vertical gardening*

5. The workshops

Pupils had the option to go to 2 workshops from the choice of 6.

WORKSHOPS:

Buggingham Palace: Build a bug hotel and take away ideas for how you can do this in your school.

Pupils found out how to make a structure- out of wood, leaves and other items that will encourage insects and bees to thrive in our school grounds and gardens.

CliMART- a creative workshop exploring how we can communicate our message about energy or biodiversity.

This workshop uses the idea of zine making- where pupils choose words and facts to create a core message. They then use paint and various sponge shapes to create their zine

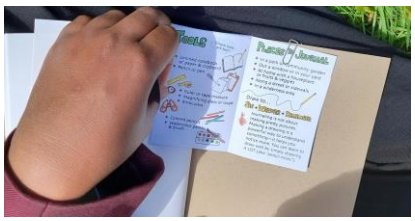
Biodiversity recording- learn how to record biodiversity in your school grounds and local community and help create a picture of how biodiverse Cumbria is. Pupils had an iIntroduction to recording – why, what and where. They were shown how to use the iNaturalist app to record the biodiversity they found.

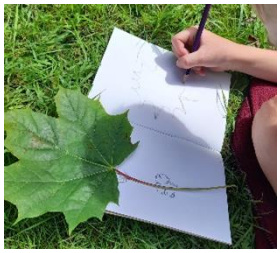
Sustainable Energy workshop: pupils learnt about sustainable energy sources, local sustainable energy sources and their benefits for the environment as a whole. They also learnt about practical ways to make their own solar panels.

SucSEED and seed bomb making- this workshop gave pupils the opportunity to learn about a current project in Cumbria, led by young people, that is supporting rewilding as part of the solution to climate change. They also had the chance to make their own seed bombs to take back to school.

Nature Journalling- get outside, connect with nature in a creative and different way.

The workshop started with talking about sustainability, climate change and biodiversity, and the importance of people being connected to nature for them to develop an empathy and compassion for the rest of nature and the environment. The pupils had the chance to create their own nature journals- using observation, curiosity and a focused connection to nature.

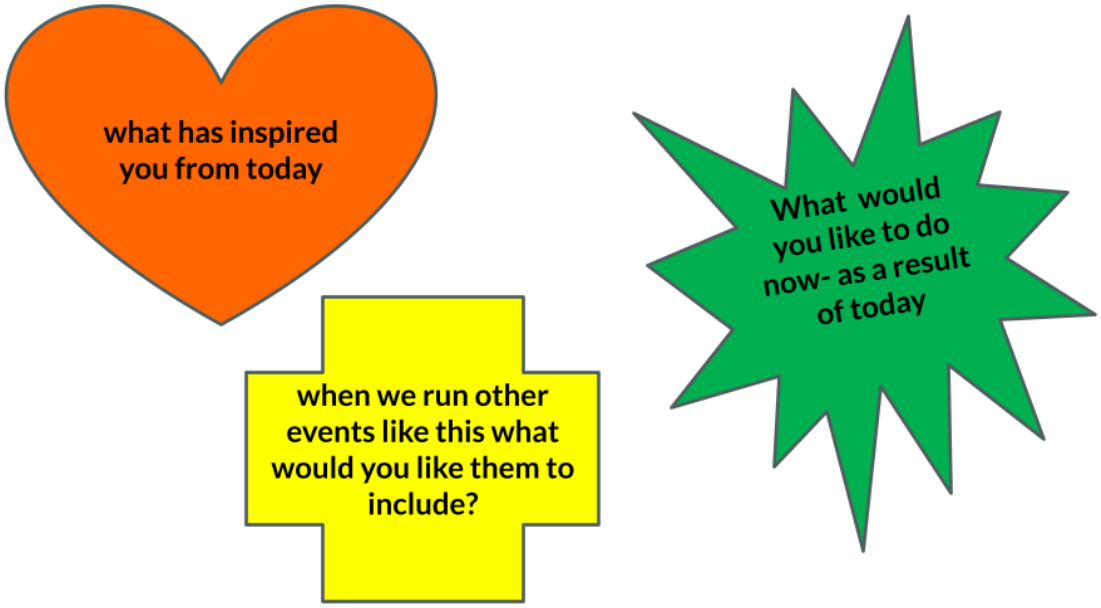




6. Closing and pledge/actions

We were joined in the afternoon by Tim Farron MP who had the chance to see all the workshops, answer questions pupils had asked in advance of his arrival and he finished off his visit with a closing address to the whole group.

The final activity was to look at



What would we like to do as a result of today?

- ✓ Download the biodiversity app and get others at our school using it
- ✓ Talk to school headteacher and governors about **solar panels**
- ✓ Rewild more of our field with seed bombs
- ✓ Make seed bombs at school
- ✓ More recycling
- ✓ Learn more about renewable energy
- ✓ Plant herbs and flowers
- ✓ Spend more time in my garden and sketch everything I see
- ✓ Recording nature and activities that we can run- like making seedbombs
- ✓ Protect habitats for wildlife
- ✓ More nature journaling

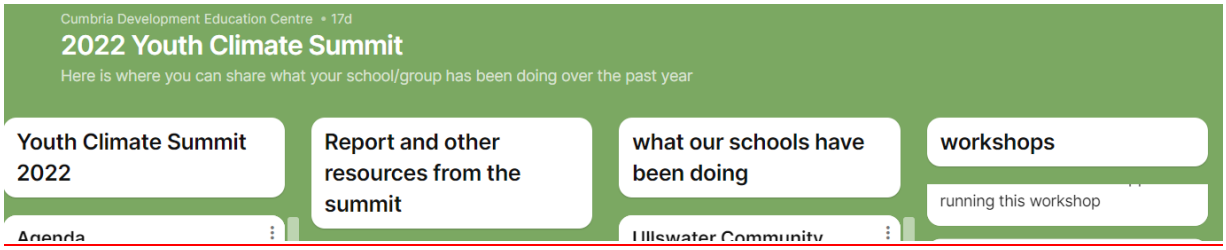
What has inspired me?

- ✓ Seedbombs- easy to make and can be planted anywhere
- ✓ It made me think about the environment
- ✓ Listening to what other schools have done
- ✓ Making zines inspired me to communicate more about climate action
- ✓ Nature journaling
- ✓ Making the zines- because they don't have to be neat
- ✓ Biodiversity count
- ✓ Some of the young leaders (Richard- from making the seed bombs and Matilda- Y10 amazing young leader)
- ✓ Meeting an MP
- ✓ Buggingham Palace inspired us to think more about wildlife when we are planting, farming or designing gardens: WORK WITH NATURE

What should future events include?

- Outdoor learning
- Make explicit how you are trying to make the event eco-friendly (eg: separating waste after lunch)
- To happen more often and activities to have more time
- Talking about tackling fishing nets and other rubbish in the sea
- Include computer packages relating to ecology
- Include litter picking
- More bug hotels
- Making posters for school

Resources and ideas shared at the Youth Climate Summit can be accessed via the padlet:
https://padlet.com/office744/YouthClimateSummit

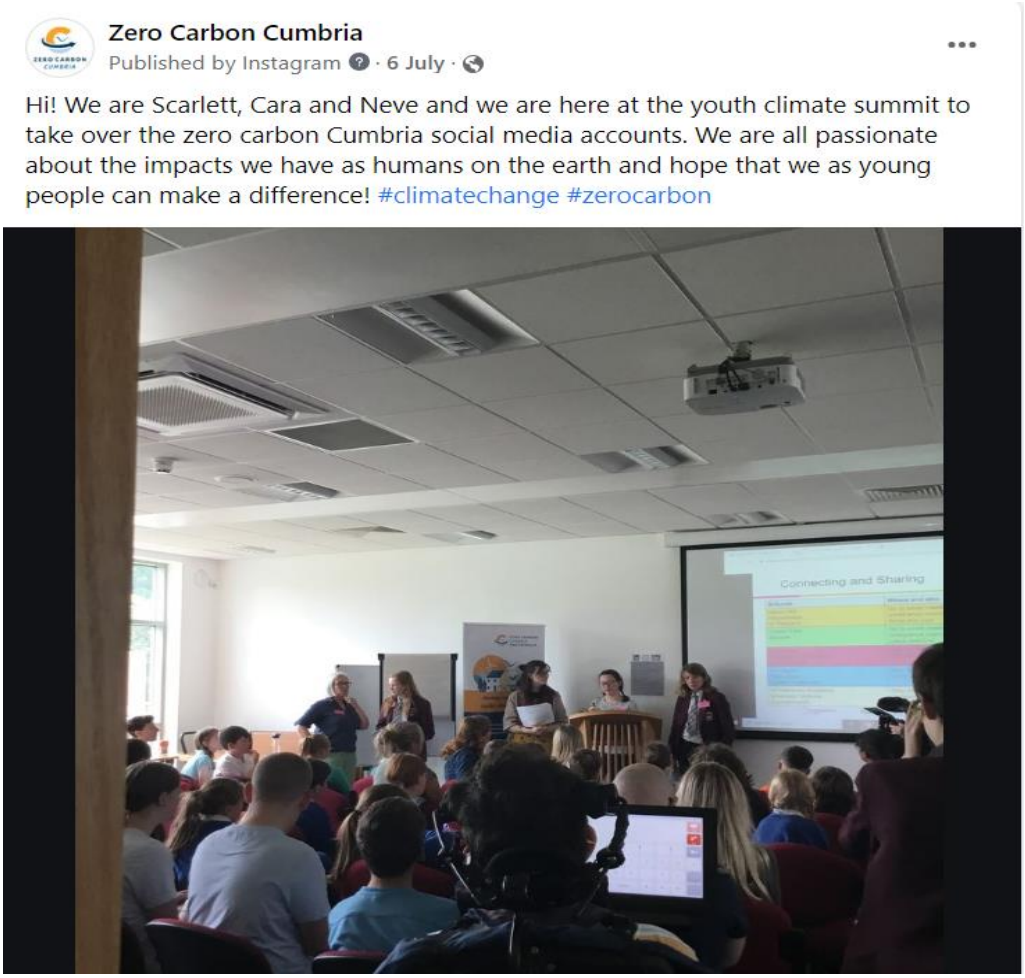


7. ZCCP Social media and website

For the first time at a youth climate summit, 3 year 6 students were given control of ZCCP's social media accounts including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. As a consequence, there was a dramatic increase in engagement across all three platforms.

Here is an example of one of the posts:

Post: [(3) Hi! We are Scarlett, Cara and Neve and we... - Zero Carbon Cumbria | Facebook]

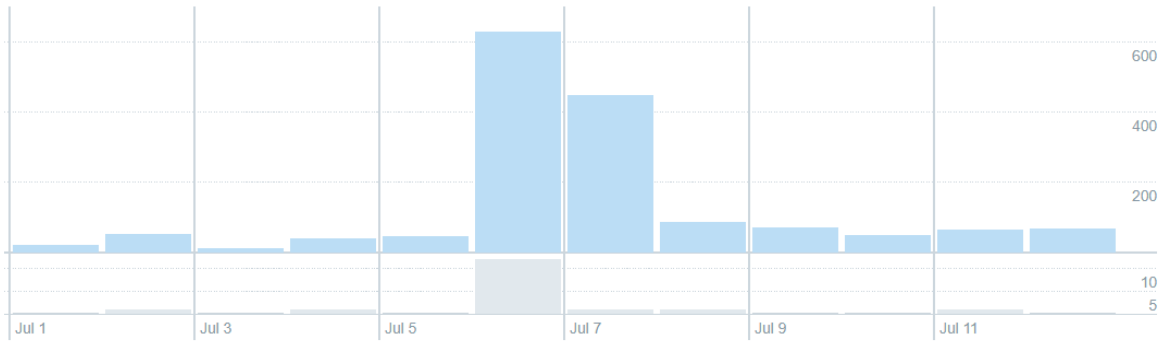


And an example of a tweet :

Impressions	145
Total engagements	9
Likes	6
Retweets	2
Profile Clicks	1

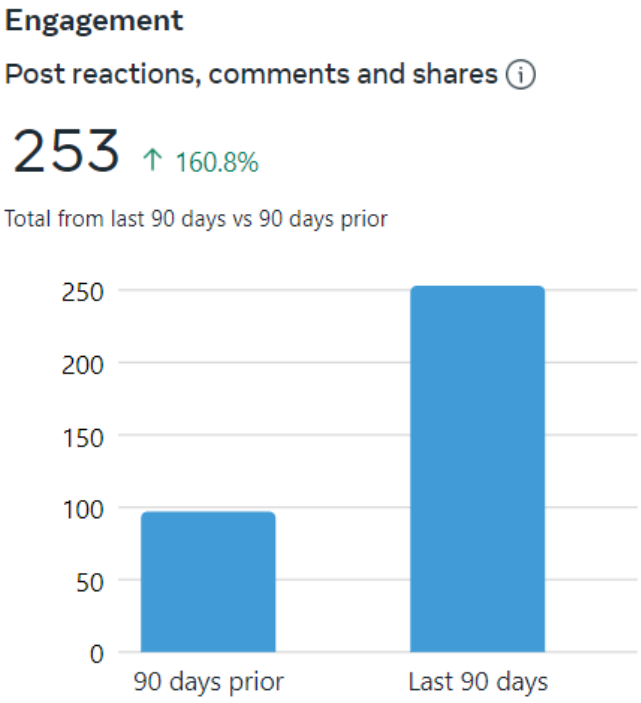
Here is an example of one of the other posts

Here are some graphs and statistics to showing the difference the students made in terms of impact on ZCCP's social media activity levels



This is the highest reaching post:

Engagement up 160% as shown in the graph below



Two year 8 students were also tasked with producing a report on the event. They were asked to interview people during the day and their report was subsequently published on the ZCCP website

ZERO CARBON CUMBRIA

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Home » Youth » Young reporters: Youth Climate Summit full of optimism

Young reporters: Youth Climate Summit full of optimism

August 22, 2023

At our recent youth climate summit we had two Year 8 boys from Queen Katherine School reporting for us, alongside the older students who took over our social media channels.

Our reporters, Luca and Jago, spent some time chatting with the other schools, finding out how the young people responded to the workshops and taking photos. Read their thoughts, and see their images, below.

We were surprised at how much we learnt, and we thought we'd ask the other schools what they thought.

The climate summit was attended by both primary and secondary schools, and lots of the primary school pupils really enjoyed the chance to learn from the older children, especially when talking about school action like planting and cooking produce. Some of us were really impressed with what the other schools could do, and the time that the groups got to spend on these projects.

The Zero Carbon Cumbria project seems like a really good idea to us – and as we took photographs of people sharing their ideas and listening to what the Zero Carbon Cumbria sector groups were talking about we realised that there really are lots of good ideas out there. It just seems a shame that so many of these ideas are not already happening – some of them don't seem difficult to do, and would make a big difference – like children's bike repairs in each town. Other ideas, like growing food in school gardens seem to happen in some places but not others, and it would be easy to share this ideas across different schools. Queen Katherine School talked a lot about their solar panels, and some of the other schools told us that they found this really interesting.

Overall, everyone we spoke to certainly had fun and learn new things, and they nearly all wanted to come back for more next year. We don't know if this means they will talk about it with their friends back at school!

8. Film of the event.

In order to capture the essence of the summit we commissioned Dom Bush, of Kendal based filmmakers Land & Sky Media, to produce a five-minute overview of the day, as well as four shorter videos capturing the young people's main recommendations for each of the ZCCP sector groups and some short clips to be used on Zero Carbon Cumbria's social media pages. The main video included an introduction from CAfS CEO and co-chair of ZCCP, Karen Mitchell, as well as clips of the youth climate summit steering committee and the young people attending.

Here are some screen shots from the main video

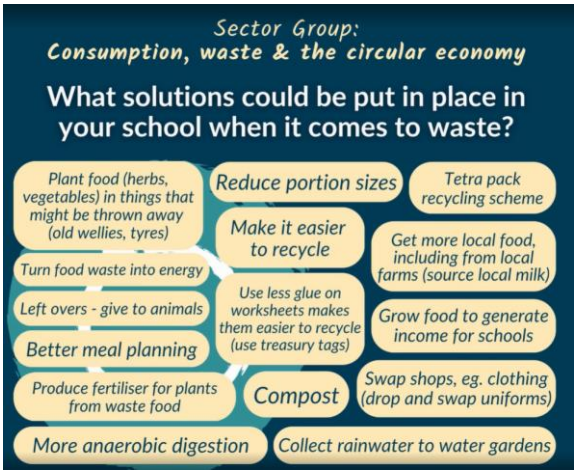
Matilda and Liza from the Youth Climate Summit steering committee describing how they planned the event with other committee members.

Livi and Jonah from the Youth Climate Summit steering committee shared how they utilized the school space for the workshops and planned the structure of the day.

Pupils from Windermere School write down their hopes for the future.

A room full of hands were raised after ZCC Project manager John Forbes asked the question "Who agrees that we need to do more, and we need to do it more quickly, in terms of climate action?"

Short videos were also produced summarising the recommendations for each of the four ZCCP sector groups



9. Report for the National Lottery

The following report was written by Matilda Bridgman, (year 10) one of the young people on the steering committee for the 2023 Youth Climate Action Summit.

The summit enabled children to share ideas, learn about the ZCCP sector groups and participate in various workshops ranging from sustainable energy to biodiversity recording

These activities also enabled schools to make connections in order to collaborate on environmental actions. We expect that they will act upon what they have learnt (e.g. after having heard another school having solar panels, they might advocate for the same at their own school). Children now have an improved awareness of environmental issues and solutions. Participants will have gained hope by seeing the capacity for schools to act, therefore increasing motivation for positive change.

Next steps include sharing video footage of the summit to raise awareness of the students' views and expand the area of influence. CAfS and CDEC will hold another summit next year (potentially at a school in West Cumbria).

Although the day ran smoothly overall, there were some improvements to be made. For example, there were sections of the day that felt as if they needed more time, such as the workshops and the sharing of actions between schools. There was also too much noise in the hall when the students were split into groups to share what they had been doing. Additionally, it was difficult to transfer children between rooms through the school. One improvement could be to increase the number of older secondary school students (i.e. above Year 9), however there was generally a good balance between primary and secondary school participation

The members of the steering committee and I got a lot out of the experience. It was uplifting to see that schools are able to take positive action, and to see so many young people eager to make a difference. I enjoyed seeing the students get their voices heard, and to see them learn from each other as well as from the workshop leaders. We have all had the opportunity to build skills such as confidence and teamwork. I also benefitted from the day as two schools approached me in order to connect our schools to collaborate on environmental projects in the future.

Moving forward, we would like the oversight board to respond to what the young people came up with during the sector group session, perhaps by organising a meeting with the students. Another action could be to help facilitate a meeting between the steering group and/or some volunteer students, and a councillor who could take their ideas on to the council.