



MEC NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2023



**COMMUNITY
FUND**

THE LOGO OF THE NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND, WHICH AWARDED US A £175,000 GRANT FROM COMMUNITIES GROWING TOGETHER

MEC AWARDED £175,000 GRANT

We are proud to announce that we are the recipients of a £175,000 grant from Communities Growing Together, part of the National Lottery Community Fund. Communities Growing Together will aim to build healthy, resilient lifestyles, self-reliance and social cohesion within disadvantaged and less resilient communities throughout Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley area, utilising the One Planet living approach alongside community-led actions to address both food and fuel poverty and improve communal green spaces by realising and building upon the assets within communities.

Having over 30 years of experience in building resilient communities, delivering sustainable living and abiding by the One Planet Living approach, alongside extensive partnership working and links and work in the community, provides us with the best possible base to utilise this grant to its fullest extent. This grant will help us see residents, communities and projects transform, becoming more resilient and sustainable in the long term, as well as allowing us to better work with, and further develop, partnerships, staff and organisational practices.

We can't wait to put the grant to good use and to help further transform the local communities that we work within!

BRIDGEHILL DAY SERVICE VISIT THE OFFICE

We recently welcomed Bridgehill Day Service and their service users to our site, as part of a new 3 week project. They were greeted, and taken care of, by Claire and Jodie who guided them around the site, where they took photos of the things they liked, and dwelt on how those things made them feel, as well as the smells and sounds of Autumn that surrounded them.

We can't wait to welcome them back and look forward to their next session on our site!



BRIDGEHILL DAY SERVICE SERVICE USERS VISITING THE ORCHARD BEHIND OUR OFFICES IN ACKLAM.

THE RETURN OF THE CLIMATE ACTION CLUBS!

Once again another fantastic session at Archibald Primary School, where Climate Action Middlesbrough helped their Climate Action Club start off the new academic year with a bang.

During the first session of the new academic year, and in honour of World Clean-Up Day, the Climate Action Club went out in force to clean up their local area on a huge litter pick, collecting three bags of rubbish from outside the school grounds including Barnaby Avenue, Acklam Road, and Ayresone Green Lane.

Well done to the Club and well done to Climate Action Middlesbrough who continue to be a beacon of inspiration and guidance for our younger generations!



CHILDREN FROM THE ARCHIBALD PRIMARY SCHOOL CLIMATE ACTION CLUB GETTING INVOLVED IN A MASSIVE LITTER PICK.

THE ECO SHOP NETWORK CONTINUES TO GROW

MEC continue to coordinate and expand its Eco Shop network. Working in partnership with Fareshare NE redistributing perfectly good surplus food that would have otherwise gone to landfill to our pop-up social supermarkets located in schools and community venues.

There are currently 30 Eco Shops in the Tees Valley area, predominately Middlesbrough, recently welcoming new sites at Coulby Newham - The Coppice, Easterside - The Health Village, South Bank - Tees Valley Women's Centre and Redcar - St Hilda's Church with more new sites to come. Please visit the eco shop website for more details www.ecoshop.org.uk



FRESH PRODUCE AT THE GREEN HUB ECO SHOP IN MIDDLESBROUGH BUS STATION: FRESH PRODUCE SUCH AS THIS IS A STAPLE OF ECO-SHOPS, PROVIDING A LOW COST MEANS OF EATING HEALTHILY

MIDDLESBROUGH Environment City
Registered Charity 1070131

Affordable warmth drop-in sessions in partnership with Redcar & Cleveland Public Health

October/November 2023 Schedule

Date	Location	Time
19 OCTOBER	Brotton Village hall	13:30 - 15:30 PM
1 NOVEMBER	Grangetown United Hub	11:00 - 13:00 PM
9 NOVEMBER	Guisborough Methodist Church	11:00 - 13:00 PM
15 NOVEMBER	Lazenby Village hall	12:00 - 14:00 PM
28 NOVEMBER	Night Light Community Hub	14:30 - 16:30 PM

Drop in to meet the affordable warmth team, and receive some free energy advice and support.

THE AFFORDABLE WARMTH DROP-IN SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

AFFORDABLE WARMTH DROP-INS FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER ANNOUNCED

As we start to enter the coldest part of the year, our Affordable Warmth team will once more be paying visits to local areas, including drop-ins at Grangetown United, Brotton Village Hall and Guisborough Methodist Church, amongst others. Visit our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/menvcity/>) or Twitter (@menvcity) for more information, including specific times.

These are "cost of living" events in partnership with the Redcar & Cleveland Public Health and Wellbeing Team, and visitors can also expect organisations such as Carers Together, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Welfare Rights, The Energy Doctor, South Tees Warm and Well, and Trading Standards to be at these events. ensuring those who attend the events have access to several services for information and advice.



PAUL ROBINSON, MIDDLE, WITH TWO SERVICE USERS OF ROOTED IN NATURE JUST OUTSIDE OF PORTRACK MARSH ON THE TEES BARRAGE.

THE LAST OF THE EEL COUNTING DAYS

It's been a staple for over a year as the Rooted in Nature crew joined their final eel counting session of the season at the end of September. With only 5 eels counted on the day, they bid farewell to Jackie and the team at the Canal & River Trust. However, plans are in place for an informal return for 2024, so hopefully the service users will once more join forces with the Canal & River Trust team to count the eels across the new year.

Despite this, trips to the Tees Barrage will still continue as the service users assist Matt and the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust team with clearing the brush and overgrowth at Portrack Marsh, and of course there's always the popular walk alongside the Tees where plenty of wildlife can be spotted and a good walk can be had!

This session in particular proved bittersweet, however, due to the fact that, unfortunately, Paul Robinson, our Rooted in Nature Engagement Officer, is due to leave Middlesbrough Environment City at the end of October. We'll give Paul a more formal send-off in next month's newsletter, and we wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours.



"ONE OF THE BEST 90 MINUTES [THEY'VE] SPENT THIS YEAR", ACCORDING TO ONE OF THE MOVING BEYOND CANDIDATES AFTER THEIR VISIT TO OUR SITE

CAM WELCOMES MOVING BEYOND AT MEC

This month, CAM welcomed delegates from the Moving Beyond conference - held this year in Stockton's watersports centre overlooking the river Tees. Moving Beyond is an initiative that brings together businesses, investors, government, and society to accelerate the UK's response to climate change and build a more sustainable way of life.

MEC and other CAM partners presented an overview of the work. The visitors learned about CAM's Climate Action Clubs - our informal offer for primary school-aged children where we engage them with climate action in a fun and practical way. They found out about our more formal lessons and how we get schools on board.

Asylum Seeker and Refugee community engagement was the next topic, including how to find a balance between the importance of climate action and the often challenging journey that new citizens face.

But maybe the highlight - or certainly the part that raised the most laughs, was when we got the delegates on our smoothie bike! We talked about how we use the bike simply to get people talking to us, and then shift the conversation to energy use..."would you make a smoothie every morning if you couldn't just flick a switch? How much electricity does flicking that switch take? Where does that energy come from? What impact does that have on the climate?". We've found the bike to be a great opener and lots of engagement happens as people pedal.

We finished off the day with a tour and talked about how CAM will link in with a new MEC project, which will be based on our allotment on the MEC site. Feedback was great, and really humbling, with one candidate telling us it was "one of the best 90 minutes [they've] spent this year"! Thank you to Moving Beyond for wanting to find out more about the work that CAM is doing to take action on climate change in Middlesbrough.