Let’s do different, let’s make a change

On 6 November, the latest international climate summit, COP27, began in Egypt. I am writing this before we know what has happened at this, perhaps imperfect but essential, international event but you may have kept up to date with the news. Global leaders will have to get down to the difficult business of negotiating how to tackle global heating when its effects are already being felt across the world – Europe’s hottest summer for 500 years, a third of Pakistan flooded, a devasting typhoon in the Philippines and severe drought in East Africa.

COP27 has also taken place in the context of global emissions still rising, the energy crisis caused by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and many nations’ continuing dependence on fossils fuels.

However, there is optimism - solar energy is now the cheapest form of energy and many ordinary people are taking greater interest in action to cut their carbon footprint. In Norfolk WI News, we have already covered food, fashion, peat and ethical investment in these articles. Also, on the Norfolk WI Facebook page we advertised the activities around the county which took part in the Great Big Green Week in September.

We have two events next year that WI members can support – Show the Love, the Green Hearts event on 14 February, and the Great Big Green Week, which next year will be in the week 10th - 18th June 2023.

The Norfolk WI Public Affairs Committee will be encouraging local institutes to support Show the Love, on 14 February, locally as it is a chilly time of year to be out and about around the county. But it would like to involve more members in a more high-profile event or events in June.

The PA committee is not asking for any ongoing commitment other than getting involved in planning next year’s event(s). There are a very small number of Climate Ambassadors in the county but they would love to work with others who are concerned about climate change and who are passionate about showing what can be done and how the wider public can make a difference.

If you are interested in being part of an informal network or group that meets either virtually or in person, or both, to work towards an event in June, please email me at francesmkempwi@gmail.com. The WI is a member of the Climate Coalition and it may be that we can work with some of the other members locally such as the wildlife trusts, the National Trust, the RSPB, Friends of the Earth and/or others.

There is plenty of information out there to help us. For example, I have recently been looking at the United Nations website https://www.un.org/en/actnow/

We do need to be thinking about what younger and future generations need us to do - focusing on a green future - even in this a difficult time of the cost-of-living crisis and a likely recession. To preserve a liveable climate, emissions will need to be halved by 2030. The cost of inaction will be far greater than the cost of action.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Frances Kemp

A national Federation of WIs Climate Ambassador and a member of the Norfolk WI PA Committee.

francesmkempwi@gmail.com