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December 2025 / ISSUE 8

Welcome to our December Edition!

Highlights this Edition

- [Bookings now open for 2026 Sustainability in Education Conference](#)
- [Recording of our latest network meeting on Energy](#)
- [Sign up for next network meeting on Food](#)
- [Eco-Emotions: Young Climate Warriors' new Climate Change Club in a Box](#)
- [What is Regeneration? A short film from Regenerators](#)
- [Holiday switch off checklist from Energy Sparks](#)
- [My Nature Play project from Learning through Landscapes](#)



We've had a fantastic start to the academic year and are looking forward to a well-

earned break. Louisa has been connecting with Our Schools, Our World schools, many of which are progressing toward Bronze accreditation. The agenda for next year's [Sustainability in Education Conference](#) on 22 June 2026 at The Food Museum, Stowmarket is confirmed, and early bird tickets are just £35. Book now to secure your place!

Further details of the conference including the agenda can be found [here](#) or on the event registration page below.

SIGN UP

This year, we've been inspired by schools appointing sustainability leads, planning climate action, and engaging with the network. It has been so inspiring to see all your hard work. On a personal note, I (Rebecca) will be stepping out of the Schools Sustainability Team for 12 months to develop project management skills, returning in early 2027. Thank you for your incredible commitment over the past 18 months - it has been a privilege to work with such passionate educators. Fear not - the network will continue, and I will email soon with details of the new Schools Sustainability Lead. Finally, Louisa and I wish you a restful holiday and a Happy New Year!

Rebecca & Louisa

NETWORKING MEETING

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting slide with the following elements:

- Title:** Thermal Imaging Cameras
- Logos:** SUSTAINABLE SUFFOLK (with a leaf icon) and SUFFOLK SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK (with a leaf icon).
- QR Codes:** Two QR codes are present. The first is labeled "Thermal Imaging Project Community Resources" and the second is labeled "Thermal Imaging Camera Booking Link".
- Image:** A thermal image of a house with a red play button overlaid in the center.
- Zoom Grid:** A vertical column of video thumbnails on the right side of the slide, showing participants: Rebecca Elbow-Haynes, Louisa Pittwood, Linda Heame, Nigel Stannett, and Mark Dale. A "+19" icon indicates more participants.
- Footer:** Rebecca Elbow-Haynes

Last month, we held our last network meeting of the year, focusing on Energy. Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders introduced their latest funded project for schools - [Solar Up](#), which offers solar panels for schools. Suffolk County Council also

presented some energy-saving tips for schools. Sustainable Suffolk introduced [thermal camera opportunities](#), while [Let's Go Zero](#) shared strategies to reduce Scope 3 emissions through food, waste, transport, and procurement. All presentations are available below.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Food

Suffolk Sustainable Schools Network Meeting

Thurs 29th January 4-5:30pm
(online)

[SIGN UP](#)



Transport

Suffolk Sustainable Schools Network Meeting

Tuesday 10th March 4-5:30pm
(online)

[SIGN UP](#)



ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE



Global Climate Action at COP30

Last month, COP30 took place in Belém, Brazil, marking significant progress and ongoing challenges. Positively, nations pledged to triple adaptation finance by 2035, launched the Belém Mission for 1.5°C, and advanced Indigenous land rights and just-transition plans. However, no agreement was reached on phasing out fossil fuels, and loss-and-damage funding fell short. Unfortunately, geopolitical divides and slow progress tempered ambitions for urgent climate action.

What Schools Can Do Now

COP30's outcomes highlight the urgency of climate education. Schools can engage students through [Inter Climate Network's](#) resources for 11–18-year-olds, including mock COP activities, and [BBC Bitesize's](#) COP30 teaching materials. These tools empower young people to lead, advocate, and take meaningful action on sustainability within lessons and Eco Group projects.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Eco Emotions

Help students manage eco-emotions with [Young Climate Warriors'](#) new Climate Change Club in a Box session. These interactive resources provide step-by-step guidance and practical techniques to support young people in coping with climate-related worries while channeling their feelings into positive action for the planet. Designed to empower and inspire, the session makes it easy to create a safe, solution-focused space for learners. Access this session and more by visiting the [Young Climate Warriors](#) website.

[READ MORE](#)

Sustainable Behaviours

The DfE-funded programme, Sustainability Support for Education, is helping schools and colleges turn climate ambition into action. The initiative offers practical guidance to embed sustainable habits across energy, travel, food, water, waste, biodiversity, and consumption. With milestone and long-term actions, plus tools to track progress and celebrate success, it supports whole-school engagement, including parents. It includes a curated library of trusted resources makes it easy to integrate sustainability into everyday practice.

[READ MORE](#)

Planet-Friendly School Meals

The Planet-Friendly School Meal Initiative, led by the [Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition](#), supports governments in designing meals that benefit both people and the planet. Using data-driven strategies across five key policy areas, the project develops tools to model costs and track the health, environmental, educational, and economic impacts of implementing sustainable, healthy school meals.

[READ MORE](#)



BIODIVERSITY



Biodiversity Case Study

This case study highlights how Bentley Primary School in Hampshire transformed its outdoor spaces in response to the State of Nature Report 2023, supported by the [National Education Nature Park](#). Through eco lessons and nature clubs, pupils built their knowledge of biodiversity and applied it through school competitions and pupil-voice projects. Their ideas led to meaningful changes, including creating a nature-only woodland zone, building a new pond, and developing a pollinator-friendly garden that enriched wildlife across the school grounds.

[READ MORE](#)

What is Regeneration?

Created by the ReGenerators, this uplifting film introduces the meaning and benefits of regeneration, making it ideal for assemblies or eco-groups. It calls on viewers to reconnect with nature, unite as communities, and help heal our damaged planet. Featuring themes of Indigenous wisdom, youth leadership, climate action and

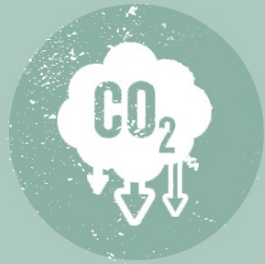
collective resilience, the video inspires a shift toward an ecological future where life guides every decision. Visit the ReGenerators website to explore global initiatives and the growing community behind this movement.

[READ MORE](#)

Alpkit Foundation Grants

The Alpkit Foundation offers grants of £50–£500 to help schools provide enriching outdoor experiences for students. Priority is given to projects that promote responsible outdoor activity or introduce new participants to nature. Grants can cover equipment purchases, activity costs, or trips. The Foundation also supports conservation and environmental initiatives, including community gardens, rewilding projects, and other hands-on sustainability activities, encouraging schools to engage students with both outdoor adventure and environmental stewardship.

[LEARN MORE](#)



DECARBONISATION



Free Thermal Imaging Cameras

As part of Sustainable Suffolk's Keep the Heat project, schools can borrow thermal imaging cameras to uncover hidden heat loss. With colder days and rising thermostat settings, these cameras reveal where warmth escapes, guiding energy-saving improvements and boosting efficiency. It's a hands-on way to involve students in investigating heat loss and sustainability, turning science into real-world action. Book a camera, explore your building's energy performance, and inspire learners to think critically about climate-friendly solutions.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Solar Up: Webinar Invitation

Suffolk secondary schools can unlock savings and sustainability through the [Solar Up initiative](#), installing solar panels and purchasing electricity at 20% less than current rates. Schools also receive two years of free access to Energy Sparks for data insights and educational resources. Funded by Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan, this project is fully supported by Suffolk County Council. Want to learn more?

Join our **webinar on 8 January 2026 at 4pm** to explore benefits and ask questions.

[SIGN UP](#)

Holiday Switch Off

In this practical guide, Energy Sparks guides schools in creating a comprehensive **holiday switch-off checklist** to reduce energy use outside school hours. Staff and students collaborate to ensure all appliances, lights, IT equipment, heating systems, kitchen freezers, and more, are turned off before weekends and holidays. The resource includes downloadable templates, room-specific lists, and assigns responsibility to individuals for each area, promoting accountability and real-world energy savings.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Net Zero Hub support for Schools

The Greater South-East Net Zero Hub provides free support for state-funded schools to decarbonise their estates. Services include reviewing key documents, offering technical advice, and project management for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding applications. The Hub also assists with heat decarbonisation strategies and plans, and conducts desktop assessments to help pre-qualify sites for future funding bids. This comprehensive support enables schools to take practical steps toward reducing carbon emissions and improving energy efficiency.

[READ MORE](#)



CLIMATE EDUCATION



The Curriculum Review: Sustainability

The recent Curriculum Review from the Department for Education confirmed the limited and outdated nature of current climate education in the national curriculum. Encouragingly, the review connected climate education to green skills and future jobs. However, there has been some criticism levelled at the review; namely, that it lacks the required urgency the climate crisis demands and at the limited breadth of the recommendations.

What Schools Can Do

A range of organisations now offering support to drive ambitious sustainability education in schools. [Teach the Future](#) have an ambitious [vision](#) for a climate education that is embedded in all national curriculum subjects, while [University College London](#) have published a [curriculum policy proposal](#) showing how each subject can contribute towards environmental learning. Now is also the ideal time to audit your school curriculum using [Sustainability Support](#) tools to map your current provision and identify opportunities to embed sustainability across all subjects.

[READ MORE](#)

My Nature Play Project

Outdoor play is vital for young children, yet time spent outside has halved in a

generation. [Learning Through Landscapes'](#) My Nature Play project aims to change that by enriching early years outdoor experiences. This 12-week programme includes onsite training, confidence-building guidance, an outdoor clothing library, and a tailored plan to embed sustainable, nature-based learning. Designed to inspire educators and children alike, it helps create meaningful connections with nature while supporting long-term environmental awareness.

Applications close midnight, 4 January 2026.

[REGISTER](#)

Transformative Climate Resilience Education

[One Resilient Earth](#) is offering a free, self-paced online course for educators through the European Clarity project. Designed for those working with learners aged 6–20+, the course tackles common gaps in climate education—moving beyond facts to build skills for behaviour change, collective action, and mental wellbeing. Educators will gain practical tools, methods, and mindsets to teach climate change with care and impact, empowering young people to respond confidently to a rapidly changing world.

[REGISTER](#)

Duke of Edinburgh Climate Change Skills

[Young Climate Warriors](#) have launched a free Climate Change Skills Programme, perfect for students working toward their DofE Bronze or Silver Awards. Running for three months, participants receive a fun, sustainable challenge every Friday—each designed to be simple, achievable, and inspiring. Supported by videos and digital resources, tasks require no travel and can be completed at home, in the garden, or a local park. This programme builds practical skills while empowering young people to take climate-positive action.

[READ MORE](#)



**GREEN
CAREERS**

Sustainable Food Challenge

The Sustainable Youth Challenge by [LEAF](#) empowers 15–17-year-olds to tackle real-

world sustainability issues in food systems. Participants will design innovative solutions for climate change, biodiversity, and food security, while enjoying a Challenge Day at Harper Adams University and a residential weekend. The program offers mentoring, industry networking, and UCAS/job application boosts. Winners may receive bursaries, travel support, and university grade discounts—plus the chance to showcase ideas at Open Farm Sunday and connect with leading professionals.

[READ MORE](#)

Future Citizen: Sustainable Fashion Week

Following a successful pilot earlier this year, the Future Citizenship programme returns in spring 2026! This innovative initiative brings together schools, colleges, and universities to champion fairer, more sustainable fashion. Through engaging activities and practical resources, the programme fosters collaboration, builds knowledge, and develops essential skills. It empowers young people to take meaningful action and adopt sustainable fashion habits, creating positive change for people and the planet.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Exploring Green Skills and Careers

Join a [Let's Go Zero](#) webinar to explore green skills and careers in education. Discover what green careers mean, why they matter, and how to embed them into your curriculum. Gain practical tips on teaching strategies, sourcing work experience, and accessing CPD for staff. Hear from inspiring speakers, share ideas, and ask questions in breakout sessions. The event will be recorded and accessible to all. Register now to secure your place!

Let's Go Zero: Future-proof Your Pupils workshop is on February 4, 2026 (3:45–4:45pm)

[REGISTER](#)



IMPORTANT DATES



Nature

Suffolk Sustainable Schools Network Meeting

Wednesday 29th April 4-5:30pm
(online)

SIGN UP



Water & Adaptation

Suffolk Sustainable Schools Network Meeting

Thursday 9th June 4-5:30pm
(online)

SIGN UP



Suffolk Sustainability in Education Conference

Food Museum, Stowmarket
Sustainability CPD
22nd June 9-4pm

SIGN UP



Let's Go Zero: Buildings and Retrofit Workshop

Tuesday 20th January 3:45pm -
4:45pm (online)

SIGN UP

SMALL CHANGES BIG IMPACT

Have you joined our network?

Please share and forward this email to your colleagues interested in sustainability. Anyone working in a school can join, including both teaching and operational staff, and membership is free!

SIGN UP

Our mailing address is:

sussn@suffolk.gov.uk



This email was sent to rebecca.elston-haynes@suffolk.gov.uk
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