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Johan Rockström

A Swedish scientist, internationally recognised for his work on global sustainability issues. He is joint Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) in Germany, with economist Ottmar Edenhofer. Rockström is also Chief Scientist at Conservation International. He is Professor in Earth System Science at the University of Potsdam and Professor in Water Systems & Global Sustainability.

Watch his TED talk [here](#) explaining where exactly things stand and offering the most up to date scientific assessment of the state of the planet and what must be done to preserve Earth's resilience to human impact and pressure.

Hello everyone ... well it's been a really busy first year for Barrow Greener Living. Initially, we needed to set up our policies and allocate responsibilities, as well as developing a seasonal BGL Newsletter to circulate to members and friends. We have been a regular contributor to the Barrow Voice. BGL has also attended various Barrow village fetes and events. Other activities in the last 12 months include:

- joining the successful campaign for part reinstatement of the Leicester bound bus service;
- arranging for the monthly visit of the [Real Refills](#) van;
- partnering with Hall Orchard CE Primary School to promote the 'walk to school' poster competition;
- visit to a Recycling Plant with information obtained & disseminated;
- making contact with like-minded groups around the county;
- running a green hardware event at the Soar Bridge Inn showcasing electric cars, bikes, PV panels & batteries, types of insulation;
- introducing the free heat loss survey for members with supporting documents;
- looking at possible sustainability actions with the Parish Council;

... And we even had time for a couple of social events getting to know our steering group colleagues.

De-brief from AGM held on 9th October 2024

- Minor amendment to name of group—to be known forthwith as 'Barrow Greener Living'
- Appointment of Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and steering group members
- New appointment of Membership Officer and Social Secretary

A brainstorming session produced many creative and progressive ideas to be explored over the next 12 months. Including further village events to promote key issues of the group's objectives and liaising with village businesses and organisations to reduce plastic pollution, advice on saving energy/insulation and local food production.

For the imminent future, we have been in touch with our MP, Jeevun Sandher, encouraging him to sign up to the [Nature and Climate Bill](#), been asked to provide a session on green energy with the local cubs' group and we are also talking with De Montfort University about holding sporting events with a green agenda in mind.

Rooftop Solar Is Driving A Silent Energy Revolution Across The Developing World



Evidence is emerging that solar panels are now so cheap that they're appearing in massive numbers across much of the developing world. This has enabled business and home owners to get on with electrifying their lives, doing it cleanly, and also ensuring energy supply in areas where national supply can be unreliable, underdeveloped and expensive.

For example, Pakistan has become the third-largest importer of Chinese solar modules, acquiring 13GW [1GW = 1 million kW] in the first half of this year alone. As a comparator, the UK is currently on course to add 1.5-2 GW of solar capacity this year. In 2023, the US economy added 32GW of solar capacity.

In addition, it should be noted that Pakistan's entire electrical generation capacity was only 46GW in 2023. In effect, it appears that in just six months, Pakistan imported solar capacity equivalent to 30% of its total electricity generation capacity! It seems that, faced with rising energy costs, Pakistanis are buying huge quantities of cheap solar panels and putting them up themselves.

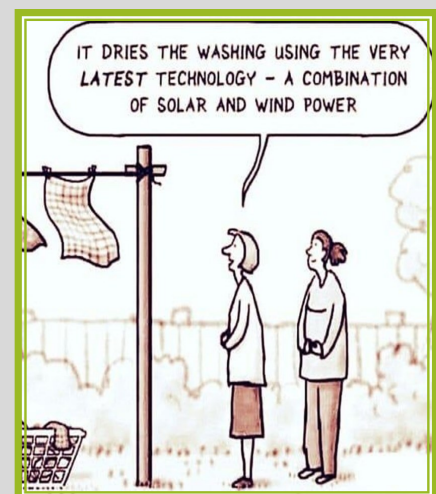
Middle-class Pakistanis can pay off the investment in a few years by selling back power to the grid. In poorer areas irrigation pumps and wells are now increasingly run on solar. And diesel generators that used to provide backup power are being turned off.

As Azeem Azhar and Nathan Warren point out (quoted in an article by Bill McKibben) their research shows that:

"by the end of the year, Pakistan's distributed solar system could be nearing half the capacity of its entire grid! This isn't just growth; it's a silent revolution in energy production".

Something similar is happening in Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar and other countries across the developing world. In his article Bill McKibben quotes Joel Nana, an analyst at Sustainable Energy Africa, Capetown:

"In Namibia we uncovered they have about 70 MW [1 megawatt = 1000 kW] of distributed generation—that's rooftop solar pv that's about 11 percent of Namibia's installed capacity. Eswatini, it's an old figure, but they're already at 30 MW and it's a very small country. That's about 15% of Eswatini's Installed capacity. South Africa is the biggest market, and it has five gigawatts of distributed solar—about 9 percent of South Africa's installed capacity."



"PV is a no-brainer for most businesses if not all ...The prices just make sense. The African market is a huge market for some of the Chinese manufacturers, so we have availability—huge availability. The market is flooded with panels from China."

Azeem Azhar and Nathan Warren believe that this adoption of solar panels at a local level is evidence that energy production is moving from a "dumb commodity", owned and priced by "regional autocrats", to a "technology". Unlike fossil fuels, which are extracted and burned, renewable energy is generated through innovations that improve and cheapen over time:

"For over three centuries, energy has been a commodity: finite, unevenly distributed and subject to the whims of markets and politics. But that paradigm has collapsed. Energy has become a technology...and, as such, it will just get cheaper and cheaper. And as those systems get cheaper, more individual businesses and households will invest in their own energy systems. With the consequence that it will be more affordable for nations to become self-sufficient in energy... and with that a dramatic rewriting of global trade and geopolitics beckons".

Sources:

The Exponential View: The Rooftop Energy Revolution No One Knew About, Azeem Azhar and Nathan Warren. <https://www.exponentialview.co/p/the-rooftop-revolution>

Silent Solar - Bill McKibben, *The Crucial Years*, 16th September 2024.

<https://billmckibben.substack.com/p/silent-solar>

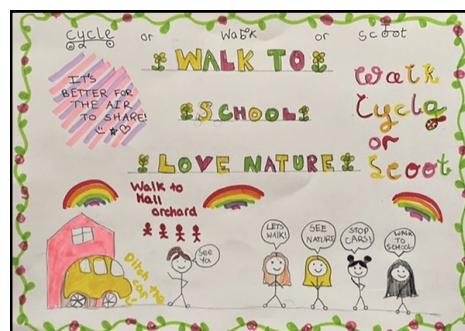
(both available through [substack](#) - but some content may be paywalled)

This article shared by kind permission of Tony Webster, Transition Belper

Click [here](#) to see solar power by country 2024

School Poster Competition

Have you seen the latest issue of Barrow Voice announcing the winners of the Hall Orchard CE Primary School ['Walking to School' poster competition](#)? The children's creativity and talent have truly shone through in their submissions. Visit the village library to view the four winning posters and be inspired by their imagination. Let's celebrate these young artists and their dedication to promoting walking to school. Show your support and appreciation by taking a moment to admire their work. Congratulations to all participants for their outstanding contributions to our community.



Kids you smashed it!

😊 Well Done 😊

Winter draws on and what you can do about it

As a member of BGL you can book a home heat loss survey!



Hurry, as appointments are filling up fast! Don't miss out on this chance to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of your home with Barrow Greener Living. More information on this in the current issue of Barrow Voice. Preventing cold spots and draughts with simple draught excluders, insulated curtains & blinds, adjustments to door and window fittings are just a few of the things we can all do relatively easily and cheaply. Of course, double glazing or interior/exterior wall insulation is also a good investment if budgets allow, or funding is available. However, it is important when taking these measures to consider air flow within the home to prevent mould formation. Have a look at our [Air Quality & Humidity document](#) for useful information on how to prevent condensation affecting your home environment.



To become a BGL member, scan the QR code or click [here](#)



Barrow upon Soar Christmas Tree Festival

Can you believe this year will be the 20th Barrow upon Soar Christmas Tree Festival, a long standing tradition in the community. This annual event gets us all in the mood for what is to come, showcasing beautiful trees that capture the magic of the season. This year, BGL will again be decorating a tree that hopefully will delight as well as inspire visitors. Between 28th Nov—1st Dec there will be ample opportunity to view the displays, as well as attend various celebrations planned throughout the festival. Full details of events/dates and timings can be found in the [Barrow Voice](#).



It's no secret that the majority of folk are concerned about the effects of climate change. Resulting in extreme weather events such as: intense storms, excess heat, flooding, resulting in loss of diversity.

Government policy and the co-operation of large corporations is of course paramount and sometimes it's difficult to see what we can do as individuals to lessen the adverse effects we will all experience. [Take the Jump](#) website has lots of information and suggestions for small steps we can all take. Have a look at their ['Six Shifts'](#) and see what you can do.

Public Transport

We are lucky in Barrow upon Soar to have buses and trains available in our village, but there is always room for improvement. BGL's focus will be on lobbying for more frequent services, extended evening and Sunday schedules and real-time information for commuters. While we work towards further upgrades, let's continue to utilise the existing public transport options we have..



Perhaps next time you're planning a trip, you might give public transport a thought and if timings are appropriate, consider leaving the car keys at home. As a member of BGL, you already know it's a sustainable option that helps reduce traffic congestion and environmental impact. Together, we can strive for a more efficient and convenient public transport service that benefits us all.

If you would like to check out the possibilities, the links below may be helpful:

Buses

Kinch bus 2: Loughborough – Barrow – Sileby.
[welcome - Kinchbus 2 - operated by Kinchbus](https://www.kinchbus.co.uk/)

Vectare 2x Loughborough – Quorn – Barrow – Sileby – Leicester [Vectare.co.uk/timetables](https://www.vectare.co.uk/timetables)
<https://www.central-connect.co.uk/timetables/67b62ede-8b8d-48d7-982c-0e02c7368441>

Centrebus22A Barrow – Birstall – Leicester city centre – Evington
<https://www.centrebus.info/bus-services>

Trains

Trains to Nottingham and Leicester (nearly on the hour – please check) from Barrow station except no trains on Sunday

National Rail: <https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>
Trainline: <https://www.thetrainline.com/>

And finally, a DIY eco friendly idea for those who enjoy Halloween ...

What you'll need:

- 1 x Empty Milk Carton
- 1 x String of (Xmas) fairy lights
- 1 x Pair Of Scissors
- 1 x Black Marker Pen

Step 1: Cut a hole in the carton

Having taken off the label and washed out the milk carton(s), cut a hole in the back just above the base.

Step 2: Decorate

Draw a face on the carton using a black marker pen.

Step 3: Illuminate

Re-use Xmas fairy lights (battery or mains) and feed up into back of the carton ... arrange to suit and switch on. If using outdoors perhaps weigh down with a stone or two and use lights appropriate for outdoor use.

