

Dumfries Climate Kitchen report: May 2025 – November 2025

Dumfries Climate Kitchen's regular monthly events at the Stove café continued to draw a brilliant range of organisations and community members together to cook up local solutions to the climate crisis. Have a read below to get an idea of what was happening.

Alongside that, Dumfries Climate Kitchen grew its number of volunteers, started a membership scheme, and built its online presence – starting an Instagram page and growing its Facebook presence.

Plans were put down for the forthcoming year including ideas for a Forest School project and more local organising around relevant topics that have come up through our events. Here's to 2026!



May 2025 event - Growing Season: Foraging, Listening & Planting Together

We jumped into Spring with a brilliant gathering of speakers from local organisations involved with growing, gardening, and connecting with the plant kingdom. It was a chance to get a taste for what's going on near you and learn how to get involved this growing season.

Old Mill Arts talked about foraging, what different plants can be used for, and Freya Skinner brought a basket of wild finds for folk to see (and taste) for themselves. There was a chance to learn about plant listening with Tamara Colchester, sharing her work connecting people to the natural world around them through walks, foraging, and community events. Finally, there was a seed swap where people brought their surplus seeds and went away with new ones to get themselves growing.

June 2025 event – Peat, Restoration and Carbon Storage

At this event, we had speakers from Crichton Carbon Centre and Nature Scot talking about the importance of peat, the history of peatlands in Scotland and the region and the value of the restoration work going on presently. There was a great Q&A session afterwards getting into all kinds of topics, including all the amazing history that has been uncovered in bogs and peatlands in the British Isles. The inspiration from this created the decision to plan a Climate Kitchen field trip to Kirkconnel Flow for September.

August 2025 event – Hope in the dark: Community resilience in crisis times

In this event we sought to explore how communities respond during crisis times. Drawing on recent examples of mass power outages in Spain and climate-related events over the summer, we planned activities for different groups to respond to. What would happen if you woke up and there was no electricity in the whole region? What would happen if there was suddenly no tap water?

We shared a video of Rebecca Solnit talking about her book 'A Paradise Built in Hell', talking about how communities can respond in amazingly positive ways and co-operate across previous divides when it comes to crisis situations.

September 2025 event - Kirkconnell Flow Peatland Restoration Site Field Trip

We organised a group to head out to Kirkconnel Flow to be guided round the site by staff from Crichton Carbon Centre and Nature Scot. It was a brilliant afternoon of hands on learning. Peatland restoration only began in 2021 but has already made an immense difference. Given the chance and some help from us, Nature can recover.

Water is held in the sphagnum moss of the bog which reduces flooding risks in the surrounding area and also lessens the effects of droughts. 2 new ponds dug out by the car park have now attracted resident kingfishers and dragonflies. Examples of bog rosemary, cranberries, sundew, bog roses, and crowberries were seen.

The raised bog has been growing since the end of the last Ice Age



when vegetation in a bowl-shaped depression sank in oxygen-deprived conditions which prevented its decomposition. The peat has been growing at a rate of a metre every thousand years since then and in the centre of the bog is now 9 metres thick.

October 2025 event - Greenland to Galloway: writing wild geese into the climate crisis

We were proud to be part of the wonderful Wild Goose Festival. Led by David Borthwick, local academic and poet alongside local author Stephen Rutt, we focussed on the geese that no one notices, the Greenland White Fronted Geese.

We learned that while climate change has resulted in milder winters in some areas allowing species such as the familiar Barnies (Barnacle Geese) and Pinkies (Pink Footed Geese) to delay their Autumn migration and hang around on the mainland of Europe, White Fronted Geese have to face changes which are making it so much harder to successfully rear their goslings. Late Winter storms in their Greenland breeding grounds see snow covering the vegetation the adults need to recover from the long flight north and even causing nesting attempts to fail. While a ban on hunting initially saw a rise in the population of White Fronted Geese the adverse changes to climate in Greenland have caused their numbers to fall again.

Even when we try to protect a species here, we may be only part of the picture. The challenging question is, “Are Greenland White Fronted Geese important?” There are 2 species of White Fronted Geese, one population breeds in Siberia, and “our” geese breed in Greenland, our geese have orange bills while Siberian geese have pink bills.

After we thought about this for a while we were given the challenge to write a piece of poetry or prose about an encounter with wildlife and how it made us feel, a tough and emotional task but Climate Kitchen folk were up to the challenge, and we ended the event with readings of some of the results. I’m told that one poem was even performed at a well-known local hostelry later on as well.

November event - Talking About the Weather: climate poetry anthology launch

Our last event of the year was the launch of an exciting new poetry anthology with contributions from local poets and authors – *Talking About the Weather!*

It was an honour to be able to showcase the talents of the contributors and to help them raise money for the organisations being supported by the anthology sales. This book brings together a range of new poems and short stories by local authors in response to the climate crisis. During the evening, contributors to the anthology gave some readings and we were also able to see some beautiful illustrations from the book.

It was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our emotional and personal responses to our changing climate as well as sparking creative ideas and reactions from the attendees around how we might come together to affect positive change.

