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GUILDFORD ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

newsletter

June - August 2021



Golden hour on the North downs by Raymond Smith

Summer comes to Rosamund Community Garden -

an update by Helen Harris

Despite the cold, the wind and the rain we have had a busy few months at the Rosamund Community Garden. The grass is growing and the wildflowers are starting to bloom! And as ever, our volunteers have been busy.

Cobb Hub Eco-dome

In March, local builder Roger Mead (Fudge) started work on the frame scaffold for our cobb eco-dome and completed it in an amazing three weeks. The frame is built entirely from local sweet chestnut, which Fudge has milled himself.

It is a beautiful structure and its completion means we can now move on to constructing its supporting stone ring and starting to organise our cobbing volunteer work days. We are hugely grateful to Fudge for his work and calm presence at the garden, despite less than ideal working conditions on many days due to the cold and the wind.

We're building a team of volunteer day leaders – WE NEED YOU!

Through our partnership with Surrey Wildlife Trust under their Empowering Communities Programme we have been able to access the fantastic experience of Stuart Flemming and Simon Humphries, two of SWT's conservation volunteer group leaders, to train 5 of our volunteers in how to run safe and successful volunteer events. We had a great day up at Nower Wood and will now start to put what we have learned into practice and also pass it on to a wider group who will help us to deliver the cobbing days over the coming months.

If you would like to learn a traditional building technique and support our community cobb build project, please do get in touch with us at the garden to register your interest: guildfordcommunitygarden@gmail.com.

To complete the cobbing we are looking for local sources of straw, sand and clay. If you know of any sources that could help us, please do get in touch!



Volunteers at work in the garden

We plan to apply for funding later this year to help us enlarge and improve our pond area, and Ben's input is such a great boost to Margaret's planning. Here is a sneak preview of how our thoughts are developing....

Call for help – would you like to learn to scythe and help Rosamund Garden continue its scything courses?

We have been running scything courses for over 10 years at Rosamund with Mark Allery providing his wise and humorous take on this very wildlife-friendly method to cut grass, mow a lawn, control the likes of bracken, brambles, etc. So far over 100 people have been trained by us to safely and effectively use a scythe.

To make for an enjoyable course where everyone gets their full input from Mark he can only manage 10 people max on each course, and we need 9 minimum at a cost of only £35 per head to pay for Mark's time, which is incredibly generous for a day's course running from 1000 to 1600. John Bannister has worked with Mark since the start of these courses, preparing the site, erecting a gazebo, laying on refreshments and recruiting participants. It is this last task that is now too much for John and he would like some help please. So would you be interested in joining the GEF scything team to manage getting the 9 participants we need and get a free course for your pains? We run these courses in May and September every year weather permitting.

If you are interested to get involved please contact John Bannister johnwbannister40@gmail.com and Helen Harris helenlwharris@gmail.com

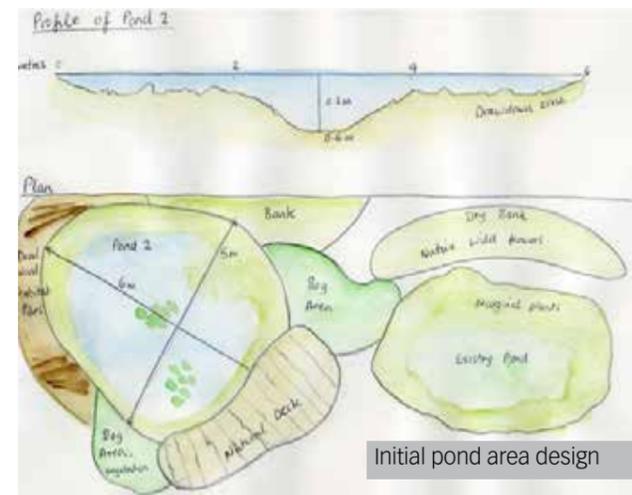
Willow bog toilet

We have also run three volunteer building days to construct another exciting eco-building on site: a new willow bog compost loo (!) inspired by other projects such as this one: A Loo with a View - Build your own Treebog | Permaculture magazine

Ben from Zero Carbon Guildford, who's passionate about traditional timber framing, has donated his time to help us. Ben has both designed the structure for us using local timber and traditional carpentry techniques and helped a novice team of volunteers to try their hand at cutting mortise and tenon joints, shaping the beams, raising the frame for the toilet and applying the timber cladding and roof tiles. Our loo will be suspended over a straw bale lined pit and surrounded by willow trees which cleanly process the waste with their roots! We are very excited about our fancy new facilities thank everyone who has helped to make this happen.

Pond development

Margaret Hattersley, one of our volunteers who has joined us this year during lockdown has taken on a project to revitalise and develop our pond area. In late May, Ben Siggery, a freshwater ecologist with Surrey Wildlife Trust visited the Garden to survey the existing ponds and give us some advice on how best to maintain and develop them to improve the invertebrate biodiversity within them. Ben has provided lots of useful information about managing and adding to the existing planting, creating wildlife friendly marginal zones and varied depths within our ponds to create different aquatic niches.



Initial pond area design

This was Mike's second talk to GEF, the first having been 11 years ago, and in it he reflected on how much has changed in this period in terms of technology and the potential of community managed energy projects, but sadly how little improvement there has been in the overall national and international framework in which this operates.

The Covid-19 crisis of the last year has demonstrated how governments can and do react to an emergency, with money being spent, research being done at lightning speed, new buildings constructed and the population persuaded to undergo a form of house arrest for long periods, all with the aim of saving lives. Yet the WHO still maintains that "Climate Change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century". Compare the reaction to this climate emergency where despite many declarations and statements of intent, there has been little activity. In the UK, the government has been sending contrary signals such as agreeing to a new coal mine in the year it hosts COP26. Global evidence for rapid and dangerous climate change is clear from the inexorable rise in global temperature to the increased frequency of extreme weather events. Though the government likes to benchmark its carbon reduction aims to 1990, in effect to achieve what it wants to do it needs to reduce carbon emissions by 63% by 2050 from where we are now.

Electricity, heat and transport are three key areas for carbon reduction or elimination. Currently roughly 43% of the UK's electricity is generated from renewables, mostly wind. Not only must this proportion rise, but more electricity will need to be generated – as much as 50% more by 2035 and 100% more by 2050 (80% renewable). This will come largely from wind and solar. Solar energy production must increase fivefold over the next decade, mainly south of a line from the Wash to the Bristol Channel. Nuclear is declining as current plants reach their end date and no big new ones are planned. All this will need land: as an example, 13 wind turbines could supply the need of Guildford but the equivalent solar array would need 460 acres of land; less controversially perhaps is the increased use of buildings for solar installations, especially non-residential buildings. But

Community Energy Initiatives

A talk by Mike Smyth Chair Energy4All and Wey Valley Solar Schools Energy Co-operative

A talk given at the Guildford Environmental Forum AGM on Tuesday 11 May 2021. Write up by Ian Stewart.

net zero has a major impact on landscape, land use and buildings. The future will look - and has to look - very different from the high carbon past.

With huge decisions needing to be taken on where to site renewable energy production, community support and buy-in is essential and it is in this context that Mike's community group – Wey Valley Solar – sits among 1000 or so other community energy groups around the UK.

The first initiative was Baywind in Barrow-in-Furness. It is undoubtedly a business i.e. it must generate a surplus and operates within the energy regulatory framework, but it is not a shareholder driven model. Co-operative values are at the core, and the mixture of professional staff and volunteers ensures community engagement and has formed a model for such groups since. It is community funded and the community benefits from any surplus, with capped fair returns on capital. The 5 turbines provide enough energy for 32000 people or over 12000 homes. Baywind formed a mass movement and then Energy4All.

There are now 30 renewable energy associations in Energy4All with over 30% in Scotland. Kinlochbervie is a new hydro scheme which may prove to be among the last as options for hydro development run out. Only 3 further hydro projects are in the pipeline. Leamington has a solar farm in an old landfill site and the trend is for these solar farms to increase in size for economies of scale and to incorporate biodiversity and educational components. Westmill near Swindon is one of the leaders in educating the public through guided tours. M&S in Truro was cited as a good example of solar on the roofs of commercial buildings generating 100kW and all used instore.

What community energy is good at:

- Non-residential rooftop solar (little competition on smaller sites)
- Onshore renewable systems up to around 30MW (in competition with private sector)
- Renewable Heat

- Microgrids

With a focus on

- Scale
- Additionality
- Trust – comfort to site owners, the public and consumers
- Natural partner for local authorities

Mike gave Wey Valley as an example of this in action:

- Wey Valley – 11 solar roofs (10 schools, 1 church; 2 LED installations); SchoolsEnergy Co-op – 90 solar roofs (schools, children's centres, library, cathedral, warehouse, hospice)
- Similar to community organisations in other communities e.g. Reading installs solar panels free of charge
- Sells electricity from the panels to host building (saving them money)
- Operates and maintains the panels without charge to the host
- Raises money from the community, pays interest at 4.5%, repays over 20-25 years
- Pays the surplus back to the hosts or to a community fund; and gives them the solar system (fully maintained) after about 25 years
- Scale is important

Other examples included St Leonard's school in Sussex with a 30kW array on the roof reducing the electricity bill by 30% and potentially another 30% if lights were changed to LEDs, and Salisbury Cathedral. There is a huge roof potential for solar panels as any aerial photograph will demonstrate. Unfortunately, planning and other regulations often militate against easy installation. Summing up the situation on community base electricity project.

Mike pointed out what generally works:

- Public, community and commercial buildings: Hospitals; Leisure Centres; universities; Schools; community halls and centres; Children's Centres; Crematoria
- Un-shaded southish facing roofs; preferably metal or tile; or flat roofs
- Host building that uses electricity in the day time
- Surrey CC has over 200 schools; only about 10% have solar panels
- Waste facilities; water/sewage facilities
- Church buildings: particularly schools (Diocesan Board of Education unhelpful)

- Former landfill sites
- Solar farms with inexpensive grid links – like 19MW Ray Valley in Oxfordshire
- Yarnton 5MW solar farm granted planning consent in Oxford green belt for
- community solar farm

He then gave a few practical ideas for Guildford Borough:

- Maximise community roof top solar on Guildford Buildings
- Promote community roof top solar to major landowners – Surrey CC, University of Surrey, NHS, Guildford Diocesan Board of Education etc
- Site identification and support in planning for community solar farms, and possibly wind turbines, including in the green belt
- Planning: design/orientation for solar; Microgrids; district heating;
- Energy efficiency standards; permit solar (and energy efficiency) in conservation areas and on listed buildings.
- Lobbying for change to NPPF
- EV Charging
- Small grants or procurement support – to enable marginal projects to become feasible

Turning to improvements in heating, Mike painted a bleaker picture than for electricity. The UK has the lowest gas and highest electricity prices in Europe, buildings are leaky, building standards are woeful and many old buildings will still require water-based heating. On the other hand, district heating can use community scale resources, scaled up heat

Council was urged to do more and to build up their sustainability team as well as putting pressure on Surrey County Council. GEF’s climate crisis group should renew contacts with the University to encourage them to walk the talk and put more solar onto their buildings. Any community initiative works best through personal contacts and influence. GEF members can best help by identifying new sites and providing the introduction. Worth noting though that not all roofs are feasible. As many as 20% of roofs may not be structurally sound enough to allow panels to be installed.

Mike Smyth was warmly thanked for what had been a highly informative and inspiring presentation.

Climate Change – 9 reasons to do more

When no serious effects of climate change can be seen from our emissions, it’s easy not feel obliged to react to the pressure to do something to help the crisis. But don’t be mistaken the problem is complex. It is important that we all realise that climate change is a global problem and our many personal emissions added together are having multiple effects right across our planet. So we are all responsible and all have to act.

1) The carbon that is released when we heat our houses, use transport (cars and flights), buy goods, our imports, etc. is trapped by the planets’ atmosphere and by the seas. This results in temperature increases in our atmosphere and our seas, which are measured continuously, so no dispute here. The steady warming of the atmosphere is causing our forests and plant life to dry out resulting in an increase in wildfires all the way from the tropics, to temperate areas, like the UK, right up into the Arctic Circle. Droughts caused by rising atmospheric temperatures impact the growing of our food leading to malnutrition in parts of Africa, South America, Asia and elsewhere. Here in the UK we import roughly 60% of our food. So what is happening across the world is of great concern to us.

pumps, wood chip systems and rivers. Kingston heats a large block of flats from a water source heat pump from the Thames. Commercial heating is perhaps a natural monopoly best owned by the community as in Denmark, and the Alford wood chip heating project on Springbok estate is a local example of community-based heating networks.

Mike finally turned to Microgrids, citing Findhorn in NE Scotland as a particularly good example. Here a housing development on an old caravan park has its own grid owned by the village with power generated by wind and solar. A connection point with the grid supplier ensures the generation is in balance, and storage is at the community level not by household giving enormous savings. The Bavarian village of Schönau generates all its own power from solar, wind and hydro with the slogan of their community group an inspiration to us all “We sell less power to our customers each year”

Discussion after the presentation touched on dealing with public opposition to solar farms and wind turbines and the difficulties of the planning process in England for any new development. There is no denying that difficult decisions must be made and objectors sometimes have to be faced down. Mike pointed out that agricultural land locally is not all that productive and pastureland underused so any community power development would not have much effect on food production.

There was a feeling that until people felt the impact of climate change personally, there would not be the same commitment to change as happened with Covid-19. Guildford Borough

- 2)** The warming of the seas is leading to ice in Antarctica and Greenland to melt even faster so that sea level rises are accelerating and roads, homes and other infrastructure in low lying places such as the great river deltas, Florida, east coast of the US, the Thames, the east coast of the UK and elsewhere are having to be raised. Rising sea temperatures are causing the seas to expand, which is the biggest single cause of sea level rise. Our individual carbon emissions contribute to this and all the other effects listed here.
- 3)** Warming of the stratosphere is interfering with our communications affecting many aspects of our daily lives from radio reception to satellite communications.
- 4)** Carbon dioxide when adsorbed in the sea makes it more acidic and this adversely affects shell fish and all life in the

sea including vital plankton, a vital food source that sits at the bottom of the ocean food chain. Acidification is also causing the loss of reefs, such that wonders like the Great Barrier reef and other reefs are dying. These are important breeding grounds for fish.

5) Cities are becoming increasingly hotter relative to the surrounding green areas and since over 70% of people now live in cities people are suffering greater distress as a result causing higher fatalities and putting added stress on the NHS in the UK and healthcare systems in other countries. The increase in air conditioning that is a consequence of this just adds to further climate change.

6) As forests become more heavily impacted and reduced in size due to human population increases it is predicted that their future viability is at risk and also pandemics will recur with ever increasing regularity due to pathogens crossing over from animals to humans as we force ourselves upon nature. Nature is being depleted everywhere and the UK is now reckoned to be one of the most nature depleted countries in the world. Roughly 96% mammals on earth are now accounted for by humans and our domesticated animals. Since farming and eating meat are major sources of everyone’s carbon emissions, due to the way we farm, then it is vital we reduce our meat and dairy consumption as an important way to reduce our carbon emissions. Also, the emasculation of nature is a real contributor to the reported increase in mental stress.

7) Melting glaciers in all the worlds mountain ranges are already affecting domestic water supplies needed for irrigation to grow our food and fibre and necessary for drinking, cooking and washing.

8) The extent to which we are all dependent on and part of the global economy was brought home to us when the massive Evergreen container ship blocked the Suez canal earlier this year. This is one of the global supply arteries we rely on so manufacturers in China, India and many other countries in Asia and elsewhere can make and sell us the things we go out to buy in our High Street and online. This relentless, often mindless, consumption means we each have to be responsible for the associated carbon emissions every time we buy.

9) On a more optimistic note South Australia is one place that is showing that if the entire system is changed then a way might be found to create a system that is more compatible with preserving our wildlife and ensuring future generations have a planet to live on.

By John Bannister

Bluebell season

thanks to members who sent in pictures this month - for next month's issue I'm asking for your best summer evening shots of local landscapes please send to elliekatemorgan@gmail.com



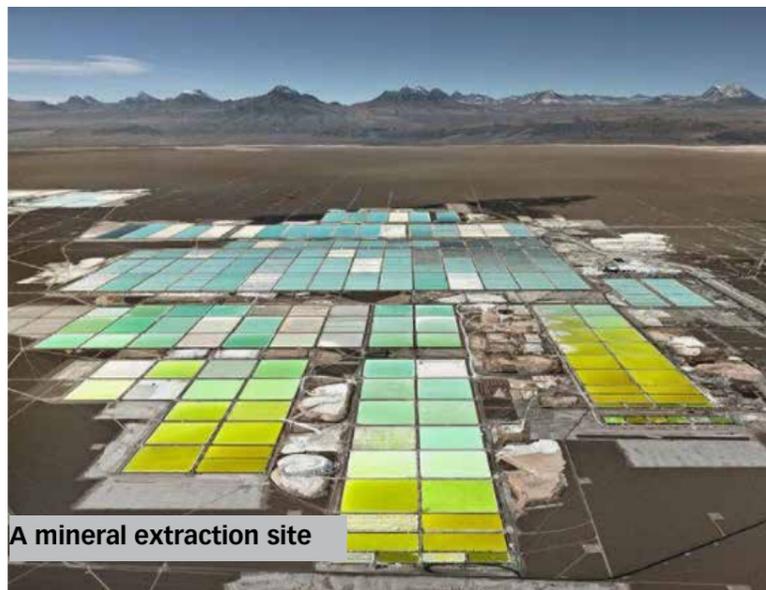
Top and bottom left taken by Raymond Smith.

Bottom right taken by Adrian Thompson



The **real** price of clean energy

By Caroline Scott - to read more of Caroline's work have a look at her blog www.regreentheplanet.blog



A mineral extraction site

While talk of the climate crisis has been somewhat side-lined by the pandemic, Biden's election to power has refocused the conversation about global warming. The new 2 trillion dollar infrastructure bill includes plans to spend 174 billion dollars on EV adoption, and 400 billion for what is termed clean energy.

Yet little in Biden's plan seems to send a message about the developed world's need to scale back. Rather it opts for the more saleable pitch of simply switching. Switch your fossil fuel consumption for that of a solar panel. Switch your petrol car for an EV. Richer countries, under such a plan, would stand to gain cleaner air, reduced emissions

and sustain their same lifestyles, at least in the short term. But what will happen to ecosystems across the planet, and the local environment for people and wildlife who happen to live in a region rich in natural resources?

To enable green tech at scale, The World Bank estimates that extraction of minerals, such as graphite, lithium and cobalt, will increase by nearly 500% by 2050. Mining is a notoriously environmentally destructive process, with consequences well beyond the area that is mined. Farmers in Tibet know this all too well, having found their yaks and fish poisoned by a lithium mine, in 2016. In the Andes, lithium mining is syphoning off 65% of the region's fresh water supplies, drying up areas in the Salar de Atacama that are home to flamingos, and farmland for the local people.

Any plans to tackle the climate crisis should also consider the biodiversity crisis. All life on earth depends on the water, the soil – the complex and fragile ecosystems -- and these have already been debilitated. We need an honest conversation about what energy consumption -- of any kind -- means for the living planet.

A Pedestrian in the Suburbs

By Michael Tanner

In these Covid days it is frequently asserted that contact with Nature is a proven therapy for troubled minds and depressed spirits. That will not have been much comfort to the majority confined to cities because they live in them and in many cases are/were confined to them by Covid regulations. Those who live in South West Guildford must have been counting their blessings over the past year and particularly during this emerging spring, with its abundance of sunshine. As I write, however, I see and hear yet another heavy shower commencing but still the sun returns, and even my old legs can reach some

shelter if caught out locally – well, most of the time.

My walking takes me through most of those areas chosen by many other locals who find themselves working at home, or are retired: what a variety of countryside they have, available by short car journey or after ten minutes or so of leaving the house on foot: the low water-meadows of the meandering Wey stretching as far as Godalming (and its banks); the slopes of the chalk ridges; the numerous footpaths through and to all these places, with their nooks and crannies contrasting with vistas of the Surrey Hills or the Thames Plain stretching for thirty miles or so on a clear day, recently even as far as the high towers of London's Dockland or the less obvious Windsor Castle.

Does today's pedestrian find much has changed in the past year in this area from his walker's point of view? On the surface of things, perhaps not, except that what is now seen is often seen more distinctly. The air is definitely clearer, the skies emptier of traffic, Do I just

imagine that the blue of alkanet flowers and bluebells is bluer, the yellow of celandines and dandelions more emphatic, the wood anemone less self-effacing? Are there really more birds in local gardens and in the clearer skies? The general opinion would seem to be 'there are'. Without a shadow of doubt there are also more people on foot in these areas, not to mention their pedestrian dogs and those on two wheels in places where the surface and gradient offer considerable challenge. The heavier use of footpaths by all three has certainly been more evident for those visiting the town's second favourite hill, the grassy Mount, the most favoured being Pewley Down. Both have attracted significantly more walkers and their dogs, unfortunately more evident in wetter weather when some of the steep paths have been trodden into undesirable mud slides for dog and man.

Another factor over the past few months, increasingly evident, especially to older pedestrians like myself, is the growing number of children out in the local countryside. I mean, in particular, those accompanied by adults, which includes those carried on the backs or on the fronts of parents, those 'manfully' keeping up with elders, those outstripping their elders on astonishingly little legs, those lugging scooters, those actively encouraged by their elders to look around and learn about a place alien to far too many who live in cities. Covid has often, it seems, freed adults to accompany their children in this way. Perhaps what has definitely started will continue and hopefully grow as 'novelty' grows into a new normality. Hopefully we shall see youngsters as conversant with flora and fauna as many are with computer or mobile screens. Hopefully they will want to tell oak from ash, name wild flowers in their season, put away their tableted games and learn to look at the natural world which certainly will not endure, anymore than they will, if they continue to prefer the synthetic world. And would that be their fault?

As for the much increased number of dogs throughout the country, and certainly in this well heeled area, what can usefully be said? There is little doubt that they are also part of a necessary therapy. Covid has probably seen a significant increase in their numbers over the whole country and certainly they are far more visible and indeed often more tangible in this suburban locality with its many conveniently hedged, but narrow, footpaths. Might I just add here that I think a serious study of the dog phenomenon is long overdue in this country, for many weighty reasons, many of these being ecologically based. There are some 10 million pet dogs over the U.K. according to an already out-of-date figure. I would just add here that I have been surprised and impressed by the local average dog walker's consideration for others, though one recalls blatant exceptions by the arrogant or ignorant few, it goes almost without saying that a mixed population of wild creatures, from skylarks to shrews,

voles, foxes and roe deer could fill a few volumes of complaint if they were literate.



Even so, I will not forget a recent sunny afternoon stroll along the shores of Broadwater Lake, when I was surprised to see dozens of scuttling mice picking up the grain and crumbs available between me and the water. Strangely, perhaps, most of those walking by seemed totally unaware of the close proximity of such a host of rodents, which included one large rat, though he/she/it remained at the water's very edge. I realized then why the guardians of the place had tucked away so many rodent poison 'traps' right round the lake (not accessible to pet dogs!).

Another, more evident factor in these times when footpaths are even more in demand, is the frequent neglect of paths, even bitumanised 'pavements' to the extent such routes may no longer be used without danger or severe discomfort to the pedestrian from nettles and briars, impassable puddles, impeding branches or root infested surfaces. Best known examples are the steep but popular footpath down to Polesden Lodge from near the A31; Down Lane itself, descending to Watts Gallery and the old road (now track) which passes the Radio and TV Booster Aerials.

The state of the River Wey's footpaths in many places is parlous to dangerous, especially just south of the wooden Ferry Bridge. I have lost count of the efficient metal Gates where there is an unavoidable puddle lurking underfoot for the unfortunate passer-through. The contrasts in the level of public provision for pedestrians have certainly become more evident with the heavier demands imposed by Covid. However, this can only mean that improvement should receive enhanced public support. Just witness what can be done when local people are determined, as in the current Warren Farm episode, which showed that David can still see off Goliath.

The pedestrian in this South West corner of the city has, during Covid, learnt quite a lot about himself, his fellows and the accessible countryside. I think he recognizes his good fortune. Is that recognition to the extent that he will not take it for granted when Covid has passed?

Changing the transport system can help tackle climate change and reduce air pollution. Adrian Watson and Suzanne Iuppa explore how policy shifts and investment in alternatives can drive a long-term change in how we travel.

Since the 1960s the UK's approach to transport policy has hardly been sustainable. The past 50 years have been characterised by a lack of investment in essential infrastructure, privatisation of public transport, a reduction in the rail network, and only very limited policy support for walking and cycling. Taken together, these outcomes have led to a rise in personal car ownership, resulting in increased air pollution and congestion in our urban centres, which were never designed for the number of vehicles we have on the road network today. As this demand for personal mobility has increased (from 25 million vehicles in 1994 to over 38 million today in the UK, according to the Department for Transport), transport-related emissions have contributed substantively towards poor urban air pollution quality (notably nitrogen oxides and particulate matter), raised noise levels, increased exploitation of land resource, and more road traffic accidents.

Health and climate impacts

Air pollution is known to cause short and long term health effects, particularly for those with pre-existing heart or lung conditions, so many people are understandably concerned about pollution in the air that they breathe. To meet this public health challenge, local authorities are tasked with managing air quality. In practice this means managing traffic and congestion, thereby controlling local pollution emissions and generally making transport more sustainable. Reducing emissions from transport is also a key element in tackling climate change. Land-based transport accounts for one-fifth of UK greenhouse gas emissions, making transport one of the key areas to target in the transition to zero carbon.

Electrifying personal transport

Probably the major technological advance in making personal mobility greener has been the availability and improvement in hybrid and electric vehicles (EVs). Most major vehicle manufacturers now have active EV development strategies, and the increased efficiency and range of newer EVs has largely addressed the range anxiety that many drivers see as a barrier to adoption. As a result, EVs accounted for over 10% of UK passenger car registrations in 2020, up from 3% in 2016. This should also raise the availability of EVs on the used market in the next few years. To speed up this transition, the UK government has set a deadline for the end of sales of combustion engine cars by 2040 but is consulting to bring that forward to 2035 or even sooner, with results of the consultation due before the end of 2020.



Sustainable transport – rural, urban and everywhere in between

– By Adrian Watson and Suzanne Iuppa published in Clean Slate, the magazine of the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT). Republished with permission.

A significant modal shift to EVs will improve local air pollution but does not address all environmental concerns; there remain serious concerns regarding the environmental impact of the Lithium used in EV batteries which needs to be urgently addressed, particularly as EV use increases and Lithium demand grows. There is also the need for improved EV rapid charging networks, especially in rural areas, and renewable energy supplies must be scaled up to ensure that the increased electricity demand is met with clean energy.

Policy support

There are many policy initiatives that local and national government can use to steer a modal shift towards more sustainable transport. Taxation options that increase the cost of personal motoring and push the public towards public transport include: city centre congestion charging, increasing the cost of workplace carparking, fuel taxes, linking road tax to vehicle emission levels and introducing toll roads. Like most taxation options, these schemes can raise levels of transport poverty, so accessible and low-cost mobility alternatives need to be supported.

Alongside financial sanctions, incentives also need to be made available to support more sustainable options. Nationally, low-emission vehicles are eligible for a plug-in grant of £3,000 and small businesses in London can benefit from an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) diesel scrappage scheme (£3,500 - £9,500) towards the cost of replacing diesel vans that don't meet the new ULEZ emissions standard in 2020.

If we are to reduce individual car use whilst maintaining current mobility levels (although increased homeworking during the COVID crisis raises the question of whether we actually need to travel as much as we do), the driving public needs to be provided with suitable alternatives to support the behaviour changes needed to deliver a permanent modal shift.

Large national or regional infrastructure schemes are hugely expensive (the HS2 rail link is likely to cost well over £80bn, for example), so there is plenty of scope for lower cost local or community-led schemes. To successfully drive behaviour change and deliver long term sustainability, these schemes need to consider the appropriate national or local context for mobility and logistics, maintain or improve access to employment, education, food (and retail), healthcare and recreation facilities, and ideally attract community buy-in.

Cutting car use in urban areas

A fully integrated transport network that considers and promotes public transport, cycling and walking as viable alternatives to the car is key to delivering a greener alternative. In the UK, London has probably the best example of an integrated transport system, which is made much easier to implement thanks to transport being locally regulated by Transport for London. A single cross-ticketing system in London makes it simpler for the public to use subsidised tubes, buses, river taxis and trams. In combination with a daily congestion charge for driving in central London (which increases for



more polluting vehicles such as HGVs and coaches), this has increased the uptake of public transport in the city.

Elsewhere, expensive infrastructure schemes, such as the Metrolink in Greater Manchester, have reintroduced lower polluting light tramway systems back to the UK. Cycling is promoted through the government's 'Cycle to Work' scheme, which provides tax incentives to cycling adopters in conjunction with workplaces. Regional cycling promotion schemes such as Bristol City Council's three-year partnership with British Cycling can help increase uptake, as can community bicycle sharing schemes such as Mobikes, which are available in many city centres worldwide. Manchester has also introduced Dutch-style cycle lanes, which reduces the space available to road users and physically separates pedestrians and cyclists from road traffic, answering many of the safety issues that cyclists face in cities. Where a journey requires a car, alternatives to individual ownership include car club membership, where vehicles can be leased for individual journeys or short time periods.

Redesigning our towns and cities

In the mid-term timescale, the design of our town centres and neighbourhoods can be reconfigured, reducing the need for transport and encouraging shared spaces to promote pedestrianisation and cycle use.

For many years, planning policy leading to urban sprawl and shopping malls located on the urban fringe has promoted the need for personal transport for access. Could higher density towns and cities with better located local employment, school and retail and leisure opportunities revitalise urban centres and reduce the need for transport?

A good example of a design approach to transport is a shared space scheme in the small town of Poynton in Cheshire, which has been replicated in many other locations. In 2012 Poynton's streets were redesigned with extended pedestrian areas. Traffic lights were removed, and changes to street furniture, parking and sightlines significantly reduced average traffic speeds, making the area more pedestrian-friendly and a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Rural solutions

An example of a rural project supporting green transport that incorporates some of these technology and policy approaches is led by a community-owned development trust, Open Newtown, based in Powys. Open Newtown aims to deliver a low carbon transport project for Mid Wales during 2020 and 2021, installing public electric vehicle charge points, which will be available to locals, visitors and businesses alike, and establishing EVs within car clubs in towns across Mid Wales. This locally owned not-for-private gain company will take on the assets and operations of the car clubs and has ambitions to sustain and grow the level of low carbon affordable transport across Mid Wales. The project received European rural (Arwain) funding during 2019 to establish public charging sites and consult with a wide variety of stakeholders to identify needs and opportunities at the town level. It will offer direct support to get EVs into car clubs, particularly in those towns across Mid Wales where none exist. Overall, it aims to make a difference to transport poverty in Powys and to address the 'gaps' in mobility provision in this rural area.

Towards zero carbon mobility

There is a need for a change in emphasis, away from the older transport policy approaches towards sustainable transport programmes that can meet society's current and future mobility requirements. Many of the schemes and alternatives outlined here were met initially with local opposition from individuals and organisations keen to maintain the status quo. But when carefully planned, taking local context into account and gathering community support, these approaches can demonstrate improved mobility and deliver economic and environmental benefits in urban and rural settings.

If you would like to find out more about The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) sign up to receive their newsletter or join the organisation you can find more information here (<https://cat.org.uk/>) on their website

Adrian Watson has been Head of CAT's Graduate School since 2018. He has been active in research in the links between air quality, transport and health for many years, which has included advising the Greater Manchester Transport Unit and membership of the NHS Transport Working Group.

Suzanne is a poet, community worker and conservationist living in the Dyfi Valley. She is a local project coordinator for Renew Wales and for Open Newtown's Low Carbon Transport Scheme in North Powys.

Annual General Meeting - The Chairman's Report

Alastair Atkinson, the new Chair of GEF welcomed about 40 GEF members to the 2nd virtual AGM of the Guildford Environmental Forum. This was followed by an excellent presentation by Mike Smyth, Chairman and Founder of Wey Valley Solar Co-operative on "The Future of Solar in Guildford", which is covered by a separate article in this newsletter (pages 3 and 4).

The minutes of our last AGM had been published on the front 6 pages of our December 2020 newsletter and these were approved. Alastair started by reminding the audience of the GEF Mission, which is as follows:

To encourage and help Guildford's Leaders, Residents and Community to live and work sustainably within our share of our planet's resources for the benefit and wellbeing of people and our environment in present and future generations.

How do we do this? Through a programme of campaigns, events and communications focused around three core areas:

- **Cherish** – Working to protect and improve our natural environment
- **Engage** – Engaging our local leaders and influencers to help them drive change
- **Inform & inspire** – Raising awareness of the issues and inspiring each individual to play their part

Alastair went on to outline the key highlights over the last 6 months as follows:

- Supporting the creation of a 'green' network – generating a louder voice in the area.
- The work of the two main working groups, Biodiversity and the Climate Group, both of whom are meeting monthly
- The progress at the Rosamund Community Garden
- Active campaigns in the areas of, Transport (eg idling), Waste and Recycling and Pesticide Free Guildford
- Advances in the area of Communications, including social media and the launch of membermojo to support the increasing membership.
- A big growth in volunteering despite COVID-19. GEF had benefitted from over 10,000 hours of volunteer time which had been given by members. Alastair thanked all GEF members for all that they had achieved.

The Climate Crisis Group or CCG is now chaired by Richard Waters. Alastair highlighted that

- The Group is meeting Monthly
- GEF is Supporting GBC's Climate Plan
- Continues to give Climate Talks to Residents Associations and Parish Councils
- Supports the Surrey Climate Commission
- Responds to consultations on Policy
- Engages with major developments, working with the Guildford Society.

As regards biodiversity, the Biodiversity Group also now meets monthly and is:

- Developing a programme of talks
- Developing a Guildford Biodiversity Partnership
- Starting the Pesticide free Guildford Campaign
- Growing the Swift Campaign. Thanks to the tireless energy and enthusiasm of Sarah Davis, over 150 swift boxes had been installed in the last year.
- Engaging with Woking and Guildford Borough Councils.
- Continuing to support the active and successful programmes to help the Small Blue Butterfly populations to recover and to support the local Peregrine populations.

The Rosamund Community Garden has developed in terms of:

- A very active Committee of 10 with 40 members
- An Annual open day with apple pressing
- Having a raised frame willow bog compost loo under construction
- Continuing to develop and plan a fantastic Hub project with over £17,000 funds secured
- Being part of the Surrey Wildlife Trust Empowering Communities pilot programme, supporting their aim to manage 30% of Surrey for greater biodiversity and bioabundance. The first year trials (grazing, tree popping, small blue scrapes) had shown great results.

On Communication and social media, Alastair thanked Charlie Meakin, who, as events officer had so efficiently co-ordinated the AGM, Ellie Morgan, who continued to edit the GEF newsletter so well and Ruth Bolton

who had successfully launched the member database Membermojo and integrated it into the new GEF website. This can now be found at <http://www.guildfordenvironment.org.uk/>. He also thanked Sarah Robinson who was providing a much-needed lead on social media via facebook and twitter.

Membership

Alastair reported that GEF membership has grown by another 32 members since the AGM in November despite the impact of COVID-19. We now have 312 members, compared with 142 just four years ago.

Accounts

The accounts show that ongoing income has not changed much with increased membership income being offset by lower event income and gift aid. Ongoing expenses have fallen due to lower marketing expenses to give a small ongoing surplus for the year.

The GEF Restricted Funds show a very large inflow into the Rosamund Community Hub project and we expect that these grants will be fully spent in the current year.

The Balance Sheet shows healthy reserves, which are needed to finance the significant projects on the Community Garden Hub and the swift project. GEF is thriving financially despite COVID crisis. The accounts were approved.

Election of Executive Committee

Alastair commented that, after the changes in November 2020, no new members had been proposed for the Executive Committee. The following were therefore duly elected to be the Executive Committee for the coming year.

Alastair Atkinson - Chair, Keith Chesterton, Colin Cross, Helen Harris - Biodiversity and Rosamund Chair, Sunethra Mendis, Caroline Scott, Richard Seymour, David Stokes, Adrian Thompson – Vice Chair, Richard Waters - Climate Group Chair

Write up by Adrian Thompson

Book for a holiday - The Wild Silence by Raynor Winn. The long awaited follow up to her highly acclaimed debut novel The Salt Path (also very much worth a read), The Wild Silence dives into the deep human connection to environment through snapshots of the authors life and shines a light on the power of the natural world when it comes helping us make sense of the challenges that come our way.

Perfect for: An evening in a cosy pub after a long day of hill walking

For a week night in - Seaspricy, Available on Netflix. A tough but important watch - if only because everyone else is watching it. This documentary shines a light on the rapid, senseless and horrifying destruction of our marine ecosystems. It's dramatic and it's unpleasant but that's precisely why it's the one that everyone is talking about. There are some nasty bits so view discretion is advised.

Perfect for: Seeing for yourself what all the fuss is about

The Editor's pick of what to read watch and listen to this summer

Podcast for summer walks - For what it's Earth, Available on Spotify or Apple podcasts

Presenters Emma Brisdion and Lloyd Hopkins have friendly accessible chats about tough, complex issues. From what goes into your tea and coffee to fast fashion and forest fires they cover an



impressive range of subjects and having just ticked over 50 episodes there's plenty to get your teeth into

Perfect for: picking up tips on how to talk about your cause in a relatable way

Culture Corner

Compiled by Ellie Morgan

Plans for the Future:

- Supporting the 'Green Guildford' Network
 - Cherishing Guildford
 - Engaging with a wider audience
 - Engaging with younger members
- Carbon reduction strategies – 6 month plan
 - GBC– enabling policy change
- Individual– to reduce individual of footprint
 - Biodiversity
 - Pesticide free Guildford
- Development of a Biodiversity Plan for Guildford
 - Guildford Biodiversity Partnership
 - Car Pollution

Culture Corner Cont... Continuing our series on this essay Caroline Scott

prefaces the next extract of **Charles Eisenstein's essay: Extinction and the Revolution of Love.**

Read the full essay here <https://charleseisenstein.org/essays/extinction-and-the-revolution-of-love/>

Extract 5 - Understanding the living planet
In this extract, Eisenstein delves into the question of understanding the living planet, as exactly that - a living being - as integral to understanding the crisis, rejecting the ideas of carbon reductionism.

Often conservation efforts hone in on one particular species, or aim to protect one particular area. But nature doesn't work if ties are broken, food chains are taken away, and only relatively small areas are demarcated as habitats. Just the example of migrating birds, or roaming bears, is enough to know that this approach doesn't work for many species.

"The climate crisis will not be solved by adjusting levels of atmospheric gases, as if we were tinkering with the air-fuel mixture of a diesel engine. Rather, a living Earth can only be healthy – can only stay living in fact – if its organs and tissues are vital. These comprise the forests, the soil, the wetlands, the coral reefs, the fish, the whales, the elephants, the seagrass meadows, the mangrove swamps, and all the rest of Earth's systems and species. If we continue degrading and destroying them, then even if we cut emissions to zero overnight, Earth will still die a death of a million cuts.

"That is because it is life that maintains the conditions for life, through dimly understood processes as complex as any living physiology. Vegetation produces volatile compounds that promote the formation of clouds that reflect sunlight. Megafauna transport nitrogen and phosphorus across continents and oceans to maintain the carbon cycle. Forests generate a biotic pump of persistent low pressure that brings rain to continental interiors and maintains atmospheric flow patterns. Whales bring nutrients up from the deep ocean to nourish plankton. Wolves control deer populations so that forest understory remains viable, enhancing rainfall absorption and preventing droughts and fires. Beavers slow the progress of water from land to sea, buffering floods and modulating silt

discharge into coastal waters so that life there can thrive. Migratory birds and fish such as salmon transport marine nutrients inland, sustaining the forests. Mycelial mats tie vast areas together in a neural network exceeding the human brain in its complexity. And all of these processes interlock with each other."

Extract 6 - More on renewable energy, and why it's not all about CO2

"By offsetting our air travel miles with tree planting, sourcing our electricity from solar panels, and thereby donning the mantle of "eco-friendly," we assuage the conscience while obscuring the ongoing harm that our present way of life entails. We imply that "sustainability" means the sustaining of society as we know it, but with non-fossil fuel sources. That's why established powers have so easily embraced the climate narrative I call carbon reductionism. Even the fossil fuel companies are OK with it, since it means that they can continue business as usual as long as we implement carbon capture technology and geoengineering

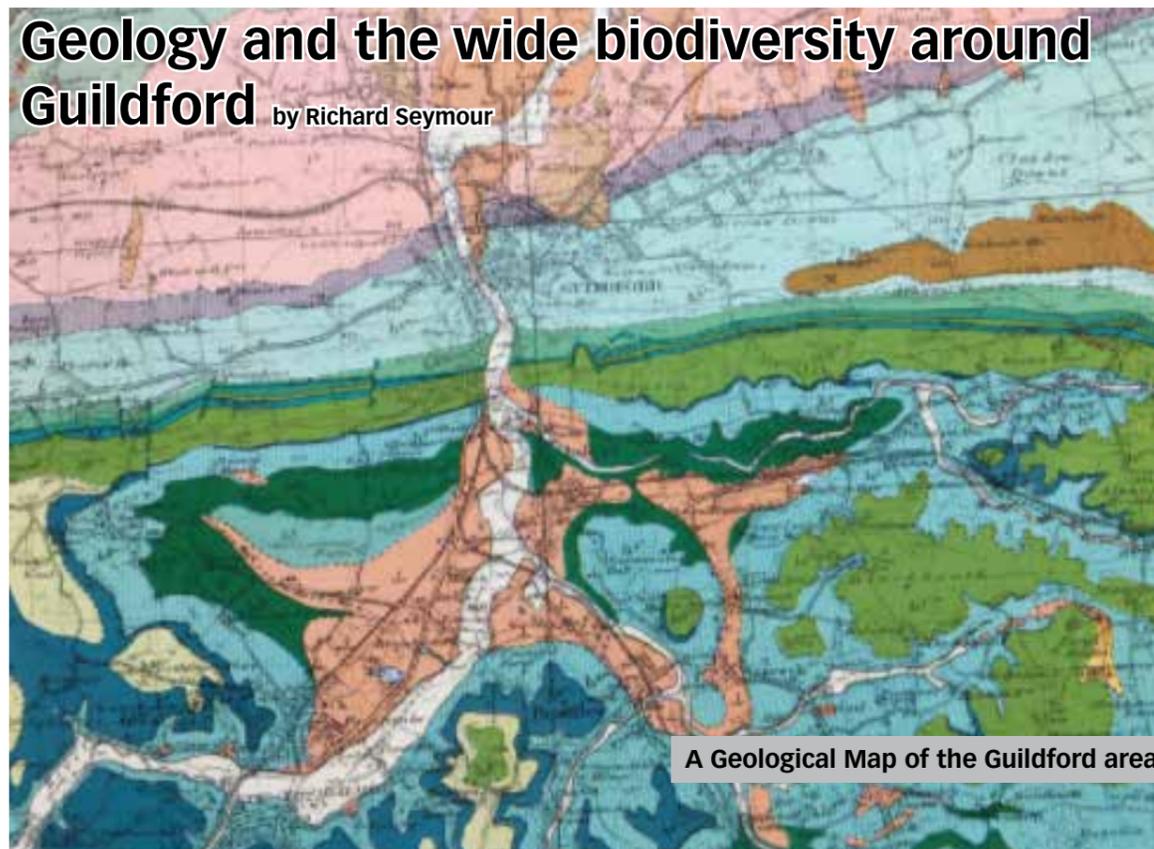
We live, in the words of naturalist J.B. MacKinnon, in a "ten percent world," the poetic statistic he uses to describe the decimation of life on Earth that began with the first mass civilizations and accelerated with the industrial era through to the present day. We have today maybe 10% of the whales that lived before commercial whaling. About 10% of the large predatory fish. Half the Asian mangrove swamps. Twenty percent of the Atlantic seagrass meadows. One percent of North America's virgin forests, and half the number of trees globally. A 30% decline of birds in my lifetime, and a 50%-80% decline in insects. On and on goes the list.

It would sure be nice to be able to blame all of that on a single cause, i.e. climate change. Then we could operate in the familiar territory of reductionism. We would, in principle, know what to do. When the cause comprises a multitude – herbicides, insecticides, noise pollution, electromagnetic pollution, toxic waste, pharmaceutical residue, land development, soil erosion, over-fishing, forest destruction, aquifer depletion, apex predator elimination, and greenhouse effects, each synergistically interacting with the others – then there is no single solution. Not knowing what to do is uncomfortable. It is tempting to escape into the illusion of a single cause. But not knowing is a lot better than thinking, falsely, that we know."

Read a book or article lately that got you thinking? Watched a film or documentary that had an impact? Please send your thoughts, reviews, and recommendations to elliekatemorgan@gmail.com and you might spot it in Culture Corner.

Geology and the wide biodiversity around Guildford

by Richard Seymour



A Geological Map of the Guildford area.

In order to understand the biodiversity of our local area it is necessary to have an overview of the surrounding geology and soils. The geological map above shows that Guildford has a unique geological landscape being located on four different rock groups and structures. The rocks are sedimentary from the Cretaceous and Eocene periods.

The southern part of the map shows the complex Wealden area, running from east to west is the chalk of the North Downs, to the north is largely the clay of the London basin and finally superimposed on this we have the silts and terrace gravels of the River Wey and tributaries. The Wealden area is an eroded dome with folds or anticlines, some have been eroded forming and Wealden Clay inlier to the south of Guildford. The North Downs forms a major escarpment with a south facing steeper scarp slope and a north facing dip slope.

The map shows clearly in light green how the escarpment varies in width and elevation, the Hog's Back to the west is a narrow escarpment due to the high angle of dip of the chalk up to 55 degrees (angle of the rock relative to the horizontal). In contrast to this, the North Downs to the east has a lower angle of dip and forms a much wider and higher escarpment. The London Basin to the north is a wide and relatively low lying vale dominated by London Clay, but with some areas of sands and gravels such as the Bagshot Beds. On the surface of these rocks, shown in yellow and orange can be seen the alluvium and river terrace gravels.

The ecological units in our local area are based on the variations in rock types,soils, climatic conditions and management strategies. To the north there are areas of mixed woodland on the London Clay such as Chittys Common, as well as the sands and clays of Whitmoor Common which is a good example of a wet heathland with cross-leaved heather and sphagnum moss on

acidic podsols. The fauna in this area includes the Nightjar and Dartford Warbler.

The soils of the North Downs are known as rendzinas which are alkaline and tend to be shallow with deeply weathered chalk beneath as can be seen on Pewley Down. The soils are well drained and tend to warm up quickly. The chalk is able to support a great biodiversity of herbaceous plants such as Marjoram, Sheeps fescue, Horse-shoe vetch and Pyramid Orchids. Other species include Yew, Wayfarer's Tree, Hawthorn and Ash. A rich diversity of fauna can be found especially invertebrates such as ants, beetles, butterflies and spiders. In addition vertebrates are common such as badgers, rabbits and deer. The vegetation of much of this area is a product of man's activities in the past and how it is managed today.

The Wealden area to the south is mainly Lower Greensand which is divided into the Atherfield Clay, Hythe Beds, Sandgate Beds, Bargate Beds and Folkestone Beds. The Wealden Clay areas support woodland some of which has been coppiced as well as varied thickets which can support hundreds of species of insects together with woodland birds and Roe-deer.

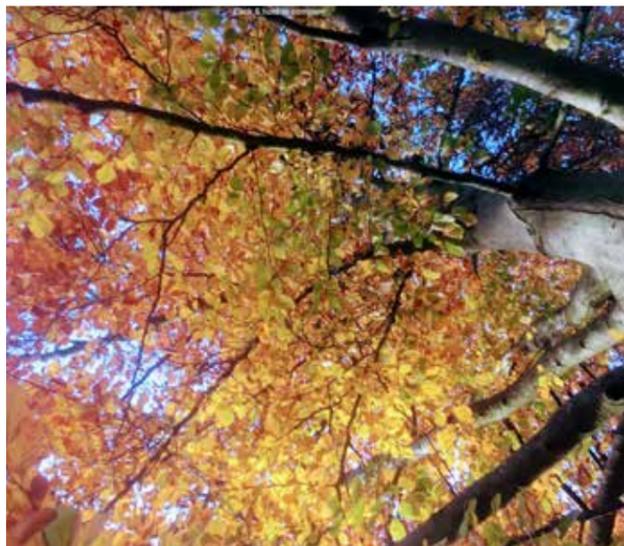
The riparian land of the River Wey where the drainage can be impeded can result in some areas which are dominated by wetland plants and trees such as Willow, Alder, Sallow, Giant Hogweed and different varieties of rushes. In the Shalford area this has resulted in diverse Carr vegetation. From the overview above it can be appreciated why the biodiversity of the Guildford area is so diverse and long may it remain.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

From **Colin Summerhayes**, of GEF's Climate Crisis Group and Scott Polar Research Institute of Cambridge University

You may often be asked what you think about Biodiversity, or Climate Change, as if they are two entirely separate issues. And indeed, that is how they appear if you start with the international agreements that cover these two topics. On the one hand we have the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (that's the group that will hold its 26th meeting in Glasgow in November); on the other hand we have the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (informally, the Biodiversity Convention). Both conventions were signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 and came into force respectively in 1994 and 1993. The Biodiversity Convention is commonly regarded as the cornerstone for the concept of Sustainable Development, while the Climate Convention took a leaf out of the Montreal Protocol of 1987 (under which member states agreed to stop the production of the chlorofluorocarbon compounds that were destroying the ozone layer and leading to the formation of the springtime Ozone Hole over Antarctica), in binding member states to act in the interests of human safety even in the face of scientific uncertainty. The Montreal Protocol was a product of the UN's Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, which was signed in 1985.

The Climate Convention has as its aim - to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations "at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system." It states that "such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner." The wording implies that there is a strong link between climate change and biodiversity, but it is a link that often seems to be ignored. The Climate Convention is supported with information on the workings of the climate system that is pulled together by teams of experts working for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which reports every 5 years or so on three main topics: the science, adaptation, and mitigation. The next IPCC report is due in mid 2021 to inform the discussions in Glasgow.



These various conventions date from the late 1980s and early 1990s, and represent the thinking of the time. Back then the sciences still tended to work as they had for a century or more, in single discipline silos between which there was rather little interaction. However, around about the same time, scientists studying the natural environment had come to the realization that understanding how the world works required an interdisciplinary approach because everything is connected (a conclusion supported by Buddhist thinking that embraces the one-ness of life and the environment). There are intimate links for example between the carbon cycle and the hydrological cycle. To understand the climate system, one has to integrate knowledge about ocean currents, winds, ocean and atmospheric fronts, and their relation to geography, ice, snow, and albedo (Earth's reflectivity, which can be much higher for example over a light-coloured monocultured wheat field than over the dark canopy of a mid-latitude forest. As a first step towards this integrative approach, in 1986 the International Council for Science created the International Geosphere-Biosphere Project (IGBP) to examine the essential interconnections between the lithosphere (the rocks beneath our feet), the atmosphere (the air around us), the hydrosphere (oceans, rivers and lakes), the cryosphere (ice and snow and frozen ground) and the biosphere (meaning animals, plants and ecology). This required bringing together biology, chemistry, physics, glaciology and geology under the heading of what subsequently became labelled Earth System Science. We realize that Earth behaves as a system of interlocking processes, and that's how we have to study it from now on. In recognition of this new paradigm or imperative, many university Geology Departments changed their names to Earth Science Departments.

Nevertheless, it is fair to say that despite this push for modern scientific research to be a collective, multidisciplinary, transnational and cross-cultural enterprise (a shift that is something of a scientific revolution), this change is still largely invisible or incomprehensible to many of our contemporaries, including some powerful scientific and technological silos, big business, the military, and religious and governmental circles. Sticking to the single discipline silo approach keeps people focused on biology under the Biodiversity Convention, or Chemistry under the Montreal Protocol, or Atmospheric Physics and the Greenhouse Effect under the Climate Convention. Hence the policy advice tends to remain 'single issue' and ignores the essentially integrative nature of the

global scale problems that we face.

Climate Change, Ozone, and Biodiversity are intimately linked, and the time is long past overdue for all of us to start thinking that way. I learned this long ago when as a PhD student at Imperial College I realised that in order to understand the origins of the seabed deposits of phosphate that might one day be a major source of fertilizer, I had to appreciate that the action of coastal winds dictated the movements of coastal currents, which brought to the surface nutrients essential for the plankton whose remains would be preserved under oxygen-poor counter currents that bathed the seabed. To find my geological solution I had to blend meteorology (winds), with oceanography (currents), with marine chemistry (nutrients), with biology (plankton productivity), with the processes of sedimentation (geology) and the ensuing sub-seabed development of the phosphate deposits (geochemistry), which gained their phosphorus from the decaying remains of plankton. It was an early (late 1960s) lesson in Earth System Science.

Nowadays we can all appreciate that warming forces plants and animals to move up mountain sides and towards the poles. These movements may divorce insect populations from the plants on which they rely, bringing ecological damage. Warming waters change the nature of plankton populations (fish food) causing fish populations to migrate polewards. Warming melts sea ice, changing sea level and freshening surface waters in polar regions, with further effects on plankton and the rest of the marine food chain. Rising seas destroy fragile coastal environments. Warming melts permafrost, releasing carbon dioxide and methane, creating lakes and changing the distribution of trees (taiga) and tundra in the Arctic. Farmers wonder what to plant when climate zones shift, as warming makes northern Europe wetter and southern Europe drier.

Let's call a halt right now. Single issue politics is all very well, but it leads us to forget the intimate linkages between climate change and biodiversity, putting our environmental policies at risk. It's time to bang the drum for an integrated approach to environmental policy at the local, regional and national level.

Guildford Environmental Forum is supporting an exciting new initiative in the centre of Guildford. A new charity called **Zero Carbon Guildford (ZCG)** won CIO charity status in December 2020 and has been using lockdown to develop plans to explain the urgency of the Climate Emergency to Guildford residents. The concept was outlined in the Guardian on 4th May and is developing at different stages across the country.



Article by Adrian Thompson

For those that are already convinced of the science of Climate Change and worried about

what they should be doing, the converted shop will encourage residents and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint. For those who remain sceptical about the need to tackle climate change, there will be opportunities to study and debate the evidence raising awareness of the urgency of this challenge.

The initiative is being led by the ZCG Chair, Ben McCallan and supported by 8 initial Trustees. Environmental charities (incl GEF) in Guildford will be represented and the initiative will be supported by Guildford Borough Council amongst similar groups including the University. A property has been identified to serve as a base and negotiations with the Landlord are underway. If COVID allows, the facility should be operating by August 2021.

ZCG will be focusing mainly on the promotion of strategies and methods for mitigation of, and adaptation to the climate crisis and additionally on the education of the public in the causes of the climate crisis. Zero Carbon Guildford will provide a physical space for Guildford's various environmental and social organisations to tackle global scale problems through local, community-based action and solutions.

Activities could include; Providing a safe, welcoming space for any group (including GEF) that are looking to organise and make strides toward a better and more sustainable Guildford. Engaging a large proportion of the wider community in climate action. Providing solutions for individuals and organisations to reach personal net zero carbon emissions. Providing a guide on how to measure personal footprint effectively, and then a process of 'easy wins' for reduction in stages, over a five- or ten-year period. Providing a space for environmental educational activities as well as for methods and solutions to reduce emissions footprints. For example: Serving as a meeting place for community projects and groups. As well as other services such as a zero waste shop, a climate cinema, a hub for talks / lectures / workshops and circular economy schemes such as repair café & bike repairs.

Financed by donations from individual GEF members specifically for ZCG, GEF is providing £2,500 of funding to help

ZCG set up the initial activities and shop front. ZCG is actively seeking further grants from many sources and plans to start its operations as soon as possible. The premises will be run by volunteers initially. GEF wish to occupy a desk in the building most days in 2 hour sessions per volunteer to spread the Climate Emergency and Loss of Biodiversity messages. GEF will also be hoping to sign up new members at the desk as well as promoting the GEF Rosamund Community garden and its Hub activities.

If you are interested you can have a look at the ZCG website - <https://www.zerocarbonguildford.org/> - or sign up to ZCG's mailing list. We would be delighted to hear from any GEF members who think they would like to help run the GEF desk when the site opens, please e-mail Adrian at adrian@lampcottage.net.list of volunteers. We will be adhering to all Government guidelines and recommendations with regard to COVID-19 and all volunteering will be at times to suit you. All necessary training will be provided.

GEF knows that despite their quarterly newsletters, monthly e-mails and fledgling social media, GEF is not as well known in the Guildford area as it needs to be. We wish to reach out to Guildford residents and support the ZCG initiative. GEF members already provide over 10,000 hours of volunteer effort a year and GEF wishes to expand its activities by involving volunteers even more. The GEF mission is very closely aligned to that of ZCG as set out in the objects of both charities.

The benefits of GEF and ZCG working closely together

on this project are numerous: GEF and ZCG can jointly reach out to the residents of Guildford more convincingly by working together. The ZCG facility, with the support of GEF can provide a significant focus for Guildford Borough Council's Climate Emergency Policy and the need to engage with residents and provide a unified approach on climate and biodiversity issues to achieve that. GEF's messages will reach a much wider audience as a result of wider distribution of its quarterly newsletter and secure a gain in new members. The desk will help promote how the various environmental charities, local parishes, residents associations are working together to tackle these twin challenges.

GEF wish to expand their volunteering capacity to support the various projects in Guildford such as the Rosamund Hub, the swift, peregrine and the butterfly projects as well as new projects.

The ultimate purpose is to provide a route for the thousands of residents in Guildford who want to play their part in tackling the Climate Emergency and help stem the loss of biodiversity but are not sure how to help. GEF and ZCG also wish to raise awareness of the these twin and related challenges to those who are not yet aware of the extent of the threats to future generations and the lack of sustainability of our current economic policies.

Please email Adrian at adrian@lampcottage.net if you have any queries or would like to run the GEF desk in this new venture.

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Guildford Environmental Forum aims to improve the environment in and around Guildford for wildlife and for people and to build a sustainable future.

Join us in our work for the town and have this newsletter posted or emailed to you four times a year. Forum membership is only £10 per year or £15 for a couple, while for age 21-25 it's £5 and for under 21s it's free. New members are warmly welcomed.

Please contact Adrian Thompson on 01483 222687 or email adrian@lampcottage.net

Guildford Environmental Forum's newsletter is published in March, June, September and December.

Please send contributions for the next issue to Ellie Morgan (details above) by 13th August 2021.

The views expressed in this newsletter are strictly those of its contributors and Guildford Environmental Forum.