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GUILDFORD ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

newsletter

September - November 2021

<http://www.guildfordenvironment.org.uk/>



Chalkhill Blue photographed on Pewley Down Butterfly by Jonathan Mortimer

Guildford's Biggest **Green** Week

By Adrian Thompson

September 2021 looks as if it could be the most significant month ever for the environment in Guildford. Please read on to find out why:

1) Completion of the purchase of Pewley Down Fields.

As reported previously, a community group raised the funds to purchase the 37.5 acres of Pewley Down Fields (previously New Warren Farm). The purchase is expected to complete in September when this land will form an additional conservation area adjacent to the existing nature reserve on Pewley Down. The aim is to nurture wildlife, provide additional amenity space for local people, offer environmental education opportunities and to protect the area from development in perpetuity."

2) As part of Great Big Green Week, Zero Carbon Guildford (ZCG) has secured funding from the Climate Coalition for the following Calendar of Events in the 10 days starting Friday 17th September. ZCG is planning to launch ZERO on the 17th, but are currently working to incredibly tight deadlines. All participants will be notified of venue changes in the event of ZERO (ZCG Friary St) not being ready in time.

Most of the events below will be free:

Date	Time	Event	Location
Fri 17th	19.00	Climate Quiz	ZCG, Friary St
Sat 18th	10.00-13.00	Doughnut Economics	ZCG, Friary St
	11.00 – late	R. Wey Festival	Dapdune Wharf
	16.00	Degrowth (CUSP- Uni of Surrey)	ZCG Friary St
Sun 19th	All day	Vegan Market (Ethical Vegan)	High St, Guildford
	13.00-16.00	Aquaponics Workshop	ZCG Friary St
	18.00	Community Energy	ZCG Friary St
Mon 20th	14.00	Climate Café (to be confirmed)	ZCG Friary St
	19.00	Climate Interactive (What Next)	ZCG Friary St
Tues 21st	19.00	Sharewear	ZCG Friary St
Wed 22nd	13.00-16.00	Vertical farming	ZCG Friary St
	19.30	Climate Cinema	ZCG Friary St
	19:00	The school run" (Greenpeace/GEF/XR)	Zoom Meeting
Thurs 23rd	11.00-13.00	Nature Writing	ZCG Friary St
	14.00-17.00	Bike Repair Workshop	ZCG Friary St
	19.00	Talk Concern for our Planet	ZCG Friary St
Fri 24th	09.30-15.00	Scything workshop	Rosamund Cmnty Garden
	All day	Hedges & Hurdles – Country skills	Guildford Cathedral
Sat 25th	11.00-17.00	The Jump – University of Surrey	ZCG Friary St
	All day	Hedges & Hurdles – Country skills	Guildford Cathedral
	10:00- 16:00	Mobile Fridge	Rotunda, Guildford
Sun 27th	All day	Stalls to celebrate Car Free Day in Guildford	High St
	14.00-16.00	Guildford - Worst Pollution in England?	ZCG Friary St

For information on how to book onto these events please visit <https://www.zerocarbonguildford.org/great-big-green-week>. This timetable is subject to change but the website will be kept up to date.

3) The ground-breaking Climate Emergency Centre is currently planned to be opened on Friday 17th September.

GEF will be supporting Zero Carbon Guildford in the opening of the new Climate Emergency Centre in a former clothes store in Friary St. as outlined in our June 2021 newsletter. The new Zero Centre will provide the first integrated location in Guildford where every resident who is concerned about the Climate Emergency and the Loss of Biodiversity will be able to come together and learn about the following (the list is subject to change before opening):

The Climate Emergency. Run by volunteers including the Trustees of ZCG will offer a large 3-floor space that will provide much of the following from the day it opens:

- Zero Waste shop. This will sell package-free alternatives to household consumables including food and cleaning products, such as plastic-free ranges of skin and beauty products as well as bulk-buy dry foods and cleaning supplies.
- Baby clothes library and Bike workshops
- Coffee and meeting facilities and a Community fridge
- A Cinema area
- "Library of Things" (<https://www.zerocarbonguildford.org/library-of-things>) and environmental books.
- A well-being centre which will help those residents who suffer from climate anxiety. According to new research from The Royal College of Psychiatrists, nearly 60% of both adults and children say that the climate and ecological emergencies are affecting their mental health now, and will continue to do so in the future.
- Many displays (some interactive) about the Climate Emergency
- **Biodiversity Loss.** The GEF biodiversity group, led by Helen Harris, will display a big Ordnance Survey map, which will show many of the positive biodiversity projects currently active and planned in the Guildford area. These will be linked to films and displays by local biodiversity groups including our own Swift Group and other displays by parish councils, residents associations and local wildlife charities.

The Trustees of Zero Carbon Guildford have worked throughout lockdown to bring all this together, with help from key members of the Guildford Environmental Forum. The following has been achieved as a result of weekly Zoom meetings, daily communication on "Slack" and huge time commitment from all the Trustees:

- Zero Carbon Guildford (ZCG) was granted CIO status by the Charity Commission in December 2020.
- Initial funding has been secured to enable the landlord to be paid a deposit and the Centre to open. Grants have been received and several Guildford Borough Councillors have offered further small grants that are

within their powers.

- An empty property has been found in Friary St in the centre of Guildford at a nominal rent and Heads of Terms have been agreed with the landlord. Owing to delays with legal contracts, there may be very little time to make the Friary Street premises ideal for the Great Big Green Week. Standby facilities are being prepared in case of yet further delays. Do come and talk to our volunteers and see the new facility by booking for at least one of the events listed.
- Crowdfunding will be launched in September 2021 to ensure that the charity continues to be able to pay for the utilities, further stock and all the presentation materials. The presentations will then be developed further over the winter months.
- Many procedures and plans have been agreed during the year to enable the opening to happen as soon the building can be cleaned up and made ready for the Great Big Green Week. Sadly, the Centre may not be as finished as had been planned, but ZCG are doing everything in their power to open in time for the Great Big Green Week.

How you can help?

Please support the crowdfunding, where a target of £10,000 from the public has been set.

This appeal has already been match-funded by an anonymous donor.

Through this mechanism the £10,000 target, together with gift aid, could raise nearly £25,000 (ie each £10 donated is doubled by match funding to £20 with a further 25% from gift aid where applicable). The detailed crowdfunding appeal will be sent by e-mail to all GEF members in September, once ZCG have the keys to the property. We would be most grateful if you could publicize this appeal in your neighbourhoods and with your social networks. The appeal will also be sent to many other residents of Guildford via a range of channels once the lease is signed. It is planned that the names of our most generous supporters will be permanently displayed on 'ZERO's Wall of Heroes'.

Volunteers are needed to run the GEF desk. If only 10% of GEF members could spare just one or two hours a week or month, the desk could be staffed seven days a week. For the first time, GEF will be reaching out beyond our core members to all those residents of Guildford who we believe may be interested in finding out more.

Please talk about this initiative with friends, family and neighbours to encourage them to visit the new centre and help Guildford to make a real difference. If you support this concept, please be generous with your time or some financial support. To find out more or to volunteer, please e-mail me on adrian@lampcottage.net or book online at <http://www.guildfordenvironment.org.uk/> for an event and come and see the new centre.



A Volunteer perspective

by an anonymous volunteer..

Access to nature is a hot topic at the moment as is the debate for the right to a healthy life for everyone alongside the right to live in a world with a healthy eco-system.

As a volunteer at Rosamund Community Garden, who has recently become involved with this project, I wanted to use this opportunity to reaffirm how important it is for me and my healthy life to have access to a garden, a secluded natural area where I can enjoy nature first hand.

As humans we are exposed to substances occurring in our living environment through our skin (our biggest organ), the air we breath and what we eat. Some toxic substances occur naturally like radon, but the majority are present due to human practices underway all around us. The biggest issue is that, most of the time, we are not aware that we are exposed to a toxin and it might accumulate over time for example the toxins that enter the food chain and affect us via our food. I believe our bodies are the perfect computers, developed over millennia to function with what nature provides us. I believe we have a natural right as one of the species who lives on earth, to enjoy an eco-system which is free from unnatural substances that are not part of the natural system of the eco system in which we live.

I have been looking for a space to be in close contact with nature for a while to support my mental and physical health. Having had more time to think and evaluate life, I have read extensively about the benefit of being in contact with nature both psychologically and physically. Through an internet search, I finally found Rosamund community garden on the edge of the beautiful Pewley Down and with views out over central Guildford. What a wonderful patch Rosamund garden is. I started volunteering on a Tuesday and I found a lovely friendly group of people. We call ourselves the Tuesday volunteers. We have been involved in weeding, preparing the soil with compost and planting. I really enjoy sharing experiences, opinions, different perspectives about a range of topics, it enriches me immensely. It is an opportunity to learn in an immersive way which, I've found, helps to retain knowledge. The no dig concept was new to me and I have been able to understand it better. Despite being a bit of a loner, I feel at ease with the garden volunteers because we are all there to enjoy nature in its various forms and benefit from gardening with other people.

The first time I went to the garden, I was introduced to mint tea; what a discovery, a fresh mint leaf infusion! Now, it is one of the things I look forward to when I am at the garden. In addition, it gives me and my partner great pleasure to cook with the herbs from the garden. Every time I go to the garden, I walk around and smell the thyme, the marjoram, the rosemary, the sage, the basil, and the parsley. It is a treat for my senses, it brings me immense joy and pleasure. I could be in my native country, Italy, up on the Alps where I am from. I use marjoram with tomato and mozzarella, I use a bouquet of herbs for a rustic chickpea soup and I use freshly chopped parsley on top of meat.

The variety of flora and fauna in the garden is incredible. There is more than the eye can see, if only plants, trees, insects and animals could speak! Sometimes I am at the garden on Wednesday and I stay until the evening: it is wonderful to look around and enjoy the simple things like the poplar leaves fluttering or an unknown bird singing.

It is like mindfulness occurring naturally. Everything in harmony with all the creatures of our eco-system.

I am sure that by now, you have appreciated how grateful and thankful I am for the opportunity to be part of the Rosamund Community Garden. May I say, **long live Rosamund community garden!**

Photos from the Rosamund Community Garden Facebook Page



Saturday morning shoppers in Godalming, Guildford and Farnham may recently have seen and spoken to people from Extinction Rebellion who are gearing up for the next rebellion in London from 23rd August. We want to explain why we



Why we rebel

Originally published in the Farnham Herald

Written by Rieks Drijver, XR Godalming

rebel, and why we are doing that now. Most people will know about the recent report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It made the headlines in most newspapers. The danger we are in from climate change created by human activity is inarguable. Most people will know about the devastating forest fires that are out of control in Greece. Most people will know about the floods in Germany and Belgium that caused houses to be washed away. Most people will know about the unprecedented heat dome that engulfed the west of Canada and the USA. Scientists and politicians agree that these and numerous other events are linked to climate change, and that humans are the cause of that change.

The facts are clear. Where we might differ is in how to bring about change with the urgency required. The climate crisis cannot be resolved by small actions. It needs those who are the largest part of the problem to take the greatest actions to bring about the most rapid change. Governments, fossil fuel companies and financial institutions who fund fossil fuel companies need to do the most. They need to go beyond talks and targets and act now. Those who think the government is doing enough should think again. A recent report by the World Wide Fund for Nature shows that government funding of fossil fuels far outstrips funding of environmental spending, despite the government's rhetoric. Worse still is that the world's sixty largest banks have invested \$3.8 trillion dollars in fossil fuels since the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. These are two of many

examples that lead us to say – enough is enough!

Governments and financial institutions have let us down. They have not stopped fossil fuel funding and they have not invested adequately in, for example, alternative energy and sustainable travel infrastructures. And that is why we rebel. We do so to press governments and financial institutions to cease all fossil fuel funding immediately. In doing so, we will cause disruption in the streets of London from 23rd August. That disruption will be an inconvenience to some people. But that inconvenience over a period of a rebellion is nothing compared to the inconvenience of being up to your neck in flood water on an underground train, of being evacuated from your island home as it burns to a cinder, or of facing starvation due to crop failures because of sustained drought. These threats are real and happening today.

XR rebels believe in a much better future than the one we have in prospect. Our hope for that future drives our determination, and that determination provides the energy to hold the government, financial institutions and fossil fuel companies to account for the damage they have created, and the restorative actions they must take now. We urge people to join us in London from 23rd August. We do not have time for further debate. Climate change is happening now, and we must act now.

Climate Justice – A moral imperative for all of us?

Climate Justice – What is it all about? by Sunethra Mendis

Until recently, images of polar bears and melting ice caps were the embodiment of climate crisis. People were on the wrong side of the camera. With images of heat waves, wild fires and flooded towns bombarding our screens, we now recognise that climate crisis affects the daily lives of people like us and the very existence of some communities and countries. People are at the very heart of it.

The burden of climate change impacts is not distributed equally. Just like with the Covid-19 pandemic, those hit first and hardest are the poorest communities. Furthermore, these are generally the least responsible for causing it, have the least capacity to adapt and given the least agency in the national and global climate conversations. This unfairness and injustice are key challenges for climate action at both local and global levels.

The recognition of climate justice and the necessity of giving a voice to vulnerable people (especially those in developed nations) is enshrined in the Paris Agreement. The concept of Climate Justice has also been gaining traction with a wide spectrum of organisations:

- **Mary Robison Foundation for Climate Justice** argues that “Climate justice links human rights and development to achieve a human-centred approach, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable people and sharing the burdens and benefits of climate change and its impacts equitably and fairly. Climate justice is informed by science, responds to science and acknowledges the need for equitable stewardship of the world’s resources.” <https://www.mrfcj.org/principles-of-climate-justice/>
- **International Institute for Environment and Development’s Climate Change Group** summarises Climate Justice as follows: Climate justice recognises the development paradox that those who contributed least to greenhouse gas emissions will be most affected by climate change. Environmental justice has three components: equitably distributed environmental risk; recognition for people’s diverse needs and experiences; and participation in the political processes that create and manage environmental policy. <https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/17170IIED.pdf>
- **According to the B Corp Climate Collective** (a group of Certified B Corporations working together to take action on the climate emergency in partnership with the UNFCCC) “Climate Justice recognizes that those who are least responsible for climate change are more likely to suffer its gravest consequences. Climate change is a human-made crisis that has been primarily wrought by those with economic power and privilege. But the effects of climate change have a disproportionately negative impact on the historically marginalized and underserved – primarily people of color and low-income communities around the world”. <https://www.bcorpclimatecollective.org/climate-justice-bccc>



The Carbon Inequity is too stark to ignore

Oxfam and the Stockholm Environment Institute highlights how the extreme carbon inequality has driven the world to the climate brink. Their analysis of carbon emissions from 1990 to 2015 reveals that **the richest 10% of the world’s population were responsible for 52% of the cumulative carbon emissions** depleting the global carbon budget by nearly a third (31%) whilst the poorest 50% were responsible for just 7% of cumulative emissions, and used just 4% of the carbon budget. **With a 15% of cumulative emissions, the richest 1% alone depleted 9% of the carbon budget; twice as much as the poorest half of the world’s population.** (<https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621052/mb-confronting-carbon-inequality-210920-en.pdf>)

The richest 10% of the world are not simply the billionaires or even millionaires. In relative terms, most of us are in a more privileged position than we realise. In wealth terms, it takes a little over £1.3m net worth to be in UK’s top 1% and a fraction of that would get one to global top 1%. The income thresholds to get to the global 1% is also much ‘modest’ in UK terms. So, **when climate researchers talk about the richest 10% of the world, that includes a lot of us in Guildford.**

When it comes to carbon inequity and the climate crisis burden inequity, the pattern is no different within Europe, the UK or in our own towns and cities. Studies have repeatedly shown that poorer communities in the UK are more vulnerable to nearly every impact of climate change despite their relatively modest carbon foot print. These communities have the least capacity / resources to recover or to adapt to climate impacts (<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/climate-change-justice-and-vulnerability>). That makes climate justice a moral imperative also in local terms.

What can we do?

We can start by **making ourselves more aware of climate inequities and the urgent need to redress these.** We need to put people, especially those who are more vulnerable at the heart of our thinking and action. Locally, we can **reach out to those who currently have less voice in local climate policy** / action and engage them in understanding their climate crisis priorities and in co-creating solutions in a way that **facilitate a just transition to a zero-carbon future.**

As people living in relative comfort, **we can and should make lifestyle changes** (<https://take.thejump.org/>) and **do more to reduce our carbon foot prints.** As relatively affluent community we must take some responsibility for our consumption and our lifestyles. However, it is also important to **recognise the structures and systems of land use and provision that lock us in particular modes of consumption and travel** etc. That means not letting those who created and profit from the status quo to simply pass the buck to individuals. After all, BP did not come out with the idea of the individual carbon footprint calculator by accident.

Our life style changes are necessary but as the former DECC chief scientist David MacKay famously said, **if everyone does a little, we’ll achieve only a little.** A planetary scale problem demands systemic solutions. Collective action of individuals has the power to push corporate culprits and local and national governments into action. So instead of just changing light bulbs or even changing our energy providers, **we can also use our collective voice to change the energy system and address energy poverty of the most vulnerable amongst us.** We can collectively urge the local and national governments **to make sure that the decarbonisation policies are socially just** so that vulnerable workers and communities will not risk bearing the brunt of the transition costs whilst losing out on benefits.

COVID-19 pandemic showed us how the structural inequalities can worsen a crisis and weaken the effectiveness our national responses. The pandemic also highlighted the interconnected nature of our economic, natural and societal systems. Applying this understanding to our responses to the climate crisis is not going to be easy. However, if we do not want our journey to a zero-carbon future to exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, **we must at least try.**

Littering the air – a public health crisis by Caroline Scott

It’s no surprise that air pollution – the source of the climate crisis – has been allowed to be overlooked. If highly visible pollution in the form of oil slicks, or mining tailings have continued despite catastrophic effects on the living planet, it’s no wonder that the largely invisible nature of air pollution has been given a free pass.

Footage of fish gasping for air when their waters are polluted has its parallels with areas of India or China where stepping outside is a perilous move. While the UK’s poor air mainly comes from transport, not heavy industry, it is nevertheless a danger. The UK government decided to set its own limits for what it considers safe levels of air pollution - they are double what the World Health Organisation recommends.

What may be considered a safe limit, may not be safe at all for someone with fragile health – and is certainly not safe at all for the natural world. Air pollution causes 40,000 early deaths in the UK every year, and worsens a long list of other health issues from pulmonary disease to dementia, and the likelihood of miscarriage.

A recent report from Highways England revealed that Guildford has the highest levels of air pollution in the whole of England. The site of the study for Highways England, was the section of the A3 near Onslow Village. Thousands of people live in this area, and are affected by the toxic air and particulate matter being kicked up from the motorway. Children are particularly vulnerable, with studies showing that lung growth can be stunted by poor air quality. Given the severity of the problem, how safe is it for children living near the A3 to play outside? How safe is it for people to play tennis at Surrey Sports Park, or those living and working in close proximity to the one way system?

It's not just that section of Guildford that is bad. The rest of the town doesn't fare well. The one way system near the Friary has high levels of toxic air, and a study carried out by the University of Surrey's GCARE department, found a 300% spike in air pollution around St Thomas of Canterbury (Merrow) at school drop off times.

It seems that air pollution has not been a priority for any of the responsible authorities. Engine idling in Guildford is widespread, and unlike in other towns, where at least signage is put up to educate drivers, Guildford has none. Traffic officers are not given the powers to fine motorists found idling, and as such, there are no fines issued, and no deterrents. Many drivers seem not even to realise they are idling at all, let alone consider it might be a problem for air quality, or a danger to themselves or their children. If simple measures like putting up signage, and issuing fines, haven't been adopted, it's no wonder that the much more complex issue of traffic flows passing through Guildford, have not been addressed either.

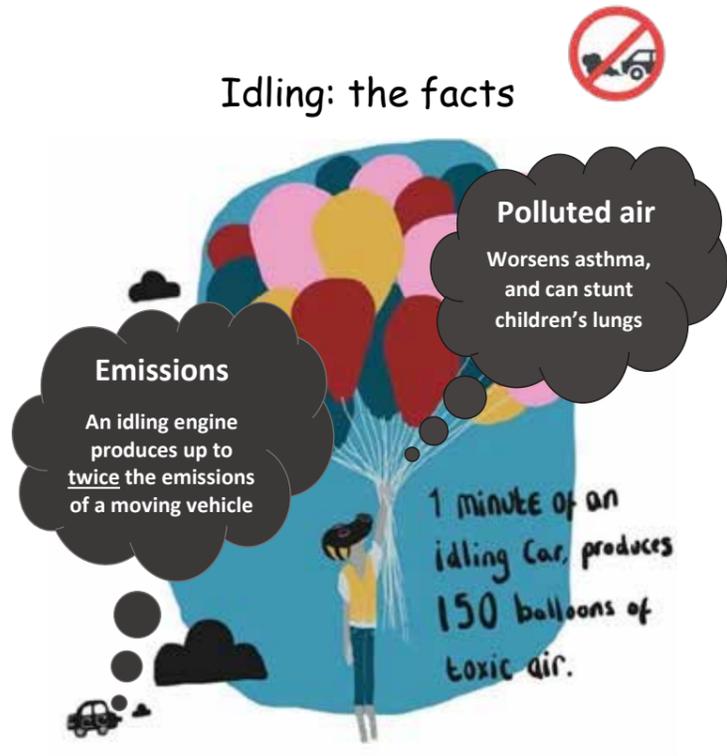
Although it's mostly diesel and HGVs which are the most polluting vehicles (many of which are on transit through Guildford) – the trend towards bigger vehicles is also playing its part. In the last few years, Guildford's streets have filled up with SUVs, some outsized, at over 5 meters

long. Bigger, heavier vehicles means more emissions and more particulate pollution from the tyres and road. The Land Rover Sport v8 emits around three times the amount of a Ford Fiesta (see info at nextgreencar.com). At a time when we should be cutting emissions in half, the rise of SUVs is taking us in the opposite direction, and SUVs are the second biggest contributor to the global rise emissions. If the council is serious about the climate emergency declaration – then it needs to follow up with some meaningful measures. At the very least, emissions-based charging for parking (accompanied by improvements to active and public transport). Better still, create a low emissions zone, that only allows vehicles of say, below 130g CO2/km through. That would still allow for most saloon family cars to move around.

It's clear that the only meaningful way to improve the air quality – and protect residents from the insidious effects of pollution -- is to reduce the number of cars, and that is tough when the infrastructure for other forms of transport is still lacking. But a crisis demands radical thinking, and bold measures. Long timelines and small tweaks aren't good enough.

Want to read more of Caroline's work? check out her blog at www.regreentheplanet.blog

Idling: the facts 



**We all want to breathe clean air.
Thank you for switching your engine off.**


Guildford Environmental Forum
GEF's campaign against engine idling

A Dilemma of time and place

By Michael Tanner

What a gamut of emotions 'having' a dog engenders, especially if you had no say in the matter right from the very young days of said creature. At one end of the gamut is an emotion of responsibility and 'love' akin to that felt by a new parent (no kidding!) and at the diametrically opposite end are a bundle of knotted emotions which may range from total frustration, to rage, disgust, helplessness and despair at the other.

I am, I think, a mature, sane, experienced adult; I have brought up five children and lived through war and other nasties. We had a dog or two, rabbits and guinea pigs when I was one of four children; perhaps I should not have been surprised; should not have been so utterly caught out even if a puppy of a kilo has now become 25.5 kilos of pure muscle in the shape of something very much like a greyhound though 'whippet' was on the label.

I give these personal details to indicate that I write from a decidedly ambivalent position regarding keeping a dog in Guildford or indeed anywhere else in the UK. I suspect there are not a few in a position similar to mine and many more who are totally committed dog 'lovers' as opposed to those who are careful dog owners but are in two minds as to their own position from a sustainable environmental point of view.

Such a point of view would have to take into account some solid statistics re keeping a dog in urban, suburban and rural circumstances: its food supply; the areas it moves in; who and what else inhabits or uses these areas; the disposal of its faeces and urine; the manufacture of items dog owners purchase for the welfare of their dog(s) and the eventual disposal of these, especially if plastic is involved: plastic imitation bones for chewing upon, for example.

Certainly the statistics in some of these areas are difficult to ascertain not least because dogs and their owners come in very different sizes and shapes, but enough information exists from which to make reasonable deductions and extrapolations.



Michael's whippet Arlo regarding his domain

My informed guess would most likely contain figures sufficiently big to raise more than a few eyebrows. But dogs are so similar to humans in so many ways, it should not be that surprising that assessing the 'dog economy' also has many lurking caveats.

I do not know what Mark Carney thinks about this subject but whether or not he keeps a dog, I would be most interested to have his professional opinion; after all if the UK really has 10 million or so dogs, the arithmetic of assessing the number of plastic bones, metal cages, bio degradable poo bags, leads, harnesses, walkers, and all that processed food might make one wonder when we will have our first Minister for Canine Affairs; he/she would of course have to work intimately alongside the Minister for Health, the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Housing, just for starters (as Top Dog of course).

At any rate it is indisputably an Environmental Question for all the GU codes and very much further afield, but unfortunately, like some others, it would undoubtedly join a long and winding queue of items too hot for many political leaders to handle when they think what the media and cartoonists could do with any one of them and especially this one.

Is a population of 10 million or so domestic dogs environmentally sustainable? Is that something that should be on the agenda in Glasgow in just over two months time, alongside so many 'uncomfortably pointing' questions? Did I hear someone say, 'Don't be ridiculous'?

Problems of landslides in the Guildford area

Landslides also known as mass movements, refers to the downslope movement of rock fragments and soil under the influence of gravity. Increased water pressure often acts as a trigger resulting in movement which can be catastrophic. There are many different types of mass movements and the slowest is called soil creep which is the slow and often imperceptible movement of soil downslope often at the rate of 1mm per year in the uppermost layers. Evidence of this can be seen in Half Penny Lane where the lower parts of tree trunks are turned downslope in other areas more soil is found downslope and supporting walls can break. The drought of 1976 caused the contraction of clay with localised movement and this caused structural damage to properties resulting in massive insurance claims.

More recent landslides have occurred at the entrance to the railway tunnel beneath St Catherine’s Hill, where on the 19th December 2019 the line was been blocked by a landslide event causing disruption to SW rail services. Part of the problem here is linked to the unstable Folkestone beds which can become mobile when saturated, also the slope angle at the tunnel portal was too steep. The exposure of Folkestone beds just below St Catherines is very unstable and subject to movement downslope. Historically there are records of the railway tunnel collapsing in 1895 indicating that not enough was known then about the frailties of the underlying rock in this part of Guildford.

The photograph by kind permission of Network Rail illustrates the vulnerability of the Folkestone beds which contains carstone a ferruginous rock which gives it higher elevation but limited strength On the 4th January 2021 a landslide occurred on the railway embankment near Wanborough disrupting rail services between Guildford and Ash. This was due to heavy rainfall from Storm Bella saturating the London clay, with which the embankment had been made, causing it to partially collapse.

This is an example of the embankment being too steep and this has occurred in other locations. Sometimes the slope angle of cuttings and embankments for roads and railways can be too steep and this can act as a trigger for landslides given severe wet weather. The problem here is that if the slope angles were shallower, more land would be needed and this would add to the construction costs of the infrastructure. Given that more extreme weather events are likely in the future due to climate change such as being too hot or too wet, greater care is required when maintaining existing road and rail links and planning the development of new ones.



Article by Richard Seymour - Image credited to Network Rail Wessex



CALENDAR



All the forum's meetings are open to the public.

Wednesday 15th Sept

What next for Biodiversity in Surrey?

The CEO of Surrey Wildlife Trust and also director and co-founder of the Surrey Nature Partnership and a Trustee for the Surrey Hills Society , Sarah Jane Chimbwandira, will be presenting to GEF: What next for Biodiversity in Surrey?

We are living through the sixth mass extinction right now, with over 50% of our bio abundance lost. The UK has one of the lowest biodiversity scores in Europe. What can we do to fix this?

Sarah Jane Chimbwandira, CEO of Surrey Wildlife Trust will lead an interactive session on the future of conservation in Surrey. What makes an effective conservation strategy? How can we better manage our landscapes? How can we balance the needs of people and the rest of nature? What do we need from our leaders and what role can each one of us who cares about Surrey’s wildlife play? Please join us online for the discussion – zoom link please contact our event organiser c.meakin93@gmail.com 19.30 to 21.00

Friday 17th September to Sunday 26th.

The Great Big Green Week

The following events will be organised by GEF, (but please see p2 of this newsletter for the full programme):

Thursday 23rd Sept

Talk by Colin Summerhayes “Concern for our Planet”.

Talk by Colin Summerhayes, Emeritus Associate at Cambridge University’s Scott Polar Research Institute. Colin will cover the new geological age that has replaced the Holocene as a result of our burning, since 1950, of 90% of all fossil fuels ever burned. Reference will be made to the latest IPCC report on Climate Change and what we can do to limit future Climate Impact on our planet.

This presentation will be part of the Opening the new Climate Emergency Centre in Guildford Please book your tickets by contact our event organiser c.meakin93@gmail.com 19.30 to 21.00.

Friday 24th Sept at 09.30 until 15.00.

Scything Workshop.

The ‘Introduction to Austrian Scything’ course includes the following:

- » How to set up the scythe
- » Choice of blades for your own application
- » Sharpening (and health and safety)
- » Technique and stance
- » Personal troubleshooting and observation

Please bring your own packed lunch and water bottles etc. plus lightweight clothing. Please also bring your own scythe if you have one or use one of ours if you haven’t. This course is being run at the discounted rate of £45 for the day. Places are limited. The course will be held at the Rosamund Community Garden off Longdown Rd. ,Pewley Down, Guildford GU4 8PP. To book please also drop us an email with your full name to charlotte.gray88@gmail.com. and make a payment of £45 to the Guildford Environmental Forum. Sort code: 30-93-74. Account number: 0053- 3088, Account name: Guildford Environmental Forum and quote “scything”.

Sunday 26th September

Car Free Day in Guildford.

GEF will have a stall under a gazebo in the High Street. Volunteers are needed, but there is no need to book to visit our stall. Please e-mail adrian@lampcottage.net for further information or to join our volunteers.

10.00 to 17.00

GEF Campaign - Call to sign our petition: Pesticide Free Guildford



Guildford Environmental Forum together with the national campaign group Pesticide Action Network are calling for Guildford Borough Council to phase out pesticide use on Council managed and owned land within the borough.

Reducing pesticide use in the borough has the following key benefits:

BETTER PUBLIC HEALTH: pesticides are poisons that adversely effect humans as well as their target species. There is a growing body of evidence that some pesticide types that are still legal to use in public spaces are carcinogens. Children are particularly vulnerable to pesticide harm.

BETTER NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: Pesticides damage all living organisms and systems. They accumulate in the environment and reduce biodiversity and bio-abundance. The UK is the G7 nation with the poorest biodiversity: 15% of our species are currently threatened with extinction, we have already lost 50% of our bio-abundance.

IT CAN BE DONE! Pesticides are banned in public spaces across the whole of France, Copenhagen and Seattle. Locally, Waverley borough, Petersfield and Chichester have all committed to phase out pesticides whilst trialling alternatives. There are viable alternatives we can use, including foam, fire and manual weeding.

The first step in getting Guildford to go pesticide free is to trigger a council debate which we can do with a petition on their website.

If you would like to see a pesticide free Guildford in the near future, **please follow the link below to sign our petition and share as widely as possible.**

We need 500 signatures. Thank you for your support.

[http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?ID=46&RPID=17947054&HPID=17947054&LO\\$=1](http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?ID=46&RPID=17947054&HPID=17947054&LO$=1)

GUILDFORD ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

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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 Monday 9th November.

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