

# CHALFORD CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

WORKING AS A COMMUNITY FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

## Newsletter

August 2020

The recent hot-spell, preceded and followed by torrential rain is a stark reminder of the reality of the effects of climate change. As a community at some point we'll need to plan to mitigate the impact of these changes – such as water supply, cooling strategies and further flood prevention. In the immediate future however, we can as a community play our part in reducing our carbon footprint to moderate rather than exacerbate the impact of climate change. And that's what ChalCAN is all about, along with working to improve our local environment.

*The Parish Council has vacancies for 3 councillors – two for Bussage and one in Hill ward. It's a great opportunity to get involved in making decisions about our parish so do give it some thought. You don't have to live in the respective wards to be considered – but you do have to live in the parish. Closing date for applications is Monday 24th August.*

*For more information contact the Parish Clerk: [info@chalford-glos.gov.uk](mailto:info@chalford-glos.gov.uk)*



### CHALCAN E-BIKES EVENT

On Friday 4th September with the support of Chalford Sports and Social Club, who will be having their monthly open-air market, we'll be holding an e-bike information stall. Dan from EDEMO bikes in Nailsworth will be there with some e-bikes as well as a couple of local residents who have them. You can even try out a bike (subject to hygiene and disclaimer).

There will be information about how to claim the government £50 voucher towards repairs, and we can suggest local cycle routes. The market is open 1.30 – 4.00 with pizzas and beer to 7pm. **We plan to be there 2-6 pm to allow people who are finishing work to get there.**

### TIME FOR A CHANGE OF DIRECTION?

Cleaner air, quieter roads and more people walking and cycling...who would have thought there was any benefit to this appalling Covid crisis? But, whilst car use is the usual default travel option for most of us, will all these good things be lost when the restrictions finally end? Just imagine: vehicles limited to cycling speeds in towns and villages; dedicated bike ways and footpaths that get you where you want to go; more frequent public transport including simple lift sharing and affordable taxis; and street cars you can hire by the hour or day for more complex journeys. All of these could happen now, it just needs people to imagine a better future like this and press for change.

The armchair activist might just write to their MP and leave it at that. Better still to be part of the change.

*For example, would you:*

- pledge to avoid one short car journey each week - and walk or cycle there instead?
- support a 20 mph speed limit across the parish to make the roads safer and calmer?
- share seats in your car with other local people for local journeys so there were fewer cars on the roads?
- help start a local cycling or walking club to help enthuse others and to push for better local facilities?

***If you answer 'yes' to any of these, then ChalCAN would like to hear from you (see page 3)***

ChalCAN



### GREEN HOMES GRANTS SCHEME



It might be hard to think of cold and draughty winters in this weather but now is the time to do so! Under this new scheme homeowners and landlords can apply for vouchers worth up to two thirds of the cost of

upgrading the energy efficiency of their home. For most people, the maximum grant will be £5,000. Households on low incomes will be eligible for up to 100% funding, up to £10,000; you can check eligibility for the low-income scheme at [www.tinyurl.com/y37z2aau](http://www.tinyurl.com/y37z2aau). The vouchers will be issued from the end of September, but you can register your interest now at [www.grantscheme.uk/](http://www.grantscheme.uk/).

It makes sense to get advice about which measures

would be best for your property. Local energy efficiency consultants can conduct a survey of your property. You can also go to [futureproof.uk.net](http://futureproof.uk.net) for virtual advice and the Simple Energy Advice service at [www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk](http://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk) will provide support.

***The scheme will provide vouchers to install one or more primary energy saving measures:***

- solid wall, under-floor, cavity wall or roof insulation
- air source or ground source heat pump
- solar thermal panels (not PV panels)

You can also use your voucher for secondary energy saving measures, including double or triple glazing or secondary glazing; upgrading to energy efficient doors and improved hot water tank/appliance tank thermostats/ and heating controls.

To be eligible for a secondary measure, you must install a primary measure.



### BIODIVERSITY

On the 29th July ChalCAN supporters got together to remove the invasive species Himalayan Balsam from the canal towpath. Introduced to British gardens in 1839 it is now listed as an invasive species that is illegal to spread. Its seeds are catapulted up to 7m away, and over time it squeezes out the natural vegetation, leading to erosion of river banks. Taking advice from the Cotswold Canals Trust on how best to eradicate it, we set off at 10.00am with bags to collect the flowering heads before it went to seed. The whole plant is pulled up, crushed and left

to rot nearby. We cleared a substantial area west of the Valley Playing Field along the canal. The collected seed heads were then burned to prevent further spread. The use of herbicides is not recommended by water, and seeds are viable for up to three years in the soil. The plan next year is to start work earlier to catch it before it flowers.

Rewilding is a fashionable concept. Essentially, it's about letting nature do its work. And this is the year, because of these exceptional circumstances, we can see the results all around us. Locally and nationally people report seeing more flowers, more insects, hearing more birds, breathing cleaner air. Many local people have expressed their joy at seeing our green spaces, our roadside verges, our gardens and allotments covered in flowers and butterflies and hearing the air loud with bees and the thrush's song. Nature has been given half a chance and has bounced back. Some of the change has been helped along in places by ChalCAN, some by our Councils only cutting roadside verges where there is a road safety issue. Think what else will come back if we let it...

So, keep up the good work gardeners and allotmenters! Councils, thank you, please carry on changing how you manage our green spaces. Let's make small changes where we can - we'll aim for "re-greening", "re-flowering" or "re-butterflying"; maybe "re-wilding" can follow!

### FOOD AND WASTE

At the time of writing, it's National Allotment Week, and anyone growing veg will be harvesting their produce. In conjunction with the Parish Council we are putting together a recipe book, focussing on favourite ideas for using up glut produce from gardens and allotments. If you have any you would like to contribute, please send them to Kate Arnold at Chalford Parish Council. Meanwhile, here's an idea for the ubiquitous courgette:

#### **COURGETTE AND RAISIN TEA LOAF**

*Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall*

*200g courgettes (or pumpkin or beetroot)*

*200g light muscovado sugar*

*4 large eggs, separated*

*1 lemon - grated zest and juice*

*100g raisins*

*100g ground almonds*

*200g self-raising flour*

*Pinch fine sea salt*

*1 teaspoon ground cinnamon*

*Generous grating of nutmeg*

*Butter or sunflower oil for greasing tin*

Preheat oven to 170c/gas mark 3. Lightly grease a loaf tin about 20x10cm, line with baking parchment. Using an electric whisk, beat together sugar and egg yolks for 2-3 mins until pale and creamy. Lightly stir in grated courgette, lemon zest and juice, raisins and ground almonds. Sift the flour, salt and spices together over the mixture and lightly fold in using a metal spoon.

In a large clean bowl, beat the egg whites until they hold soft peaks. Stir a heaped tablespoon of this into the cake mixture to loosen a little then fold in the rest as lightly as you can. Tip the mixture into the prepared loaf tin and gently level the surface. Bake for about 1 hour, or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for ten minutes then transfer to a wire rack. Leave to cool completely before slicing.

*If you would like to get involved with ChalCAN or help with any of these projects, please contact the Parish Clerk. You can get our full newsletter and/or be put in touch with one of action groups (Biodiversity, Food & Waste and Energy & Transport)  
christine@chalford-glos.gov.uk*

### OTHER LOCAL NEWS...

There's a **campaign to reopen Stroudwater Station**, on the site of the old Bristol Road station in Stonehouse, to provide a direct sustainable transport link to Bristol. An application has been made to the Restoring our Railways New Stations Fund and they are building up support.

*There are 3 things you can do to help.*

1. You can show support and promote the campaign on social media (Facebook: Stroudwater station, Twitter: @StroudwaterSta).
2. You can sign the e-petition to persuade GCC to include this in their transport plan ([www.tinyurl.com/y3hcdgmt](http://www.tinyurl.com/y3hcdgmt))
3. You can respond to the website consultation set up by the Campaign for Better Transport at ([www.tinyurl.com/y5afkhh2](http://www.tinyurl.com/y5afkhh2)) and mention Stroudwater station in response to the question on local projects.

This year's **Stroud Book Festival** (4-8 November) will take place entirely online for the first time. Most events will be streamed live via Zoom and on Stroud Book Festival's YouTube channel (to which you need to subscribe). Already confirmed are two events in association with Transition Stroud on the evening of Thursday 5th November: a tribute to Polly Higgins and her book, "Dare to be Great", and an 'in-conversation' event with Jonathon Porritt about his new book, "Hope in Hell: A Decade to Confront the Climate Emergency"

#### **Transition Stroud's Textiles Group aim to**

- Encourage the re-use of clothes, objects and material which would otherwise be thrown away
- Share skills as part of the Transition message of sustainability for the future

The group usually meet regularly to mend and update clothes, swap clothes and fabric, and knit, crochet, make buttons or do other crafts. Repairs and sewing can be dropped off for fixing; they will be quarantined for three days then repaired if possible. All for a donation.

Subject to regulations and safety they are planning to run a Trashion Show on Saturday 7th November at Lansdown Hall, Stroud. People are invited to think about what outfit you can create from trash, rubbish, unwanted items; anything that you have and is not being used, can it be worn in some way? Contact: ClareSheridan on [textiles@transitionstroud.org](mailto:textiles@transitionstroud.org) or see [www.transitionstroud.org/textiles-group](http://www.transitionstroud.org/textiles-group)