

ALDBURY SUSTAINABILITY CLUB



This Meeting - Wednesday 15th March 2023 at The Greyhound, Aldbury @ 8-9:30pm

Next Meeting - Wednesday 14th June 2023 at Lucy Carmody's house, Aldbury @ 8-9:30pm

Attendees: Lucy Carmody, Jont Cole, Ian Brown, Fiona Wilson, David Wilde, Sue Justice, Annie Eggar, Rob Davies, Duncan Eggar, Tom Irwin, Alexandra Irwin, Andrew Irwin, Felicity Aris

Apologies: Jo Stone, Michelle Singleton, Jo Horder, Paul Barritt, Sheila Work, Hugh Wilson, Jill Timms, Neil Capp, Tim French, Ted Bianco, Nikki French

THANK YOU FROM THE LAST QUARTER

Thank you to the waste reduction team for their hard work and model group organising!

A big thank you to David Wilde, ex Parish Council Chair of Wigginton, and the team at Tring in Transition, who have helped set up thermal imaging surveys for residents. Many are very grateful, as we heard during our meeting and a few emailed their thoughts. We hope this service will be able to continue if we can find Aldbury based volunteers to learn how to use the camera.

If you think you might have time next Winter to help, please do get in contact with Tring in Transition at transition@tringintransition.org.uk.

For the past year Lucy has been Chair of this very active and growing Group while very busy with work and travel. We are very grateful for this commitment. Over the past year, we have managed to work well in the sub-groups and adjusted our project timelines where required according to people's time commitments. If there is anyone with more time on their hands to 'get stuff done' who would like to take over the Chair role to ensure momentum, please let Lucy know.

Feel free to get in touch if you are interested in taking over the Chair role lucycarmody@gmail.com

GENERAL

- No problem if there hasn't been too much progress considering busy schedules and other commitments. Thank you to everyone for coming along to have a chat and figure out what is achievable over the next few months.
- Please could all members email their contact details and area of expertise in sustainability to Felicity (felicityaris@gmail.com) so that she can populate the Members spreadsheet. It is really incredible how many experts we have in one village! It would be great to have a clear idea of who's who so that we can connect people through ASC.
- All members should be a member of min. one of the 4 Working Groups
- If a subgroup chooses to set up a WhatsApp Chat it should ensure that it works for all volunteers. Not everyone uses Whatsapp and some believe confidentiality is an issue
 - If the vast majority are using WhatsApp we could set up the Club as a 'Community' in WhatsApp and have separate 'Groups' which makes general messaging easier.
- Members of the group have raised audibility issues at our previous meetings - solutions update from Felicity

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- We decided to host the next meeting at Lucy's house on 14th June 8pm - 8, Stocks Farm Barns, Stocks Road, Aldbury. HP235RX. Please bring along a new member each if you can! Lucy will provide refreshments.
- May Fair
 - Sophie Ficek is chair of May Fair committee - if anyone wants to help with stalls/traffic, get in touch with Sophie Ficek (sophie.hanson2@btinternet.com) or Beth Cole (dr.ejcole@googlemail.com)
 - Sophie has asked for ideas to make the May Fair more environmentally friendly. Lucy has sent the following ideas:
 - We could aim for a Carbon Neutral event in 2024 - we estimate the emissions created by the MayFair and buy carbon credits to offset the Scope 1 and 2 emissions. Lucy could organise this. We could possibly do this for 2023 also but is it too late to add to marketing?
 - Stall providers - could ensure they don't use single use plastic items when serving food/drink (considering the [single use plastic ban comes into force in Oct 2023](#), they should be moving away from single use, but important to raise anyway) or everything has to be certified compostable and other food items in recyclable packaging - write into future contracts? In 2024 could this be written into Stallholders contracts?
 - There are often long queues of cars along Station Road - could ask people queuing in their cars to turn off their engines (e.g. set up signs along the road - 'No idling' or 'Turn off your engine' signs - and ask volunteers to inform visitors)
 - Communications - try to bring your own cutlery/coffee cup and, this year, take all plastic waste home to recycle.
 - Separate waste collection (e.g. use different coloured bags in bins or volunteers could help separate rubbish along the streets)
 - Concerns: Recycling can be difficult - if one bin is tainted, the whole lot isn't recycled. We would need to explain clearly what goes in recycling to the volunteers.
 - Andy Neil is helping at the May Fair with rubbish disposal and the local council provides bags (like the litter pick) - anyone from ASC who wants to volunteer can reach out to Andy or Ian on ianbrown396@gmail.com

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Action Items

- **Ian Brown** to ask Andy Neil how many volunteers he needs to help litter pick/collect rubbish at May Fair and then share with ASC members to review interest in volunteering
- **Felicity Aris** to add link to May Fair website and description of event to www.aldburyvillage.org. They could have a page hosted on the website to reduce their costs next year.

- St. John the Baptist church has received a Bronze sustainability rating (part of [EcoChurches](#) initiative) – would anyone like to support Michelle Grace/Jane Brown on this? There is a [Church of England webinar](#) to understand more on 26th April.

Action Items

- **Ian Brown** to ask Jane Brown what we need to do next and share at next meeting - e.g. how do we help reach silver rating?

- Tring Church sustainability group – update from Felicity
 - An informal group met at Tring Church in January to discuss how they could set up initiatives in their community - received no further communication about their plans since
- NEWS zero carbon community heat pump group headed by Nick de la Bedoyere. If anyone is interested in hearing more please [contact him](#).

Action Items

- **Felicity Aris** to share article with ASC members

- Youth engagement – update from Felicity
 - Force of Nature - online action network for 16-35 year olds. They run climate cafés, community zoom calls, provide volunteer/paid opportunities, and run an online Slack discussion board for young people interested in taking action in their own communities. If you know of anyone interested, they can take a look at their [website](#).
- Dacorum Climate Action Network – join as an organisation? – update from Felicity
 - Anyone interested in getting involved with other climate action groups or activities in the local area, you can sign up to their Facebook group as an individual or an organisation → [Dacorum Climate Action Network](#)

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Action Items

- **Felicity Aris** to sign ASC up as an organisation and look into collaboration/publicity opportunities

- Annual litter pick, Saturday 22nd April - Sally Ann Houghton is running it and Lucy Carmody has litter picking tools
 - Anyone interested in helping out at this event, please [get in touch with Sally Ann](#)

WORKING GROUPS

- Each working group will meet when it needs to and report on progress at the quarterly Club meeting
 - **Transport** - Tim French
 - **Nature** - Jont Cole
 - Fiona to join this group.
 - **Waste reduction** - Sue Justice
 - **Buildings and energy** – Ian Brown (leading temporarily, communications)
 - Would anyone like to volunteer to run the Buildings and Energy Working Group?

1. TRANSPORT (Tim French)

- Promoting cycling and walking
 - Bike rack - in the works (NEEDS SOMEONE TO TAKE LEAD ON THIS)
 - £5000 available to purchase the bike racks
 - Bike rack proposed location – ideas raised at the meeting:
 - Inside the Peace Hall wall?
 - Adjacent to school entrance?
 - On the other side of the Church yard wall (Is it possible to put bike rack on consecrated land?)
 - In the car park by the tennis court - too far from bus stop.
 - Outside the Greyhound, take one of the parking spots (might not be supported as it would be removing a car space, also dangerous for kids?)
 - Inside the school boundary? (potential insurance issues and not necessarily publicly accessible)
 - Key points to consider:
 - Maintaining Aldbury standards for Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation and Conservation area
 - Could cause issues with filming revenue opportunities

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- Shouldn't be placed on the triangular green outside the shop - this would likely get very muddy and an eyesore
- How many kids would use it? Survey revealed there was some appetite
- Signage from the station would help with

Action Items

- **Ian Brown** to ask Jane Brown about setting up bike racks inside Church property and to talk to Andy Stephenson about whether they would consider putting it in by the Peace Hall (could help be part of supporting the youth of the village)

- EV infrastructure (domestic + public)
 - No updates
- Feasibility of improving the footpath to Tring Station.
 - Update on funding - this project has ground to a halt due to a complication accessing the feasibility funding secured in Oct 202. ASC does not maintain a bank account and the funding had to be paid into an account by the end of the 2022-23 financial tax year. Tim was in discussion with the Parish Council to place the funding in their account however there were issues sorting this out.
 - Other restrictions include: needs the entity holding the funds to have an insurance policy that can indemnify the railway, even if the consultant had their own insurance; the entity holding the funds also can't have any control over the outcome of the project (e.g. funds would likely have to be ring-fenced)
 - Potential accounts suggested during the meeting:
 - Tring Residents association account?
 - Jill Timms Toddler's group?
 - Tim is dealing with this so we will await update
 - We have received a proposal from a consultant who could do the feasibility work

Action Items

- **Lucy Carmody** to discuss with Tim and identify next steps

- Friends of Tring Station update - Nikki Howells
 - No updates but Nikki will get in touch when he needs volunteers or help with planting
 - The 2022 Network Rail Budget have outlined some basic plans for upgrades to the station forecourt and ticket office including potentially a

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new ticket office and toilets - it would be worth keeping tabs on this once they begin consultations so that we can raise ideas around improving biodiversity and the user experience

Action Items

- **Felicity Aris** to email Nikki about how we can engage with any upcoming consultations to support positive, sustainable development of the forecourt renovations

2. WASTE (Sue Justice)

- Sharing Table
 - Looking to publicise more in the spring
 - Note: when advertising on Facebook groups, it would be helpful to specify the exact location of the table in the allotments
- Survey of local businesses
 - Sue Justice has drafted a survey to ask what businesses are doing to reduce waste so that we can identify a clearer picture of their perspective on sustainability
 - The survey has been shared with other people in ASC for comments and will be conducted in person to encourage more responses
 - Main businesses to survey: The Greyhound, Neil Gosling's Garage, Musette, Poppies, Church farm businesses, National Trust café, Stocks
- Fresh, Local Produce at Shop
 - No updates
- Recycling – battery recycling pot in village shop
 - A small pot for battery recycling has been placed in the village shop (due to health and safety requirements, we can't collect in large quantities)
 - This initiative has not been publicised yet, however lots of batteries have already been handed in
 - A member of the Waste Reduction group goes every week to collect the batteries from the shop and takes them to a larger supermarket where they collect and recycle batteries
- Recycling bins at the village shop
 - Currently there are three shoe bins located outside the village shop which are regularly full. A charity collects them (in collaboration with the village shop)
 - The group have considered other recycling bins (e.g. rubbish bins with mixed material sections). Jo Stone has contacted the Parish Council to look into this.
 - Could contact Victoria Collins, Lib Dem candidate, regarding recycling bins, as she might be interested in supporting this project ahead of the upcoming local elections

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Action Items

- **Felicity Aris** to add a note about the shoe bins to the website

- Repair – Tring Repair Café
 - Sue Justice went along to test it out - the café gets very busy and unless you get there by 10am, you probably won't get anything mended

Action Items

- **Michelle Singleton** to produce a poster to circulate and promote local repair cafés
- **Felicity Aris** to add a note about arriving early at repair cafés to village website

- Toy and book swap (Summer project?)
 - There are around 30 mothers/fathers/guardians who take part in book and toy swaps
 - This project is self-sustaining and members are very supportive and environmentally-oriented
 - This group considered starting up an equipment bank however the idea has not really taken off
- Equipment sharing
 - There are already a number of people in the village who share equipment with each other (under the radar), no need to take this on board at this point although there is the possibility of a village 'swap and give' facebook group?
- Olio
 - Have also set up selling and borrowing features



Free
Give away free food/non-food



Sell
Sell non-food items




Borrow
Lend to people locally



Wanted
Ask for something



Forum
Share relevant topics with the community

 Help! What can I add?

- Kate shares about food on Facebook and Olio - would like to keep it running as it is now as it is manageable and food is quickly snapped up

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- Suggestion from the group: working with school children to encourage better recycling in the local area?
 - Potentially under the remit of the Waste reduction group if they are interested in taking this on board
 - Duncan Eggar's experience as governor to a school found that good sustainability practices is also good economics (by monitoring electricity, food waste, general waste, etc. every month, the whole school becomes more engaged with very clear objectives) - would be helpful to engage with local schools/playgroups this way

3. NATURE (Jont Cole)

- Ponds - project run by Ted Bianco and Paul Barritt
 - They have received about 15 responses to their pond survey and they are now looking for IT support to set up the map to identify wildlife corridors - possibly Paula?
- Allotment seeding project – also with Ted Bianco
 - No updates - Ted is slowly building up this project and has sorted out a plot in the allotments and pots
- Aldbury Village 'pond'
 - Agreed that ASC won't actively get involved in this area - it is APC responsibility.
 - Will always be challenging because it is, effectively, a drain with water running from the fields and roads
 - A working party is being set up, to be publicised by Steve in the Outlook and on Everything Aldbury) - it would be interesting to learn more about what they are planning with the pond so could ask them to attend the next meeting?

Action Items

- **Jont Cole** to invite Steve to our next quarterly meeting

4. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- No major updates on the points listed below:
 - Resources on sustainable options – insulation, batteries, ground source, solar etc
 - Advice/articles/recommendations
 - Local help e.g. Tring in Transition, Community Support Grants
 - Anyone fuel vulnerable who needs help/support
 - Always on the lookout to help people
 - Extension on min. of fuel
 - Raise awareness of [Aldbury Community Support](#)
 - 1 page leaflet, on village website, the church, the school?
 - Speak to Monday Lunch Club

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- Useful/experienced tradespeople
- Planning - Ian Brown anything from PC re. planning regulations for conservation homes
- Collective ordering
 - Set up community ordering for insulation, thermal imaging, low carbon solid fuel
- Open day: event showcasing people's houses and the actions they have taken to improve energy efficiency, source renewable/eco-friendly material, etc.
 - No volunteer for the group currently who is interested in setting this up - anyone interested, do feel free to take this on board
- Tring in Transition (www.tringintransition.org.uk/) resurrected their energy group and have some amazing volunteers!! - update from David Wilde
 - The volunteer team have been conducting free thermal imaging surveys around Wigginton, Tring, Tring Station, and Aldbury over the winter. These are not professional reports however they do provide useful information to households about heat loss in their homes
 - This included around 14 surveys in Tring station and Aldbury (there are still a few households on the waiting list who will go into next winter)
 - A big thank you to clients for their generous donations. It would be helpful to get some feedback in a year's time - perhaps do a survey to gauge how useful the surveys were to households and what actions they have taken in response to identifying heat loss areas of their house
 - The survey report is changing format - becoming simpler with more images and action-based advice. The Berkhamsted contingent provide a record of thermal images with light comments which helps make the advice more easily digestible
 - Concern about accessibility raised to the group and any suggestions about how this service is publicise/provided to people in low income households:
 - Tring in Transition have worked with a charity in Tring to survey around 30 properties including Almshouses in Tring - households have received reports and advice about energy saving measures however they might not have the means to invest in high-cost energy saving solutions, such as heat pumps or double glazing - this is where pointing out simple measures such as draft excluders or thicker curtains, is helpful
 - People living in rented properties are also difficult to target as often landlords don't have to pay for their tenants heating bills and don't necessarily have to upgrade or retrofit their properties in the name of energy efficiency. That said, new EPC regulations come into force over the next 5 years - by 2025, any newly rented properties will need an energy efficiency rating of at least a C, and by 2028, existing tenancies will have to achieve the same or higher energy efficiency rating ([Howells LLP, 2022](#))
 - The trustees of Aldbury Almshouses could contact Tring in Transition to set up surveys
 - It would be helpful to recruit volunteers from Aldbury and Tring Station for the next winter

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Action Items

- **Sue Justice** to make a note to publicise for volunteers in the September/October issue of the Outlook
- **David Wilde** to write a small ad for volunteers to send to Sue

COMMUNICATIONS

- Email aldbury.outlook@gmail.com by the 14th of the month to submit an article
- Share articles and comments/events on [Everything Aldbury Facebook Group](#)
- Email Lucy for articles for the Village website www.aldburyvillage.org

ANY OTHER BUSINESS?

- Next meeting at Lucy's house
- Share Nick's article about the ground source heat pump with meeting notes - **Felicity Aris**
- All try to bring one new person to the next meeting