



2G3S Newsletter Extra April 2021

Local Elections May 2021

Two sets of questions were drawn up by members of 2G3S, with particular thanks to Dr Anthony Cooper. These were emailed to candidates standing in the forthcoming Local Elections.

The first set of questions were sent to County Council candidates for the Sawston and Shelford Division, and the second set were sent to candidates for Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. Unfortunately no contact email address could be ascertained for Tracy Draper of the Labour Party.

Reponses from candidates have been listed in the order they were received as follows:

County Council Candidates:

	Pages
• Maria King – Liberal Democrats	2-3
• Brian Milnes – Liberal Democrats	2-3
• Sophi Berridge – Green Party	4-5
• Eleanor Ruth Crane – Green Party	4-5
• Dale Keith Hargrove – Conservative and Unionist Party	6-7
• Manas Deb – Conservative and Unionist Party	8-9
• Anand Pillai – Labour Party	10
• Tracey Lynne Draper – Labour Party	Not Contacted

Mayor Candidates:

• Nik Johnson – Labour and Co-operative Party	No Response Received
• Aiden Van de Weyer – Liberal Democrats	No Response Received
• James Palmer – Conservative and Unionist Party	No Response Received

The questions posed to candidates for Mayor are included on p11 for completeness.

Answers From Maria King and Brian Milnes – Liberal Democrats

Dear Claire

Great to hear from you and thank you for your thoughtful and pertinent questions. I hope we are still within your deadline (just!).

The answers below are from Brian and myself as the two Liberal Democrat candidates for the Division. Personally I would like to add that I have been involved in the environmental protection, sustainability and climate resilience work professionally, if not politically, for a number of years. Liberal Democrats' Green agenda and net zero carbon ambition was the main driver for me to join the party and run as a party candidate.

Specific questions aside, if elected I would be a passionate supporter of making climate, environmental and social outcomes considerations at the forefront of any other council decisions, be it on transport, infrastructure, care provision etc. I am hoping to be able to meet you and the group soonest, it is very encouraging to learn about your work and your membership.

Kind regards, Maria

Hi again,

I just thought I'd make reference to packaging reuse legislation and deposit return schemes that will become part of the recycling landscape. We will be making representations to DEFRA in their current consultation, which includes how we might use bottle collection systems.

<https://www.mrw.co.uk/news/epr-consultation-analysis-25-03-2021/>

Brian Milnes

1. What will you do to encourage the County Council to move towards zero carbon?

Liberal Democrats' Green and Fair philosophy underpins all decisions we make locally and nationally. As far as the County Council is able to, we would want to emulate what the Lib Dems are achieving in South Cambs District, with our call to Double Nature, increase bio-diversity and our Green to the Core philosophy.

We were disappointed that the Combined Authority, who commissioned the Independent Commission on Climate Change appeared to resile somewhat from its recommendations. We would take its recommendation onboard wholeheartedly, but would require the support of other parties to do that.

Likewise, we will work with other parties as part of Combined Authority to push for an assessment on how compatible all Combined Authority housing and transport investment is with the zero carbon roadmap; we will push for higher environmental standards for housing everywhere, including across the OxCam Arc, which has the opportunity to demonstrate world-class, affordable design, with costs borne by developers and landowners.

2. Will you ask the County Council to support the Plantlife Road Verges campaign (<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>)

We will support the campaign and do what is in our power to implement it across the county.

3. What will you do to reduce use of single-use plastics within the council, and encourage it within communities?

Cambridgeshire County Council already has Plastics Strategy, which commits to being able to recycle all plastic by 2025. We would like to accelerate that. Simple things, like replacing vending machines that don't enable using reusable cups, to more complex issues such as auditing supply chain organisations, can have significant impact.

As part of the regional RECAP board (**R**ecycling **C**ambridge and **P**eterborough), Brian is already active in trying to accelerate this, and publicise adoption of good practice. He is also an investor in, for example, plastic recycling technologies, which, using anaerobic pyrolysis techniques, can recover re-usable material from a much wider sub-set of plastic materials (like black plastic) and return them to raw material stock. We will seek to use such advances as quickly as possible to contribute to the circular economy.

4. What action would you take to improve public access to the countryside in the division?

We recognise there is enormous demand to improve access, primarily for cyclists and pedestrians, to the countryside and between villages. We will build on the current [Greater Cambridge Greenways](#) scheme to expand and build more off-road cycle paths which should also be accessible to pedestrians, mobility scooter and wheelchair users.

We are also looking to support specific projects which improve access and amenities at specific countryside spots, for example Dernford Reservoir south of Stapleford. We would absolutely need to make sure that any proposed development is done in an environmentally sensitive way.

5. Do you recognise that public transport improvements in and around Greater Cambridge will not be effective without putting into place effective management and control of private motor traffic in and around the built up areas, including parking, and will you support the implementation of measures to achieve this?

Yes we do recognise that current transport usage, dominated by the private car, has hugely damaging effects. As you hopefully agree, there is a need to strike the right balance between making it harder to drive in and putting in place attractive and affordable public transport options to encourage people to switch voluntarily. Liberal Democrats vision, reflected in the Mayoral Manifesto and our county programme, includes a transformation of the transport system, with improved bus provision; measures to make Peterborough, Cambridge and other towns attractive, low-traffic destinations; mass rapid transport built quickly in the major cities; a huge boost to the quality of routes for cycling and walking. Together, these measures will attract a high proportion of people away from car use towards sustainable journeys.

6. Do you agree that a network of relatively small public transport hubs further out from the built up area of Cambridge is preferable to building large park and ride facilities on the edge of that area?

We recognise that Cambridge needs an urgent and transformative solution to its congestion and traffic problem and are very much in favour of designing and implementing a mass rapid transport system. It has to work with existing network and infrastructure, be affordable and accessible. We would be looking to de-risk the proposals by removing reliance on little-tested autonomous technologies and looking to a system than can be built and commissioned in parts, to enable it to start delivering benefits as soon as possible. Again, a balance of solutions needs to be looked at, so it is probably too early to declare what the right mix of measures would be with any certainty. There is no doubt that small public transport hubs provide the right level of flexibility and can be build and put into operation quickly and efficiently in build-up urban and suburban areas.

Answers from Ellie Crane and Sophi Berridge – Green Party

Dear Claire

Please find attached a joint response from Sophi and me as the two Green candidates for the Sawston and Shelford County Council seats.

Thank you for getting in touch.

Best regards

Ellie Crane

1. What will you do to encourage the County Council to move towards zero carbon?

The County Council declared a climate and environment emergency in 2019. They published a Climate Change and Environment Strategy in May 2020. In this, they pledge to reduce the Council's carbon footprint on by 50% on 2018-19 levels by 2023, and to aim for net-zero carbon emissions for the whole of Cambridgeshire by 2050. If elected, we would work with our fellow councillors and council officers to ensure the strategy is properly resourced and implemented, and to explore ways of increasing its ambition.

2. Will you ask the County Council to support the Plantlife Road Verges campaign (<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>)

We are both long term supporters of Plantlife and were really pleased to see Cambridgeshire County Council's announcement last month (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/wildflowers-bees-and-plant-species-to-thrive-in-cambridgeshire-after-changes-to-roadside-verges>) that they have a new wildlife-friendly verge management plan, developed in consultation with input from Plantlife among others. Wildlife is one of our passions - Ellie is an ecologist by training, and her career has included jobs at the Wildlife Trusts, Natural England and the RSPB. Sophi has already spoken to members at Cambridge 'on the verge' campaign group and is working with Stapleford Parish Council to explore how the village could support the campaign. If elected, we would help to ensure that the Council's new management plan is fully delivered and the results monitored to inform future decisions on verge management.

3. What will you do to reduce use of single-use plastics within the council, and encourage it within communities?

The County Council launched a strategy in 2019 committing them to send no plastic packaging to landfill by 2025. If elected we would ask to be kept informed on whether the targets within this strategy are being met, and if not would push for the necessary resources to be made available to achieve the strategy objectives (ideally sooner than 2025!).

The Council's plastic strategy includes actions on raising awareness about plastic waste across Cambridgeshire and 'enabling Cambridgeshire to take action'. The latter focuses mostly on recycling of plastic waste. We would like to see more focus on reducing such waste, particularly by supporting the increase in 'refill' services. Over the last few years both of us have taken action to reduce our own plastic use, with Ellie bulk buying dry goods and cleaning products in refillable containers and switching most of her personal care products to plastic-free options. Sophi always tried to buy 'naked' fruit and vegetables (not wrapped in plastic) and buy cleaning products in recycled and recyclable bottles. Ellie notes that she is lucky enough to live within cycling distance of shops offering refill and zero plastic options, and to be able to afford their products – but this isn't the case for everyone. We both think there is a lot the Council

could do – for example grants to support minimal waste businesses (like Green Weigh Shop in Sawston) in setting up and expanding their services. The Council could also sign up to the ‘Refill’ campaign, already supported by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council – this campaign focuses on reducing use of single-use plastic drinking bottles.

4. What action would you take to improve public access to the countryside in the division?

The County Council has responsibility for Rights of Way. Their role includes providing information about rights of way, ensuring rights of way have appropriate signage, and working with other landowners to address problems. If elected, we would hold regular surgeries to listen to the concerns and suggestions of residents, including any about local rights of way. We would address the issues raised in all the ways available to us as councillors, including by working with council officers and pushing for appropriate council decisions and policies.

5. Do you recognise that public transport improvements in and around Greater Cambridge will not be effective without putting into place effective management and control of private motor traffic in and around the built up areas, including parking, and will you support the implementation of measures to achieve this?

To achieve a real shift in transport modes, public transport needs to be as cheap and convenient as private car use. We agree that there is a role for disincentivising driving, as long as schemes are designed and implemented to be fair to all sections of society. We need to be careful in using financial disincentives as they risk further increasing inequality. We must also take into account the needs of people who have to drive, for example because of limited mobility, so that they can also enjoy the benefits of reduced traffic without being unfairly penalised. Driving disincentives need to go in step with improvements to public transport. London’s congestion charge worked because there was already good transport infrastructure in place – we think introducing a congestion charge would play out very differently in Cambridge and would be very cautious of such a proposal. Green Party Policy (which we fully support) has long included measures to reduce traffic in built up areas, including 20 mph speed limits in all residential areas, increased restrictions on parking outside of designated parking areas, and designing streets to give pedestrians greater priority. We should be drawing on the experiences of other cities, in the UK and abroad, to design traffic control measures that work.

6. Do you agree that a network of relatively small public transport hubs further out from the built up area of Cambridge is preferable to building large park and ride facilities on the edge of that area?

Yes. Park and Ride does not reduce car traffic, but simply shifts the problem out of the city centre into the fringes, while concentrating rush hour traffic around the P&R sites themselves. Public transport hubs which are closer to where people live, are accessible by cycle and on foot as well as by car, and enable buses to run more directly to where people need to go, would clearly be preferable. We’re big fans of the work of Smarter Cambridge Transport, who have been promoting the travel hub concept for some years.

Answers from Dale Keith Hargrove – Conservative and Unionist Party

Dear Claire,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to write on these topics, I am pleased to see so many residents and groups within the division have an active interest in protecting the environment and encouraging sustainability.

*Many thanks,
Dale*

1. What will you do to encourage the County Council to move towards zero carbon?

I will encourage the County Council to move towards Zero Carbon by encouraging and supporting projects that promote sustainability as well as those that support Green Energy such as that seen with the Babraham Road Park & Ride Solar Panel Project. As a young person in the county, the environment is a top priority. We have a duty to uphold the environmental beauty of the County and I would use my voice at the Council to remind and encourage other members to help champion the move towards Zero Carbon.

2. Will you ask the County Council to support the Plantlife Road Verges campaign (<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>)

I will certainly ask the County Council to support the Plantlife Road Verges campaign, it is a key campaign in promoting and protecting our biodiversity as a county. I believe we should always support biodiversity and that includes educating others about the importance of wild flowers in the local ecosystem.

3. What will you do to reduce use of single-use plastics within the council, and encourage it within communities?

Plastic use is an incredibly important issue that we must act on. One way in which I would like to help reduce plastic use in the area is through examining the current Waste Management capabilities of the County Council. There is always room for improvement as more technology develops when it comes to tackling plastic. I also strongly support the current County Council's strategy from 2019 and would push for its implementation to help reduce plastic use and single-use plastics. Ultimately, I believe reducing plastic use is a matter of awareness and education, I believe teaming up with schools and local authorities to raise awareness about the damage of plastic to the environment will help lessen its use County wide. I also believe we can all be champions in our own communities when it comes to reducing plastic. I will encourage not only my own party members but all Councillors and staff to reduce plastic use in our offices and in the County Council Building.

4. What action would you take to improve public access to the countryside in the division?

Public Access to the Countryside is a fantastic part of living in a beautiful county such as Cambridgeshire, I believe by improving cycle lanes and footpaths as well as ensuring they connect up with other routes in the division, we will vastly improve access to the countryside. New Developments should also have an impressive amount of green space that not only respects our environment but actively promotes it such as the inclusion of new wetlands habitats.

5. Do you recognise that public transport improvements in and around Greater Cambridge will not be effective without putting into place effective management

and control of private motor traffic in and around the built up areas, including parking, and will you support the implementation of measures to achieve this?

On this issue I believe in a multilevel approach, our first step should certainly be to improve public transport so that the capacity and facilities are there for residents to use. From there we can certainly prioritise far better and more effective management of private motor traffic in and around built-up areas. Public Transport should be convenient and private motor traffic does have a negative impact on the swiftness and convenience of busses by contributing to road congestion.

6. Do you agree that a network of relatively small public transport hubs further out from the built up area of Cambridge is preferable to building large park and ride facilities on the edge of that area?

I strongly agree that a network of relatively small public transport hubs further out from the built-up area of Cambridge is preferable to building large park and ride facilities on the edge of that area. Small public transport hubs that connect across the County and are convenient for residents to use will be beneficial when it comes to reducing overall traffic and congestion. Many people would use public transport if it were more convenient for them to do so, so part of my job if elected would be to ensure that future public transport is convenient, sensible and sustainable in its design. This will also help with reducing the County's carbon footprint by taking more vehicles off the road.

Answers from Manas Deb – Conservative and Unionist Party

Hi Claire

Thanks for reminding me and much appreciated

My division is very large and I am busy canvassing and leafleting.

I have attached my answers to all your questions and sincerely hope your green group will vote for me.

Regards

Manas Deb

1. What will you do to encourage the County Council to move towards **zero carbon?**

Answer: Extension of the County's solar scheme for households, investment in non-carbon energy use in Council properties and facilities (e.g. ground/air source and hydrogen boilers); better public transport provision, and conversion of public transport to greener fuels.

Highways & Transportation, and all committees need to "green-check" all the decisions they make, including whether such has an impact on carbon use.

1. Will you ask the County Council to support the Plantlife **Road Verges campaign (<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>)**

Answer- Yes

2. What will you do to reduce use of single-use **plastics within the council, and encourage it within communities?**

Answer-I would support reduction of vending machines which supply such items, and reviewing use in cafeteria and other foods and beverages supplied, by the Council in its facilities for staff and public, and encouraging suppliers and own staff to seek alternatives where these are practicable. E.g. use of syphons rather than bottles; encouraging staff to use their own multi-use bottles.

In the community there should be vetting of blue bin use or non-use with friendly "enforcement" by the Council; more recycling bins should be available near to retail and recreational areas where plastics are consumed; I support police enforcement of anti-litter legislation

3. What action would you take to improve public access to the countryside in the division?

Answer-Lockdown has shown the importance of access to green areas. More permissive paths need to be agreed with farmers. In my area, the tunnel underneath the KX railway on the Gt Shelford to Hauxton path has become permanently flooded, meaning disappointed walkers end up walking round field edges – we need to have a drainage scheme put in place in conjunction with agricultural needs (and the Farm Companies), and better sign-posting should be installed until it is available (this is the highest quality walking area close to the central village envelope). Overall we need better signposting of what are and are not permissive paths should be encouraged, maybe a voluntary scheme with the landowners concerned.

4. Do you recognise that public transport improvements in and around

Greater Cambridge will not be effective without putting into place effective management and control of private motor traffic in and around the built up areas, including parking, and will you support the implementation of measures to achieve this?

Answer: Yes, I agree with this. Further rat run may need to be closed, and better off-road parking facilities made available, so more double-yellow lines can be introduced to protect cyclists and smooth traffic flow.

6. Do you agree that a network of relatively small public transport hubs further out from the built up area of Cambridge is preferable to building large park and ride facilities on the edge of that area?

Answer: I agree there may be a case for more local hubs, but these would only be effective for rush-hour type parking, as smaller ones cannot sustain regular services during the day.

Answers from Anand Pillai – Labour Party

*Dear Mrs Lord, Thanks for your E Mail and yes here are my thoughts towards the questions sent.
Regards, Mr Anand M Pillai, Labour Candidate County Council Election.*

1. What will you do to encourage the County Council to move towards zero carbon?

If elected I would make sure that the County Council does move over to Zero Carbon as its important for the future of our environment.

2. Will you ask the County Council to support the Plantlife Road Verges campaign (<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>)

Yes I would make sure that there is more wild flowers planted by the road verges as this is very important.

3. What will you do to reduce use of single-use plastics within the council, and encourage it within communities?

I would make sure that the County Council is in the for front in reducing single use plastics which is important and then encourage the wider Community to do the same.

4. What action would you take to improve public access to the countryside in the division?

5. Do you recognise that public transport improvements in and around Greater Cambridge will not be effective without putting into place effective management and control of private motor traffic in and around the built up areas, including parking, and will you support the implementation of measures to achieve this?

Yes there has to be effective management of private motor traffic and parking within built up areas which means encouraging more drivers to use Park and Ride and make sure these measures are achieved.

6. Do you agree that a network of relatively small public transport hubs further out from the built up area of Cambridge is preferable to building large park and ride facilities on the edge of that area?

Yes I do agree that we should have small public transport hubs further out of Cambridge. Also my other thoughts are the pavements should be improved. Safety at the key road junctions is very important at Bridge Lane, Church Street and Whittlesford Road and High Street. There should be lower speed limits to stop rat running which is important. There should be more consultation with the public regarding the East West Route that is planned.

Questions for Candidates for Mayor

1. Will you receive with an open mind the recent recommendations of the Independent Commission on Climate Change, and what steps would you take to see that those recommendations are adopted and reflected in plans without delay?
2. How would you plan for the area covered by the Combined Authority in the light of moves afoot for others to plan for the area covered by the Cambridge-Oxford “Arc”?
3. How would you ensure that funds available for housing and infrastructure are used in such a way that the special characteristics of Cambridge and its green belt are protected, as well as meeting growth, Net Zero and ‘doubling nature’ targets?
4. As the whole of East Anglia and of the area of the Combined Authority in particular is rated as being under Water Stress, what steps would you promote to restore and improve the quality of the chalk streams in our area and would you urge Anglian Water to revoke or reduce the number of abstraction licences?
5. Given the urgent need to protect and enhance biodiversity, what would you do to increase biodiversity in the area? Would you give active support to the establishment of the Cambridge Nature Network?
<https://www.cambridgeppf.org/cambridge-nature-network>
6. Given that the ‘bus services in and around Greater Cambridge are operated by private companies and are largely unregulated, would you support the introduction of regulation of those services so that they are frequent, reliable and affordable to users and serve their needs, even though some of them might be unremunerative and the introduction (if necessary) of a degree of subsidy to achieve this?

Claire Lord for2G3S (email: [greengroupssss@gmail.com](mailto:greenproupssss@gmail.com)) 22 April 2021

The next regular newsletter will be out in early May.

