

2G3S is short for Going Green in the Shelfords, Stapleford and Sawston. You can find out more about us and our aims on our <u>website</u>.

2G3S Newsletter - Summer 2023

Editorial

You might not have noticed, but we have quietly changed what we stand for. Not in terms of mindset - we still stand for promoting green living in our homes and where we live - but what "2G3S" itself is short for. So in future you will see that it stands for "Going Green in the Shelfords, Stapleford and Sawston" instead of "Green Groups in the Shelfords, Stapleford and Sawston" which it was originally. We made this change because the former individual green groups are no longer active as such, although many of their members continue to be active in 2G3S.

Increasingly, we are co-operating with nearby eco-groups and like-minded organisations to share resources and open up our events to a larger audience. An example of this is the "Re-imagining Community Energy" event to be held on 22nd October, co-organised by 2G3S with Hasligfield and Harlton Eco group and Cambridge Carbon Footprint. Details of this and a host of other events can be found below.

Peter Woods

Upcoming 2G3S events

We have quite a few different events happening in the next few months so here is a brief summary:

August

- Every Tuesday 3pm to 5:30 pm Dr Bike Stapleford bike workshop
- Saturday 19th August Nature walk along Bury farm track
- Tuesday 22nd August Book Club at the Three Horseshoes, Stapleford

September

- Every Tuesday 3pm to 5:30 pm Dr Bike Stapleford bike workshop
- Saturday 2nd September 2G3S stand at the Challis Garden Horticultural Fete
- Sunday 3rd September Dr Bike Stapleford "Back to School" bike check workshop
- Monday 11th September South Cambs Organic Gardens talk by a local farmer
- Saturday 16th September Nature Walk at Wandlebury Country Park
- Monday 18th September Social Cycle Ride
- Monday 25th September Conversation evening: Saving on energy bills at home

October

- Every Tuesday 3pm to 5:30 pm Dr Bike Stapleford bike workshop
- Sunday 15th October Film Screening, Whittlesford (with Whittlesford Eco)
- Monday 16th October Social Cycle Ride
- Saturday 21st October Nature Walk at Wale rec, Whittlesford
- Sunday 22nd October Community Energy event Reimagining Energy

November

- Saturday 18th November Repair Cafe at the Sawston Free Church
- Tuesday 21st November Book Club at the Thre Horseshoes in Stapleford

Further details on each of these appears below.

Going Green at Home - a Series of Conversation Evenings

We are busy organising a series of meetings with speakers on different aspects of how we can take steps in our own homes (including for tenants who are renting) to reduce our climate impact and at the same time potentially save money. We are hoping that the short presentations by the speakers will lead to a discussion amongst all attending so we can share our experiences and learn from each other.

All these sessions will be held on a Monday evening. Dates are yet to be confirmed, so keep a lookout on our website and in village newsletters for further details. The outline programme includes the following:

25th September - Sawston: What can tenants in rented accommodation do to save on bills (and what can and must landlords do to improve the energy efficiency of their property?). Rory Cosgrove of South Cambs District Council will talk about small cheap ways we can all save energy. In particular we will consider what steps are open to tenants (who for example cannot install solar panels, or building insulation). Sawston Free Church (High Street, Sawston) 7:30 pm

Details to be confirmed, so please check the 2G3S website nearer the date.

November - Little Shelford: Wrapping up for winter. If you want to reduce your heating bills, where do you start? We will discuss the value of EPCs, thermal surveys, and practical steps from topping up loft insution to a whole house retrofit.

January - Great Shelford: How we eat is another area where we can make changes that could reduce emissions and also save money. Cambridge Sustainable Food will (we hope) be there to make some suggestions.

March - Stapleford: What should you consider if thinking of buying your next vehicle? It's a weighty decision, and there are some options you might not have considered....

Book Club - 22nd August

Our quarterly book club meetings have changed from Thursdays to Tuesdays. So on Tuesday 22nd August we will be discussing *Reimagining Capitalism (in a World on Fire)* by Rebecca Henderson.

In a nutshell, this book proposes that when businesses collectively and individually strive to serve a (morally good) purpose rather than simply maximise profits, they can flourish in ways that exceed what might have been possible by following the traditional (profit trumps all) model. Many case studies are examined to support this view, which variously cover environmental concerns, equity between global north and south, and how well employees are treated.

And yet the world being on fire seems to be more of a news report than a metaphor at the moment, with evacuations in progress from wildfires on Greek island resorts, smog in American cities from wildfires in Canada, and excessive heat in parts of the US directly

disrupting transport and other services. So how convincing is the thesis that enlightened capitalism provides a solution to the climate emergency?

If you want to join us at Book Club please send an email to <u>2G3S</u> with "Book Club" in the title (so we can let you know of any changes and future events). We meet roughly every 3 months. The next book club meeting after August will be on 21st November to discuss "Islands of abandonment" by Cal Flyn.

Venue: The Three Horseshoes, Stapleford, 8pm.

Challis Trust Horticultural Fete - 2nd September

We are intending to have a stall at this event, which is organised by the <u>Challis Trust</u>. We'll be displaying the "Biodiversity in our gardens" posters which we produced for the Big Green Weekend in June (see report below).

Dr Bike - Back to School weekend session: 3rd September

Dr Bike Stapleford are running a special 'Back To School' session on Sunday 3 September, from 10am to 4pm. This is intended in particular for children (accompanied by a parent please). This will be at the usual venue - the Old Slaughterhouse on Church Road in Stapleford.

We hope that this will be really useful if your child is going to cycle to Sawston Village College, as they can learn the basic checks needed on their bikes.

The regular Dr Bike mid-week sessions will continue to run at the Slaughterhouse in Stapleford every Tuesday afternoon from 3pm until 6pm (please aim to arrive by 5:30 latest).

Monday 11th September - Talk on sustainable farming

This talk is organised by South Cambs Organic Gardeners group, which is independent of 2G3S. This group has now been going for 6 months, and has had a lovely summer of visiting allotments and gardens.

From September the group will be returning to Cox's Close Community Centre in Stapleford for monthly meetings. This month we will be having a talk by Robert Smith from Russell Smith Farms, the farming company which farms much of our local land. It's sure to be an interesting talk for anyone interested in the land and growing. Our meetings are open to all, whether organic gardeners or not. Please do come along.

Talk begins at 7pm. There will be refreshments after the talk. Attendees will be asked for a contribution of £2 towards costs. For further details, please contact Helen Harwood Cambridge 840393 helen_harwood_uk@yahoo.co.uk

Film Screening - 15th October

2G3S is teaming up with Eco Whittlesford to bring you something inspiring for an autumn evening!

A screening of a film from the 'Local Futures' organisation: '**Planet Local: a Quiet Revolution'**

This 50-minute film celebrates the power of community and gives voice to a growing number of people building a more beautiful world. Featuring grassroots activists from every continent alongside internationally known figures like Noam Chomsky, Vandana Shiva, Russell Brand, Naomi Klein, Jane Goodall, Gabor Maté and Helena Norberg-Hodge – all of them bringing inspiration and clarity to a world full of dark news.

We hope you will stay for an informal discussion after the film.

Refreshments provided. All are invited; there is no charge but donations welcome.

Sunday 15 October at 7 pm

Whittlesford Memorial Hall, Mill Lane, Whittlesford, Cambridge, CB22 4NE

Community Energy - 22 October 2pm - 5 pm

Following on from the successful <u>Reimagining our Future</u> ... <u>Together</u> event in January, and in collaboration with the <u>Net Zero Now Programme, Haslingfield and Harlton Eco, 2G3S</u> and <u>Cambridge Carbon Footprint</u> are pleased to announce a follow-up event, Reimagining Community Energy ... Together.

The venue is yet to be confirmed so keep an eye on the 2G3S website, and in the meantime mark your calendars!

In response to the enthusiasm for the topic arising from January's event, this event will focus on community energy - what it is, why it's a good thing, who is working on it, and how your community can have a go.

With expert speakers and stalls from Octopus Energy's community energy project, Younity; Cambridgeshire County Council's Head of Energy Services Eithne George; Transition Cambridge; Cambridge Carbon Footprint; and local people at various stages of actual community energy projects, including solar, wind and heat networks, we will explore the possibilities for communities to work together to develop their own renewable community energy generation schemes.

Community Energy programmes often start with reducing energy needs in the first place, so we'll also have local retrofitting experts on hand who can answer your questions about transitioning to comfortable, cost-effective homes that are good for us and the planet.

As in our first event, there will be a community assembly inspired guided conversation element to this event. A chance to meet and talk to others from around the region who are interested in helping to be part of the solution to our current crises and working toward a positive, healthy future together.

As there is so much information to cover, this one is not a family event.

If you would like to be involved on the day, perhaps as a general helper or to run a stall/share your own experience of community energy, or if you have any comments or suggestions, do get in touch by email: <u>2G3S</u>.

Sunday 22nd October 2pm - 5pm - venue to be announced.



<image>

Sawston Repair Cafe – Saturday 18th November 2pm – 5pm

Bring along your broken item and a skilled volunteer will help you fix it! We can tackle a wide variety of repairs including clothes and fabrics, electrical items, jewellery and other items. We may be able to accept some repairs on the day, but please note that for electrical repairs in particular it is better to book in advance. (Please note that we will not be able to replace cracked screens on phones or tablets).

We are grateful to the Sawston Free Church for providing the venue for this event.

If you have any questions, please email 2G3Srepaircafes@gmail.com

It's a free event but donations are very welcome. The repairers are brilliant and can fix a lot of things but there are no guarantees. Tea and cake will be available of course!

2G3S Nature walks

Our Nature Walks are held on the 3rd or 4th Saturday of the month and start at 2 p.m. Walks are intended to raise awareness of local wildlife sites and associated fauna and flora. Participants are welcome to share their knowledge. All walks are at attendees own risk.

Here is a list of the remaining walks planned for 2023:

- Wandlebury 16 September
- Wale Recreation ground and woodland 21 October

Please remember that dates and details may change, so we advise participants to check the 2G3S web site beforehand.

Wandlebury Country Park - 16th September

You are invited to join me for an informal nature walk at Wandlebury Country Park from 2-4 pm. Meet by the main Information boards by the car park. The Country Park offers walks though woodland and meadows grazed by cattle. There are also several lengths of laid hedges of high biodiversity.

Note there is a car parking charge for non-members of Cambridge Past, Present and Future.

Sturdy footwear is advised and appropriate outdoor wear. Note these walks are intended to raise awareness of our local wildlife sites and open to all, though you attend at your own risk. Sturdy footwear is advised and appropriate attire for the weather conditions.

Wale Recreation Ground, Little Shelford - 21st October

Join me for an informal nature walk at the Wale Recreation Ground on Saturday 21st October between 2-4 pm. We can explore the local flora and identify the trees along the woodland walk. Meet at 2 p.m. at the entrance gate opposite 46 Whittlesford Road. Sturdy footwear is advised and appropriate attire for the weather conditions. Note these walks are at your own risk and intended to raise awareness of our local wildlife sites and open to all.

You don't have to book for these walks - just come to the designated meeting point at 2pm. (The meeting point for each walk is as above, and also given on the 2G3S website).

Sturdy footwear is advised and appropriate outdoor wear. These walks are intended to raise awareness of our local wildlife sites and share knowledge of the local fauna and flora, though you attend at your own risk.

John O'Boyle

2G3S Social cycle rides

Our monthly social cycle rides have taken a break over the Summer, but will resume in September. Join us for a leisurely ride on quiet roads and traffic-free paths of around 20 miles, to include a coffee stop.

Here is a list of the dates for forthcoming bike rides:

- Monday 18th September
- Monday 16th October

All are 10am start at Stapleford Pavilion. Returning to Stapleford by about 1pm.

Booking essential: greener@sawston.org

Dr Bike Stapleford - Tuesdays 3pm - 6pm

Volunteer-run weekly Bike Repair Sessions at the Old Slaughterhouse in Stapleford, which is on Church Street near the Three Horseshoes pub. 3 pm - 5:30 pm every Tuesday.

We offer a free 23-point check, and we can do minor repairs for a donation (just to help us maintain a stock of commonly used spares).

Children are welcome but must bring a responsible adult with them as well as their bike. We can't work on hydraulics or e-Bike electrics.

If you are interested in joining our team of volunteers, or have any questions on Dr Bike, get in touch using drbikestapleford@gmail.com.

Reports on Recent 2G3S Events

Repair Cafe and SWISH at the Shelford Rugby Club, 15th July

We were very pleased to have the chance to use a larger than usual venue for our latest repair cafe, held at Shelford Rugby Club on 15th July 2023. We made good use of the available space by combining the repair cafe with a SWISH (clothes swap).

This seemed to work out well – we had room for more repairers, and that meant that we were able to accept all the items brought in on the day as well as the booked-in items, with visitors only needing to wait a few minutes, if at all, to see a repairer.

The overall success rate for repairs was 72%, which is a pretty good result – you can see the overall impact of our efforts on the Restarters' "Fixometer" website.

The SWISH did well too, with a good quantity of clothing donated, most of which found new owners very quickly! the remaining items have been donated to the Arthur Rank Hospice Charity.

We would like to thank the Shelford Rugby Club for allowing us to use their facilities for this event.

Great Big Green Week - June 2023



Rachel Vollerthun created a set of 3 posters for us on the theme of biodiversity in our own gardens, which were on display in Shelford Library during the week of 10th-18th June, this being the Great Big Green Week for 2023. One of the 3 posters is shown above.

2G3S Book Club - May 2023

The 2G3S book group met on 30th May to discuss "Forget Me Not" by Sophie Pavelle, which is a first person account of the author's attempts to see ten different species that are native to the UK but threatened with extinction here, due to changing climate and loss of habitat.

This young author's style was in strong contrast to that of our our last read, Regenesis by George Monbiot, which is a very serious work with a meticulous and substantial list of references. Forget Me Not is very much a travelogue rather than a reference tome, but despite the lighter touch it did contain some interesting insights.

For example, I was unfamiliar with the term "Blue Carbon" until I read about this in Sophie's report of her visit to the Lynn Penisnula in Wales. It was here that she encountered seagrass and the attempts that are under way to understand its huge potential as a carbon sink. Groups are already at work taking practical steps to restore lost seagrass meadows by painstakingly harvesting seeds underwater, growing them as seedlings in the lab, and replanting them underwater.

Here is a link to a series of articles in the Guardian about this and other aspects of Blue Carbon:

Part 1: <u>https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/04/can-blue-carbon-make-offsetting-work-these-pioneers-think-so</u>

Part 2: <u>https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/05/seagrass-meadows-could-turn-tide-of-climate-crisis-aoe</u>

Part 3: <u>https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/06/dangerous-blindspot-why-overlooking-blue-carbon-could-sink-us</u>

Our next Book Club meeting is on 22nd August, see above.

Other Local News

Second Hand September

This is a campaign by Oxfam to encorage buying good condition second hand clothing instead of buying new.

"When you shop and donate second hand, you reduce waste, take a stance against climate change, and help create a fairer world – and you do it all while looking fabulous."

Information on how to donate clothing and where to buy, can be found at your local Ofam shop, or online here: <u>https://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/second-hand-september/</u>

Open ECO Homes autumn programme announced



Open Eco Home Tours and Talks 14 Sept - 20 Oc

Cambridge Carbon Footprint is delighted to present a new season of tours and talks desgined to inspire, inform and involve Cambridgeshire residents in the processes and practicalities of home energy improvements through retrofit and design.

With 10 planned Eco Home tours, across a wider region of the county than before, and 5 free talks there will be something for everyone to engage with.

Eco Home Tours, energy saving talks and events include: 7 Retrofits of inspiring homes

- Wide variety and ages and now featuring homes in Caxton, Guilden Morden, Heydon, and St Ives
- Now beautiful, comfortable homes with a tiny energy consumption.

3 New-builds:

- Marmalade Lane revisiting a cohousing community of 42 homes 5 years on
- Self-builds in a development of 9 very different new homes in Caxton
- Building Hope modular eco homes for the homeless

Talks and events:

- Human Library book out one of our experts and experienced volunteers
- Low Carbon Heating learn about heat pumps and other low carbon options
- Cambridge Retrofit Guide Practical advice to retrofitting your home; what measures, how much and with who?
- Low Cost Home Energy Savings for All low cost and solutuons for home owners and renters.
- Open Eco Homes Retrospective what our hosts have learnt in 10 years







For a full list of OEH events as they become available see https://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/open-eco-homes/



All hosts are volunteers, keen to show what they've done and hopefully inspire othersto do something similar. But they are not selling anything; in fact, they will discuss what went wrong or was difficult, as well as their triumphs. Each home has a case study with full details

of their design approach, costs, energy savings and contractors and suppliers used. All talks and tours are free.

Better Ways 4 Busways Update

The campaign group Better Ways 4 Busways is reminding us that their petition asking for decision-makers to consider an alternative route for the busway, adjacent to the A1307, is still open for signatures. The petition will bepresented to local politicians in September, when they are due to make a decision on this scheme. Over 2,200 people have signed so far. Please encourage friends, family and colleagues to sign as well. Sign at www.change.org/save-se-cambridge-countryside.

If this does not change the minds of our local politicians, then the next stage is that there will be a public inquiry for the government to decide whether the GCP's bus road through the countryside should be given permission. BW4B will take part in the inquiry and argue against permission being granted, asking instead for a scheme in the A1307 corridor. BW4B are raising funds to pay for independent experts to provide evidence for our less-damaging alternative and to provide legal and professional advice. Their target is £60,000.

Local charity Cambridge Past, Present & Future is collecting donations to this fighting fund. Donate here <u>Save Southeast Cambridge Countryside | Cambridge Past,Present and</u> <u>Future (cambridgeppf.org)</u> Donations will be returned if an enquiry is avoided.

Cambridge City Council Retrofitting guide - feedback welcomed

In our last edition we promoted the comprehensive <u>home energy retrofitting guide</u> published by Cambridge City Council. The City Council officers would welcome feedback on this guide, so if anybody has any feedback, please email us at <u>2G3S</u> and we will make sure your comments are forwarded to the relevant people on the council.

Zero Carbon Community Grants awarded



South Cambridgeshire District Council has recently announced that it has awarded £500,000 worth of Zero Carbon Communities grants, as part of the Council's vision to help the district become net zero carbon by 2050. In particular:

• Cambridge Carbon Footprint will receive £15,000 to continue expanding and developing their repair café network. Staffed with skilled volunteer repairers, the cafes fix items

(from clothing and small electricals to bikes) free of charge and educate people around circular economy and consumption habits.

- Cambridge Carbon Footprint's thermal imaging scheme will receive £11,095 to continue their thermal camera loans to households across the District. They will also continue their Open Eco Homes scheme and employ a Home Energy Officer to support households making energy efficiency upgrades to their homes.
- Cambridge Sustainable Food will receive £15,000 to develop and extend their network of sustainable food and local growing projects and continue outreach to educate people around food and greenhouse gas emissions.

News from further afield

Is the UK government about to abandon its commitment to nature and the environment?

Concerns have been widely raised that the UK government is planning to abandon the UK's flagship £11.6 billion climate and nature funding pledge.

This would be a dire abandonment of our commitment to protect the world's most vulnerable people and places.

Friends of the Earth's have organised a petition asking the government to keep its funding commitment. Over 35,000 have already signed and this petition is still open for further signatures. You can add your name by following <u>this link</u> to the FOE website.

The somewhat weak justification offered for the abandonment of these pledges is that the government does not wish to add household bills of ordinary people at a time of high inflation. However, Since that announcement, the government has announced it is re-examining a number of other policies, including tightening minimum energy efficiency standards for the private rented sector.

Home decarbonisation is one of the government's principal measures for lowering household bills, and reducing the UK's exposure to the volatile international gas markets which the Office for Budget Responsibility has identified as the key driver of fiscal insecurity. Far from adding to household bills, green policies and investment could help insulate households from future energy price shocks. According to an E3G briefing, new energy efficiency standards would save renters £570 per year, leading to aggregate annual savings of £1.75bn.

Make Your Money Matter

Did you know that making your pension "green" is 21 times more effective than giving up flying and becoming a vegetarian and switching to a renewable energy provider combined, say the campaign group <u>Make My Money Matter</u>.

There's a whopping three trillion pounds invested on our behalf in UK pensions, much of which is funding fossil fuels and driving deforestation. Pension funds financially support almost every sector, including arms and tobacco, making us unintentional investors in the practices we condemn. This is our money, so what can we do?

For starters, we can contact our current provider and tell them to go green. There's a prewritten email on the <u>Make Our Money Matter</u> site that gets sent directly to your particular pension provider and requests that they use their power to end fossil fuel expansion, tackle deforestation in their portfolio, and invest more in climate solutions. If that doesn't work, we can ask our employers to move our money into sustainable pensions and fossil fuel-free investments.

<u>Nest</u>, the UK's largest workplace pensions provider, has an Ethical Fund which invests with a view to how people and the planet are treated., and along with <u>Cushon</u>, who have the world's first Net Zero pension, they aim to develop new forestry investment strategies to address climate change pressures.

If you have a private pension, or are looking to start one, <u>PensionBee</u>'s Sustainable investing prioritises funding companies that consider their long-term impact on people and the environment. Their Fossil Fuel Free Plan is one of the UK's first mainstream private pensions to completely exclude companies with proven or probable reserves in oil, gas or coal, tobacco companies, manufacturers of controversial weapons, and persistent violators of the UN Global Compact, whilst also investing more of your money in companies that are aligned with the Paris Agreement.

And this doesn't mean your investments won't grow. Quite the contrary. Peter Michaelis, head of sustainable investment at <u>Liontrust</u>, said: 'We believe sustainable companies have better growth prospects and are more resilient than businesses not prioritising environmental, social and governance issues. These advantages remain underappreciated by the wider market.'

Last Word

This edition's Last Word happens to have been written by the editor, but from the viewpoint of one of the team who organises our Repair Cafes.

I recently attended the 2nd ever European Repair Café Conference, an on-line event with speakers and attendees from the UK, Europe, and the USA.

We know that our own repair cafes are very popular, but we suspect that there are a lot of people out there who have not even heard of them, and we are always trying to think of ways to expand awareness of repair cafes and the whole "Reduce-Repair-Reuse-Recycle" mentality. It seems we are not alone, with similar thoughts being expressed by several of the speakers at the conference. But while we try to find ways to appeal to a wider audience, in particular to be inclusive of younger people, there is a trend in continental Europe toward making the idea of repairing, rather than (throwing away and) replacing, mainstream.

Since January 2021, shoppers in electronics and appliance shops around France have seen new colour-coded labels on some products, showing a score of how easy it should be to have the product repaired. The scores are part of the world's first repair index, which campaigners believe could have a global impact.

More recently, France is initiating a clothing repair program, intended to reduce waste. (Each year in France, around 772,000 tons of clothes are discarded, with two-thirds of them —

many items probably perfectly wearable — adding to the heaps of usable "trash" in landfills). The new scheme involves the government offering a "repair bonus" for people to have their clothes mended. Starting in October 2023, those joining the program will be able to receive a credit of $\notin 6$ to $\notin 25$ for bringing their shoes and clothes to a cobbler or workshop to be mended.

I still think a cup of tea and a chat, as available at our repair cafes, is even better value, but this is an interesting concept that I hope we might see considered on this side of *la Manche*.

The EU is drafting legislation that would apply throughout the EU, to require manufacturers to provide a repairability rating for their products, similar in concept to the A+, A, B, C, D etc "energy rating" we are familiar with, and also an obligation to make information (and spare parts) available to consumers and repairers. This reminds me of what we already are used to for motor vehicles – of course it's not affordable to scrap a car because, say, the radiator is leaking, but replacement radiators are available and there are plenty of competent workshops who can carry out the repair (for a fee of course). This contrasts with what we find at our Repair Cafes even for quite expensive electrical and electronic items, where it may not even be possible to access the interior of a device without damaging it, and when a fault can be traced to a defective component, no spare is available. Repair cafes are explicitly considered in the draft EU legislation, which is an indicator of how influential the Repair Café movement has become.

In the meantime - our next Repair Cafe is in November - tell your friends!

Peter Woods

The editor welcomes ideas and copy by email, for inclusion in future newsletters. The next edition will be due in November 2023 - please send contributions to the editor before the end of October.

We encourage you to let us know what you think about this newsetter- send your comments to the editor via 2g3snewsletter@gmail.com.



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