

**Environmental
Group**

Issue 52

www.earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk

Earley - Old English 'Earnley' = eagle wood

CHALLENGING TIMES

Is reality finally kicking in? In spite of the leader (Donald Trump) of one of the biggest polluters on the planet (the US) insisting global warming/climate change is fake news, it is becoming generally accepted that the scientists have it right. Weather has always varied over time, but it is becoming far more unpredictable: witness the top 10 warmest years on record in the UK have all occurred since 2002 (analysis from the Met Office). The Met Office also confirmed that the UK's hottest temperature ever - 38.7C (101.7F) - was recorded on 25th July.



There seem to be phases in the environmental anxieties we suffer, but we have finally arrived at global warming and subsequent climate change. Young people are urging for action, insisting that governments should take steps to prevent this calamitous event, and there are signs that some politicians are listening. Visionary changes to human activity are needed on a planet-wide scale, but hard to imagine this happening in a hurry, but it can occur locally (get up-to-date with how our local leaders are coming to grips with it on page 2).

Changing the subject, we have good news and sad news. Firstly, the sad news is that Peter Soul died on May 15th. Peter, after discussions with the Earley Environmental Group and Maiden Erlegh Residents Assn., in 2010 founded EASI (*Earley Adopt-a-Street Initiative*) together with Brian Hackett. By enlisting the help of local volunteers, and spurred on by Peter's e-mails and great enthusiasm, they labour to keep Earley free of litter. We send our condolences to Peter's wife Jo and family.

The good news is that members of the Earley Environmental Group have been awarded two awards and are nominated for another (page 3).

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Wokingham Council moves to address Climate Emergency

The Council has appointed Councillor Gregor Murray as Executive member for Climate Emergency and has opened a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/644086849443503/> to “share ideas of Environmental initiatives that the council could undertake in order to 1) reduce our carbon footprint or 2) offset our carbon emissions” – so do make your suggestions!

During the Council meeting on 18th July, in response to a Question (ref. 25.3 in Agenda) from



Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey, Councillor Murray announced that the Council will be seeking to install ethically manufactured solar panels and potentially other alternative energy generating devices onto the roofs of the Borough's schools, leisure centres, libraries and some other suitable Council owned properties, starting during the next school year.

Councillor Gregor Murray, Executive Member for Climate Emergency, talking with demonstrators before the Council meeting- photo: Harry Atkinson.

Later in the meeting, after a long debate and with cross-party support, the Council adopted ‘amended Motion 417’ (ref. 29.2 in Agenda) declaring a climate emergency.

‘Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) believes the world is now in a climate emergency. More concerted and urgent action is needed at local, national and international level to protect our planet for future generations. As such, this Council commits to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*.

The Executive Member for Climate Change will set up a cross-party working group on the climate crisis to investigate and propose further recommendations to help achieve a carbon neutral Borough, reporting back within six months.

The working group will invite, consult and involve as wide a participation from our local community as possible, in order to create a broad consensus of how we contribute to the fight against the climate crisis.’

**The date 2030 was in the original motion but was omitted from the draft minutes. I am assured this was a clerical error.*

Draft Minutes are at <https://wokingham.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=3269&Ver=4>
To see video of the debate click on the link to YouTube – the climate emergency debate starts after 2 hours and fifteen minutes and lasts about half an hour.

John Booth

ETHIOPIA HAS PLANTED MORE THAN 350 MILLION TREES IN A DAY

What you can do. Trees absorb carbon emissions. We need more!

Sign up now -

<https://act.friendsoftheearth.uk/petition/tell-uk-government-double-tree-cover>



Woodland Trust: Over the next 10 years aim to plant 64 million trees.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/>



Encouraging environmental awareness in the young



Earley Environmental Junior Group, led by Charlotte Alchin, meet monthly at the reserve. In April, nine families received their **John Muir*** **Discover Award** at a presentation hosted at the Earley Town Council Chambers. They have been working to achieve the award for 12 months and with help from the Ranger Team, discovered much about the fauna and flora in the reserve.

*John Muir, born Scotland, emigrated to America . Engineer, naturalist, philosopher, writer, botanist, geologist, environmentalist.

Notice boards - telling the story of Lower Earley

Meadows, and the River Loddon.

Derek Davis, a member of the Earley Environmental Group, was a recipient of the July **Mayor's Roll of Honour**. He dismantled two important historical notice boards of artistic merit in Lower Earley Meadows, refurbished them and re-erected them, using all his carpentry and metal skills to restore them to their former glory.

Another possible award

The *Earley Environmental Group Wednesday Volunteers*, who help to look after the Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve and other parts of the town, have been nominated for a **Pride of Reading Award**. The group, which is organised by Earley Town Council, have been nominated for the Volunteers of the Year Award.



Chalfont Woods saved (for now)

Plans have been abandoned for the moment to develop Chalfont Woods, a valuable green space at the edge of Chalfont Park, much to the relief of local residents who opposed it. This is not a permanent decision, as the Council has only agreed to exclude the site from current plans, so it is still under threat. Do your bit for green spaces in Earley and sign the petition to make the protection permanent. <https://wokingham.moderngov.co.uk/mgEPetitionListDisplay> - Current e-petitions, Protecting Chalfont Wood

NEWS FROM BEYOND EARLEY: Peter Wadhams, a leading British scientist, warns the “decaying” of the Greenland ice sheet risks pushing up the sea level and threatens coastal cities around the world. The melting has moved from low altitude edges to include its surface at the centre. “It’s coming down more or less like Niagara Falls, down through holes all over the ice sheet”. The World Met organisation said July equalled the record for the hottest month in history.

Warm weather may be good news for some **butterflies**: in 2018 the **Common Blue** increased by 104% compared with the previous year, thanks to warm weather. It may also be a record year for the **Painted Lady** so keep a look-out.

EARLEY GARDEN SURVEYS: Butterflies

June: Gillian: Holly Blue, Painted Lady (June 26), Red Admiral, Speckled Wood

Margaret: Comma, Holly Blue, Painted Lady (June 20), Small Tortoiseshell

July: Gillian: Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Small White, Speckled Wood, Gate Keeper

Margaret: Holly Blue, Large White, Small Tortoiseshell, Ringlet, Gate Keeper

LOCAL FORTHCOMING EVENTS September 2019 – December 2019

Friday September 6th 7pm - 9.30pm Bat walk & talk. Rose-Ann Movsovic will give a short talk followed by a walk to see these wonderful mammals. Meet at the Interpretation Centre, Instow Road. 30 spaces only so pre-booking required - check poster and website for booking details.

Tuesday October 15th 10am - lunchtime Autumn litter pick. Meet at the Waterside Centre on Thames Valley Park Drive at 10am. Further details: Grahame Hawker 0779 6170689.

November meeting - To be decided, please check EEG website/Events

Monday December 16th 7pm to 10pm Christmas party. Interpretation Centre, Instow Road. Open to all EEG members. Come along - bring some food to share (please let us know what you are bringing, so we can balance the fare), we'll provide mulled wine.

Bits and Pieces

Don't forget: the Earley Environmental Group has a [Facebook](#) presence. We will be using this in addition to the main website and the newsletter as a way of keeping everyone up-to-date with our activities, and to let you know about upcoming events. Members are also welcome to post news stories or any photographs relevant to the group. Search for 'Earley Environmental Group' and we should pop up. Look forward to seeing you on there. **Mel Orros**

EASI (Earley Adopt-a-Street Initiative) would like more volunteers. Help keep your street clear of litter. Everything provided. Contact Brian Hackett by phone (986 1115) or e-mail easilittergroup@gmail.com.

Can you offer active **help to EEG**? If so, phone 0118 962 0004, or go to the website <http://www.earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk>. We would welcome more member involvement. If you have no expertise and would like to get involved, you may be able to give practical help or maybe you have graphic design skills, computer skills, any other skills to offer. At the moment 'the few' help to keep EEG going.

EEG committee members can be found on www.earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk under Contacts.

For **Wildlife Survey Forms**, go to the website, or phone Earley Town Council on 0118 986 8995.

Comments or contributions to the newsletter to: sheila.crowson@ntlworld.com, or 2 Reeds Avenue, Earley, RG6 5SR. We would welcome short contributions from members.

If you know someone who would like to join **EEG**, **membership forms** are available from Earley Town Council, 0118 986 8995, on the website under Downloads , or send an e-mail to the Membership Secretary, Liz Wild at liz@helva.plus.com. **Please inform Liz if you intend to change e-mail or address** at 50 Kenton Rd, Earley RG6 7LG, or e-mail her.

Erlegh Elfins: A pre-school playgroup on Thursdays at the Interpretation Centre in Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve runs from 10 am to 11:30 am, with a focus on outdoor play and exploration of the natural environment. For more information, please contact erleghelfins@gmail.com or Charlotte on 07771 605825. There is a limit on numbers to ensure safe play. Child-minders are welcome. Adults are responsible for the children they bring with them, so a ratio of 2:1 is recommended. A charge of £1.50 per child applies.

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