

Newsletter

June 2021



Thinking of buying an electric car and reducing your carbon impact?

Claire and Mark bought their first electric car 18 months ago, and love it, but there are a few things they wish they'd known at the outset:

- Electric vehicles (EVs) can be plugged into a standard 13A 3-pin plug at home (buy a purpose-built heavy-duty cable and don't plug it into an extension cable!) to get a 3KW charge, but you can get a £350 grant (OLEV) towards installing a dedicated home charging unit (usually 7KW).
- Newer EVs have a range of 150 miles or more, which is plenty for most journeys. However, range is reduced by driving conditions (e.g. how hard you accelerate, and "hilliness" – a significant factor around Stroud). Also battery capacity and hence range decrease significantly during the colder, winter months when the heater's on.
- Charging points come in three categories
 - Slow (3KW – e.g. home charging via 3-pin plug)
 - Fast (7KW – e.g. dedicated home charging points and purpose-built charging points at Tesco etc.)
 - Rapid (44 or 50KW, or even higher, usually just at motorway services - e.g. Ecotricity Superhighway)
 - Slow charging generally charges to full capacity overnight; Fast in 4-5 hours; Rapid in an hour!
- EVs come in many different sizes from large to small. Prices are coming down all the time, but they still typically cost more than a petrol/diesel equivalent. There is a good second-hand market for EVs now but



be aware that battery capacity increases all the time so older EVs will have lower battery capacity (hence range) than newer models.

- Annoyingly, EV's use different types of charging connectors, and that's the main thing you need to check when looking for charging points when out and about – the most popular is Type-2 for "Slow" and "Fast" charging, but CCS and CHAdeMO are needed for "Rapid". If your car doesn't support rapid charging, you can only get another 50 miles or so of range from a charging session at motorway services.
- EV chargers are being added to the network every day, but you will still need to plan out your journey for going further afield. We'll be giving more information about charging in next month's newsletter.
- EVs are great to drive as many functions are automated – windscreen wipers, lights, etc, and of course they don't have manual gearboxes!
- Mechanically, EVs are far simpler than petrol/diesel vehicles and so regular EV services are much cheaper as very little is involved.
- And of course, they're beautifully quiet, and much more environmentally friendly.

If you have more questions, come along to see our demo of EVs and information session in September or contact us at info@chalcan.org.uk

The Long Table: a local food sharing project

Promoting a carbon neutral community and zero-waste are two of ChalCAN's priorities. The Long Table, focusing on the provision, preparation and sharing of local food, does just that by reducing food waste and the distance food travels before it reaches our plate.

Tom Herbert co-founded the Long Table in Brimscombe in 2018 with a vision to "make locally sourced and lovingly prepared food available to everyone" and to put food at the centre of communities. The literal "long table" was, pre Covid, an excellent place to meet friends or strangers and share delicious food – if you could get a seat! Staff and volunteers stepped up during the pandemic, providing NHS staff with meals from 11 Freezers of Love sited in the county's hospitals. The trainees and volunteers now make yummy meals for sixteen "Freezers of Love" located across the county, including the Parish Centre in Chalford.

The meals, to which you can help yourself from the freezer, are free of charge to ensure that everyone can enjoy delicious, nourishing food such as chicken curry, macaroni cheese, sausage casserole, cottage pie. Those who can afford to pay are asked to do so. To check out freezer locations and opening times or arrange delivery if needed: <https://www.thelongtableonline.com/ready-meals>. The Long

Table's "Teenage Kitchen" also trains young people in all areas of meal preparation: kitchen basics like safety, food hygiene and knife skills; baking; how to create full, nutritionally-sound meals.

What next?

- With their present lease expiring, the Long Table is hoping to move to Brimscombe Mills, just beyond the Ship Inn.
- More Freezers of Love are planned for various locations around Gloucester
- The NHS are funding for a project for the Long Table to help men who want to live a healthier life.
- "Young Minds Matter", a mental health project for young people, are also working in partnership with TLT to give young people a three-day cooking adventure tracking food from farm to fork.

If you have surplus produce, why not drop it off at the Long Table's Crop Swap table - open to all to drop off or pick up. To become a "friend" of the Long Table, donate or read more about their work <https://www.thelongtableonline.com/>. For a look inside the Long Table kitchen check out Countryfile from January 31st on iplayer. 5 minutes into the programme. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000ryp6/countryfile-ellies-home-turf>

A Biodiversity Trail around our Parish coming in July!

We are nearly ready to launch a new Biodiversity Trail, funded by a grant from the Cotswolds National Landscape and supported by the Parish Council. **Look out for full details in next month's newsletter!**

Orchids are blooming in... Brownshill!



Just look at this lovely bee orchid which appeared in the churchyard in Brownshill this June. Well done to the conservation group who have put in so much work to nurture this area.



France Lynch Pleasure Ground reveals its hidden natural history

You may have noticed a small section of the Pleasure Ground is being left uncut this summer. It is an experiment to see what flowers and grasses appear.

Surveys show that many different species survive there from the days when it was part of a large common which stretched to Bisley. Despite all the wear and tear of the last 150 years and the constant mowing, we think many of the original species found on unimproved limestone grasslands are still here. It won't grow very high and will not be fenced off. All we ask is that you tread lightly on this little piece of our rich natural heritage and take a moment to stop and wonder at the delightful range of plants which just may have survived here for hundreds of years.

For Peat's sake!

Peat is the UK's equivalent of the rainforest. Like the rainforest it is treasure. That dull, dark stuff in a plastic bag is treasure, absolute treasure. It supports a wonderful variety of plants and animals. It stores vast quantities of carbon - even the small amount of peat bog the UK has left holds carbon equivalent to twenty years' worth of UK emissions. Like the rainforest we have been destroying peat for decades, and we continue to do so. Like the rainforest we have been trying to preserve it for decades. Now however, perhaps hope is finally at hand...the government has published a 'Peat Action Plan' proposing to ban the use of peat almost completely and restore some peat lands.

What can you do to help? Firstly, don't buy ANY compost that does not clearly state that it is peat free. Currently this is easier said than done: many composts make it difficult to check the peat content and those with a low peat content are more expensive. But think about how little you actually spend on peat overall and pay that bit extra. This will put pressure on the industry to adjust to the proposed ban on peat for gardeners from 2024. Beware button mushrooms! They are grown in compost topped by a layer of peat – though again there is a proposed ban from 2030. Look for peat-free mushrooms such as oyster mushrooms. You may need to pay more, so remember we're talking about peat, the UK's equivalent of the rainforest. You'd pay to save the rainforest....

Grow your own everlasting BASIL from cuttings



- 1. Take a cutting: use scissors to cut long stems (about 5 cm) from an existing plant**
- 2. Use scissors to gently strip off the lower leaves. This gives you a long knobbly stem with just the top 4/5 leaves.**
- 3. Put the basil stems into an old jar, cup or bottle and fill with tap water to cover most of the stem (the top leaves help you balance the cutting on the jar edge).**



- 4. Leave somewhere sunny like a windowsill, and check the water level stays within 1 cm of the top.**
- 5. In about 2 weeks you should have a healthy set of roots: when they are about 2 cm long they are ready for repotting.**
- 6. Fill an old plant pot (or yoghurt pot with holes in the bottom) with soil or compost.**
- 7. Make a hole in the compost at least the size of the roots and drop the cutting in, then cover over the roots with compost.**



- 8. Water well and place somewhere sunny – the windowsill or outside.**
- 9. Check every 2-3 days and keep watering to keep the compost moist.**
- 10. Once you have 2 or 3 sets of leaves, pinch out the very top one. This will encourage new stems to grow from below so your plant is nice and bushy.**
- 11. Pick leaves as needed (always leaving a few to keep growing).**
- 12. Repeat!**

Wish you could ride a bike?



In September ChalCAN transport group will be running a course for adults who are new to cycling or who have a bike but have lost confidence. Using the widely recognised 'Bikability' training model, we'll have experienced trainers on hand to guide you. Details to follow soon, but in the meantime let us know if you are interested.

This Beautiful Planet

Local resident and composer Penny Johnson (Squire) has released a new film to celebrate diversity in wildlife. Follow the link on her website (pennysquire.com) to the YouTube clip or read more about her at <https://stories.350.org/an-aged-activists-story/>

If you would like to get involved with ChalCAN or be put in touch with one of the action groups (Biodiversity, Food & Waste, Energy or Transport) please contact Penny at info@chalcan.org.uk

Do browse our website chalcan.org.uk, follow us on Facebook and/or Instagram @chalford.can