

TAKING PERSONAL ACTION FOR A BETTER WORLD

1. SOURCES OF INFORMATION TO GET YOU STARTED

1. Global Action Plan – www.globalactionplan.org.uk
2. DEFRA Doing Your Bit; <http://www.doingyourbit.org.uk/>
3. Friends of the Earth web site; www.foe.org.uk
4. WWF web site; <http://www.wwf.org.uk/core/takeaction/rethink.asp>
5. Sustainable Development Commission

2. ACTION

Mitigation

Climate change will happen but you can take action to reduce your CO2 emissions and energy consumption and so help to mitigate its effects.

- Reduce your energy consumption at home; switch to renewable energy. Recycle household waste
- Aim to reduce the amount of travel you undertake every year
- Persuade your company to make a difference too

See fuller list of activities below

Adaptation

You can also help to make our environment a more friendly place for wildlife to adapt to as climate change takes effect.

- Wildlife gardening – make your garden a friendlier place for wildlife (see English Nature's website http://www.english-nature.org.uk/Nature_In_The_Garden/)
- Support the work of the WT and other environmental NGOs.
- Campaign to protect your local wood if it is under threat of development so that the seed corn of future biodiversity is protected.
- Take part in planting new woods for the future with your children (see www.woodland-trust.org.uk)

Further ideas to mitigate climate change

Do your bit to combat climate change

We must all take action to minimise any adverse impact we are having on the Earth. Contributing your records to the UK Phenology Network certainly helps in the study of climate change. Here are a few other ideas which can make a real difference

- Only boil as much water as you need when you put the kettle on. Jug-type kettles need less water as they have smaller elements.
- Switch off lights when you leave a room.
- Don't leave the TV and video (and other appliances) in standby mode and remember not to leave them on charge unnecessarily.
- Buy FSC timber - The FSC label demonstrates that timber and timber products have come from sustainably managed sources.
- Don't waste your money - turn your thermostat down by 1°C. It could cut your heating bills by up to 10%.
- Always put the plug in your basin or sink. Leaving hot water taps running with it removed is akin to washing money down the plughole.
- Curtains: close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows.
- Washing machine and tumble dryers: Always wash a full load and if you can't, use a half-load or economy programme if your machine has one. Always use the low temperature programme bearing in mind that modern washing powders will be just as effective at lower temperatures. And don't put really wet clothes into a tumble dryer; wring them out or spin-dry them first.
- Pots and pans: Choose the right size pan for the food and cooker (the base should just cover the cooking ring) keep lids on when cooking and cut food into smaller pieces. With gas, the flames only need to heat the bottom of the pan. If they lick up the side then you're wasting heat.
- Taps: In just one day, a dripping hot water tap can waste energy and enough water to fill a bath. Make sure they're off.
- Take a shower rather than use the bath. An ordinary shower uses only two-fifths of the water needed for a bath.

- Lightbulbs: replace your light bulbs with an energy-saving equivalents - which will use around a quarter of the electricity and last up to 12 times longer.
- Keep furniture away from radiators, if possible: the foam in an upholstered chair is a very effective heat insulator!
- The sun is the most readily available source of heat there is - and the cheapest! So make the most of it by opening internal doors of any rooms which get more sun than others and let the warm air travel through your home. Avoid using tumble driers and radiators to dry your clothes; on nice sunny days clothes can be dried outside.
- Don't buy products with excessive amounts of packaging and, where possible, choose products with re-useable containers.
- Buy pump-action sprays rather than aerosols - even alternatives to CFCs can contribute to greenhouse gases.
- Buy recycled or recyclable products such as toilet tissue and stationery.
- Take your own bag or re-use plastic carriers when shopping.
- Use public transport, cycle or walk rather than using a car.
- If you drive to work, try to share your journey with colleagues who live near you or on your route.
- Don't travel by air if you can avoid it - air travel uses up large amounts of fossil fuels and creates greenhouse gases which cause climate change.
- Change your electricity supply to green power – most energy firms now have green energy options that don't necessarily cost more than your current one.
- Plant native trees and shrubs and build habitats for wildlife and birds in your garden or local park.
- Recycle your newspapers, cans, bottles and plastic containers if you cannot re-use them yourself.
- Compost your food waste if you have a garden – it produces very good compost to help your plants grow.
- Get a water butt attached to your guttering to allow you to re-use rainwater for watering plants.
- Repair, restore or adapt something you already have. You may need professional help but it could still be cheaper than something new and it's far better for the world's forests.
- Buy secondhand, recycled, reclaimed or waste timber. A better environmental choice than buying new.
- Avoid food and drink from distant countries and support more local produce - think of the energy used to transport it here!

List of source websites:

Friends of the Earth - <http://www.foe.co.uk/>

Greenpeace – www.greenpeace.org

Centre for Alternative Energy - <http://www.cat.org.uk/>

Save Energy – the Energy Efficiency Campaign: <http://www.saveenergy.co.uk/>

Energy Saving Trust: <http://www.est.org.uk/>

Understanding Energy, the educational arm of the Electricity Association
<http://www.energy.org.uk/>

National Energy Foundation: <http://www.natenergy.org.uk/>

Crown website on sustainable development: <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/>

FSC's website: <http://www.fsc-uk.info/>

World Wild Fund for Nature website: <http://www.wwf.org.uk>

Climate Care website: <http://www.climatecare.org/>

For help and advice on switching your energy supplier <http://www.simplyenergy.com/woodland/>