



TOGETHER

INFO PACK



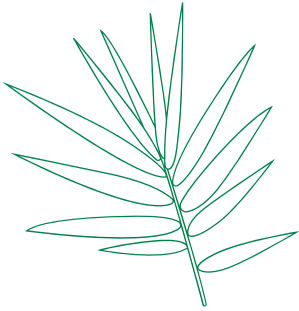
“Right now, we are facing a man-made disaster of global scale, our greatest threat in thousands of years: climate change. If we don’t take action, the collapse of our civilisations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon...

Never before have we had such an awareness of what we are doing to the planet, and never before have we had the power to do something about that... The future of humanity and indeed, all life on earth, now depends on us.”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH



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What is EcoTogether and some other frequently asked questions



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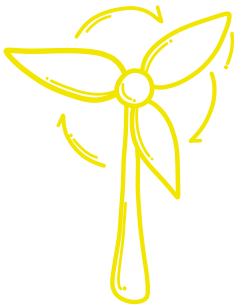
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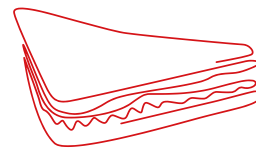
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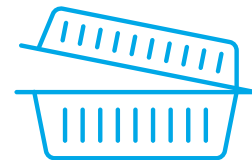
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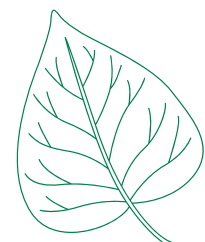
Transforming how we consume resources



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CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!

What to do next now you have completed the EcoTogether programme



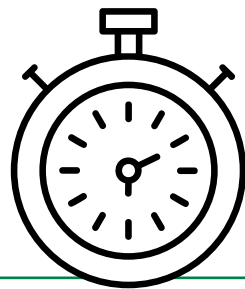
Welcome to eCC TOGETHER

This information pack will help you prepare for the each of the sessions and enable you to complete the Action Packs

You are not alone. 70% of people in the UK are concerned about the climate and millions are already involved in solutions. Below are just some of the ways EcoTogether can help you make a difference...

PROVIDES A STRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

You will learn from the other participants and don't have to start from scratch.

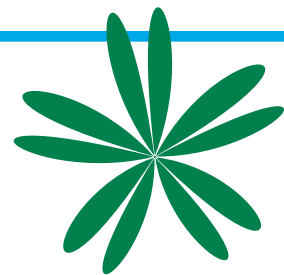


IS TIME-EFFICIENT

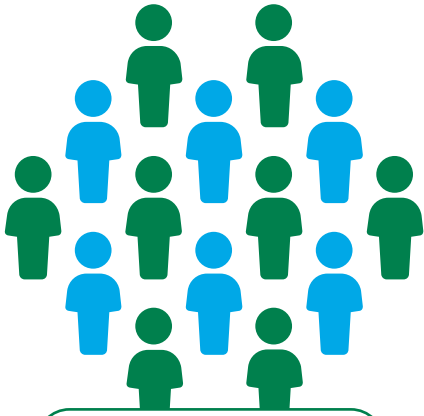
So busy people can get involved. It's just six enjoyable sessions then you can decide if you want to keep meeting up.

IS EASY TO RUN

Group members can take it in turns to run the simple sessions, even if they are new to eco-activity. The materials can spark ideas and are packed with useful information.



70% OF PEOPLE IN THE UK ARE CONCERNED AND MILLIONS ARE ALREADY INVOLVED IN SOLUTIONS



BUILDS COMMUNITY

You can get to know your friends or neighbours better, by working on something you all care about.



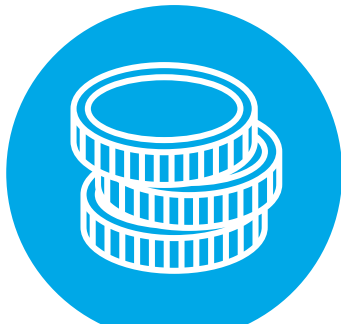
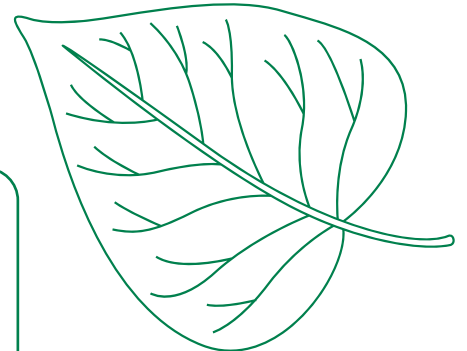
IS WELL RESEARCHED

Designed by environmental professionals, it reduces the complexity and time spent researching.



CAN GO ON YOUR CV

Once you have finished EcoTogether, if you report your results in our survey, you can receive an electronic certificate to show you have completed the project.



SAVES MONEY

Many eco-activities can save you money, look out for this icon.



SUPPORTS BIODIVERSITY

EcoTogether focuses on climate change. However, we are also in an ecological crisis. Many of the actions will also have benefits for ecosystems and biodiversity.

Questions & Answers about EcoTogether

Here are a few frequently asked questions to help explain some more about how EcoTogether works...

SIZE AND MEMBERSHIP?

Groups consist of 5-10 people, or a few households, and can include friends, neighbours, colleagues or people with a shared interest.

WHO RUNS THE GROUP?

The group is brought together by a First Host, then group members take turns to run the sessions if they feel comfortable to do so. We have provided guidance on the website, if needed, on how to do this.

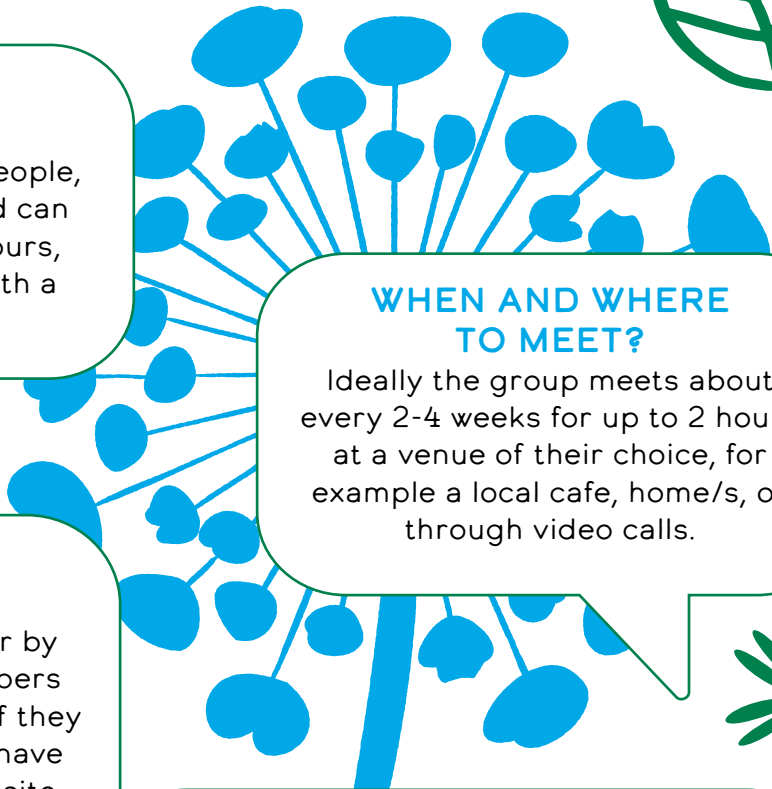
WHEN AND WHERE TO MEET?

Ideally the group meets about every 2-4 weeks for up to 2 hours at a venue of their choice, for example a local cafe, home/s, or through video calls.

WHAT ARE THE RESOURCES?

This Info Pack has background for the sessions, alongside a Resource List that's on the website. You complete an Action Pack before each session to discuss with the group. EcoTogether is deliberately low-tech, valuing the real-time interaction between group members. Connecting on social media is optional but many groups find it useful to coordinate and share info between sessions.

**ECOTOGETHER IS A FRIENDLY,
HELPFUL AND NON JUDGEMENTAL
WAY TO BE GREENER**





WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Spend 30m completing the Action Pack before the session then attempt the actions you have chosen. You can decide if you'd be able to take the group through one of the sessions. For the last session you can bring refreshments to celebrate progress.



WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT ECOTOGETHER?

EcoTogether considers the climate using our four powers. We each have powers no one else has, and more power than we think.

HOW IS PROGRESS MEASURED?

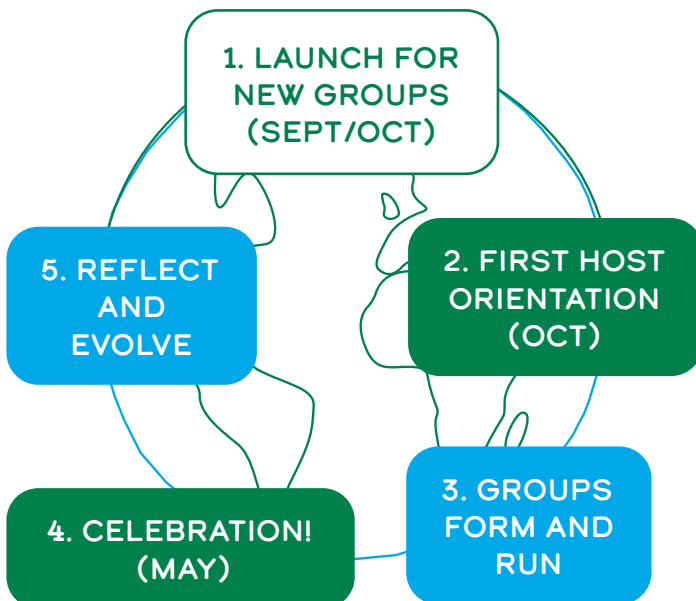
We invite you to measure your impact with Carbon Savvy's Taster Carbon Calculator at the start and end of the project, and give feedback at the end on the actions you have taken.



WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM PLANS FOR ECOTOGETHER?

EcoTogether will always be free and open source so any group can use or adapt it. If you'd like to support the overall organising, please get in touch to volunteer, we'd love your help.

ECOTOGETHER TYPICAL TIMESCALE





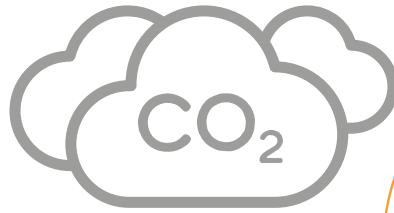
Session 1

INTRODUCTION

Before we start it is useful to reflect on the importance of climate action. We also suggest watching (or re-watching) David Attenborough's "Climate Change - The Facts". To summarise:

IT'S WARMING

The earth has warmed by 1.1°C already and could hit 1.5°C by 2030. Beyond 1.5°C, the impacts will get much more severe.



IT'S US

Humans are burning ever more fossil fuels that release carbon dioxide (CO₂) and harming the forests, soils and oceans that absorb CO₂. More CO₂ has been released since 1990 than the whole of human history before that.

WE ARE SURE

97% of scientists agree humans are causing climate change.



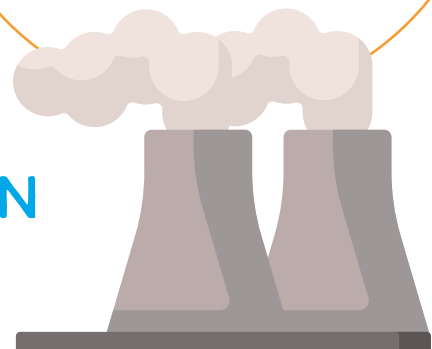
IT'S BAD

Our food, society and security is threatened. The cost of living will rise as crops fail. Ecosystems are spiralling into decline. The military see a serious security risk. The UN Secretary-General has stated that unless governments everywhere take action, much of the world will be uninhabitable.



IT'S NOT FAIR

The poorest and most vulnerable people will suffer most whilst contributing least to the problem, as will plants and animals with no voice. In the UK, the wealthiest 10% emit around 3 times as much CO₂ as the least wealthy 10%.



MORE CO₂ HAS BEEN RELEASED SINCE 1990 THAN THE WHOLE OF HUMAN HISTORY BEFORE THAT





Coming to terms with the Climate



We can't see into the future to know whether what we do will be 'enough' to slow or reverse global warming. What we do know is that throughout history, the actions of people like us have brought huge changes. We have the ability to make a positive impact, and many people are already doing so.



"I feel more powerful, more inclined to advocate for the environment, and I would go to the group for advice."

ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT

"Over 60% of young people worldwide are anxious about the climate. Not just about the climate itself, but because those in power are not doing enough."

**CAROLINE HICKMAN,
CLIMATE PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHER**



ONLINE RESOURCES

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH "CLIMATE CHANGE - THE FACTS"

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m00049b1/climate-change-the-facts>

CLIMATE PSYCHOLOGY ALLIANCE:

<https://www.climatepsychologyalliance.org/>

CLIMATE CHANGE FROM THE UN:

<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange>

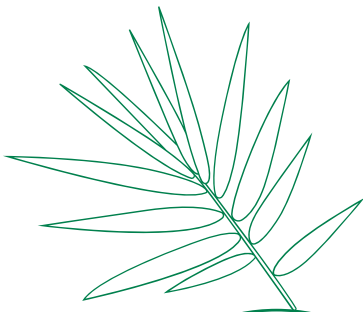




Session 2



YOUR POWERS



ADVOCACY

Influence decision makers - business and politicians.

LIFESTYLE

Personal actions eg: buy green, use less, green travel.

YOU

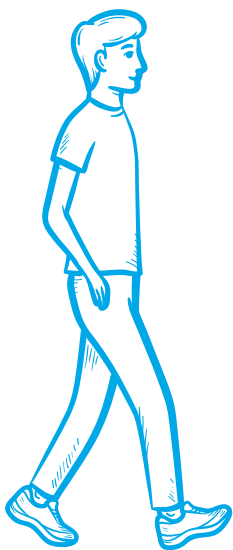
COMMUNITY

Be an eco champion in your networks eg: neighbourhood, work, school or faith



COMMUNICATION

Telling people if you do any of these things!



I thought the 'powers' were a useful tool. It is an original idea and fresh way of distinguishing ways we can make a difference.

ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT

HOW CHANGE CAN HAPPEN

1 PEOPLE (YOU!) USE LIFESTYLE, ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY POWER

2 THIS AFFECTS BUSINESS PROFITS, GOVERNMENT VOTES AND 'SOCIAL NORMS'

3 GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESSES AND PEOPLE CHANGE



1 LIFESTYLE POWER



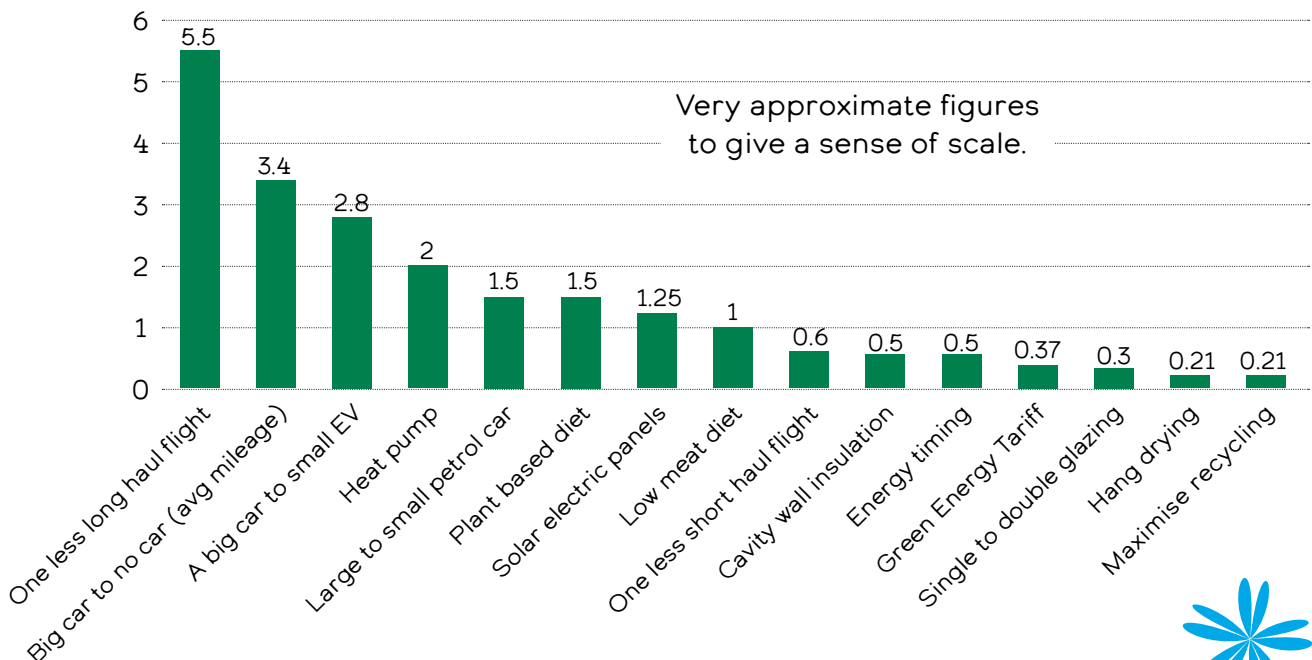
If 10-30% of the population switched to low-carbon lifestyles, this would become the new 'social norm' and making eco-choices would feel normal.

There are lots of small changes you can make, which will all help. However, to get to grips with the climate we are going to need big changes. We invite you to consider the lifestyle actions that save most carbon.

WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER WORKING TOWARDS THE ACTIONS THAT SAVE MOST CARBON



GREENHOUSE GAS (CO₂e) SAVING - TONNES PER YEAR



We encourage you to use the Carbon Savvy carbon calculator to help set priorities. Personal actions are essential.

However, some companies causing climate change try deliberately to get ordinary people to feel guilty for climate change, to deflect blame. The idea of an individual 'carbon footprint' was invented by the oil company BP for this reason.

Lifestyle power is best used with the other powers. Small actions are only small...unless many people take them. Communication and Community power enable this. Advocacy power can press for change if lifestyle actions are difficult or costly.

With lifestyle, we suggest patiently working on it, being kind to yourself, and celebrating success. In a few years, you'll be amazed at the change.

ONLINE RESOURCES

CARBON SAVVY CARBON CALCULATOR:

<https://calculator.carbonsavvy.uk/>

READ ECO REVIEWS OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:

<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>



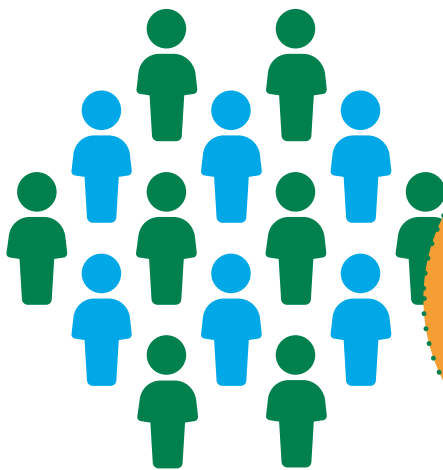
2 COMMUNITY POWER



You have more power than almost anyone else to influence the groups that you are part of. This can be friends, neighbours, work, school, university, voluntary, sport, faith groups or family. People constantly compare to others in their groups to decide how to act themselves.

You use this power when you lead by example and others see the choices you make. All organisations also have power. See the diagram for the actions they can take, and give each one a score out of 5.

How does your organisation score and is it using its powers?



DIRECT EMISSIONS
Buildings, equipment, processes
SCORE

SECTOR LEADERSHIP
Visible commitment
SCORE

ADVOCACY
To customers, politicians and organisations
SCORE

ACTION FOR ORGANISATIONS
TOTAL SCORE

TRAVEL
Commute and fleet.
SCORE

STAFF
Eco-skills development, eco-lifestyle support.
SCORE

PURCHASING
Suppliers, food etc.
SCORE

"I'm looking at how I can bring environmental practices into my work as a trainer and coach."

ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT



ONLINE RESOURCES

BUSINESSES THAT HAVE DECLARED A CLIMATE EMERGENCY:

<https://businessdeclares.com>

ENERGY SPARKS PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

<https://energysparks.uk>

ADVICE FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS:

<https://www.carbontrust.com/>

"I'm a teacher and I have now brought the Energy Sparks programme to our school and we are saving energy whilst learning about it."

ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT





3 ADVOCACY POWER



Advocacy power is influencing decision makers. It can be frustrating when the odds seem stacked against us, for example plastic packaging or lack of alternatives to the car.

These problems require decision makers to act, in government or business. This shows that your vote, or your custom, depends on them making the change. For each person who speaks up, decision makers know that many others feel the same.

To start with, you can join an existing group or contact the decision maker and there are many creative ways to get your voice heard. If there's not group working on it, you could do it yourself. Often, a small amount of carefully targeted effort can yield massive results. See below for an outline of how to plan an advocacy project:



Sisters Ella and Caitlin took on Burger King to ban plastic toys in their kids' meals. With the help of over 560,000 petition signatures - they won!

www.change.org



SELECT A SPECIFIC ACTION YOU WANT TO SEE TAKEN

IDENTIFY WHO, EXACTLY, CAN MAKE THE DECISION

IDENTIFY A MESSAGE & MESSENGERS THAT WILL MOVE THE DECISION MAKER

PLAN HOW TO GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS - YOUR 'TACTICS'

GIVE IT A TRY!



"I approached my local councillor about an eco-issue I'd long cared about, and contacted other groups who might support my cause."

ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT



Your local council is a good place to start. You can find out who your own ward councillors are, then perhaps arrange a meeting about the climate. Most Councils have a Cabinet, and Councillors in the Cabinet have most power. You can go onto the Council's website to see who's the Cabinet member for whatever you are interested in. Maybe see if they'll meet with you or your EcoTogether group? Not many people do this so they will remember you, and they make many important decisions about climate. You could also consider getting elected yourself.

ONLINE RESOURCES

START A PETITION www.change.org

CHECK YOUR MP'S VOTING RECORD

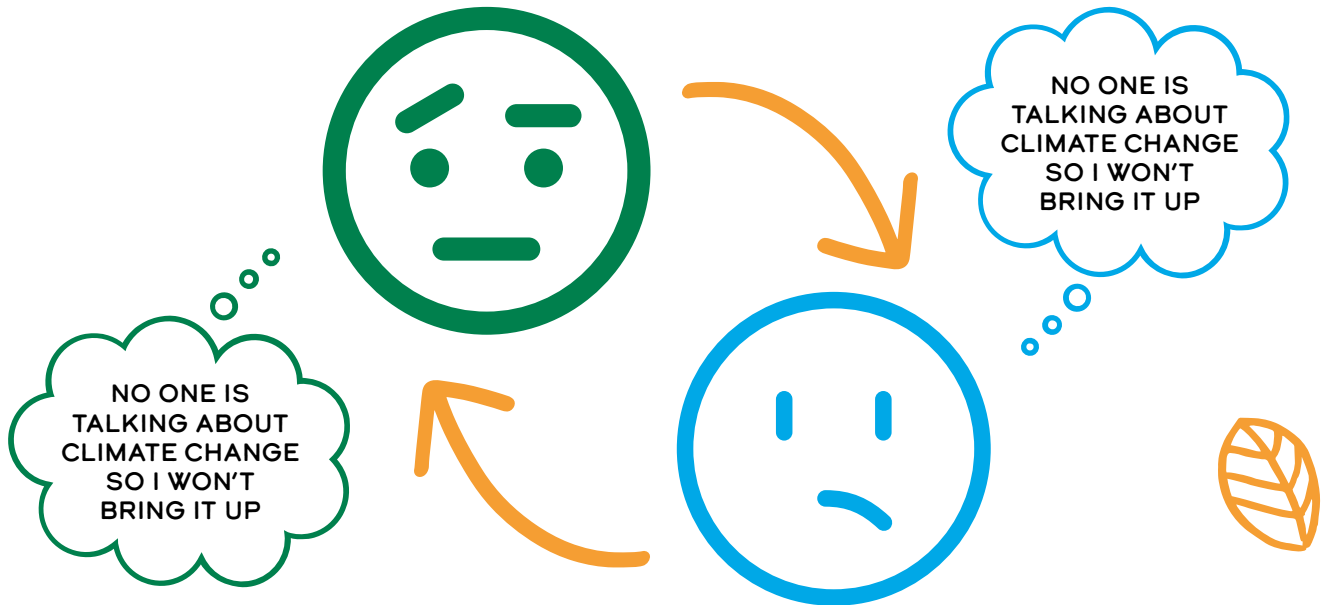
<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/>

FIND OUT WHO YOUR COUNCILLOR IS AND WRITE TO THEM www.writetothem.com

4 COMMUNICATION POWER

Talking to other people multiplies all your actions, because people don't do it very often.

An astounding fact is that whilst 70% of people are concerned about climate change, 70% of people also feel other people aren't concerned enough. That's because we don't talk about it enough...yet.



EcoTogether gives you a positive conversation starter. Simply share what you are doing, the challenges and successes, and listen to what they think. You don't have to 'convince' them. Just by showing that you are doing something opens the possibility for them to do the same.

You're unlikely to get outright climate

denial. More commonly, you will hear 'disavowal'; "a state in which we are aware of climate change and its effects, but find ways to remain undisturbed and carry on as if it isn't happening".

In a 'spiral of silence', people remain quiet on a topic because they think that no one agrees with them, even if that is not true.

"IN A 'SPIRAL OF SILENCE,' PEOPLE REMAIN QUIET ON A TOPIC BECAUSE THEY THINK THAT NO ONE AGREES WITH THEM, EVEN IF THAT IS NOT TRUE."

NATHAN GEIGER, PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

ONLINE RESOURCES

HOW TO TALK TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF PEOPLE ABOUT CLIMATE

<https://climateoutreach.org/>

COUNTERING CLIMATE SCEPTICISM

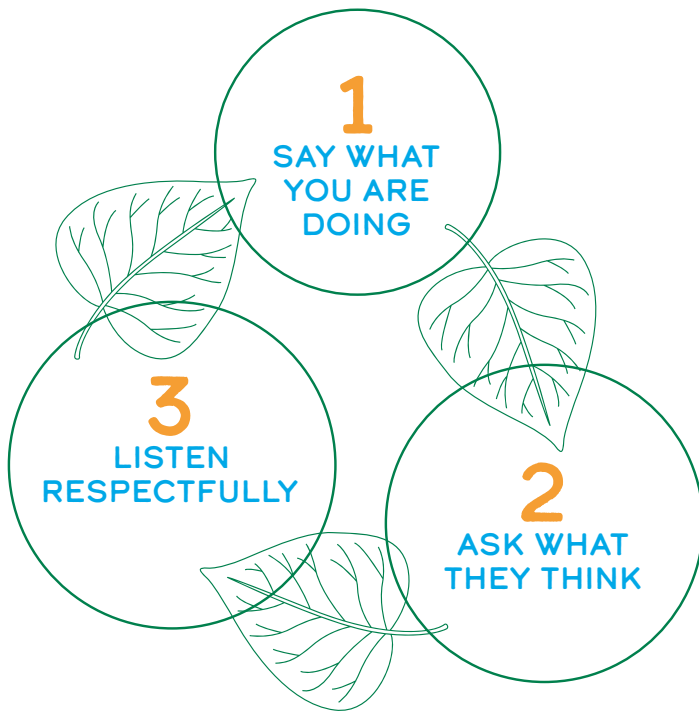
<https://skepticalscience.com/>





GET TALKING!
EcoTogether gives you
a conversation starter

A SIMPLE CLIMATE CONVERSATION

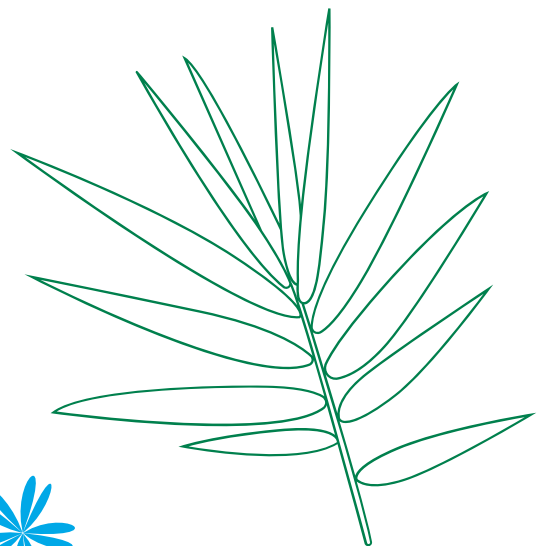


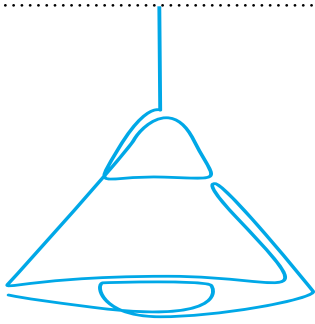
**HEARING
ABOUT HOW
YOU ARE
RISING TO THE
CHALLENGE
AND ACTING
ON CLIMATE
CHANGE IS A
POWERFUL
ANTIDOTE TO
DISAVOWAL**

NEXT STEPS

Now you can complete the Action Pack for Session Two. You can complete it online or it can be printed out. It's important to record your thoughts as it helps you get change happening and remember the ideas you've had. It is up to you whether or not you share your ideas in the group.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE ACTION
PACK FOR THIS SESSION**





Session 3 ENERGY



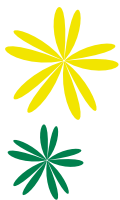
- ✓ Use less energy
- ✓ Use electricity at the right time
- ✓ Use renewables
- ✓ Leave fossil fuels in the ground

⚡ USE LESS ENERGY

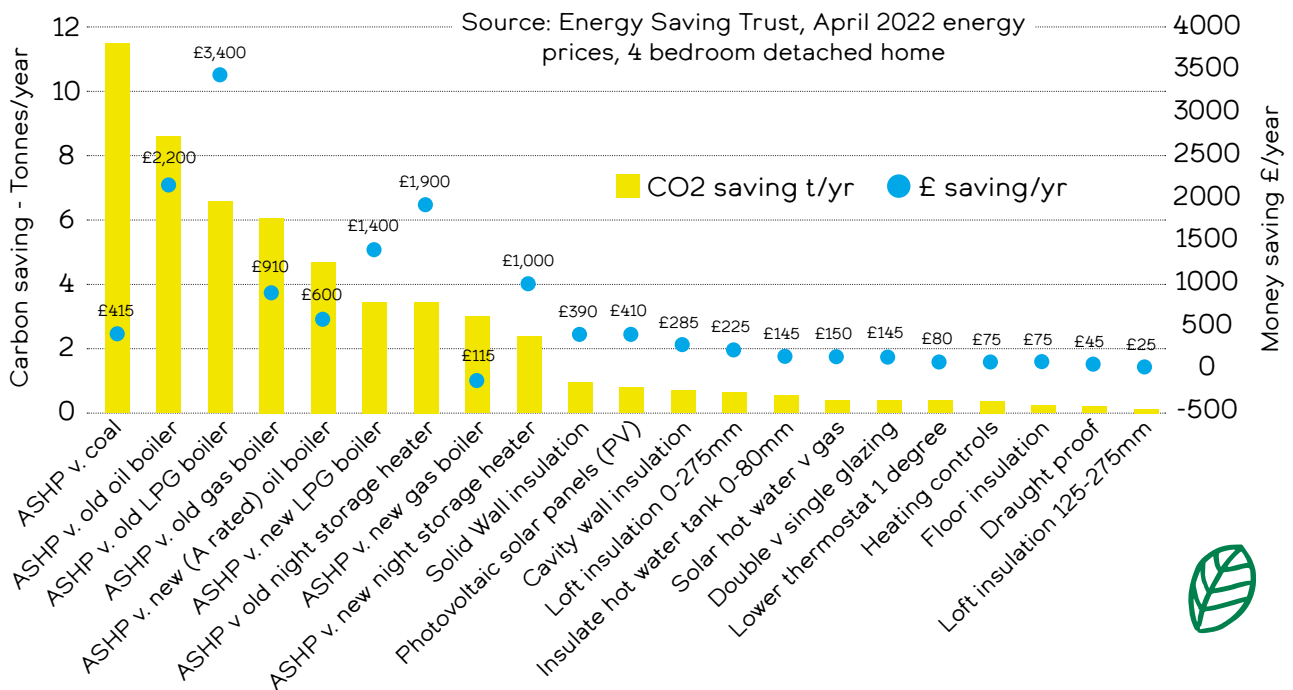


By 2030, to stay under 1.5°C of warming, each person needs to produce no more than 2.5 tonnes of greenhouse gases. This means reducing the amount of energy we use. A great place to start is your home.

Looking at the chart below, which actions have you already done? Which would you like to investigate? The blue dots show how much money you can save and the yellow bars are carbon savings. Air Source Heat Pumps save most carbon, and can provide a pleasant steady heat. They work well with solar batteries and an energy tariff that uses power at cheap times. They can be pricey though grants are available.

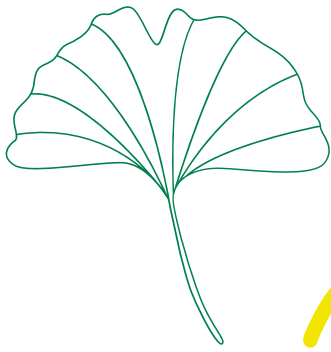


⚡ CO2 AND MONEY SAVINGS OF HOME ENERGY MEASURES



JARGON BUSTER: ASHP (Airsource heat pump), LPG (Liquified petroleum gas), A Rated (new boiler), G rated (old boiler)





AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP

ASHPs work best in homes that have good insulation



With energy prices skyrocketing, most people are now thinking about how to save energy. Please see the list on the website of low or no cost measures and a sheet showing how much power appliances use. There are also ways to make yourself feel warmer without reaching for the thermostat...

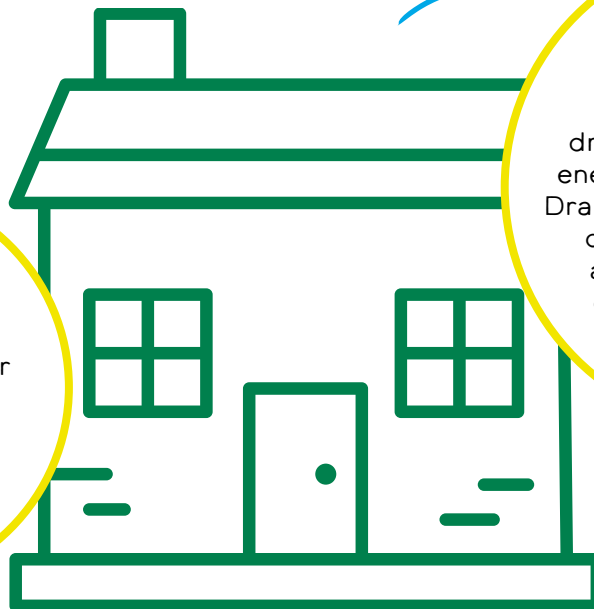


⚡ ENERGY SAVING HACKS



DON'T GET COLD FEET

We are most comfortable when our feet are 2°C warmer than our head. Use slippers, hot water bottles and thick socks.



CUT DRAUGHTS

Even a warm room feels cold if it's got cold draughts. Up to 20% of our energy is lost through draughts. Draught proof doors, windows, cat flaps and letterboxes and use low-cost acrylic or plastic film over your windows to cut the draft.

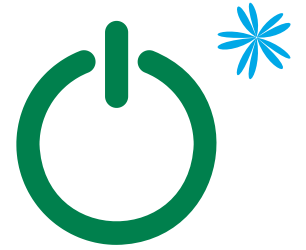
STOP DAMP

Which makes the cold seem worse. Put lids on pans and make sure to ventilate.

For grants and info on home energy, see the Resource Sheet for your local energy helpline or contact the National Energy Action helpline Mon-Fri, 10-12, 0800 304 7159

⚡ USE ELECTRICITY AT THE RIGHT TIME

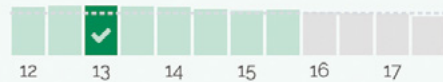
Renewables such as wind and solar now produce around 52% of UK electricity. By using power when renewables are plentiful, you can halve your emissions. This is regardless of whether you are on a green tariff, since green tariffs simply match your power demand with purchases of renewable electricity over the course of the year, not at the actual time of using power.



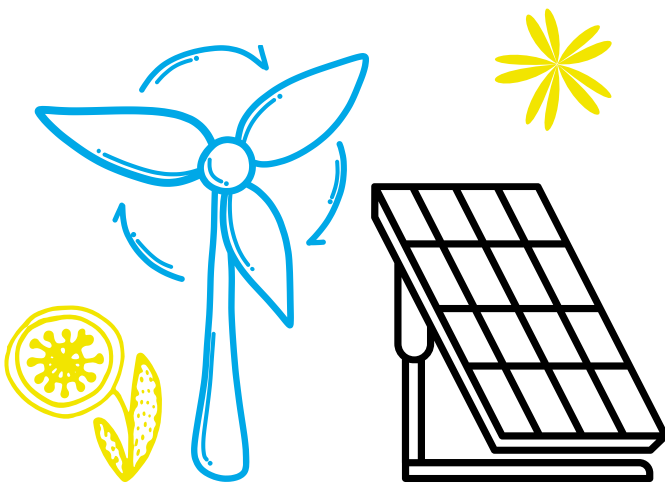
Avoid using appliances between 4pm and 7pm when gas power stations are used to meet high demand. Check the website [Should I Bake](#) to see when renewable energy is high, and set your timed appliances for then. In the example below, that's at 3.30pm. Using power at the right time is a cost-free way to save carbon.

Today

Afternoon



⚡ RENEWABLES FOR WHAT'S LEFT



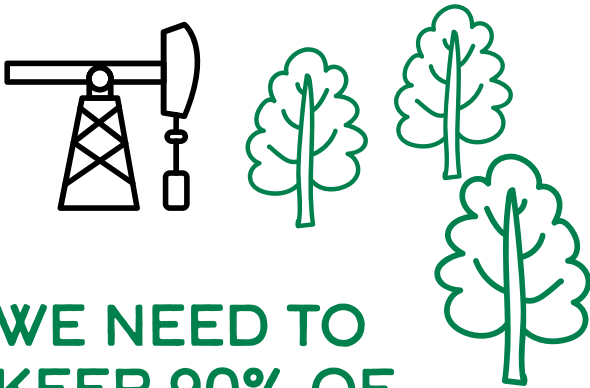
If you can get solar panels, great. This can also protect you against rising energy costs. Batteries can help you use more of your solar power and avoid grid energy at peak times.

Many people switch to Green Tariffs. These provide income for renewable generators, though some support renewable generators more than others. However, they are not zero emissions. If you use power when renewables aren't being produced, you will still be using fossil fuelled electricity. Green tariffs are worthwhile, but are not a replacement for cutting demand and using power at the right time.



⚡ LEAVE FOSSIL FUELS IN THE GROUND

To stay below 1.5°C, we need to keep 90% of coal and 60% of oil and gas reserves in the ground. Fossil fuel companies will fight hard against this, because they know that if ordinary people work together, we can change regulation. The UK's Climate Change Act was passed in 2008 after the 'Big Ask' campaign by Friends of the Earth. Joining organisations can really help.



WE NEED TO KEEP 90% OF COAL, OIL AND GAS RESERVES IN THE GROUND

A WORD ON OFFSETTING

Some carbon offsetting projects are useful, but there is a risk that offsetting is used to avoid making the changes needed. The scale and cost of offsetting all our emissions is too huge. For example, tree planting is vital, but even if tree cover doubled in the UK, it would only absorb around 10% of the UK's annual emissions. Trees take many years to grow and we need to cut carbon now. If you wish to offset, check it's a good project and we suggest not counting offsets as carbon reductions when thinking about your footprint.



CHOOSING A BANK

Your choice of financial providers also matters. 35 of the world's major banks – many of them household names – have provided £4 trillion of investment to fossil fuel companies since 2015. You can ask your finance providers (banks, pension funds, investment firms) to do more on climate or ask them to 'divest' – give up fossil fuel investments. If you switch providers it is worth telling your provider why. So far, over \$40 trillion has been divested by investment funds from fossil fuels.



ONLINE RESOURCES

NATIONAL ENERGY ACTION ADVICE LINE AND CONTACT DETAILS

<https://www.nea.org.uk/get-help/wash-advice/>

LOOK UP YOUR HOME'S ENERGY RATING AND NEXT STEPS

<https://www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate>

ADVICE ON ENERGY SAVING IN YOUR HOME

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk>

SEE WHEN THE BEST TIME IS TO USE ELECTRICITY

<https://shouldibake.com/>

SEE WHAT YOUR BANK IS DOING ABOUT CLIMATE [bank.green](https://www.bank.green)

NOW YOU'VE READ THIS, YOU CAN COMPLETE THE ACTION SHEET FOR THIS SESSION



Session 4

TRANSPORT



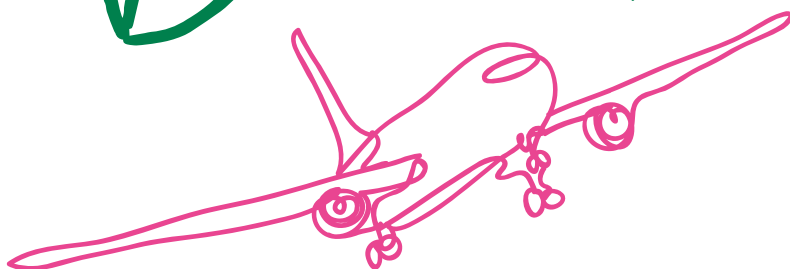
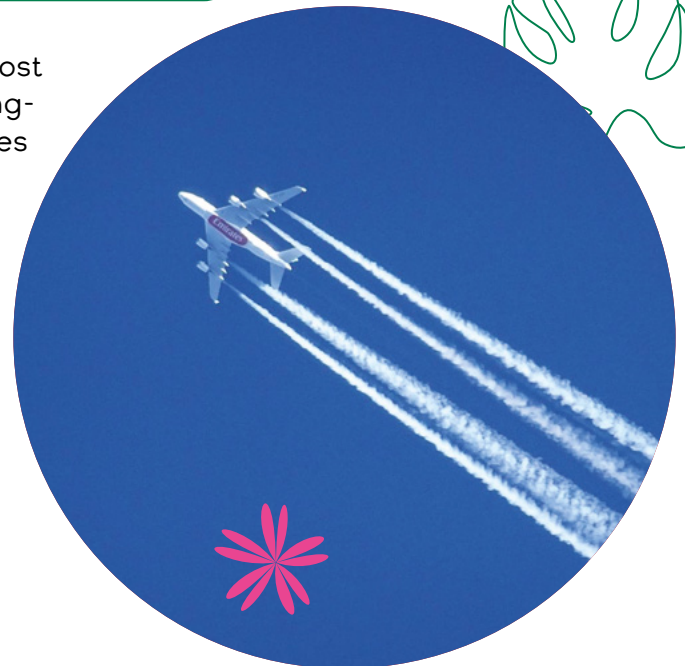
- ✓ Fly less
- ✓ Go car free (wherever possible)
- ✓ Switch to a cleaner vehicle
- ✓ Advocate for alternatives



FLY LESS



Reducing flying is the single most effective lifestyle action. A long-haul flight can release 5 tonnes of CO₂ and a short haul flight 0.6 tonnes. Frequent-flying “super emitters” are just 1% of the world’s population but caused half of aviation emissions in 2018, whilst almost 90% of the population didn’t fly at all. Stopping flying altogether may be hard for people with family overseas (‘love miles’) so holidays might be a good place to start.



“I have committed to flight free holidays - I just took the train to France. It was a great way to see more of the country.”

ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT

ONLINE RESOURCES

PLEDGE TO GO FLIGHT FREE <https://flightfree.co.uk/>

CAR CLUB ADVICE: <https://www.como.org.uk>



GO CAR FREE (WHEREVER POSSIBLE)

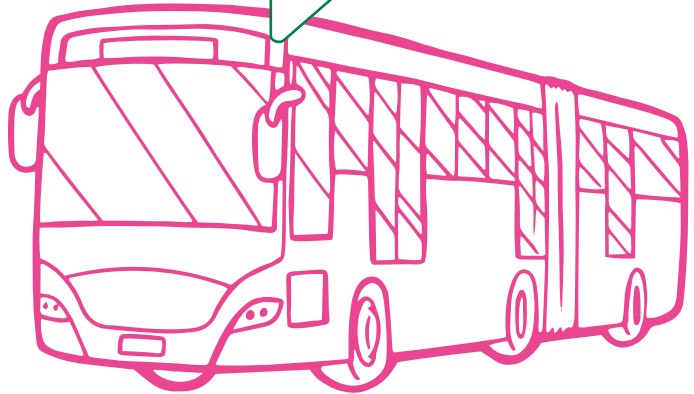


Sometimes it is hard to avoid driving since our society has been built around the car. Advocacy power is vital for getting better alternatives. However, for most people, many car journeys are optional.

Public transport fares are far higher than they should be, but it also costs around £2000 a year to run a car. Google maps will show you how to get to places by public transport.

"I don't miss my car at all. Once you don't have one, you just find other ways. It takes a bit more thought to get some places, but it has saved money and simplified my life."
ECOTOGETHER PARTICIPANT

IT COSTS AROUND £2000 A YEAR TO RUN A CAR



CAR SHARING
A simple way to cut carbon

SHARED TRANSPORT

You can walk or cycle, or join a car club. One car club vehicle typically displaces 20 private vehicles.



There are many established car club companies, or websites that let you rent local people's cars (you can rent out your car too). Or start a community car club by informally sharing a vehicle/s with friends or neighbours.

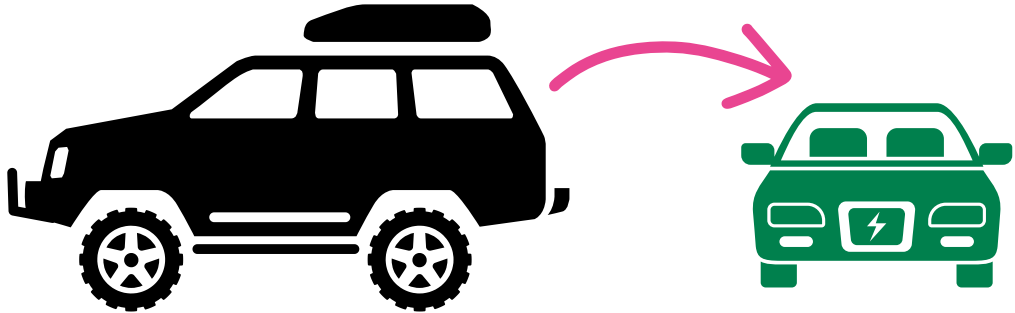
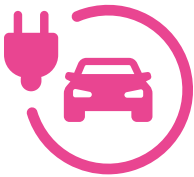


Car sharing halves the emissions per person, or reduces them even more if you pile four people in! Use a lift sharing website to find people who travel the same route as you.

🚗 SWITCH TO A CLEANER VEHICLE



You'll save most carbon by walking, wheeling or cycling. If you need to go further, the chart below shows that rail, coach and ferries are low carbon. Electric bikes are great too. E-bikes start at £1500, which would pay back in a year if replacing car ownership. Many families are doing the school run by e-bike. Switching from an SUV to a smaller or hybrid fossil-fuelled car can make a big difference.

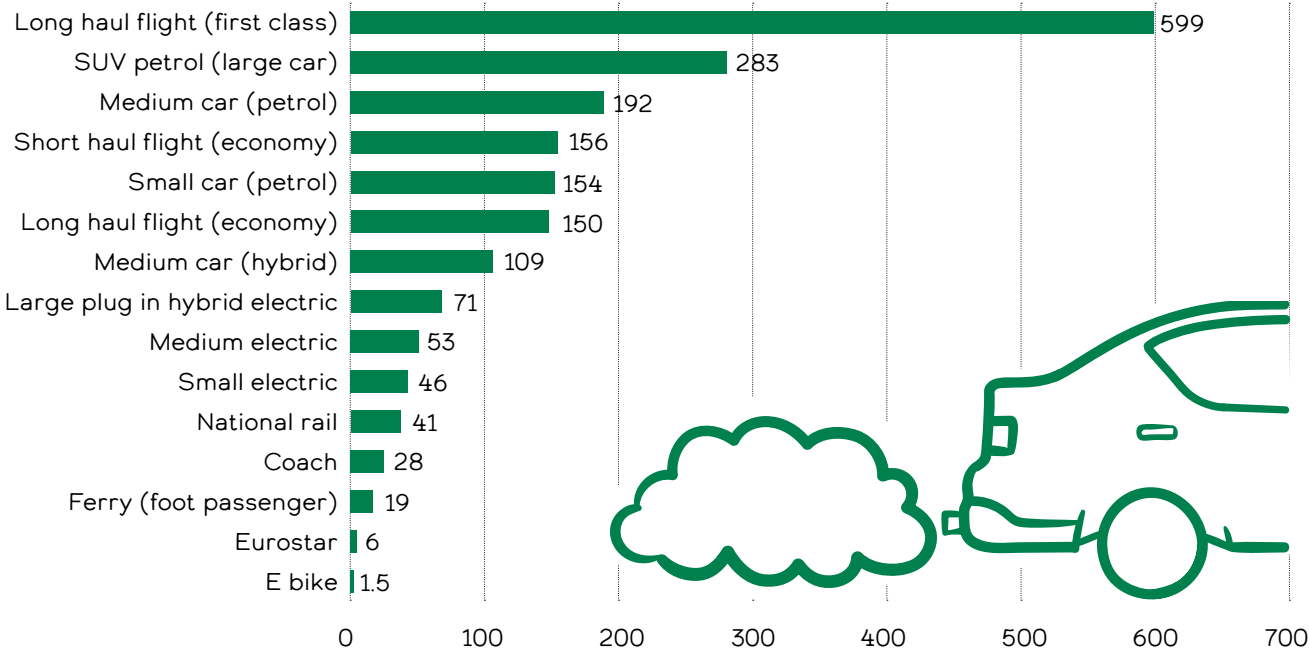


Electric vehicles (EVs) save carbon, even when you count the energy to make the battery. A new Nissan Leaf pays back its embodied carbon after less than two years if you drive 6000-7000 miles a year and emits three times less CO₂ in its lifetime than an

average new conventional car. However, there are not enough minerals for everyone in the world to have a private EV and extracting the minerals can damage human health and the environment. Sharing could be the solution, consider joining or starting an EV car club.

☁️ IN USE CO₂/KM EMISSIONS OF VEHICLES

Source: UK Government data (BEIS)



■ In-use emissions gCO₂/km, assuming single occupancy of cars

ADVOCATE FOR ALTERNATIVES



Many more people would go car free if there were decent alternatives available. National government controls most transport funding but local councils are responsible for local measures such as bike lanes and bus subsidies.

There is understandably often resistance from those directly affected if councils try to take road space away from cars for example with cycle lanes or removing parking spaces. The walkers, cyclists or bus users who would benefit often aren't aware or don't speak up, so the loud voices often win. This makes progress painfully slow.



However, since not many people get involved, one voice, maybe yours, really matters! Easy options include responding to council transport consultations (found on your council's website) and contacting your local councillor to make sure they are pressing for sustainable transport.



ONLINE RESOURCES

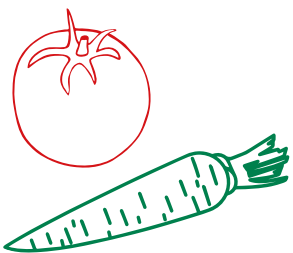
RENT LOCAL PEOPLE'S CARS <https://www.hiyacar.co.uk>

FIND A LIFT SHARE <https://liftshare.com/uk>

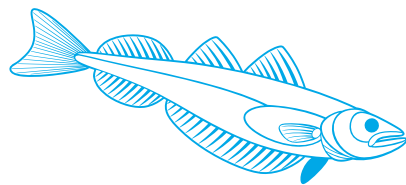
CYCLING ADVICE FOR FAMILIES

<https://www.cyclesprog.co.uk/>

NOW YOU'VE
READ THIS,
YOU CAN
COMPLETE
THE ACTION
PACK FOR THIS
SESSION

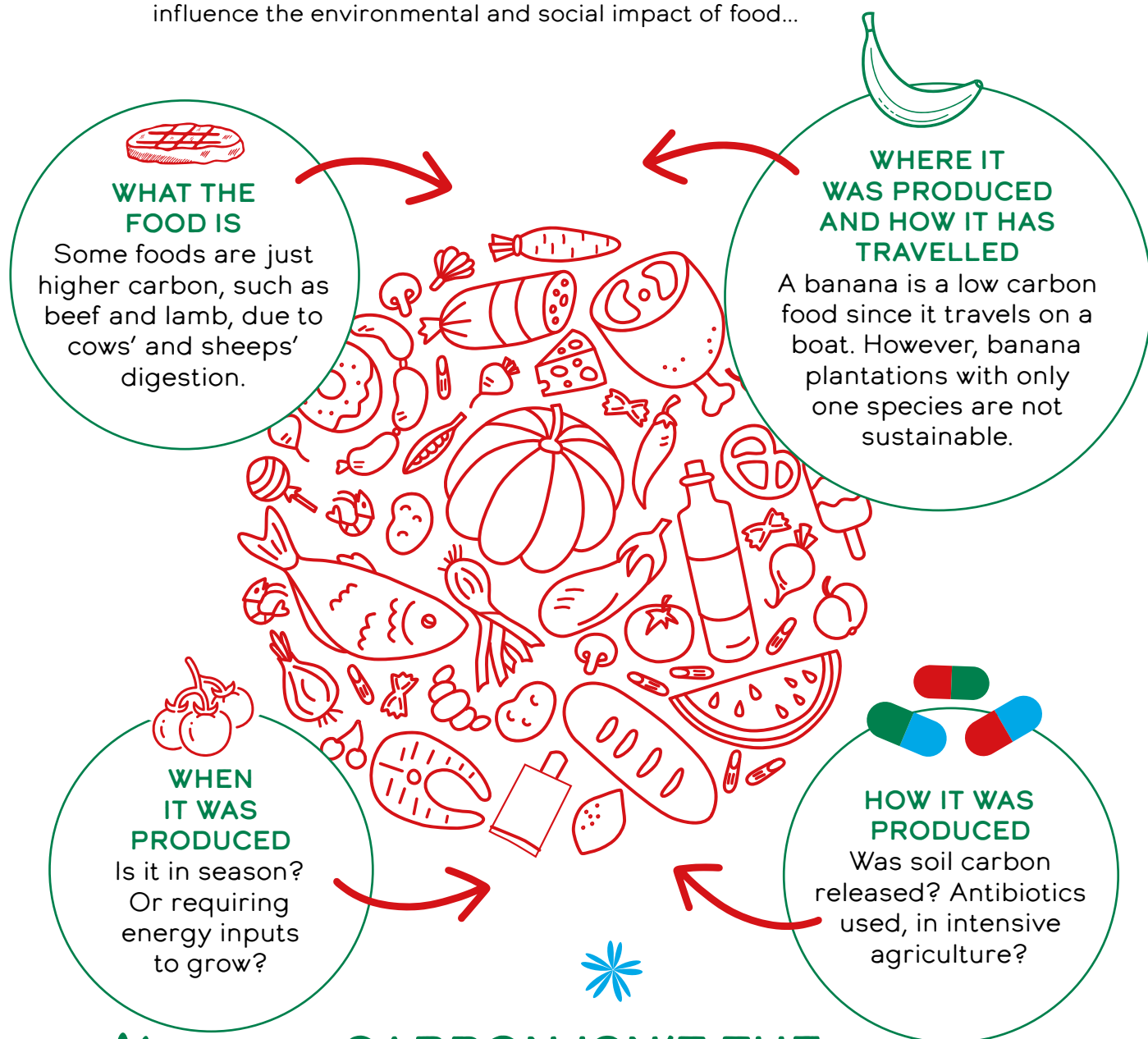


Session 5 FOOD

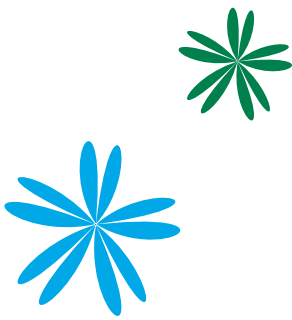


- ✓ Eat more plant-based food
- ✓ Eat the seasons
- ✓ Eat Local food
- ✓ Eat Sustainable food

Carbon isn't the only factor to consider with food, there's also cost, culture, individual health, animal welfare, soil, water, agricultural practices and your living situation. Four factors influence the environmental and social impact of food...



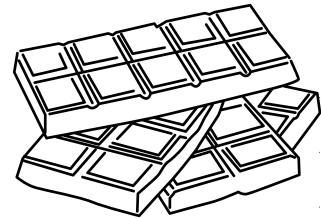
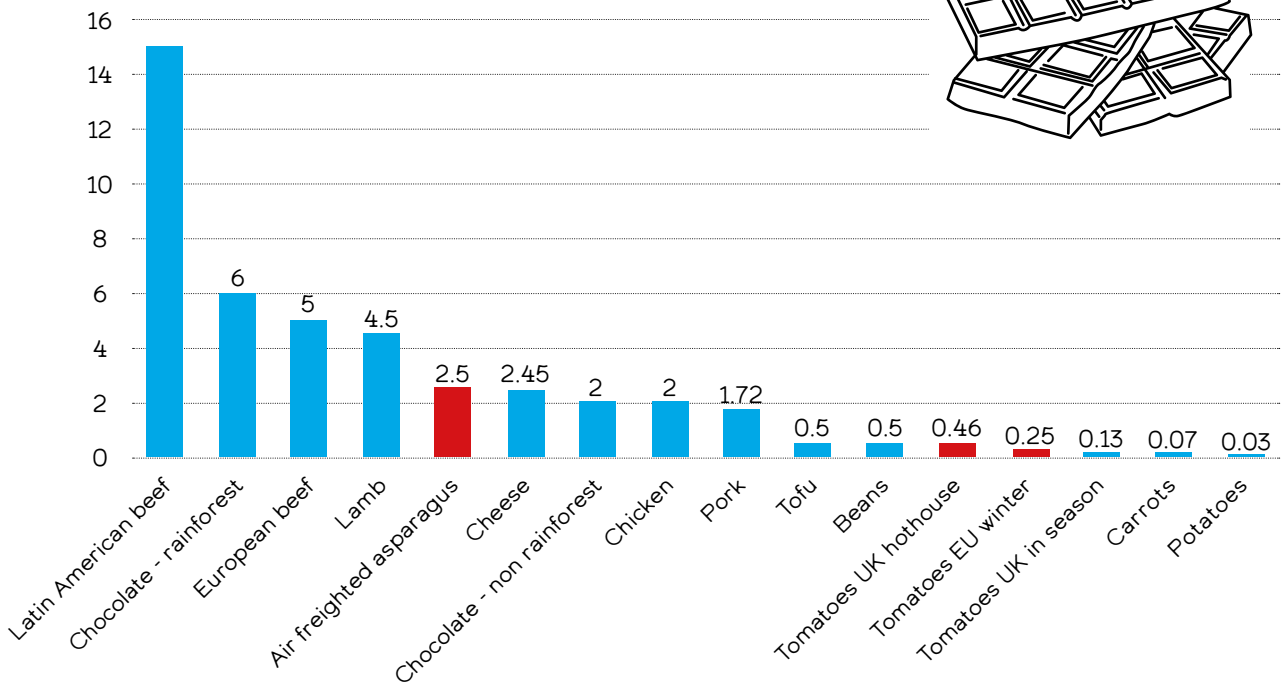
CARBON ISN'T THE ONLY FACTOR TO CONSIDER WITH FOOD



The chart shows the rough lifecycle CO₂ of different foods by serving. Note that out of season asparagus is worse than cheese, and imported EU tomatoes are lower carbon than UK hothouse tomatoes.

KEEP IT SEASONAL
Seasonal veg is much lower carbon

☁️ KILOGRAM OF CO₂ PER SERVING



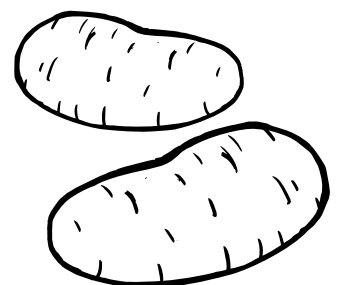
ONLINE RESOURCES

BBC FOOD CARBON CALCULATOR - HOW CARBON INTENSIVE ARE YOUR FAVOURITE FOODS?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-46459714>

SEASONAL RECIPES

<https://www.riverford.co.uk/recipes/seasonal>

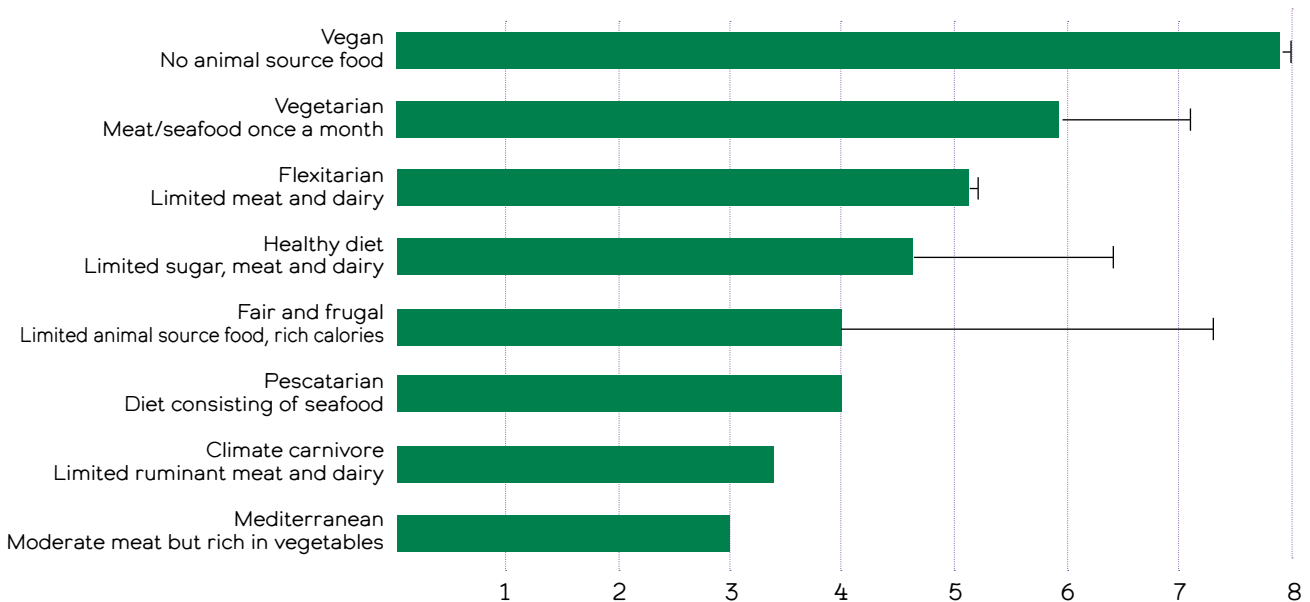


EAT MORE PLANT-BASED FOOD

If everyone shifted to a plant-based diet it could reduce global land use for agriculture by 75%. This would leave more space for biodiversity. The chart below, from the UN, shows the carbon savings possible if everyone in the world changed diet. If everyone switched to a plant-based diet that included all necessary nutrients, 8 gigatonnes (billion tons) of CO₂ would be saved out of a total of 36 gigatonnes released globally each year.



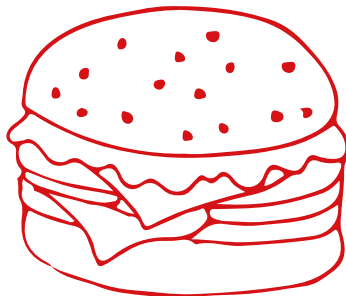
CARBON SAVING DIETS



Carbon saving potential if everyone in the world adopted this diet - gigatonnes CO₂ equivalent per year.
Source - UN IPCC report: Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change UN

This, plus concerns about animal welfare and healthy eating, is motivating more people to become vegetarian or vegan. The UK market for meat-free foods has grown rapidly, with many more veggie options on sale.

Food is complex though, with other evidence showing high-welfare animal rearing can be a positive part of regenerative farming, improving the soil and storing carbon. If you are a meat eater, we suggest making it a treat and saving your money for less and better-quality local meat.

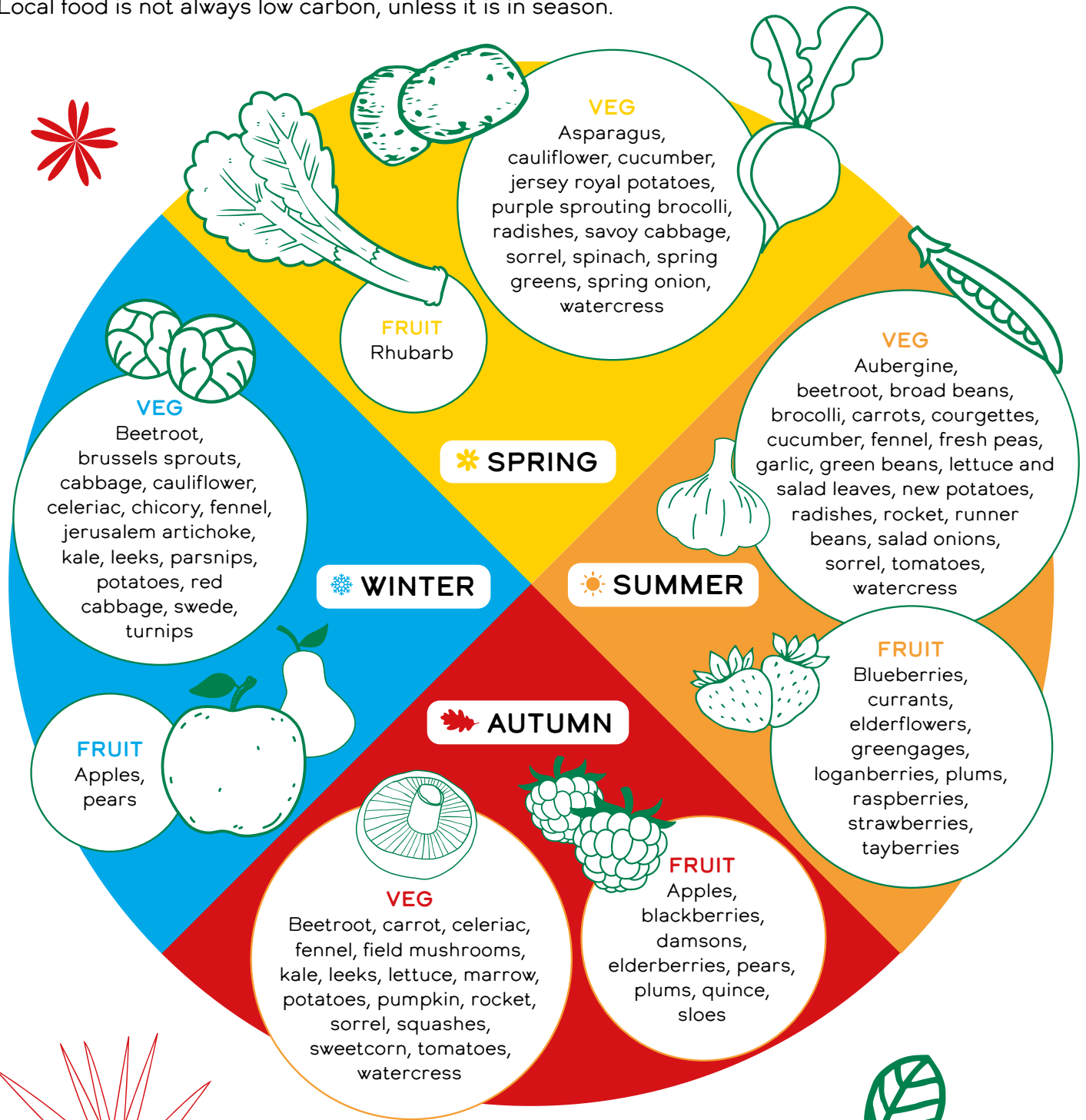


You could save up to a third on food bills with a more plant-based diet, if you stick to less processed food which is also healthier. Beans, peas and lentils provide protein, are very healthy and add nitrogen to the soil, reducing the need for fertilisers. Beans can replace rice which, like cows and sheep, produces methane.



* EAT THE SEASONS

Eating seasonally means that food is at its freshest, most nutritious and requires the lowest energy input to grow. Local food is not always low carbon, unless it is in season.

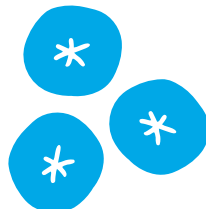


YOU COULD CUT FOOD BILLS BY A THIRD ON A MORE PLANT-BASED DIET

LOCAL FOOD

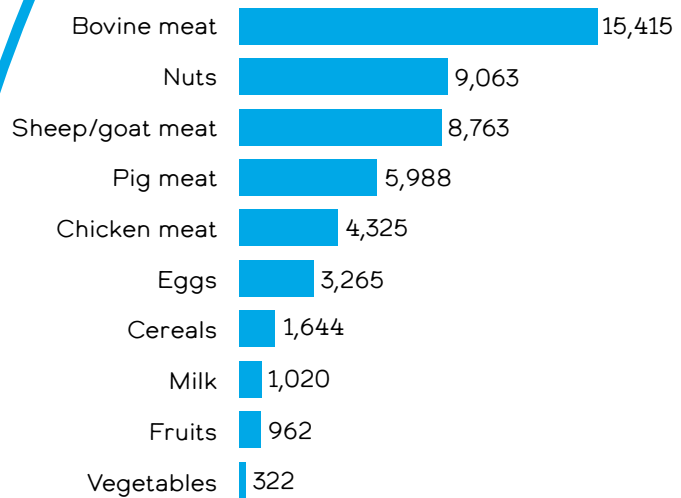
Two thirds of our grocery shopping is at the 'big four' supermarkets: Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons. Having other outlets increases resilience to shocks to the global food system as we saw during the pandemic when some supermarket shelves were bare. This will be important as climate change and global events disrupt supply chains.

AIR FREIGHTED FOODS EMIT AROUND 50 TIMES AS MUCH GREENHOUSE GAS AS SEA FREIGHTED FOODS



HOW THIRSTY IS OUR FOOD?

Litres of water required to produce one kg of the following food products*



* Global averages

Source: Water Footprint Network

It is important to avoid air freighted food which emits around 50 times as much greenhouse gas as transporting the same amount by sea, 33 times that of rail and 4 times that of lorry transport. You can usually guess what has been air freighted; it is fresh food that goes off quickly and has come a long distance such as green beans, berries and asparagus.

Eating local can also reduce the water footprint of your food which is of vital concern in a changing climate. If you are eating food imported from a water scarce region, you are affecting water supplies in that country.

EAT SUSTAINABLE FOOD

We are losing soil at a rapid rate. Over a quarter of global topsoils have lifespans of less than a century unless farming methods are changed. Organic farming is part of the solution and there is a growing regenerative Farming movement to farm in a way that improves soils, climate resilience, animal welfare and biodiversity.

Sustainable, seasonal and local food can be more expensive. If you can afford it, we encourage you to buy it, since profit margins are thin and your custom makes a difference.

If it's too expensive, often you can find lower cost local food in season from sustainable farmers who may not be able to afford organic certification. Also look for food that is Palm Oil Free and fish that is Marine Stewardship Council certified.

We also encourage you to try growing your own food. You can choose crops that are easy to grow, or cost the most to buy at the supermarket, or provide the most calories, or reduce plastic use.

Try these top 10 money saving crops...

TOP 10 MONEY SAVING CROPS



1

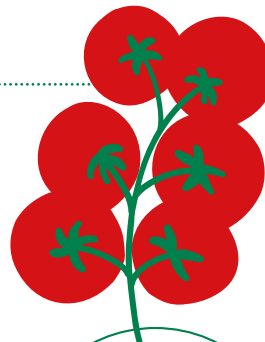
LEAFY HERBS

Leafy herbs take up very little room

2

SALAD LEAVES

For best results grow salads as individual plants



6

FRUITING VEGETABLES

Such as tomatoes and cucumbers

3

QUICK-GROWING SALAD ADDITIONS

Eg: Radishes, baby beets and spring onions

4

CELERY

You can harvest it one stem at a time

5

CLIMBING BEANS

Beans are healthy, filling and high in plant protein



7

COURGETTE

used in everything from stir-fries to cakes

8

GARLIC

Softneck varieties of garlic store really well

9

SOFT FRUITS

strawberries, raspberries and blueberries



Source www.growveg.co.uk

10

LEAFY GREENS

enjoy steamed, stewed or blitzed up into a smoothie



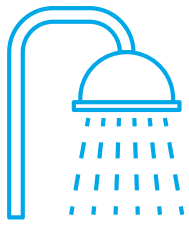
ONLINE RESOURCES

FOOD WATER FOOTPRINT CALCULATOR::

<https://waterfootprint.org/en/resources/interactive-tools/product-gallery/>

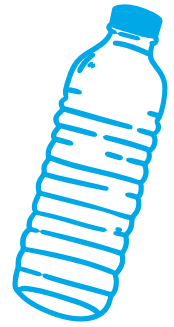


NOW YOU'VE READ THIS, YOU CAN COMPLETE THE ACTION PACK FOR THIS SESSION



Session 6

RESOURCES



- ✓ Don't buy it
- ✓ Embrace pre-loved
- ✓ Buy ethical
- ✓ Revolt at waste



DON'T BUY IT!

We are depleting our resources at an alarming rate - resource extraction has more than tripled since 1970 and is continuing to grow. The UK imports around 40% of our total carbon footprint.

So, the first principle is "Don't buy it". This is more easily said than done, since millions are spent telling us that possessions will make us happy. It is highly empowering to start to gain control of this.

You can prioritise large purchases. For example, do you need to replace your existing kitchen or bathroom, or could you refurbish existing fittings? You can get the benefit of an item without buying it by borrowing or renting. Libraries are a good place to start and need our support; 800 have closed since 2010. They can order a book if they don't have it in stock.

**LIBRARIES NEED OUR SUPPORT;
800 HAVE CLOSED SINCE 2010**



♥ EMBRACE PRE-LOVED

There is no waste in natural ecosystems, everything is used. We need a Circular Economy where products are designed to never become waste, replacing a "cradle to grave" product lifetime with a "cradle to cradle" where the materials are re-used.

Vintage clothing is in style, and there are many pre-loved clothes apps. Charity shops are great; often with better-quality clothes, cheaper, preventing waste and raising money for charity.

Websites such as Freecycle or Freegle offer a wide range of items for free, and is also a free removal service for things you no longer need. Globally, Freecycle keeps over 1000 tons a day out of landfills.



FREECYCLE KEEPS OVER 1000 TONS A DAY OUT OF LANDFILLS



🛒 BUY ETHICAL

If you have to buy new, have a search for eco-alternatives. Look for one of the reputable certification schemes for companies for example B Corp, Fair Trade and Forestry Stewardship Certification (FSC).



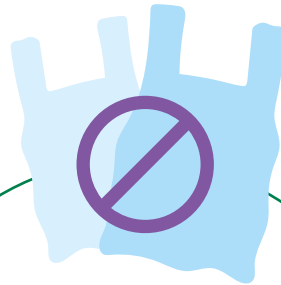


REVOLT AT WASTE!

PLASTIC WASTE

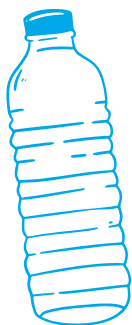
Half of all plastics ever manufactured have been made in the last 15 years and that is increasing. Plastics are entering into every natural environment and every part of our bodies.

Exxon Mobil, the oil company, is the biggest producer of single use plastic. They and other companies spend millions lobbying against regulation and to convince us that litter and waste is our fault, to avoid regulation.

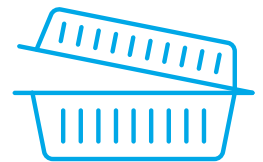


NO PLASTIC - FANTASTIC!

Rebecca Hoskings got local businesses on board to make Modbury in Devon the first plastic-bag free town in the world. This led to the plastic bag charge in the UK and elsewhere.



HALF OF ALL PLASTICS EVER MANUFACTURED HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE LAST 15 YEARS



FOOD WASTE

Globally, around a third of all food produced is lost or wasted, which contributes 8-10% of total greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, 820 million people go hungry. There are many simple ways to reduce your own food waste and you can also get involved in community projects such as Fare Share.

Our rejection of plastic has led to many alternatives in recent years, but it's not over yet. Use advocacy power to strengthen your rejection of plastic, for example sharing photos on social media with the hashtag #pointlessplastic. Another bold action is leaving your plastic at the supermarket till.

Litter picks are great fun and many EcoTogether groups do them as a social activity. For some additional Advocacy power, photograph the branded litter and send the picture to the company.



WATER WASTE

16 out of 23 water suppliers have to manage moderate or high-water stress levels. Yet a single member of a household in UK used 149 litres of water on average each day. This is a 70% increase since 1985, and more than our water supplies can sustain.

Already, over-use of water is causing our natural streams to

dry up. However, there are many simple ways to reduce your water consumption. This also saves energy - 20% of the heating bill is hot water. One of the best things we can do is to get a water meter.

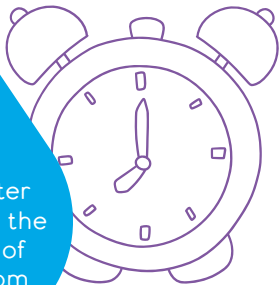
You can improve water quality by avoiding putting damaging chemicals or cleaning products down the drain, since these damage ecosystems and there are eco-alternatives.



TOP WATER SAVING TIPS FROM WATER UK

1

Please try to reduce water use during the peak time of 6pm to 10pm.



2

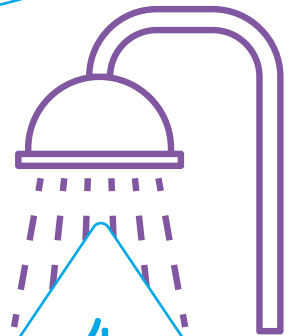
Make sure the dishwasher is full and use the eco setting.

3

Let the lawn go brown - it'll go green again as soon as it rains.

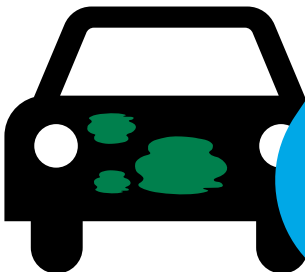
4

Taking shorter showers saves a lot of water.



5

Take pride in letting the car get and stay dirty.



6

Please use a watering can instead of a hose or sprinkler in the garden.



ONLINE RESOURCES

FASHION FOOTPRINT CALCULATOR

<https://www.thredup.com/fashionfootprint/>

AN APP FOR FREE FOOD FROM LOCAL SHOPS AND NEIGHBOURS

<https://olioapp.com/en/>

TOP FOOD WASTE

<https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com>

VOLUNTEER TO ENSURE EDIBLE FOOD WASTE USED

<https://felix.org>

SAVE WATER

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/why-water-efficiency-matters/>

NOW YOU'VE READ THIS, YOU CAN COMPLETE THE ACTION PACK FOR THIS SESSION

CONGRATULATIONS

This is the end of the Information Pack, and if you are reading this as you participate in an EcoTogether group, the end of the programme.

TO WRAP UP, WE ASK THAT YOU...

1 ✓ Fill out a feedback form that your First Host will send, which helps us immensely as we continue to develop the programme.

2 ✓ Re-do the Carbon Savvy Calculator to see if there is any change.



Hopefully EcoTogether has given you some new ideas and support to continue to create change. Many groups stay in touch, and some organise local projects together. We will be offering extra sessions if you would like to continue.

Of course, we would love for you to carry on and become a First Host for another EcoTogether group. Please contact us for more information, and now you've seen how it works, your experience could be really valuable to other people who are concerned about the climate but not sure where to start.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EcoTogether Info Pack (2026) has been co-produced by the volunteer working group. The EcoTogether project is dedicated to all the young people in our families and beyond.

With thanks to the Wessex Water Community Fund grant and the Bath and West Community Energy Fund grant. Various images from Canva and Vecteezy.

We are grateful to the many people who have been involved so far. Thank you!

NOTES



eco 
TOGETHER
INFO PACK