

every little bit helps

are you doing  your bit?

“Pollution, wasting energy, wasting water, recycling. Not my problem!”

That’s what many people think, but as individuals, we can all do things to help protect and improve our environment.



“But what can I do?”

Take local air pollution. You and your children could be at risk. Local pollution, such as car fumes, can aggravate asthma and cause premature deaths in those seriously ill. But you can help by, where possible, not using your car for short journeys, sharing car journeys with friends and family and having your car serviced regularly.

Pollution is also affecting the whole world. The burning of fuel in power stations and oil refineries provides you with the energy you use in your home and car. This burning of fuel also pumps out ‘greenhouse gases’ which cause global warming. In the UK this could mean more floods and storms, drier summers and wetter winters. You can do your bit to help the environment, and save money at the same time, by saving energy and resources.

“My life is too busy, I want convenience. Doing my bit for the environment has to fit into my lifestyle and budget.”

It can - and you could save money too. A little thought about your everyday actions and how they affect the environment would really make a difference. Many people want to ‘do their bit’ for the environment but need advice on how to do it. This leaflet will help by giving you tips and ideas.

“Can I really make a difference?”

Yes, making a few changes in what you do at home, at work, when shopping or getting about is all that you need to do.

doing your bit at home

Action to help our environment really does begin at home.

Here are some top energy and money saving tips for the home:

- **Central heating** - just turning down your thermostat by 1°C could cut your heating bill by 10%, saving you £15-£30 a year.
- **Lights** - remember to turn off any lights you don't need.
- **TVs, computers and hi-fi's** - don't forget to switch these off too, if you're not using them.
- **Washing machines** - save water and energy by using a lower temperature wash or the economy programme and by washing a full load rather than half a load.
- **Fridges** - let food cool down before you put it in the fridge or freezer and avoid leaving the fridge door open for longer than you need.
- **Kettles** - if you're making tea for one, use just enough water for your cup of tea.



Using energy efficiently can save you money, and you may be able to get a grant for installing energy efficient home improvements.

Installing insulation or even using light bulbs that use less energy will save you money. Ring the Energy Efficiency Hotline for further details **0345 277 200** (local rate). Ask for your copy of the Energy Saving Trust's home energy check.

Water and the Home

Water companies now have to do their bit to boost their efficiency by cutting water leakage and introducing water saving devices, but your action in and around the home is equally important.

Here are some top tips:

- Report any water leaks you see to your local water company. If you have a water leak on your property, ask your water company whether it offers a subsidised repair service.
- Check all taps for drips and replace worn-out washers. A dripping tap can waste enough water in a day to run a shower for five minutes.
- Hot water - if your water is too hot, turn the thermostat down to around 60C/140F. Running hot water down the drain costs you money.
- Take a shower - it will use 2-3 times less water than a bath.
- Toilet devices - consider using a water saving device in your cistern. They're often free from your water company and easy to install.
- Toilet flush - if you are replacing your bathroom, buy a dual flush toilet and use the short flush when you can.
- Avoid using sprinklers - if you do use them, your water company may wish to install a water meter and charge you for the water you use.

Is your rubbish rubbish?

Not everything you throw out this week will be rubbish.

Consider these facts:

- Producing new aluminium cans from used cans saves up to 95% of the energy needed to produce cans from raw materials.
- Every tonne of glass recycled saves over one tonne of raw materials like sand and limestone. This means less quarrying, less damage to our countryside, less pollution, valuable energy savings and less global warming.

Here are some top tips:

- Use your council's recycling scheme, if they have one.
- When you are going to the supermarket, make use of the recycling banks provided.
- Why not compost your garden and appropriate food waste?



Reducing rubbish is not just about recycling. You can also:

- Buy products with less packaging.
- Re-use items such as bottles, carrier bags and refillable containers.

And, protect your local environment:

- Bin your litter.
- Dispose of chemicals or oil in local authority facilities.
- Don't dump waste in water or on the ground.
- Don't try to flush away items such as nappies, condoms, or cotton buds. Bag it and bin it.

Doing your bit is easy

doing your bit

when you travel

We all travel - to work, to the shops and on holiday. For many, the car is essential. Individual choice in owning a car is one of our greatest freedoms.

But this freedom comes with a price.

Consider these facts about emissions from vehicles:

- They make air quality worse.
- They contribute to acid rain and smog.
- They contribute to global warming.
- Pollution from car emissions can aggravate health problems such as asthma, and sitting in a car can result in you receiving up to three times more pollution than pedestrians.

Top travel tips:

- **Walk when you can - it's great for your health.**
- **Cycle and enjoy the exercise. Take advantage of any designated cycle routes in your area.**
- **Catch a train or bus - family fares, ticket offers and group discounts mean public transport could cost less than you think. Contact National Rail Enquiries or your local bus company for further details.**
- **Park and Ride - these schemes are linked to priority bus lanes for a speedier journey, and take the hassle out of parking in town.**
- **Share car journeys with friends or family - the school run, journeys to work and shopping trips. Think about a car pool scheme with friends in your area.**



Doing your bit when driving

- **Keeping in tune: try to have your car regularly serviced. It will burn less petrol and emit less pollution. Under-inflated tyres can increase fuel consumption by up to 8%.**
- **Switch off - and save your petrol and money. Turn off your engine if it is safe to do so, especially if you're stuck in traffic for more than two minutes.**
- **Fuel efficient cars - ask your dealer about fuel efficiency between cars of similar specifications. The Vehicle Certification Agency produce a booklet outlining fuel consumption on all new car models each year. For further details see page 14.**

You benefit

If you follow these tips you will feel the benefit straight away. Traffic congestion will be cut and so will your fuel bill.

Doing your bit feels good

doing your bit

while shopping

As a consumer you have choice and power through your spending decisions. Why not use it?

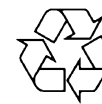
All the products you are buying will have some effect on the environment. Are you doing your bit when shopping?

Here are some simple tips:

- **Re-use bags or buy 'bags for life' which are now offered by most supermarkets.**
- **Choose good quality water-based or low-solvent paints, glues, varnishes and preservatives. They are less harmful to your health than solvent-based materials.**
- **When buying electrical products, choose the most energy efficient ones and reduce your electricity bills.**

Ask your retailer to:

- **Point out products made from recycled material such as plastic bottles (e.g. shampoos and soft drinks), kitchen rolls, tissues, toilet paper, writing paper and envelopes.**
- **Explain the environmental claims on products. If you don't understand, just ask. They should know.**



This symbol means that the product can be recycled or that it contains recycled materials.



Choosing the most energy efficient products could save you money. Look out for the energy labels on selected products, such as fridges and washing machines.

'A' or 'B' = most efficient, use less energy and, possibly, less water.

'F' or 'G' = cost more to run, use more electricity and are not so kind to the environment. Appliances with a rating below 'D' are now being phased out.

Doing your bit matters

doing your bit

at work

Business has a major impact on the environment. All businesses use resources. Heating, cooling and manufacturing all use energy and add to global warming. The average office worker generates over half a kilo (more than 1lb) of scrap paper every day.

Here are some top tips:

If your company has a staff suggestion box or, via your union, encourage your employer to:

- **Set up a car sharing scheme.**
- **Offer interest free loans for public transport.**
- **Buy recycled products.**
- **Promote a green bin policy so that you can easily recycle cans, glass and paper.**
- **Ensure machines and lights are switched off.**
- **Install flow controls in toilets - this is a rapid money saver and is good for the environment.**

Doing your bit works



doing your bit

for the millennium and beyond

If you are ready to carry out one or more of our top tips and do your bit for the Millennium, Going For Green would like to hear from you.

Planet Pledge invites you to make a 'green' New Year's resolution for the Millennium.

From 1 January 2000, your name will appear at the Earth Centre, Doncaster on a huge display called the 'Pathway to the 21st Century'. For details on how to make a pledge, call the Planet Pledge Hotline: **0870 9090 800**



doing your bit online

Visit the official 'are you doing your bit?' website for regular updates on how you can do your bit to help the environment at: **www.doingyourbit.org.uk**

useful contacts

Air Pollution Hotline: if your health is affected by air pollution, you can get up-to-the-minute information on air quality in your area. For details call on **Freephone: 0800 556677. Ceefax pages 410 - 417. Teletex page 106. Internet address: <http://www.environment.detr.gov.uk/airq/aqinfo.htm>**

Don't Choke Britain: This campaign aims to encourage less traffic congestion and less pollution in our cities. There are literally hundreds of events happening throughout the UK, especially during June. Check out **www.dcb.org.uk for details**

Energy Saving Trust Hotline: for details of energy efficiency grants, a free home check and details of your nearest Energy Efficiency Advice Centre call the **Trust's hotline on: 0345 277 200 (local rate call)**

Environment Agency: the Agency has a wide range of responsibilities and powers to improve the environment in England and Wales. For details on how to save water and avoid pollution in your home and garden, call **0645 333111**. For further information on the work of the Agency visit their website at **www.environment-agency.gov.uk**

Going for Green: they are active supporters of the 'are you doing your bit?' campaign. In addition to their Planet Pledge scheme featured above. *Going for Green* also run many local initiatives which can help you do your bit for the environment. For details call on **Freephone: 0800 783 7838**

Health Education Authority: the HEA's 'Active for Life' campaign can give you lots of tips about walking and cycling instead of driving on short journeys. For details check out **www.active.org.uk**

Tidy Britain Group campaigns for the improvement of local environments and is the UK's national anti-litter organisation. For details of Tidy Britain Group schemes call **01942 824620**

Travelwise: many local authorities are involved in Travelwise campaigns, which encourage people to think about how they travel. Look out for information in your area.

The Vehicle Certification Agency produce a handy guide New Car Fuel Consumption. It contains figures detailing emissions from and the fuel economy of all new cars produced for the UK market. Write to: The Eastgate Office Centre, Eastgate Road, Bristol BS5 6XX

"Stop Fuming" is the motor industry-led campaign to encourage motorists to service their cars regularly. Why don't you make sure you are a greener driver? Look out for our free emissions testing sites across the UK. A check will only take 5 minutes, but it'll make all the difference, and save you money. For more information, please contact Lucy Goddard, 110 St Martin's Lane, Covent Garden, London WC2N 4DY. Email: lgoddard@cbarker.co.uk

Further Literature: free information on issues such as energy labels, air pollution, greener driving and much more is available from DETR Free Literature, PO Box 236, Wetherby, West Yorks, LS23 7NB, Telephone: **0870 1226 236**, Fax: **0870 1226 237**

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are you doing your bit?

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