

So what can I do?

Forget the small changes

You can stop worrying about leaving your telephone charger plugged in for a start.

As David Mackay, author of "Without hot air" (www.withouthotair.com) says:

"If you leave your mobile phone charger plugged in, it uses one quarter of one percent of your home's electricity. Don't be distracted by the myth that 'every little helps'. If everyone does a little, we'll achieve only a little. We must do a lot."

The big changes

What you can do to help tackle climate change depends on what you currently do. The average UK citizen emits 10 tonnes of CO₂ every year. This is known as our average carbon footprint. By 2050, we want to be on 2 tonnes of CO₂ per person.

Below are things which lots of us can do. Doing them, or something like them, will reduce your carbon footprint.

Drive a more efficient vehicle

Switching from a 2l petrol Ford Focus to the most efficient 1.6l Diesel Ford Focus would save 1.5 tonnes of CO₂ (and 700 litres of fuel) for every 10,000 miles you drive.



Likewise, switching from a Suzuki 3.2l Vitara 4x4 to a Suzuki 1.6l SX4 4x4 would save 1.9 tonnes of CO₂ (and 950 litres of fuel) for every 10,000 miles you drive.

For more information on efficient vehicles, see:

<http://campaigns.direct.gov.uk/actonco2/home/on-the-move/>

Stop flying, especially long haul

A return flight to New York emits 4.6 tonnes of CO₂ per person.

A trip to Australia emits 10.9 tonnes – more than the average UK citizen in a whole year. No amount of reusing carrier bags or turning lights out will make up for that footprint.

Short haul flight is less damaging, just wrong when viable alternatives are available. A return flight from Newcastle to London emits 0.5 tonnes of CO₂, compared with 0.1 tonnes for the same journey by train.

Short haul holidays in Europe are pretty energy-intensive too. A return flight to Spain will emit 1.8 tonnes of CO₂.



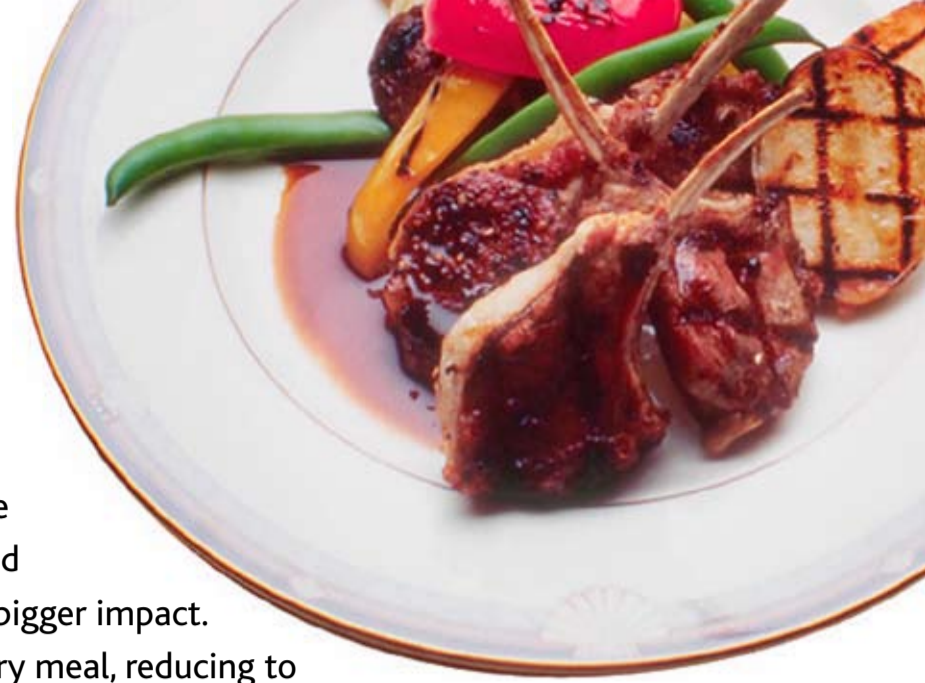
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Eat less meat

Food miles have got more of the attention, but reducing meat and dairy consumption has a much bigger impact.

If you currently eat meat in every meal, reducing to 2 or 3 meals with meat each week would save 0.5 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

Pound-for-pound, beef and lamb have the highest impact, but this is partly because they are less readily farmed intensively. So if you also care about animal welfare, then you should probably try to cut down across the board.



Insulate your house

Depending on your house, installing cavity wall and loft insulation will typically save 0.5 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

If you have an older house which lacks cavity walls, you should consider internal insulation. Although this reduces the size of your rooms and means redecorating, effective insulation material of as little as 10cm will warm your house considerably.

For information on grants, call the Energy Saving Trust on **0800 512 012**.

Buy or generate renewable energy

Green electricity tariffs, which buy or invest in renewables, can reduce your footprint by 0.3 tonnes of CO₂. Compare tariffs at: www.greenelectricity.org

There are several installers of solar-powered hot water systems, and wood burning stoves in North Northumberland.

Find out more details of suppliers at: www.n-e-renewables.org.uk/



Join an environmental group

Contrary to popular belief, most people who are interested in environmental issues are actually quite normal. Not all of them wear sandals. Joining a group will help you influence the wider community, and demonstrate that there is an appetite for really tackling climate change.

Together we really are stronger.

The groups below operate in Alnwick and the surrounding area:



local campaigning and community group.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES:

4th June – Talk by Dr Barbara Sexon of Thropton Energy.

“Taking Alnwick off grid: peak oil and new possibilities” –
7.30pm at St James Church, Pottergate, Alnwick.

Summer-Autumn 2009 – Apples for Alnwick.

We have obtained land for up to 3 community orchards in Alnwick and are giving away trees to local schools and community groups.

More information: www.alnwickfoe.blogspot.com or call David Farrar **01665 605812**.

Transition Alnwick

New group seeking to establish Alnwick as a Transition Community, responding to challenges of both climate change and peak oil on a local level.

FORTHCOMING EVENT:

20th June – Skills and activities which are useful as well as fun – brewing, weaving, cold frames from plastic bags and bottles and lanterns from tin cans.

2pm at St James Church, Pottergate, Alnwick.

More information, email transitionalnwick@googlegroups.com
or contact Paul Mills on 01665 602742

Act Now

Group establishing Warkworth and Acklington as Transition Community.

More information: email john.hobrough@btinternet.com

FORTHCOMING EVENT:

6th June – World Environment Day Exhibition and Films.

12 noon 'til 8pm at Warkworth Memorial Hall.