



**Friends of the Earth** is a charity that gets people campaigning at all levels – in communities, nationally and internationally. Our campaigns are groundbreaking and have been behind laws to protect wildlife in Britain, doorstep recycling for every home and the world’s first climate change act. We believe the environment is for everyone and that a healthy planet and people’s wellbeing go hand in hand. We believe things can get better if we tackle the underlying causes of the threats to our planet – economic and social injustice.

**And with your help we can do this.**

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## The issues

# Why we need a green economy



The global economy is driven by natural resources – timber, oil, metals, minerals, water, coal and gas. This is putting a massive strain on our environment. Greenhouse gases are building up in the atmosphere. Communities are being devastated by mining and logging. The global meat and dairy industry is destroying vast swathes of rainforest. Rich countries are gobbling up the world’s resources. And too many people still live in poverty.

To change this, we need to change the way our economy works. We need to transform what industries make and do, what we buy, and how our homes and cars are powered. A green economy would be fairer to people and good for the planet.

### Creating jobs

In 2009 unemployment in the UK hit its highest level for 15 years. A green economy would help create hundreds of thousands of jobs at a time when we most need them. We have the skills and natural resources needed to create a booming green technology sector.

### Fighting climate change

To avoid the worst impacts of climate change the world urgently needs to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Rich countries need to cut their emissions by at least 40 per cent by 2020. By providing support to poorer countries we can help them develop their economies in cleaner ways.

### Energy security

A green economy would promote low-carbon energy sources over dirty fossil fuels.

As North Sea oil and gas run out, the UK will be increasingly dependent on supplies from volatile parts of the world. By investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency we can reduce our reliance on oil and gas – protecting families from the yo-yoing costs – slash fuel bills and lower our carbon emissions.

### Protecting the natural world

A healthy planet not only gives us food, but also clean air, a stable climate and fresh water. Yet forests and precious raw materials are under threat. We need an economy that respects the real value of goods and services nature provides for us – estimated to be worth US \$33 trillion a year – so that trashing them is longer the cheapest option.

### Making things fair

Poorer people are the worst hit when the environment is damaged and they get the least out of what the Earth has to offer.



A green economy would help change this. By making it more expensive for companies to pollute, poorer communities will have cleaner air and a better environment. By changing rules that govern the way businesses work, poorer countries could better protect their raw materials, such as timber and minerals.

[www.foe.co.uk/greeneconomy/evidence](http://www.foe.co.uk/greeneconomy/evidence)

“... if we can seize the moment, we can open the door to a new economy for the 21st century that will bring new energy, new jobs and new hope to families.”

Barack Obama in a speech on the challenges of energy and climate change.

See inside to find out what a green economy would look like.

## Introduction

# What is a green economy?

**Friends of the Earth wants a healthy planet and a good life for everyone on it. You might wonder what the economy has to do with this. Here's how it links up.**

The economy should provide us with the basics for a good life. But we can't have a good life without a healthy planet and the food, clean air and fresh water it gives us. If our economy damages the environment, our quality of life is affected.

That's what's happening now. For too long it's been cheap and easy to pollute. This is destroying people's health and livelihoods.

For too long rich countries have been using more than their fair share of the world's resources. This means less for poorer people – and they're the worst hit when the environment is damaged.

We need to change the rules that set the economy against the environment. A green economy is one that respects nature's limits and delivers a good quality of life for all people – rich or poor.

In this booklet we don't just highlight the problems. We describe how we're tackling them. Read on to find how you can help us campaign for a better, greener economy.



## Friends of the Earth's solutions

# How we can create a green economy



**We need to change the rules so that the economy works for people and the environment. Here are some of the ways we're campaigning to make this happen.**

### Tax reform

With rules as they are, green alternatives can be more expensive. That's why we're pushing for financial incentives to help us all make greener choices, such as tax breaks for businesses that invest in energy efficiency and renewable power.

We're also pushing the Government to increase taxes on pollution, with the revenue going towards cutting taxes on jobs.

### Spending reform

The Government often makes spending decisions that are bad for the environment. It ploughs billions into road building schemes that increase traffic and carbon emissions.

We want them to spend more on carbon-cutting travel schemes, such as public transport, cycling and walking.

Vast swathes of rainforest are being destroyed to grow animal feed for the meat and dairy industry. The Government spends more than £700 million a year subsidising this industry. We want it to stop subsidising factory farming and use taxpayers' money to support planet-friendly farming instead.

### Green investment

We need greater investment in green technologies. Friends of the Earth has led calls for a Green Investment Bank – to provide funding for renewable power and energy-saving schemes. In 2010 the Government committed to setting up such a bank. We will continue campaigning to make sure this bank is strong and successful.

## Support Friends of the Earth

# Easy ways to help change the world



**Changing our individual behaviour can help, but we'll have even more impact if we act together to change politics. That's why Friends of the Earth asks you to support us in our work. Here's how you can help:**

### Take action and campaign with us

From simple actions to joining groundbreaking campaigns, you can help make the environment better for everyone.

### Make a donation or regular contribution

A regular direct debit is a great way to support our vital campaigns. And there

are many other ways you can help us financially. These include getting a Friends of the Earth credit card, signing up to Good Energy for green electricity, shopping with us, or holding a fundraising event.

### Keep your finger on the pulse

Sign up for our email newsletter for the latest news, campaigns actions and greener lifestyle tips delivered straight to your inbox.

Do all this and more at

[www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)  
[www.foe.co.uk/shop](http://www.foe.co.uk/shop)  
or phone 020 7490 1555



### Climate justice

We're campaigning for the UK to make good on its promises to support developing countries in tackling climate change. One solution is to ensure new money through a tax on the financial sector. This so-called Robin Hood or Tobin Tax would help stabilise financial markets and provide the UK with money needed to help developing countries grow cleanly and cope with climate change.

### Better rules

We're pushing for policies to promote efficient use of the world's natural resources, such as wood and metal.

We also want big business to consider its environmental and social impacts. We're fighting to ensure this happens.

**We're the organisation that led the successful campaign for the UK Climate Change Act – a world first that commits the Government to deal with climate change. Two hundred thousand people from across the UK joined our Big Ask campaign to make this happen. With your support we get things done.**



“I saw people campaigning on The Big Ask and thought – I could be doing that as well. I've loved being part of the campaign... seeing so many people coming together and the effect of it.”

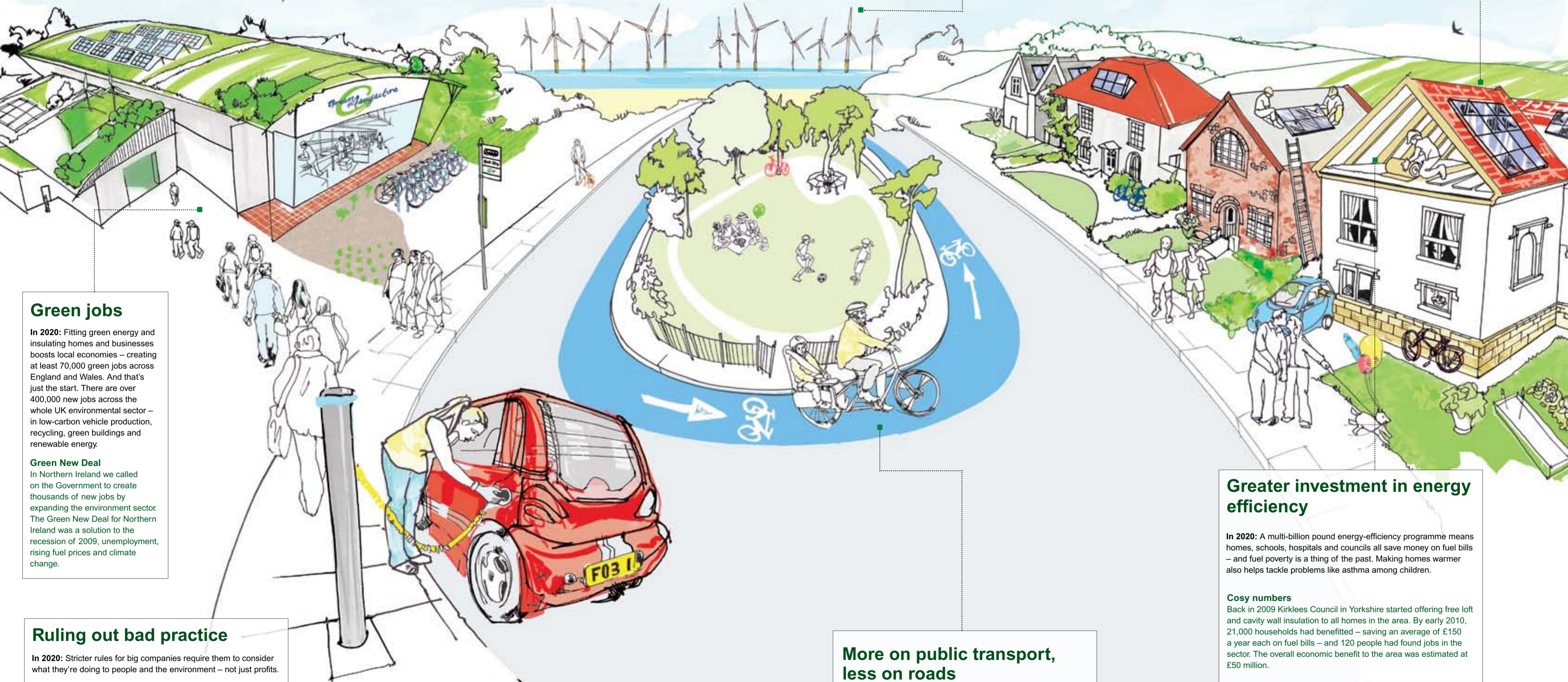
Jenny Claydon, local Friends of the Earth group volunteer.

Read on to find out how you can get involved.

# What would a green economy look like?

Imagine a country with hundreds of thousands of new jobs in cutting-edge industries. A country where the air is cleaner and the streets are safer for pedestrians and cyclists. A country where everyone can afford to keep their homes warm. Imagine an economy that supports everyone's needs.

Flash forward to 2020. A green economy has helped create this. Here's how.



## Green jobs

**In 2020:** Fitting green energy and insulating homes and businesses boosts local economies – creating at least 70,000 green jobs across England and Wales. And that's just the start. There are over 400,000 new jobs across the whole UK environmental sector – in low-carbon vehicle production, recycling, green buildings and renewable energy.

### Green New Deal

In Northern Ireland we called on the Government to create thousands of new jobs by expanding the environment sector. The Green New Deal for Northern Ireland was a solution to the recession of 2009, unemployment, rising fuel prices and climate change.

## Ruling out bad practice

**In 2020:** Stricter rules for big companies require them to consider what they're doing to people and the environment – not just profits.

### Shell out

In 2009 Friends of the Earth Nigeria helped four men sue oil giant Shell for destruction of farmland and fisheries caused by oil pollution. Shell's defence – that the Dutch parent company did not have jurisdiction over Shell Nigeria and was therefore not responsible – was overruled by the court. This opened the way for local people to claim compensation.

## International agreement

**In 2020:** A safe global cap on carbon emissions with a fair share allocated to each country protects economies and people around the world from the worst impacts of climate change.

## Renewable energy

**In 2020:** Greater private and public investment makes the UK a world leader in renewable technologies. The sector employs hundreds of thousands of people and we've drastically reduced our dependency on polluting fossil fuels.

### People power

Friends of the Earth in Wales helped collect thousands of letters backing positive action on green jobs and renewable energy. Thanks to this support, the massive Gwynt y Môr wind farm, eight miles off the North Wales coast, was finally given the go ahead in December 2008.

## It's easier being green

**In 2020:** Tax breaks and grants encourage businesses, communities and individuals to invest in energy efficiency and renewable power. Small green energy projects are common and emissions from running our homes have fallen.

### Feed-in tariff

Thanks to a successful campaign by Friends of the Earth and our supporters, from April 2010 homes, small businesses and communities get paid for the electricity and heat they produce from renewable sources. Feed-in tariffs proved a successful way to boost renewable energy generation in 20 European countries – creating new jobs, saving money and greening the economy.

## Greater investment in energy efficiency

**In 2020:** A multi-billion pound energy-efficiency programme means homes, schools, hospitals and councils all save money on fuel bills – and fuel poverty is a thing of the past. Making homes warmer also helps tackle problems like asthma among children.

### Cosy numbers

Back in 2009 Kirklees Council in Yorkshire started offering free loft and cavity wall insulation to all homes in the area. By early 2010, 21,000 households had benefitted – saving an average of £150 a year each on fuel bills – and 120 people had found jobs in the sector. The overall economic benefit to the area was estimated at £50 million.

## Meeting basic needs

**In 2020:** Policies on transport, food, electricity and heating ensure that everyone can afford to heat their home, buy good quality food and easily reach essential services such as schools, hospitals, work and shops.

## More on public transport, less on roads

**In 2020:** £2 billion is saved every year through less road-building. This money goes to improving public transport and providing safe walking and cycling conditions. Benefits include cleaner air, safer roads and healthier people – and that spells savings for the National Health Service too.

**Together we can make this vision real. Turn over to find out about our campaigns and how you can get involved.**