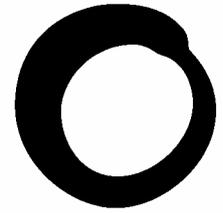


February 2004



**Friends of
the Earth**

Briefing

How to be a friend of the Earth

Introduction

The need for us all to live on this planet in a sustainable way is becoming more urgent. In the developed world we consume too much, throw away too much and pollute too much. To improve the quality of life for all of us and for the sake of the environment, we need to tread more lightly on the earth and encourage others to do the same.

We can make changes straight away so that our everyday lives have less impact on the planet. Making more informed choices about some of the things we buy, and consuming less in our daily lives is a good start. But we can also become more enthused, involved and active – to get changes that are further reaching. This might be a local campaign to stop an unwanted development on a green space, or persuading your council to source local food for school meals, for example.

Friends of the Earth inspires solutions to environmental problems, which make life better for people.

Friends of the Earth is:

- the UK's most influential national environmental campaigning organisation**
- the most extensive environmental network in the world, with almost one million supporters across five continents and over 60 national organisations worldwide**
- a unique network of campaigning local groups, working in over 200 communities throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland**
- dependent on individuals for over 90 per cent of its income.**

To join or make a donation call us on 0800 581 051

Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ

Tel: 020 7490 1555 Fax: 020 7490 0881 Email: info@foe.co.uk Website: www.foe.co.uk

Friends of the Earth Limited company number 1012357

♻️ Printed on paper made from 100 per cent post-consumer waste

How to be a friend of the Earth

Friends of the Earth is 'the UK's most effective environment group' (The Guardian). We have achieved successes to help us all tread more lightly, from persuading the Government to introduce the Household Waste Recycling Act, which means every household will have a doorstep recycling collection by 2010, to helping fence-line communities affected by Shell's refineries around the world, come and tell their stories at the company's AGM.

For more on recent successes and campaigns see:

www.foe.co.uk/resource/annual_reviews/annual_review_0203.pdf

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/infoteam/pressrel/index.html

How to get involved and active with Friends of the Earth:

Join your local Friends of the Earth group which will be campaigning on environmental issues in your area: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/local_groups_and_campaigns/#locate

Are you are interested a specific campaign or issue? We have online campaigns on GM, Corporates, Trade, Waste and more. You can become a part of these campaigns by taking actions at: www.foe.co.uk/press_for_change/

Get regular information and quick actions on all our campaigns by joining Campaign Express, which provides easy actions three times a year by post. Each pack is based on a current live issue like climate change, GM foods or factory pollution. The actions are carefully planned to put pressure on the right people at the right time – like getting your MP to sign up to one of our Bills. Each pack has an update telling you how effective previous actions have been. Campaign Express is free to join - please call us for further information or see:

www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/campaign_express/

Join Friends of the Earth: www.foe.co.uk/join_index.html

If you prefer, call our Freephone on 0808 800 1111 for more details of any of the above.

Save energy

The world's top scientists agree - climate change is happening and will affect us all. A report by leading magazine Nature says it could mean extinction for a quarter of the world's species by 2050.

When we burn fossil fuels (oil, coal, gas, petrol and diesel) for energy, carbon dioxide is released. This traps the sun's heat in the atmosphere, leading to global warming and climate change.

We can all take steps to combat climate change by reducing the amount of energy we use. This doesn't necessarily mean giving up the luxuries we are used to; being energy-efficient can cost you nothing and may even save money on your electricity and gas bills.

- Stop heat escaping by insulating your home.
- Choose an energy-efficient boiler and other household appliances.
- Buy energy-efficient light bulbs which use a fifth of the electricity of ordinary bulbs and

last eight times longer.

Buy green energy

Switching to a green electricity supplier that supports green energy sources - like wind power - is a great way to help stop climate change. Our new guide to green energy is at:

http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/press_for_change/choose_green_energy/index.html

Useful organisations:

Energy Saving Trust - energy efficiency advice for domestic consumers and details of energy efficient appliances

21 Dartmouth Street, London, SW1H 9BP Tel: 020 7222 0101

Email: info@est.co.uk Web: www.est.org.uk

Action energy (formerly eebpp) - helps businesses and organisations of all sizes save money by improving their energy efficiency.

Transport web pages: www.energy-efficiency.gov.uk/transport/

Homepage: www.actionenergy.org.uk/

Free Building Consultation <http://www.designadvice.co.uk/DesignAdvice/application.jsp>

Tel: 0800 585794

Leave your car at home

Transport, as a whole, is the fastest growing source of carbon dioxide emissions in the UK, with Government projecting an increase of 31 per cent between 1990 and 2010. We're making more and more short journeys - using our cars so much impacts on the environment and therefore on our health in many ways. Pollution from vehicle exhausts, environmental damage from the building of roads, noise pollution, stress levels in congested traffic and death and injury in accidents are some of them. We can build cleaner, safer vehicles and invest in public transport and use it more. In the long run, however, we can cut pollution and other negative effects of road transport only by cutting traffic.

- If you have a car, whenever possible leave it at home - walk, cycle or use public transport instead.
- If you have to buy a car, choose a small, fuel-efficient one, or get a clean fuel vehicle which won't emit harmful gases. Join a car-pooling scheme.
- You don't actually have to own a car - there are car-clubs which run pay-as-you-drive schemes.
- Many children are growing up unfit and dependent on cars too - school journeys are safe and fun with a Walking Bus scheme - cutting car congestion and pollution as well.
- Use trains instead of planes for short-haul journeys - aviation is the fastest growing source of carbon dioxide worldwide

Useful organisations:

Powershift: www.est-powershift.org.uk/ - details of clean fuel vehicles and grants

Hotline: 0845 602 1425

How to be a friend of the Earth

Vehicle Certification Agency - new car fuel consumption and emissions figures

Email: fuel@vca.gov.uk Web: www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk

Liftshare - nationwide free on-line link up for those offering and looking for liftshares

Email: info@liftshare.com Web: www.liftshare.com/ Tel: 08700 780 225

Smart Moves - pay-as-you-drive car clubs

The Media Centre, Northumberland St, Huddersfield HD1 1RL Tel: 01484 483061

Email: office@smartmoves.co.uk Web: www.smartmoves.co.uk/index.html

Carplus – helps set up car clubs at work or for private use

The Studio, 32 The Calls, Leeds, LS2 7EW Tel: 0113 234 9299

Email: info@carclubs.org.uk Web: www.carclubs.org.uk

Reduce waste

The average person in the UK throws out their own body weight in rubbish every three months. This is piling up problems for our environment and future generations worldwide. Whatever we chuck away ends up in landfill or being burnt in incinerators, and both methods damage the environment. The UK is way down the league table of European countries with a measly recycling rate of 12 per cent compared to Switzerland, where they recycle around half of their waste. Innovative schemes around the country are achieving recycling rates of 50 per cent, and with proper resourcing, recycling and composting can work anywhere. In the end though we have to reduce the amount of waste we produce in the first place.

- **Replace** - Use libraries, tool-hire shops, launderettes, nappy washing services and car hire companies to cut down the number of products you need to buy. Pass on unwanted computers or furniture with life left in them to charity.
- **Reduce** - Only buy products you really need with the least possible packaging.
- **Re-use** - Everything you can.
- **Repair** - Items such as clothes, shoes and many electronic goods can be repaired. If the manufacturer says it is not worth repairing, ask why not. Buy goods that are built to last.
- **Recycle** - Buy as many recycled products as possible and recycle or compost everything you possibly can. Recycled products save energy and raw materials. Try to use easily recyclable products.
- **Refuse** - Don't accept excess packaging and refuse plastic bags.

Useful organisations

Wastewatch – Info on all aspects of waste and recycling – tells you who's recycling/re-using what in your area

96 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2TH Tel: 020 7253 6266

Email: info@wastewatch.org.uk Web: www.wastewatch.org.uk

Waste Connect - national on-line directory of local recycling opportunities

Tel: 01743 343 403 Web: <http://www.wastepoint.co.uk/>

Community Recycling Network - community-based recycling and waste reduction, setting up recycling schemes

Trelawney House, Surrey Street, Bristol BS2 8PS Tel: 0117 942 0142

Email: info@crn.org.uk Web: www.crn.org.uk

National Recycling Forum – on-line guide to products available in the UK which contain recycled materials.

Web: <http://www.recycledproducts.org.uk/>

Envirowise - Government website and helpline offering practical environmental advice for business.

Freephone: 0800 585 794 Web: www.envirowise.gov.uk

Shopping: be a green consumer

As consumers we sometimes have the option of buying products that are both ethically and environmentally sound. It is important to support good business by buying these products whenever we can (always check the small print!) But, on its own, green consumerism cannot bring the widespread and urgently needed change in the way we trade and do business. It is essential that we combine using our spending power wisely and ethically, with campaigning for widespread laws that would challenge corporate power and force companies to operate in an environmentally and socially sound way.

Join our email network to receive easy email actions that will help make a difference
www.bigbusinesssexposed.com

In the kitchen

- Buy locally produced food instead of shopping at supermarkets. Shopping locally cuts down on journeys, reduces packaging and helps the local economy. If you shop at a farmers' market – you can quiz the farmers directly about how your food has been produced.
- Buy organic food and drink products wherever possible. It's better for the environment, your health and for animal welfare, and it helps the rural economy. There are lots of box delivery schemes available. Organic food does not contain GM and consumer pressure has led to the major supermarkets and food manufacturers getting rid of GM ingredients in their food.
- Buy fairly-traded products (tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, bananas and more).
- Buy an ozone-friendly fridge without CFCs. Make sure the CFCs are safely removed from your old fridge.

Useful organisations

The Soil Association – campaigns for organic food and farming, details of box delivery schemes and much more

Bristol House, Victoria Street, Bristol, BS1 6BY Tel: 0117 929 0661

Email: info@soilassociation.org Web: www.soilassociation.org

How to be a friend of the Earth

National Association of Farmers' Markets – how to find your nearest Farmers' Market
South Vaults, Green Park Station, Green Park Road, Bath, BA1 1JB Tel: 01225 787914
Email: nafm@farmersmarkets.net Web: www.farmersmarkets.net/

Fairtrade Foundation - awards the Fairtrade Mark to products which meet internationally recognised standards of fair trade.

Suite 204, 16 Baldwin's Gardens, London, EC1N 7RJ Tel: 020 7405 5942
Email: mail@fairtrade.org.uk Web: www.fairtrade.org.uk/

Henry Doubleday Research Association - organic gardening, farming and food. Also advises on growing your own organic produce.

Ryton Organic Gardens, Coventry, Warwickshire, CV8 3LG Tel: 0247 630 3517
Email: enquiry@hdra.org.uk Web: www.hdra.org.uk

In the garden

- Our last peat bogs are being dug up to sell in garden centres, threatening many rare species. There is no need to use peat in your garden. If your garden centre offers no alternative, complain.
- Composting your kitchen and garden green waste can make the best soil conditioner there is - for free. And it won't end up in landfill.
- Garden organically to protect wildlife from harmful chemicals and encourage natural pest controllers like birds, ladybirds, frogs and hedgehogs. Grow your own vegetables if you can.

In the home

- Buy organic clothing, textiles etc
- Don't buy tropical timber. The timber trade is threatening valuable habitats and rare species around the world. Buy wood and wood products only from sources certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, or use reclaimed timber. Far too much wood still ends up in landfill. For more details have a look at our good wood checklist: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/resource/good_wood_guide/wood_timber_buying_guide.html
- Conserve water as much as possible: take a shower instead of a bath and use water-efficient appliances. Don't pollute water by pouring used oil or paint down the drain.
- Batteries contain a cocktail of dangerous chemicals. Using mains power is less damaging, or use rechargeable batteries. Wind-up radios and torches are also available.
- When buying cleaning products, choose ones with biodegradable, non-toxic ingredients. Aerosols still contain damaging chemicals so choose pump action sprays instead. Avoid scented products that may contain artificial musks. Avoid PVC products that may contain phthalates. Avoid anti-bacterial products which may contain alkytin or triclosan.
- Use water-based paints. Many of the chemicals commonly found in cleaning products, paints and plastics don't biodegrade so they are building up in the environment, causing health problems for humans and wildlife. See our Safer Chemicals Campaign for more

information on what to avoid:

http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals/

Useful organisations

Ethical Consumer Research Association - reports on the stories behind the products

Unit 21, 41 Old Birley St, Manchester M15 5RF Tel: 0161 226 2929

Email: mail@ethicalconsumer.org Web: www.ethicalconsumer.org

The Natural Collection - mail order catalogue, for products which have less impact on the environment

Eco House, Monmouth Place, Bath BA1 2DQ Tel: 01225 404010

Email: info@naturalcollection.com Web: www.naturalcollection.com

Forests Stewardship Council - products made from wood from well-managed forests

Unit D, Station Buildings, Llanidloes, Powys, SY18 6EB Tel: 01686 413 916

Email: info@fsc-uk.org Web: <http://www.fsc-uk.info/index.asp>

Life

- There are increasing opportunities to invest your money ethically, including saving schemes, pensions and mortgages. So don't support bad business – change to an ethical bank.
- Is your holiday hurting the planet? Tourism can have an adverse affect - culturally, environmentally and economically - the rapid rise in air travel means that this is now the fastest growing source of carbon dioxide pollution worldwide. Many short-haul journeys can be made by train, so holiday closer to home.

Useful organisations

Ethical Investment Research and Information Service - information for ethical investors

EIRIS, 80-84 Bondway, London SW8 1SF, Tel: 020 7840 5700

Email: ethics@eiris.org Web: <http://www.eiris.org/index.htm>

Tourism Concern – campaigning for ethical and fairly traded tourism

Stapleton House, 277-281 Holloway Road, London N7 8HN Tel: 020 7133 3330

Email: info@tourismconcern.org.uk Web: www.tourismconcern.org.uk

Speak your mind!

- Express your concerns about the environmental impact of any product to the shop manager or manufacturer.
- Write to your MP on environmental issues which concern you. See our Press for Change actions at: www.foe.co.uk/press_for_change/
- Support local community campaigns.

Further reading from Friends of the Earth:

Cutting your car use:

A practical guide to cutting car use through changing our personal habits. It's packed with cartoons, success stories, a directory and cost calculation worksheets to help tackle our car dependency.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#cutting_y

Good wood guide:

This guide looks at the problems facing the world's forests, and highlights how we can help alleviate these problems through our buying power. It examines the types of wood available for builders, architects and DIY enthusiasts - where this wood comes from, any environmental problems associated with it and what alternatives could be used. Includes an extensive reference section that lists reclaimed timber supplies, a full A to Z of world timber and good wood checklist.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#good_w

The good shopping guide:

Want to avoid genetically-modified foods? Need a new fridge? Or maybe you want to be sure your pension will not fund the arms trade. The Good Shopping Guide is a road map to ethical shopping, endorsing some consumer brands and exposing others. This book uncovers the environmental, animal welfare and human rights records of hundreds of high-street familiars across a vast range of goods and services.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#good_s

The green building bible 2003/04:

Get help making your home less harmful to the environment with this essential guide from the Association for Environment Conscious Building (AECB). From a selection of materials to heating your home efficiently, builder's merchants, architect or carpenter with green sympathies, the Bible lists members of the AECB throughout the UK and Ireland.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#green_building

The energy saving house:

Minimise your energy consumption, reduce your impact on the planet and save money. From construction to renovation, white goods to heating systems, maintenance to running costs, this is an invaluable guide to energy saving for all home owners.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#energy_s

More from Less:

Showing how we can live better on less in tomorrow's world, this is a blueprint for sustainable living and working in the 21st century, as if Life - of wildlife and humans alike - really mattered.

http://www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/big_issues.html#more_f

Don't throw it all away:

Friends of the Earth's guide to waste reduction and recycling looks at the environmental problems caused by rubbish, the potential for reuse and recycling and suggestions on how individuals can help.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#dont_throw

The real food book:

This exposé of what's wrong with modern farming and our food system offers a wealth of ideas about how to find locally-produced and seasonal foods, organic farming and innovative new ways to shop. It also shows consumers how to make sure they have a real choice about real food.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/big_issues.html#real_f

The walking bus:

Everything you need to know about setting up your own neighbourhood walking bus for junior school children to walk safely to school. The guide explains why such local schemes can significantly help to cut car congestion and pollution.

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/practical.html#walking_b

How to win: A guide to successful community campaigning:

A guide to community-based campaigning which draws on almost 30 years of experience from Friends of the Earth, outlining how to run, and win, a local campaign.

http://www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/guides.html#how_to_c

Safer Chemicals factsheets:

www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals/resource/general_readers.html

Useful information on what to watch out for when buying paints, toys, food, bottles, beakers and perfumed products, and on health problems associated with some hazardous chemicals.

We do have a range of briefings and free publications. For briefings see the resources section of the campaign pages at: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/index.html

For the publications list go to: www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/pubscat/

Need advice?

20,000 people contact our enquiries team every year for information on Friends of the Earth campaigns and for help in taking action - like how to respond to the brush-off from a reluctant MP. The team also advise on everything environmental from energy efficiency to recycling – and provide referrals to other expert organisations.

Ask us a question at: www.foe.co.uk/resource/notes_and_queries/ask_question.html

For job and voluntary opportunities, please see:

www.foe.co.uk/jobs/ and www.foe.co.uk/press_for_change/volunteer/

For information on recent successes and campaigns, please see:

www.foe.co.uk/pubsinfo/infoteam/pressrel/index.html

www.foe.co.uk/resource/annual_reviews/annual_review_0203.pdf

For our objectives, please see:

www.foe.co.uk/fund_raising/welcome/about_foe.html