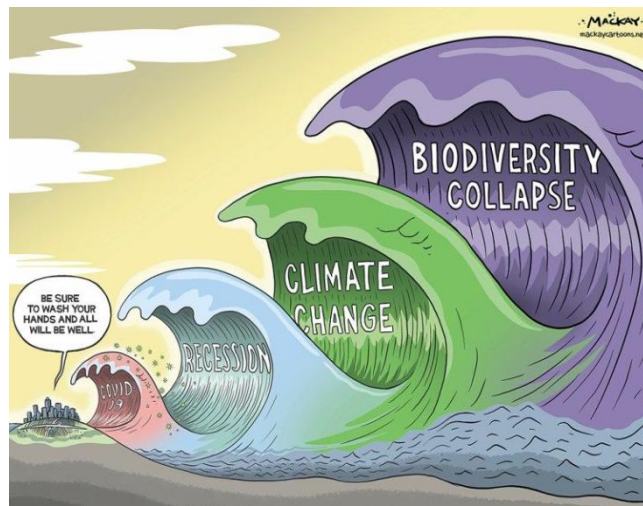


What we can do

No-one made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do so little
Edmund Burke

Change should present opportunities, not threats.



The following points are intended as a guide – you will know what rings true for you and will find the suggestions that are appropriate for you, your physical capacity and your lifestyle.

This is not a blueprint, just a set of ideas that might inspire you!

Think of it as a 'pick and mix' with some new ideas to try.

Further information: [u3a: Climate Change & the Environment: COP Group \(u3asites.org.uk\)](https://u3asites.org.uk)

Stage One – Conservation; Reducing Energy Consumption

Many of these are likely to be familiar to you and are steps you can take in your own life and home

Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle: A guiding principle in all our consumption behaviour. Changing behaviour in these modest ways is not difficult and has benefits in lower bills and increased comfort (particularly the domestic energy measures).

Some suggestions:

- Increased walking, cycling and use of public transport
- Drive less; drive slower; use a smaller car
- Switch to [Ecosia](#) search engine – plants trees on your behalf
- Find out – does your bank/savings portfolio etc invest in fossil fuels? (Banks are generally the worst culprits)
- Start using your voice and your vote to bring about change – speak truth to power!
- Speak out online – sign petitions
- Think about the choices you make as a consumer; buy less 'stuff'; repair more.
- Find out more about Fairtrade
- Turn down your thermostat
- Improve your insulation <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/reducing-home-heat-loss/>; <https://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/passivhaus.php>
- Try to reduce your energy consumption: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/>
- Switch to a sustainable energy provider, once the energy market regains equilibrium
- If you or your children are in the 'nappy generation' explore using the new types of reusable rather than disposable: <https://www.thenappylady.co.uk/reusable-nappies.html>
- Travel less. Think hard about the travel you do – and make it really 'count'
- Shop locally eg Farmers' market, farm shops, honesty boxes - and buy what is in season: <https://eatseasonably.co.uk/>
- Try to grow your own herbs and vegetables – or become involved in your community garden
- Recycle paper, glass, plastics etc – but aim to re-use/re-fill/even refuse in the first place
- Eat less meat and dairy: <https://www.green.org.il/en/reducing-animal-products/>
- Find your local [zero waste shop](#) and remember to take your (clean) containers for re-filling
- Buy fewer new clothes
- Give away unwanted items through Freecycle
- Take a look at '[Ethical Consumer](#)'
- Learn about your carbon footprint: [WWW](#) and [Giki Zero](#) both have easy-to-use calculators.

Level Two – Lobbying, Getting Connected and Informed

These steps are in many ways more challenging. If you are ready to make a wider difference, then you will need to 'speak truth to power' – your personal steps have much value but have limitations in changing the world!

Yes, these are 'political'. Climate change is 'political', but with a lower case 'p'. These links are all to well-respected bodies, organisations and academic institutions.

- Information is power: become better informed and prepared to lobby and influence others:
- Find out about the [Climate Coalition](https://www.theccc.org.uk/) and the work of the Climate Change Committee: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/>
- <https://www.tyndall.ac.uk/>, <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/what-is-climate-change> www.campaigncc.org/;
- Being part of an organisation helps: such as Global Action Plan: www.globalactionplan.org.uk/, Friends of the Earth: www.foe.co.uk/ and/or BioRegional: www.bioregional.com/ and Transition Towns: <http://www.transitiontowns.org/>, all of which provide support and ideas.
- Take a look at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT): <https://www.cat.org.uk/>
- Do all you can to influence organisations with which you interact, including those that employ you and any voluntary organisations with which you are involved.

It is worth writing to your MP/MSP to exhort them to push for carbon budgeting or any other of the climate emergency solutions: MPs have to take notice of their constituents, and a heavy postbag on one issue will really make a difference and will challenge their belief that 'there are no votes in environmental issues' – recently this seems to be changing.

Level Three – Changing Behaviour

Some of these suggestions are challenging: they tend to focus on travel, home efficiency and diet, as these are areas where we can have a big impact – but they can be 'outside the comfort zone' for some. Maybe you are already doing some of them:

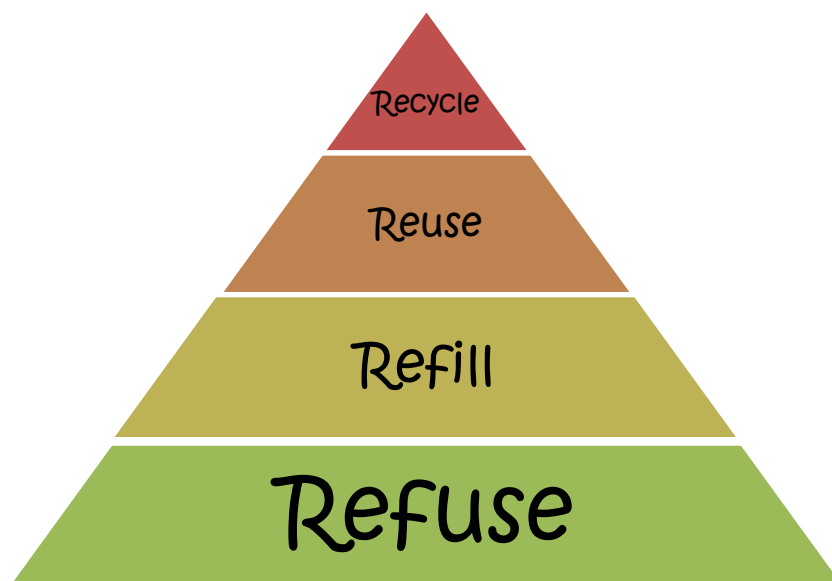
- Move on from car ownership: <https://www.bestapp.com/best-car-sharing-apps/>
- Explore Car Clubs: <https://www.zipcar.com/en-gb>, <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/car-clubs><https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/car-clubs>
- Aim to eliminate air travel, unless really necessary. Explore the European rail system: www.seat61.com/; <https://www.raileurope.com/>. Unfortunately, cruises are energy-greedy, polluting and wasteful.
- If you have a property abroad, you might ask yourself if this is really sustainable, particularly if it is necessary to fly to use it.
- Research domestic renewable and sustainable energies: [https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/renewable energy](https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/renewable-energy)
- Install an air source or ground source heat pump: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/air-source-heat-pumps-vs-ground-source-heat-pumps/>

- Look into solar panels and battery storage: <https://energyguide.org.uk/solar-battery-storage-system-costs/>
- Make every attempt to reduce your own 'carbon footprint' www.footprintnetwork.org/. It's helpful to explore the differences between 'wants' and 'needs'. Find out about alternative economic models: contact and/or join the New Economic Foundation: <https://neweconomics.org/>
- Find out about carbon rationing action groups: CRAG: <https://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/research/energy/archive-carbon-rationing.html>
- Swap your investments, savings, pension, mortgage etc to providers and Building Societies that do not invest in fossil fuels: <https://www.which.co.uk/money/investing/types-of-investment/ethical-investing-explained-avy661g6r0l7>
- Avoid buying anything new and buy only what you need
- Aim for a plant-based diet: <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/putting-it-into-practice/plant-based-diets/plant-based-diets/>

Community Actions such as

- Join in with more political/activist activity eg The Green Party, Extinction Rebellion (XR), local demonstrations, leafleting and canvassing
 - 'Guerrilla gardening' in your community on roundabouts etc.
 - Start your own campaign group
 - Encourage children and young people in starting/joining school clubs/campaigns/school strikes.
 - Use your local 'Repair Café' – or maybe set one up
 - Join – or set up - a Climate Café

The waste pyramid – recycling should be a last resort; it is the smallest section:



As Sir David Attenborough said in late 2019 “The longer we leave it, not doing things but going on talking about the problems, the worse it’s going to get. And in the end, unless we do something, it becomes insoluble. So now is the moment”.

