

Understanding Your Carbon Footprint

Today it is more important than ever before to minimise our environmental impact. The developed countries like the UK have been consuming more and more natural resources and energy and thus have been producing more and more carbon emissions. As the developing and third world countries start improving their lifestyles they will consume more of everything too and add to the problem. We in the UK need to lead the way in energy conservation and in reducing our CO2 emissions to prevent global warming and serious climate change.

THIS SOUNDS LIKE IT IS ALL BAD NEWS - BUT IT'S NOT , BECAUSE -

YOU CAN DO THIS AND SAVE MONEY AT THE SAME TIME!

Electricity generation is one of the largest producers of carbon emissions, every time you use it to put the kettle on or turn the television on - you are adding to global warming. The consumption of coal, gas, oil , petrol , diesel and aviation fuels all add to global warming.

The following tips make a great start to reduce *Your personal* contribution to global warming – *i.e. Your Carbon Footprint* –

Most of them are guaranteed to save you money over a period of time!

1. Reduce energy wasted from the home. Seal off draughts. Install loft and Cavity wall insulation – schemes available for discount prices through British Gas on 0845 971 7731(quote BRAC). Prices start from c £250.00 and this scheme also offers £50.00 council tax rebate. (Some householders may be entitled to this work for free). Double glazing helps too if you can afford it.
2. Turn down the CH thermostat by 1 degree in the winter, and wear a sweater. This can save a surprising amount of energy. Turn off heating for the summer season and reduce timings for hot water, make sure the hot water tank is well insulated and that a thermostat is installed.
3. Use low energy light bulbs. They use around 80% less electricity, and they last about 5 times longer. Prices are coming down rapidly - and after 2010 the standard filament light bulbs will be unobtainable anyway!
4. Switch off all appliances at the socket if they have a standby function. Standby wastes a huge amount of electricity!
5. Switch off everything electrical as soon as you have finished using it. Don't leave TVs and radios on if nobody is watching or listening!
- 6 If you are buying a new appliance buy the highest A energy efficiency rating - if you can possibly afford it.
7. Don't try to heat the planet with a patio heater! If it is too cold for a barbecue then cook the food indoors.

8. A microwave oven is the most energy efficient way to cook food.
9. Try to cook food as much as possible in the same way at the same time, and if house sharing - avoid cooking different meals at different times!
4. Walk more, car share more, or even try cycling to work.
5. Travel less by car, use public transport whenever possible.
6. Take your holidays in the UK rather than abroad.
7. Drive your car as if there is an egg on the accelerator pedal.
8. Drive a car that is the most energy efficient you can afford that will fulfil all the essential functions that you actually *need*.
9. When making all purchases consider your *needs* first - *desires* last. Beware of slick advertising and gadgetry!
10. Try to live, shop, work and play as locally as possible
11. Dont buy bottled water. Fill bottles with tap water. Ideally get your tap fitted with an under the sink water filter, costing from £30 + installation. You can keep the bottles nice and cold in the fridge in the summer and take them out with you.
12. Recycle everything you can. Reuse everything that can be re-used, Repair everything that can be repaired. Refuse to buy anything you don't need.

TO LEARN HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT AND MORE
WHY NOT COME TO A MEETING OF
THE BRACKNELL CARBON REDUCTION ACTION GROUP
RUN BY BRACKNELL & DISTRICT FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
7.30 pm on the second Tuesday every month in The Tea House in the Broadway,
Town centre Bracknell, Next door to Herbies Pizza Parlour.