

New Year.....New World?

Many of us make New Year's Resolutions, so this year, alongside the ones about being good and losing those few pounds we might have put on over Christmas, how about making some small changes to the way we live which might just change the world? Here are a few ideas from the Climate Change Group of the Parish Council which might also save you money!

It can be as simple as remembering to ask ourselves whether we can Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair and Recover at home or at work.

Reducing food waste: there are some great hacks/tips on <https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>

- check for the longest use by dates when you buy and create a "use me next" space in your fridge to prevent missing items that are getting close to their date.
- go online for tasty recipes to use up leftovers e.g. vegetable soup/bubble and squeak/curries/or the more traditional shepherds' pie!
- got potatoes in the cupboard that are looking a bit sad? Try making them into mash and freezing. Reheat in the microwave, a great time saver.

Can I reduce my carbon footprint? Here are some ideas.....

Apparently the biggest change we can make is to eat less meat; eating beef just once a week can produce 221kg of CO₂, equivalent to a journey of about 410 miles in the average family car! According to Sir David Attenborough, humans currently use 80% of all farmland to raise animals for food but this only provides 18% of the calories we need; a staggering statistic so possibly

- try meat free Mondays or go the whole hog (excuse the pun!) and do Veganuary or if that's a step too far Veguary in February (not sure if that exists but sounds good).

After that, it's reducing our energy usage. Like many of our New Year's resolutions, we know we should do lots of these but it's not easy. A bit of an incentive, like making it into a personal challenge or a competition with other family members or friends, could make it more fun:

- walking/cycling to work/school or using public transport if you can
- switching off all unnecessary electrical items; you'd be amazed at how much energy running standby lights takes (for more info on energy saving tips like this <https://www.uswitch.com/energy-efficiency/free-energy-saving-tips/> has 104 ideas for saving energy across all rooms of the house)
- turning the thermostat down by 1° and don't heat rooms you aren't using (set the radiator thermostats to the * frost setting)
- drawing the curtains before it gets dark to provide more insulation, perhaps consider lining them if they aren't already.
- turning the brightness setting down on the TV / computer screens / your phone
- turning the thermostat down on the hot water. Do you have to add cold water to wash up/fill the bath? Yes then you could be wasting energy.
- using a washing up bowl if you only have a few plates to wash up. Not only saves heating the water with costly gas but saves water too.

- If you don't have a combi boiler, using the kettle to heat the hot water to wash up when there's only a few things to do.
- batch cooking when you use the oven / hob.

If you already do all that, how about something a bit different such as reducing the amount of water you use?

Did you know that the average household in the Anglian Water area uses 125 litres (or 27.5 gallons) per person per day? They have an app that lets you calculate your water usage and helpful ideas for reducing it at <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/help-and-advice/save-water/water-usage-calculator/#>.

For example

- Collect rainwater to water the garden, any container will do but water butts that attach to drainpipes are brilliant and pretty easy to set up.
- Clean your car less frequently and use a bucket and sponge when you do.

Recycling / Reusing

Having a post-Christmas clear out? Does it have to be thrown out? Can it be repurposed? Can it go in a charity bag? Perhaps advertise goods on Facebook Market Place/Vinted/Freegle or any of the many other sales sites to get a bit of cash back.

If it does need to go in the bin, please make sure you put it in the right one. Not sure about what to put in your bins? Checkout the A to Z of waste at <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/a-z-of-waste/>.

You can recycle garden and kitchen waste by composting, not sure how?

<https://www.edenproject.com/learn/eden-at-home/how-to-make-a-compost-heap-10-top-tips>

Or you might want to set up a wormery. They're brilliant for vegetable peelings and make excellent liquid fertilizer and compost in return. There are lots of ideas for how to do this on the internet and kids just love them. And with the introduction of the subscription service for Green Bins coming up in April, now would be a great time to start. Did you know you can get soil improver for free from the waste transfer site in Alconbury? Just take your own shovel and bags!!

Repairing/Recovering

Before you throw it out, could that item be repaired /upcycled? Perhaps you might not be any good with a sewing machine / soldering iron but do you have friends who are into DIY? The PC are hoping to set up a repair café in Buckden where those of us who have stuff that needs mending can be put in touch with those of us who have the right skill sets to do it. Please watch this space for more info.

Good luck with sticking to your resolutions, whatever they may be. It would be lovely to hear how you have got on, especially if you decide to make it competitive! Above all, the Parish Council would like to wish all residents a very happy and prosperous new year.