

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION IN MANCHESTER: WHAT YOU CAN DO — AT HOME

Did you know that you can reduce your energy bills, improve your health, and help make Manchester a better place to live while doing your bit for the planet? Manchester's commitment to taking action on climate change is for you and for your future: this is a short guide to getting involved.

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

When we heat and light our homes, travel by car, or buy food or other goods, we use energy. Most of this energy comes from burning fossil fuels such as coal and gas, and this releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere.

Over the past 200 years increased levels of CO₂ have been making the planet steadily warmer by making the 'blanket' of gases in the atmosphere thicker than before. This overall warming is changing the climate around the world in different ways: here in Manchester it has already begun to mean wetter winters and more extreme weather such as storms and heavy rainfall. In other parts of the world, higher summer temperatures and worse flooding are now more common.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

Manchester has agreed a climate change action plan for 2010–20. It's called Manchester – A Certain Future and you can read it at www.manchesterclimate.com.

The plan aims to reduce the amount of CO₂ that is produced across Manchester, and to prepare for a changing climate. Everyone in the city can play their part – you can too, and this leaflet tells you how.

BUILDINGS



Whether you rent or own your home, there are things you can do to make it more energy-efficient and reduce how much CO₂ your home produces. How much energy you use, how you buy it and whether you waste any are the questions to ask to reduce your bills but keep you toasty when it's cold.

- Make sure your home is properly insulated. Home improvements can include internal and external cavity insulation, loft insulation, and improved window and door fittings. www.getmetoasty.com or call **0800 009 3363**
- Buying a new appliance? Check its energy-efficiency rating and look for an Energy Saving Recommended logo. www.energysavingtrust.org.uk



energy saving trust®

- A big factor is not how much equipment you have, but how you use it. You can find out about Carbon Literacy training, at www.manchestercarbonliteracy.com and book in for a training session. Another organisation that can offer support is the Carbon Coop www.carbon.coop

ENERGY



Generating your own energy can save you money and lower your 'carbon footprint' plus, you won't have to rely on the national grid.

- For free and impartial advice about renewable energy technologies for your home, contact the Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service www.getmetoasty.com or call **0800 009 3363**
- Find out how much electricity you're using at home with an energy monitor, then try to use less! Ask about borrowing an energy monitor from any Manchester library, or ask your energy supplier.
- If you're part of a community organisation that owns a building, consider installing solar panels to generate your own energy.



TRANSPORT

- Walking or cycling your usual route just one day a week can improve your health, save you money and reduce your CO₂ emissions.
- Plan your walking route at www.walkit.com
- Try to include cycling in your daily journey: sign up for free cycle training and safer route planning at www.tfgm.com/cycling
- Learn how to give your health a lift with walking and cycling at www.gettingmanchestermoving.org
- Using public transport can give you a quicker and stress-free journey, and you'll save on parking costs and CO₂ emissions. Plan your door-to-door journey at www.transportdirect.info



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green Infrastructure (GI) is the term used to describe all our 'green' and 'blue' spaces (parks, gardens, trees, rivers and ponds.) Together, all these open spaces act like giant lungs, helping to keep our air clean and reducing CO₂.

- GI can help reduce the risk of flooding and cools the air on hot days. It also keeps the city looking good, and provides us – and wildlife – with places to relax. GI even includes your garden, if you have one. Make the most of it and other open spaces by planting a tree, growing food, or encouraging wildlife with feeders and nest boxes. Find out more at www.gmwildlife.org.uk
- Make a difference to your local area by volunteering to join your park's Friends group, becoming a tree warden or joining the RSPB. As a volunteer you get a brilliant feel-good factor and there are lots of other groups and organisations to get involved in. www.rspb.org.uk



SHOPPING CHOICES

What you buy, where you buy it from and where it came from in the first place are all factors that have a big impact on your carbon footprint – that's what we call the sum of all the emissions, like CO₂ (carbon dioxide), that were released by your actions during a specific period of time.

As consumers we can influence shops to offer low-carbon goods – often these can support jobs in the UK, particularly those involved in food production:

- Plan your weekly food menu – only buy what you need and will use: most of us waste food simply because we buy too much. www.lovefoodhatewaste.com
- Try to shop local/seasonal. Check where your goods were produced – in January, strawberries will have been grown in a hot climate and shipped or flown into the UK. www.realfoodguide.org.uk
- Have a go at growing your own fruit and vegetables. There are lots of groups in Greater Manchester that can help if you're new to gardening, such as



FURTHER INFORMATION

There are lots of organisations in Manchester that are already involved in tackling the challenges and opportunities of climate change. Some of these are listed in the leaflet, and others that can help you in your home or community are listed below:

Action for Sustainable Living

BikeRight!

Friends of the Earth

Manchester City Council

Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service

Groundwork

Red Rose Forest

Manchester Carbon Literacy

Food Futures

Manchester City Council Travel Change Team

Transport for Greater Manchester

Manchester Is My Planet

GM Wildlife

RSPB

Lancashire Wildlife Trust