

## WHY IT MATTERS

Each of us has a Carbon Footprint – that's the impact on the environment made by our personal life style and energy use. It stems from the design of our homes, the appliances we use, the way we travel, the things we buy.

Collectively these footprints are changing the climate of our planet in significant ways. They are affecting the future of our children, threatening wildlife and changing landscapes.

Each of us is able to do something simple and practical right away to reduce our carbon footprint.

This leaflet suggests some pledges we could make to cut down the resources we waste.

Every small step makes a difference. Start today.

Not only will it save energy, it can save you money.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT

Timers and thermostats can save up to 20% of your heating bills;

The recommended range for central heating is 18-21 degrees C

Washing clothes at 30 °C can save up to 30% of energy of a 40°C wash (<http://www.whatprice.co.uk/home-efficiency/wash-at-30.html> )

60% of heat loss of a typical house is via walls and roof- better insulation pays off quickly

Energy saving light bulbs can cut the fuel bill by as much as £10 per year

Eco-driving can save you up to 20% in fuel costs

An average family throws away £400 a year on wasted food

Switching off at the wall can save £156 per year on electricity

1 acre can produce 40,000 potatoes or tomatoes but only 250lb of beef

60% of the carbon cost of a can of Coke is saved by recycling the can.

## WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

Climate change – [www.bbc.co.uk/climate](http://www.bbc.co.uk/climate)

Calculating your carbon footprint - [www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator](http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator)

Reduce Reuse and Recycle – <http://www.reducereuserecycle.co.uk>

Environmental information particular to Northern Ireland [www.nienvironmentlink.org](http://www.nienvironmentlink.org)

Consumer price comparisons including green solutions <http://www.whatprice.co.uk>

**START TODAY  
YOU CAN  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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How big is your carbon footprint?

If everyone on Earth used resources the way we do in Northern Ireland, we'd need 3 planets.



*For the sake of our children and grandchildren, we need to use fewer resources and recycle more*

Downpatrick & District  
Soroptimists

[www.soroptimists.info](http://www.soroptimists.info)

**From TODAY I will:**

- Turn off lights whenever I leave the room
- Fill the kettle with just enough water for each use
- Turn down the heating by 1 degree C
- Use a 30 degree or “eco” wash programme for clothes and the half-load setting for small loads  
<http://www.whatprice.co.uk/home-efficiency/wash-at-30.html>
- Hang out washing whenever possible rather than tumble dryer
- Carry a fold-up shopping bag in pocket
- Shop locally and choose local produce if possible
- Go for loose products in preference to pre-packaged
- Buy loose products and avoid pre-prepared vegetables
- Compost fruit and vegetable peelings
- Sort out waste – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle
- Switch off all electrical appliances at the wall, when not in use
- Be an eco-driver, easy on the throttle and brake and check tyre pressures regularly
- Only use the car’s air conditioning over 50 mph otherwise open a window

**As NEXT STEPS I will**

- Work out my personal carbon footprint and aim to cut it by at least 10% using web-site to calculate carbon footprint [www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator](http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator)
- Think before I use the car. Use public transport more.
- Sort out unwanted items for reuse through Ebay, charity shops or [www.freecycle.com](http://www.freecycle.com).
- Switch to my energy supplier’s green tariff
- Insulate the roof-space to 270mm if I have not already done so
- Have at least one “car-free” day a week
- Opt out of junk mail: [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)
- Opt in to paperless billing and email billing newsletters
- Use as many recycled products as possible
- Seek carbon –friendly and sustainable gifts and services for birthdays
- Repair and revamp wherever possible instead of buying new
- Lobby manufacturers to make appliances repairable
- Choose appliances with the highest energy conservation rating

Check car energy ratings before deciding on my new car. [www.vcacarfueldata.org](http://www.vcacarfueldata.org)

Install a SMART metre to check out how much energy each of my appliances is using

Make the most carbon-friendly travel choices I can. Carbon offset flights if they’re unavoidable.

Respond to food “sell by”, “use-by” and “best before” dates in ways which cut my food waste

Think about the goods I buy – environmentally and in human terms see [www.goodguide.com](http://www.goodguide.com) for ratings on a variety of consumer goods.

