

Sustainability Team, ESS

Did you know.....?

Sustainability

- Did you know that over 80% of the world's resources are consumed by 20% of the world's population? (UNDP, 1998).
- Modern lifestyles have increasingly led to a 'throw-away society' where, after investing so much into creating new products, nearly 70% of household 'waste' in the UK is still sent to landfill (DEFRA, 2006).
- On average, each person in the UK is consuming nearly three times the average 'Earthshare' of the Earth's resources. This is based on the level of natural resource consumption in comparison to the Earth's biologically productive capacity (land and sea). Each of us are responsible for consuming 40 tonnes of resources per year (DEFRA, 2002) - the equivalent weight of 40 cars!

Energy

- If your current fridge freezer is more than 10 years old, and you upgrade to a new, A-rated model, you will save £35 per year in running costs (Energy Saving Trust, 2010).
- An energy efficient washing machine will use a third less electricity for each wash, which, over its lifetime, could save you more than the cost of the appliance (Energy Saving Trust, 2010).
- A regular house loses over 40% of its heat through loft spaces and walls (based on gas-heated semi-detached house with three bedrooms) (Energy Saving Trust, 2010).
- Turning down your thermostat by 1°C can cut 8% off your fuel bill. The average British household spends a startling £620 per year on fuel and power. That's about £200 too high (Energy Saving Trust, 2010).
- Energy saving lightbulbs produce light using a fraction of the electricity needed for conventional light bulbs – which means they last up to 12 times longer and go on saving you money year after year (Energy Saving Trust, 2010).
- Fossil fuels are depleted at a rate 100,000 times faster than they are formed (ecoforce, 2010).
- Oil accounts for a quarter of all pollution incidents; one barrel of oil poured onto a lake can cover an area the size of two football pitches (ecoforce, 2010).

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Did you know.....?

Waste and Recycling

- Britain throws away about £20 billion worth of unused food every year – equal to five times our spending on international aid and enough to lift 150 million people out of starvation. *The Independent* 15 April 2004.
- By recycling cans, we reduce the need for mining bauxite, from which aluminium is extracted. Recycling aluminium uses around 95% less energy than the equivalent aluminium made from scratch. (Source: International Aluminium Institute)
- England and Wales produce 400 million tonnes of waste every year (Environment Agency)
- Scotland produces more than 3.3 million tonnes of waste each year, of which over 2.6 million tonnes are collected from households (Waste Aware Scotland).
- Scotland recycles only 6% of its waste, among the worst rates in Europe (Defra).
- It is estimated that consumers are throwing away more than £400 worth of food waste per year (Environment Business Journal, 2005).
- 70% less energy is required to recycle paper compared with making it from raw materials (ecoforce, 2010).
- 1 recycled tin can would save enough energy to power a television for 3 hours (recycling-guide, 2010).
- 1 recycled glass bottle would save enough energy to power a computer for 25 minutes (recycling-guide, 2010).
- 1 recycled plastic bottle would save enough energy to power a 60-watt light bulb for 3 hours (recycling-guide, 2010).
- 70% less energy is required to recycle paper compared with making it from raw materials (recycling-guide, 2010).
- Up to 60% of the rubbish that ends up in the dustbin could be recycled (recycling-guide, 2010).
- The unreleased energy contained in the average dustbin each year could power a television for 5,000 hours (recycling-guide, 2010).
- The largest lake in the Britain could be filled with rubbish from the UK in 8 months (recycling-guide, 2010).
- On average, 16% of the money you spend on a product pays for the packaging, which ultimately ends up as rubbish (recycling-guide, 2010).
- As much as 50% of waste in the average dustbin could be composted (recycling-guide, 2010).
- Up to 80% of a vehicle can be recycled (recycling-guide, 2010).
- 9 out of 10 people would recycle more if it were made easier (recycling-guide, 2010).

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Water

- Only 25% of domestic customers in England and Wales have their water metered, so there's little incentive to use less and no way of knowing how much you are saving if you start water efficiency measures (Ofwat, 2010)
- A dripping tap can lose up to 90 litres of water every day, whilst a rapid stream of drips from your tap may waste as much as 32,000 litres of water in a year (Anglian Water, 2010).
- A third of water used in the home goes down the toilet (Anglian Water, 2010).
- A running tap can use up to nine litres a minute (Anglian Water, 2010).
- Washing machines typically account for around 14% of the water used in the home (Anglian Water, 2010).
- Leaking cisterns can use twice the normal amount of water needed (Anglian Water, 2010).
- The average bath uses 80 litres of water (Anglian Water, 2010).
- If you're taking lots of water-saving measures and your water use still seems high, ask the water company to check for leaks in the pipe between the mains and your house (RSPB Water Policy team, 2010).

Biodiversity

- Did you know...that human activities lead to the premature extinction of at least 10 species a day (RIGB, 2008).
- The annual value of carbon sequestration from UK woodlands is estimated to be £770 million (DEFRA, 2010)
- 580 million tonnes of carbon are stored in England's peat soils (DEFRA, 2010).
- Forests cover approximately 30% of the earth's land surface and are a major carbon reservoir and sink, regulating the global climate (DEFRA, 2010).
- Forests are home to 80% of the world's remaining land-based biodiversity (DEFRA, 2010).
- Deforestation continues at an alarming rate, with the loss of some 13 million hectares (130,000 km²) a year (DEFRA, 2010).

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Did you know.....?

Transport

- The number of vehicles on the road has nearly tripled since 1970 (Environment Agency, 2004).
- A quarter of all car journeys are less than two miles (DTI, 2002).
- Pollution from traffic is currently estimated to reduce the life expectancy of every person in the UK by an average of 7 to 8 months (defra, 2010).
- 58% of car journeys in Britain are less than 5 miles (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- School journeys can account for 1 in 5 cars on urban roads at the peak time of 8.50am. With more and more cars on the roads the fumes and noise they produce are a major source of pollution both in towns and in the countryside where pollutants drift on prevailing winds. The main pollutants are benzene, nitrogen dioxide, 1/3 butadiene, carbon monoxide, lead, ozone, particulates, sulphur dioxide and carbon dioxide (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- It is estimated that around 24,000 premature deaths and a further 24,000 hospital admissions each year in Britain may be as a result of by air pollution (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- 3.4 million people in the UK have asthma. Air pollution can trigger attacks and make sufferers' lives a misery (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- Young children and the elderly are particularly at risk of ill health caused by air pollution (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- Drivers and passengers in cars are exposed to higher levels of pollutants than pedestrians and cyclists because they are, in effect, travelling in a tunnel of pollution (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- Information on air quality, air quality forecasts and health advice is available on a regional basis on the Air Quality Information Line run by the Department of the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA, 2010).
- Every litre of petrol burnt produces about 2.4kg of carbon dioxide (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- Wildlife habitats can be threatened by road building programmes (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).
- Many millions of birds, hedgehogs, badgers and other animals are killed on our roads every year. Our health, natural resources, land, wildlife, peace & quiet and air quality are all being sacrificed to our dependence on our cars (NE Derbyshire Council, 2010).