

## **TAKE THE WARMINSTER PLEDGE!**

Supported by Warminster Town Council in association with Sustainable Warminster.

Warminster Town Council are actively looking at their own operations and have an aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. We are asking the people of Warminster to 'take the pledge' and to try one or more of these easy changes, and help us to make Warminster a cleaner, greener, healthier place to live.

### **1. Switch your energy provider to a renewable tariff**

This is one of the biggest impacts we can take as households. Visit for example [www.bigcleanswitch.org](http://www.bigcleanswitch.org) – an energy comparison site that only lists renewable tariffs.

### **2. Switch off! – save energy at home and save money**

When your lightbulbs need replacing, switch to LED bulbs. Switch off lights when you leave the room, turn things off standby, turn your thermostat down.

### **3. Move your money**

Many banks and pension providers are investing in the fossil fuel industry. Put your money to green use. Visit websites such as [www.switchit.money](http://www.switchit.money). NB. If you're looking to move your pension, do take professional financial advice first!)

### **4. Cut your digital footprint**

Data centres that store our e-mails currently use around 1% of global electricity demand. Delete any e-mails, photos and old files you no longer need

### **5. Reduce your food waste**

If food waste were a country, it would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> biggest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions AND 50% of all food waste occurs in the home! Look on our website for waste cutting/money saving ideas.

### **6. Plant a tree and 'rewild' your garden**

A tree is the best way to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Sustainable Warminster can offer advice and provide you with a sapling to plant. Leaving a patch of your garden to 'go wild' can increase the numbers of bees and pollinators visiting by up to 10 times.

### **7. Travel smart**

Could you commit to walking, or cycling a proportion of your shorter journeys say under half a mile? Can you car share or take public transport to lower the impact of your daily commute?

8. **Reduce and re-use**

Think reduce and reuse whenever you can – whether that's coffee cups, water bottles, shopping bags, or face masks.

9. **Eat smart**

Food production is responsible for around 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Reduce that impact by trying meat-free Monday, swap one regular product for an organic or Fairtrade equivalent, support local producers and retailers, this often results in lower 'food miles'

10. **Use your voice**

And share your changes with your friends and family, your school, your workplace, businesses and elected representatives. Share the Warminster pledge too - invite them to get involved!

Share your pledge with us using the form below, or via the Warminster Town Council Facebook page. Further ideas about all the pledges can be found on the Warminster Town Council Website.

As extreme weather events become more frequent, we're all becoming more and more aware of the climate crisis - the impact that it will have on our lives in the very near future, and certainly on the lives of our kids and grandkids.

It's a massive issue – one that can feel really overwhelming. And it's easy to ask ourselves the question “Can I really make a difference?”.

The answer to that question is a resounding “YES!” – individual actions DO make a difference. Warminster Council are actively looking at their own operations and have an aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, but we're aware that changes 'in house' are not enough, and we want to support Warminster residents to make a difference too.

We've put together some suggestions for 'easy eco changes' and are asking the people of Warminster to 'take the pledge' to try one or more of these changes, and help us to make Warminster a cleaner, greener, healthier place to live.

Let's do this together.

### **1. Switch your energy provider to a renewable tariff.**

This is one of the biggest impacts we can take as households. Visit for example [www.bigcleanswitch.org](http://www.bigcleanswitch.org) – an energy comparison site that only lists renewable tariffs. According to energy supplier Bulb, switching to renewable electricity and carbon offset gas could slash your carbon footprint by up to a quarter! AND it could save you money too.

Even if you're in rented property, if your name is on the bill, you should be able to switch providers. Grab a recent bill (so you get an accurate quote) and head over to Big Clean Switch ([www.bigcleanswitch.org](http://www.bigcleanswitch.org)) or similar sites. Pop in all your details, pick the quote that suits you best and switch! It really is that easy!

### **2. Switch off! – save energy at home and save money**

When your lightbulbs need replacing, switch to LED bulbs. Switch off lights when you leave the room, turn things off standby, turn your thermostat down.

Become an energy saving super-hero at home too (this is another one that will save you some money!). When your lightbulbs need replacing, look out for LED bulbs – replacing all the bulbs in your home with LED ones could knock up to £230 a year off your electricity bill. Switch off lights when you leave the room. Turn things off standby – they're still sucking up electricity. In fact, leaving appliances on standby accounts for around 10% of a household's energy usage. Turn your thermostat down by just 1C – doing this could cut another 10% of your energy bill.

### **3. Move your money**

Many banks and pension providers are investing in the fossil fuel industry. Put your money to green use. Visit websites such as [www.switchit.money](http://www.switchit.money). NB. If you're looking to move your pension, do take professional financial advice first!)

Not something that many of us think about, but many banks and pension providers are investing our hard earned cash in the fossil fuel industry, as well others things we'd prefer not to support.

According to a new campaign called Make My Money Matter ([www.makemymoneymatter.co.uk](http://www.makemymoneymatter.co.uk)), fronted by Comic Relief's Richard Curtis, moving your pension out of fossil fuels is 27x more powerful against climate change than giving up flying, meat and dairy combined!

And again, this isn't necessarily the headache that most of us assume it might be. There's a website called Switch It ([www.switchit.money](http://www.switchit.money)) where you can pick your bank or pension provider from the dropdown list and it will tell you how well (or otherwise) they perform when it comes to the planet. And it will then give you suggestions for better performers if you're looking to switch.

(NB. If you're looking to move your pension, do take professional financial advice first!)

### **4. Cut your digital footprint**

Data centres that store our e-mails currently use around 1% of global electricity demand. Delete any e-mails, photos and old files you no longer need.

Have you ever thought about how much energy it takes for us all to be online? Probably not, but it's a lot. If the internet were a country it would rank #3 in the world for electricity consumption. Data centres that store our e-mails currently use around 1% of global electricity demand, but on current trends, this could rise to 30% by 2030!

Some easy steps to take (that can be done from your sofa!) are:

- Delete any e-mails you no longer need
- Unsubscribe from any e-mail newsletters or shops that you never read
- Switch your search engine to one like Ecosia ([www.ecosia.com](http://www.ecosia.com)) – they use their ad revenue to plant trees, and produce twice as much renewable energy as they use, making them a 'carbon negative' organisation.

### **5. Reduce your food waste**

If food waste were a country, it would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> biggest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions after the USA and China.

AND 50% of all food waste occurs in the home!

Both of these are shocking stats, but there also quite empowering, as it's something we can all do something about, relatively easily.

- Keep a note of all the food you throw away over a week and then take a look – is there something that's getting consistently thrown away (bagged salad is a prime culprit here!).
- Make a meal plan – have a look at what's already in your cupboards and fridge and make a meal plan for the week.
- Have an 'eat me first' box in the fridge for anything that's about to go out of date.
- Sign up to apps such as the Olio app ([www.olioex.com](http://www.olioex.com)) – an app that allows you to share any surplus food you might have with people nearby.
- Compost your veg peelings, tea bags etc. Wormeries can work well if you don't have any/much outdoor space, and the Wiltshire Council subsidise the cost of 'hot composters' for residents, which can take cooked food as well as meat and are a great choice if you have space.

## **6. Plant a tree and 'rewild' your garden**

A tree is the best way to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Sustainable Warminster can offer advice and provide you with a sapling to plant. Leaving a patch of your garden to 'go wild' can increase the numbers of bees and pollinators visiting by up to 10 times.

Despite all our technological wizardry and know-how, us humans have failed to come up with a more effective way to remove carbon from the atmosphere than the humble (and amazing!) tree. If you have a garden, allotment or any other outside space, planting a single tree will make a difference. Sustainable Warminster can help – by advising you on which tree might be most appropriate for you, as well as providing you with a sapling to plant. Do get in touch ([www.sustainablewarminster.co.uk](http://www.sustainablewarminster.co.uk))

If you haven't got space for a tree, then how about simply leaving a patch of your garden to 'go wild' and reduce your mowing frequency to every 4 weeks for the rest of the garden. Just by doing this, you can increase the numbers of bees and pollinators visiting your garden by up to 10x! Sustainable Warminster are taking part in the nationwide "Blue Campaign" and can supply you with upcycled blue wooden hearts to proudly display in your 'rewilded' garden.

If you're unable to do either of the above, then do consider making a donation to a charity like The Woodland Trust who are working hard not only to plant new trees, but to protect our existing precious ancient woodlands, which are a vital carbon sink.

## **7. Travel smart**

Could you commit to walking, or cycling a proportion of your shorter journeys say under half a mile? Can you car share or take public transport to lower the impact of your daily commute?

38% of journeys in the UK are under 2 miles – a distance that could be cycled in around 10 minutes, or walked in under half an hour. Could you commit to walking, or cycling a proportion of your shorter journeys? Find your home on a map and circle a half mile radius. If your destination is within this zone, then don't drive. Over a year you will reduce your carbon use and will be fitter as a result. Warminster Town Council are also dedicated to improving cycle routes throughout Warminster, so swap the car for a bike within your half a mile zone. Even just once or twice a week will help.

## **8. Reduce and re-use**

Think reduce and reuse whenever you can – whether that's coffee cups, water bottles, shopping bags, or face masks.

Single use plastic is now more of a problem than ever when we take into account single use PPE. According to scientists, disposables are no safer when it comes to Covid-19 than reusables, and they're causing a huge amount of damage to our planet and our wildlife.

Bristol based charity City to Sea have started a great campaign called "Contactless Coffee" which is calling on the major coffee shop chains to take reusable cups, and even has a great video for coffee shop owners showing how they can fill a reusable cup without having to touch it ([www.citytosea.org/uk/contactless-coffee](http://www.citytosea.org/uk/contactless-coffee)).

## **9. Eat smart**

Food production is responsible for around 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Reduce that impact by trying meat-free Monday, swap one regular product for an organic or Fairtrade equivalent, support local producers and retailers, this often results in lower 'food miles'

While we all have to eat, there are lots of ways we can easily reduce that impact.

- Try meat-free Monday, or even a vegan meal once a week
- Can you swap out one regular product for an organic, or a Fairtrade one from your weekly shop?

## **10. Use your voice**

And share your changes with your friends and family, your school, your workplace, businesses and elected representatives. Share the Warminster pledge too - invite them to get involved!

Share your pledge with us using the form below, or via the Warminster Town Council Facebook page.

Our voices are more powerful than we know.

Sign that online petition, send a message to your supermarket on social media, e-mail our MPs, councillors, Businesses and governments. The more of us that speak up, the more likely we are to get change.