



Residents' climate change toolkit

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Getting started

This guide aims to help individuals and households understand how they can take action to tackle climate change. Providing tips and suggestions about things you can do or consider to help tackle the emissions that cause climate change, whilst hopefully saving some money along the way!

All the options may feel overwhelming, so just pick a few to start with and go from there.

Your carbon footprint

Emissions that cause climate change largely come from these four areas:

- heating and powering our homes
- how we get around – particularly car use
- what we eat
- the things we buy

To identify and understand which behaviours and activities cause the most climate change emissions you need to calculate your carbon footprint.

For households, you can use the following tools:

- [WWF - Footprint calculator \(https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/\)](https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/)
- [Carbonfootprint.com - Carbon calculator \(https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx\)](https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx)

Other bespoke tools are available from providers such as [Households | Creation Care \(https://creationcare.org.uk/members/\)](https://creationcare.org.uk/members/)

Once you know your carbon footprint, why not start by choosing a few areas where you can make the biggest difference to your carbon footprint and go from there.

Easy wins

Your home

Heating and powering our buildings accounts for a huge proportion of our carbon footprint. [The Environment Centre \(https://environmentcentre.com/\)](https://environmentcentre.com/) is a local organisation offering individual tailored advice to help you reduce your energy bills and carbon footprint.

[Use less heating_#](#)

Fossil fuel heating is responsible for a large proportion of emissions so heating less is a quick way to reduce emissions. A quick win is to turn down your thermostat, if possible (if there are no elderly or young children in the house).

Look into better control and monitoring systems such as smart thermostats. These enable you to use less heat, by only heating the rooms of your home that you need or setting the heating for certain times.

[Use less water_#](#)

Using less hot water will save you money and reduce your carbon emissions. Simple changes like shorter showers, low-flow shower heads and washing up bowls should all mean you use less hot water.

[Draft exclusion_#](#)

Reducing drafts is an easy way to reduce heat loss. This could be as simple as using thick curtains or moveable draft excluders around doors and windows. Get more advice and guidance from the [Centre for Sustainable Energy_ \(https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/advice-and-support/diy-draught-proofing\)](https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/advice-and-support/diy-draught-proofing).

[Replace lighting for energy efficient alternatives_#](#)

[Switching lights to LEDs \(https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/lighting/\)](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/lighting/) saves energy on lighting costs and quickly pays for itself within the energy saved as a result. It makes sense to switch all your existing light bulbs.

LED alternatives can now be sourced for all sorts of light fittings. Remember to dispose of old lighting units responsibly.

[Switch off!_#](#)

Turning off electrical goods and lights when not in use is an easy way to save money and energy that is otherwise wasted.

Turn off lights when leaving rooms and avoid leaving devices on standby.

Even devices like Wi-Fi routers could be turned off if you're going away.

[Switch to a green energy tariff \(#\)](#)

This is a simple step that may not even cost much more than your existing tariff, especially if you haven't switched energy providers for a while.

Switching providers is quick and easy and many suppliers offer 100% renewable tariffs. [Check out your options using an Ofgem accredited price \(https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/switching-energy-tariff-or-supplier\)](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/switching-energy-tariff-or-supplier)

Some energy companies have recently struggled as a result of increases in the cost of energy and have ceased to trade as a result. However, a process called 'Supplier of Last Resort', run by Ofgem, ensures that you will always have an energy supplier.

[Seek energy saving advice \(#\)](#)

Using less energy is a great way to save money and carbon!

[Contact The Environment Centre \(https://environmentcentre.com/\)](https://environmentcentre.com/) - a local organisation offering individual tailored advice to help you reduce your energy bills and carbon footprint, especially for individual households.

Your transport

[Travel less \(#\)](#)

Try and travel less to reduce emissions and save money on fuel or tickets. Consider whether journeys are essential and how you might be able to consolidate trips.

Where possible and permitted, think about working from home which can save emissions if you drive to work or have a long commute.

Where you have to drive, lift-sharing can work very well for certain journeys, such as the school run and your commute. [Hampshire County Council provide some support via Hants Carshare \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportoperators/community-transport-kit/access-and-transport-solutions/liftshare-car-clubs\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportoperators/community-transport-kit/access-and-transport-solutions/liftshare-car-clubs) or [Liftshare \(https://liftshare.com/uk\)](https://liftshare.com/uk) is a well-known alternative.

[Walk, run or cycle! \(#\)](#)

Commit to walking or cycling, especially for short journeys of less than a mile. It's free, healthy and has none of the stress of navigating traffic! For regular, shared journeys, like the school run, you could set up or join a 'walking bus' and coordinate with friends and neighbours. Challenge local schools to promote or organise this, as well as providing secure bike/scooter storage.

Cycling is an option for slightly longer journeys. Although it may be a more expensive option, you could consider an electric bike, which makes tackling hills easy.

If you use the train for longer journeys, consider cycling to the train station. [For information about cycle storage at Basingstoke station visit the South Western Railway website \(https://www.southwesternrailway.com/travelling-with-us/at-the-station/basingstoke\)](https://www.southwesternrailway.com/travelling-with-us/at-the-station/basingstoke).

[Find information about cycling on our website \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/cycle\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/cycle) and on the [Cycling UK website \(https://www.cyclinguk.org/\)](https://www.cyclinguk.org/).

Lifestyle, consumption and waste

[Talk about change \(#\)](#)

Talk to others such as friends, family and colleagues. Share this guide and your story, explain the importance of action and why it matters to bring people on the journey with you, rather than just telling them what to do!

[You could become one of Hampshire County Council's Waste Prevention Community Champions \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/getinvolved\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/getinvolved)

Although this guide relates to changes at home, much of it applies to the workplace. If you are in a position of influence at work, why not make sure tackling climate change becomes a key aspect of your company values and challenge your business leaders to take climate change seriously? It could help you gain business and save money, as well as future-proofing against upcoming changes.

Work with colleagues to change behaviours. Consider setting up a sustainability/climate champions group or similar.

[Diet and food \(#\)](#)

Diet can form a large portion of our individual carbon footprint and is something you can reduce quickly.

Generally meat, especially red meat such as beef and lamb, and dairy products have the largest carbon footprint. Reducing your meat intake can quickly help. [Find out more by using the BBC's food calculator \(https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-46459714\)](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-46459714).

Going vegetarian or vegan would help the most but this may feel too big a change for many, so why not try going meat-free for a day or two a week to start with. Not all vegetables were created

equal! Air freighted fruit and vegetables will have a much higher carbon footprint than local and seasonal goods, or those shipped by boat.

Check out the [BBC's seasonal food calendar \(https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/seasonal-calendar\)](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/seasonal-calendar) or [the guide to eating seasonally \(https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/seasonal-calendar\)](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/seasonal-calendar).

Food waste is a big issue as emissions are generated in production, to just be thrown away. Simple ways to reduce food waste include planning meals, sticking to a shopping list and freezing as much as you can. This can also save you money. The following websites offers tips on reducing food waste:

- [Love food hate waste \(https://lovefoodhatewaste.com/\)](https://lovefoodhatewaste.com/)
- [Smart living \(Hampshire County Council\) \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/in-the-kitchen\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/in-the-kitchen)

Buy less! (#)

Everything we purchase has a carbon footprint, from aspects such as manufacture and shipping, so buying less saves us money and helps our carbon footprint.

Consider whether certain purchases are really required. Or buy higher quality items that will last longer, especially clothing.

Try to repair old items or appliances before replacing them, as new products use energy to manufacture. Right to Repair rules in the UK should make this easier and more affordable to do than it has been for some time.

Hampshire County Council has lots of ideas, around:

- [Furniture \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/loveyourfurniture\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/loveyourfurniture)
- [Fashion \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefashion/sustainable-fashion\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefashion/sustainable-fashion)
- [Electricals \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefashion/reuse-electricals\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefashion/reuse-electricals), including [where to find reuse/repair sites \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefashion/reusesites\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefashion/reusesites).

Be creative and try to 'upcycle' products which may have an alternative use.

Why not buy second hand goods and clothes? This could be from one of the charity shops in the borough, which will help support these brilliant causes, or you could use one of the many online marketplaces that now exist. Finding and buying functional second hand stuff has never been so easy!

[Find more advice on the Ethical Consumer website \(https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/\)](https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/)

[Saving and investments \(#\)](#)

How we save or invest our money is hugely powerful.

Good interest rates are important to most of us, but we may think very little about what these banks or funds do with our money.

These days there are an increasing number of alternative ways to invest or save money that will contribute to reaching net zero and tackling climate change. [Read the Government's framework for Green Financing for more information \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-government-green-financing\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-government-green-financing).

Some ethical ways to save or invest include:

- [Green Savings Bond from NS&I \(https://www.nsandi.com/help/manage-your-savings/manage-savings-online\)](https://www.nsandi.com/help/manage-your-savings/manage-savings-online) the government will use the proceeds of this to help finance green projects
- [Triodos bank \(https://www.triodos.co.uk/\)](https://www.triodos.co.uk/) has green or ethical accounts and options
- [Abundance Investment \(https://www.abundanceinvestment.com/\)](https://www.abundanceinvestment.com/) has alternative ways to invest and support ethical projects directly

[Find out more from the Ethical Consumer \(https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/money-finance\)](https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/money-finance)

You could also ask your employer about their pension and how this is invested, putting pressure on them to stop investing in fossil fuels, or other businesses that contribute to climate change.

The natural environment

[Protecting existing land and re-wilding \(#\)](#)

If you have a garden and areas of grass, please don't replace them with artificial turf.

Lawns and grass are important natural habitats and help with natural drainage, which will be ever more important as incidences of extreme rainfall are expected to increase.

Allow areas of your garden to grow wild. Mow certain patches less frequently and even plant wildflower seeds. This is great for biodiversity and looks amazing!

Consider volunteering for a conservation group. [Find a list of local conservation groups on our website \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/conservationgroups\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/conservationgroups).

[Go pesticide free \(#\)](#)

Avoid using pesticides or pellets in your garden as they harm biodiversity.

Happy to spend a bit more time or money

Your home

[Appliances and IT \(#\)](#)

[Ensure new purchases are energy efficient models](#)

(<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/home-appliances/>). All appliances have an energy label, ranked A to G, with A being the most efficient. Some appliances may use an older scale where A+++ is the most efficient.

[Try to repair old appliances](#)

(<https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/intheshome/reuse-electricals>) before replacing them, as manufacturing new products uses energy. This prevents waste and emissions. New 'Right to Repair' rules in the UK should make this easier and more affordable to do, than it has been for some time.

[Encourage your landlord to improve your building \(#\)](#)

Landlords are bound by legal requirements to ensure that their rental properties meet [Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards \(MEES\)](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-private-rented-property-minimum-energy-efficiency-standard-landlord-guidance>) to rent them out.

This is an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E or better. If you rent a property that doesn't meet these standards, you can report it by completing a [Housing Standards Enquiry form](#) (<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/housing-standards-enquiry>).

The government is also considering the need for this to improve to a 'C' rating by 2030.

There may be [grants available to landlords](#) (<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/energy-efficiency-loans-and-grants>) to help with improvements to rental properties, whether private or social landlords.

Your transport

[Public transport \(#\)](#)

Avoiding additional journeys by using public transport that is already running is a vital way to cut emissions, and create demand for additional provision.

Use public transport more often where possible, particularly for travelling into the town centre. Although there is an associated cost, this could well be offset by avoiding parking charges.

[View public transport links \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/public-transport\)](#)

Basingstoke train station is well connected to other local destinations, locally, regionally and nationally. Basingstoke also has coach services, such as National Express, to destinations further afield.

[Fly less \(#\)](#)

Flying emits the most CO₂ per mile travelled and emissions from aircraft are particularly damaging due to the fact they are emitted at altitude.

Zero emission air travel may become a reality in the future but at the moment this is still some time away from being readily available. The only current solution is to avoid flying.

Avoiding unnecessary air travel will make a huge difference in keeping your carbon footprint low.

For holidays, there are many destinations in the UK or further afield that are reachable by train or ferry. With travel agencies such as [Byway \(https://www.byway.travel/\)](https://www.byway.travel/) dedicated to flight-free holidays. In Europe there are sleeper trains, some of them luxury, which offer an alternative to travel further afield.

For work, reducing air travel may be harder but with video-conferencing available for conducting business the need for unnecessary travel can be minimised.

Lifestyle, consumption and waste

[Waste \(#\)](#)

Do your best to:

Reduce - the best action from a carbon and environmental point of view is to use, consume and buy less.

Reuse - try to reuse or repair items, this could be anything from coffee cups and packaging, to nappies!

Recycle - is a positive step although it won't reduce your impact or emissions as much as the steps above. [Find out what you can put in your recycling bin \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/recycling\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/recycling).

If you do want to get rid of something, why not give it away or swap it? Sites such as [Freegle \(https://www.ilovefreegle.org/\)](https://www.ilovefreegle.org/) or [Freecycle \(https://uk.freecycle.org/\)](https://uk.freecycle.org/) are a great way to rehome old goods and prevent them from being wasted.

Plastics are more difficult to avoid in our society but there are [simple swaps you can make to reduce using plastics \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthehome/plastics-packaging\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthehome/plastics-packaging), such as choosing products without unnecessary packaging or buying a reusable water bottle and refilling it for free at one of the many local locations. [Find out where you refill for free \(https://www.refill.org.uk/\)](https://www.refill.org.uk/).

[Get involved \(#\)](#)

Check out whether there is already a local climate action group in your area. If not, why not set one up?

You can also lobby for support and action. That could be your local councillor ([find out who your local councillor is \(https://democracy.basingstoke.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx\)](https://democracy.basingstoke.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx)) or MP ([find out who your MP is \(https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP\)](https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP)), or perhaps another action group.

Use existing national awareness days like 'cycle to work day' as an opportunity to try out new ideas with others and get more support.

The natural environment

[Tree-planting_\(or other plants\), where appropriate \(#\)](#)

When plants and trees grow they absorb carbon and lock this up within their 'biomass' – their roots, trunks, stems etc.

So why not plant something low-maintenance and appropriate in your garden? Fruit trees can be a nice option and you get to enjoy their produce too!

It is important that you choose the right tree for the right place. [The Woodland Trust have lots of advice on planting and maintaining trees \(https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/\)](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/).

Local or national organisations may be looking to arrange tree-planting days that you could volunteer for.

If you don't have a garden yourself, you could consider window boxes or even small herb plants in pots. These all help and herbs are great to reduce your shopping list too.

[Composting_\(#\)](#)

If you have space composting is a great way to use up your unavoidable food and garden waste, such as peelings and cuttings.

[Hampshire County Council has a wealth of information on composting \(https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthegarden\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthegarden), including on alternatives if you don't have lots of space.

If you buy compost, ensure it is peat-free. Peat is a hugely important habitat for storing carbon, among other things, so it's vital we protect it.

[Low maintenance and low impact planting_\(#\)](#)

Consider low-maintenance vegetation options for the garden. Not only will this reduce the need for maintenance, which will have an associated carbon footprint, but it may also be more resilient to future climate change, such as reduced watering needs.

[The Royal Horticultural Society has a wealth of guidance on this \(https://www.rhs.org.uk/\)](https://www.rhs.org.uk/)

[Watering_#](#)

Reducing your use of mains water can also help you save money and reduce your carbon footprint.

Collecting rain water in butts or a rain water harvesting system can reduce your need for the tap or hosepipe and is also better for plants due to the absence of chemicals.

Make a big difference

Your home

[Improve insulation_#](#)

Heating our homes often accounts for a large amount of our personal carbon emissions.

Improving the energy efficiency of buildings reduces energy demand and carbon emissions. This provides you with a warmer home which can help reduce energy bills to save you money and offer health benefits.

[Check if you already have an Energy Performance Certificate \(EPC\) for your property \(https://www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate). This may recommend certain measures which could improve the energy efficiency of the building.

Insulation measures which vary in cost and complexity that you could consider include:

- Draft-proofing
- Loft insulation
- Pipe or hot water tank insulation
- Cavity wall insulation
- Pitched roof insulation
- Floor insulation
- Solid wall insulation - [Find out about solid wall insulation, from our YouTube explainer video \(https://youtu.be/-7P8bks40k\)](https://youtu.be/-7P8bks40k)

Replacing windows and doors can also improve the energy efficiency of your property although they are relatively costly measures.

[Find information about schemes we offer to support with improving the energy efficiency of homes \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/energy-efficiency-loans-and-grants\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/energy-efficiency-loans-and-grants)

Finding an installer

- [The National Insulation Association \(https://www.nia-uk.org/\)](https://www.nia-uk.org/) provides a postcode search tool for local installers
- [Trustmark \(https://www.trustmark.org.uk/\)](https://www.trustmark.org.uk/) a government-backed accreditation scheme helps you search for tradespeople
- [Checktrade \(https://www.checktrade.com/\)](https://www.checktrade.com/) has recommendations for tradespeople

Check permissions

If you live in a conservation area or Area of Outstanding National Beauty, ensure you check what work you are able to do to your property without the need for planning permission by using our [planning portal \(https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects\)](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects). If you're in a historic or listed building, talk to specialists such as [Historic England \(https://historicengland.org.uk/\)](https://historicengland.org.uk/). Find out more on our [Historic Environment pages \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/building-conservation\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/building-conservation) and get in touch with the planning team using the [planning enquiry form \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning-enquiry-form\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning-enquiry-form).

If you rent your property, encourage your landlord to improve the building and remind them of their responsibilities. Landlords are bound by legal requirements to ensure that their rental properties meet [Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards \(MEES\) \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-private-rented-property-minimum-energy-efficiency-standard-landlord-guidance\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-private-rented-property-minimum-energy-efficiency-standard-landlord-guidance) to rent them out.

[Replace fossil fuel heating systems \(#\)](#)

Once you've improved insulation in your property, it's time to tackle the heating.

Burning fossil fuel, such as gas or oil, for heating is high in carbon. Replacing an old boiler or heating system with something more efficient will help. A bigger step is to switch the heating source of your home to use a heat pump. These act like a fridge working in reverse, using electricity to upgrade incoming heat.

They come in two main varieties:

- [Air-source heat pump \(https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/air-source-heat-pumps/\)](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/air-source-heat-pumps/) (ASHP) – where the heat source is the external air
- [Ground-source heat pump \(https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/ground-source-heat-pumps/\)](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/ground-source-heat-pumps/) (GSHP) – where heat is extracted from the ground using a horizontal array of pipes, or vertical boreholes.

Find out more about heat pumps (<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/heat-pumps>)

[Generate renewable energy_#](#)

Solar photovoltaic panels (PV)

You could have solar photovoltaic (PV) panels installed on your roof to generate electricity from sunlight.

[Find out how photovoltaic solar panels work from this YouTube explainer video](#)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h485ATPqAM>)

These solar panels can help you save on energy bills and reduce the carbon footprint of your home. There is an upfront cost, but for an average property you could expect to save £200 to £400 a year on energy bills. A typical system should pay for itself in 10 to 15 years.

[By visiting Centre for Sustainable Energy called Solar Wizard](#) (<https://solarwizard.org.uk/>) you can get a free calculation, quick and independent predictions on the potential to generate electricity from rooftop solar panels for your home or business.

If your solar array generates more electricity than you can use at home at that time (which is most likely if the house is empty) then this excess electricity is exported back to the electricity grid. You should get paid for this by your electricity supplier under the [Smart Export Guarantee \(SEG\)](#) (<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/smart-export-guarantee-seg>) scheme. Rates vary so you should look for a supplier that offers the most generous SEG rates.

Take a look at our [information about solar panels webpage](#) (<http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/solar-panels>) to find out more.

Excess electricity can also be stored in a battery – see the section on battery storage for more information.

[Find information about grants and loans that may help to cover the cost of installation](#)
(<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/energy-efficiency-loans-and-grants>)

[Find an accredited local installer on the Microgeneration Certification Scheme \(MCS\) website](#)
(<https://mcscertified.com/find-an-installer/>).

Solar water heating

Solar thermal, or solar hot water panels use solar energy to heat your domestic hot water, avoiding the need to use a boiler or heating system to do so.

It can be more complicated to install than Solar PV (electricity) as you will need a large hot water cylinder. Check whether your home might be suitable on the [Energy Saving Trust website](#) (<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/could-solar-water-heating-work-for-you/>).

Because we tend to use more electricity than hot water, solar PV panels will likely make more financial sense for most people. If you do have a hot water cylinder you could consider a device that diverts any excess electrical generation from solar panels to an immersion heater.

Check permissions

If you live in a sensitive area or property such as a conservation area or listed building then you will need additional permissions. If you are unsure, you can find out more on the council's [Historic Environment pages \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/building-conservation\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/building-conservation) and get in touch with the planning team using the [planning enquiry form \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning-enquiry-form\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning-enquiry-form).

[Battery storage \(#\)](#)

Batteries are currently still very expensive but they work well and can help save you money when:

- paired with solar PV
- paired with a 'Time of Use' (ToU) energy tariff, where electricity is cheaper at certain times of day, for example, overnight.
- or ideally, both!

With Solar PV, a battery can be charged during the day when the solar panels are generating, and then the energy used at times of the day when needed most, such as the evening when returning from work.

When paired with a ToU tariff, the price of electricity fluctuates. The battery can be charged when electricity is cheap and then this can be used when electricity is more expensive, helping save on energy bills.

This principle could also apply to an electric vehicle (EV) which is essentially a battery on wheels! At the moment, discharging an EV to power your home, or to sell to the grid, known as vehicle-to-grid (V2G) is in its infancy, however, is expected to become increasingly popular.

Transport

[Go electric! \(#\)](#)

Switching to an electric vehicle (EV) can make a huge difference to your personal carbon footprint, particularly if you drive a lot and can't use public transport alternatives.

[The Energy Saving Trust has an excellent guide on all you need to know about electric vehicles \(https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/electric-vehicles/\)](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/electric-vehicles/)

The upfront cost of electric vehicles is high but there are several financial benefits that could make EVs cheaper in the long run:

- Cheaper 'fuel' costs. This is particularly the case if you can charge at home where electricity costs are significantly less than petrol/diesel per mile

- Lower servicing and maintenance costs (there are less moving parts in an EV)
- No vehicle excise duty
- Free parking in many locations
- No charges in 'clean air zones' in a number of cities

Compare running costs of existing petrol or diesel vehicles to EVs by using such tools as the [Zap Map's journey calculator \(https://www.zap-map.com/tools/journey-cost-calculator/\)](https://www.zap-map.com/tools/journey-cost-calculator/) to show how much you can save, and how quickly the upfront cost could be paid back.

Some EVs are eligible for the Plug-in vehicles grant which offers a discounts on the purchase of an EV. [Find out more details about the grants for plug-in vehicles \(GOV.UK\) \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/grants-for-plug-in-vehicles\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/grants-for-plug-in-vehicles)

Charging an EV

[Information about charging electric vehicles \(Energy Savings Trust\) \(https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/charging-electric-vehicles/\)](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/charging-electric-vehicles/)

The availability of charge points is increasing all the time.

- [Find public and home chargers wherever you are going by using Zap Map \(https://www.zap-map.com/live/\)](https://www.zap-map.com/live/)
- [Find out more information about charging points available in our public car parks \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/vehicle-charging-point\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/vehicle-charging-point)

The council is working with Hampshire County Council, responsible for local highways, to rollout on street EV charging options.

Home charging

The [Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-grants-for-low-emission-vehicles#electric-vehicle-homecharge-scheme\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-grants-for-low-emission-vehicles#electric-vehicle-homecharge-scheme) provides funding for up to 75% of the installation of an on-street charger, up to £350.

If you charge at home it will be beneficial to switch to a 'Time of Use' tariff that has cheaper rates at off peak times, such as overnight. There are now a number of EV-specific tariffs on the market.

The natural environment

[Green roofs \(#\)](#)

A green roof on a shed or outhouse will absorb carbon and increase biodiversity and could be a good way to increase green spaces at your property.

[There's a handy DIY guide to green roofs available if you'd like to find out more \(https://greenrooftraining.com/\)](https://greenrooftraining.com/)

We'd love to hear from you

Do you have any other ideas that are currently missing from our toolkits? Or do you have any suggestions on how to make our toolkits easier to use? Perhaps you have some ideas on tackling climate change?

If so, get in touch, [send a message to the Climate Change Team \(https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/contact-the-climate-change-team\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/contact-the-climate-change-team)

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