



Essex County Council
Environment and Climate Action



Resident Advice Pack

Taking Action on Climate Change

EasyRead Version



EasyRead



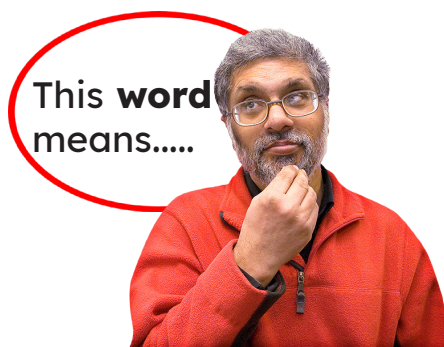
This is an EasyRead version of a report. It may not include all of the original information, but it will tell you about the important parts.



This EasyRead report uses easier words and pictures. You may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker.



These are words that some people will find hard. When you see a bold word, we will explain it in the next sentence.



Blue and underlined words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links.

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Climate Action Top Tips



Climate change is one of the most serious problems we are facing.



This document is about what we can do to make things better for future generations.



We must reduce our carbon emissions to **net zero** by 2050.

Net zero means not adding to the amount of carbon in the atmosphere.



The Essex Climate Action Commission has written a report called **Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral**.

This report gives us some ideas on how to reduce our carbon emissions.



It suggests that we (Essex County Council) show you where to find advice about how to reduce the amount of carbon you make in your daily lives.



We think you will be surprised by the effect that some actions have on the environment.



We wanted to find out what you think are the best actions to help improve climate change.

We asked a company called BritainThinks to ask you.



The charts on the following pages show what you **think** are the best actions to improve climate change, followed by the list of actions that really **are** the best.

This list shows which actions you **think** are the best to help improve climate change.

80%



Recycling as much as possible.

69%



Cycling, walking or using public transport more.

67%



Changing to renewable energy sources.

66%



Changing from a petrol or diesel car to an electric car.

65%



Reducing food waste.

59%



Taking 1 less flight of more than 7 hours per year.

53%



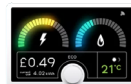
Composting food waste.

48%



Not buying as many new clothes.

42%



Installing a smart meter in your home.

36%



Replacing your boiler with a heat pump.

35%



Eating a vegetarian diet.

This list shows which actions **are** the best to help improve climate change

- 
- 

Changing from a petrol or diesel car to an electric car.
 - 

Taking 1 less flight of more than 7 hours per year.
 - 

Changing to renewable energy sources.
 - 

Cycling, walking or using public transport more.
 - 

Replacing your boiler with a heat pump.
 - 

Eating a vegetarian diet.
 - 

Reducing food waste.
 - 

Installing a smart meter in your home.
 - 

Not buying as many new clothes.
 - 

Recycling as much as possible.
 - 

Composting food waste.



1. Transport



Our cars are the biggest source of personal carbon emissions.

We know that many people in Essex need a car every day. But sometimes, we can think about other ways to travel.

There are more than 800,000 cars in Essex.



More than half of Essex car journeys are under 5 miles.

This is a distance that can usually be covered quickly by bike, on foot or using public transport.



If every household in Essex replaced a 1-mile car trip each week with walking or cycling, we could reduce carbon emissions by several thousand tonnes.



One of the changes we could all consider is to use cars less.

There are several alternatives to driving including:



- Walking or cycling for short journeys.



- Working from home.



- Using public transport.



Car Share

This is where you travel in the same car as someone who is going to the same place as you, such as work.





If you can't avoid using a car, using an electric vehicle (EV) is one of the best ways you can reduce your carbon emissions.



If you are still using a standard car that is not an EV, then the way you drive is important.

Doing the following things will make driving safer, cheaper, lower carbon and will pollute less:



- Reducing your speed.



- Not speeding up or slowing down too suddenly.





The aeroplane has opened up many opportunities for travel across the world.

But, flying has the highest rate of carbon emissions.



A return flight from London to Hong Kong creates 10 tonnes of carbon emissions per person.



In England, the average carbon emissions per person is 12.7 tonnes a year.



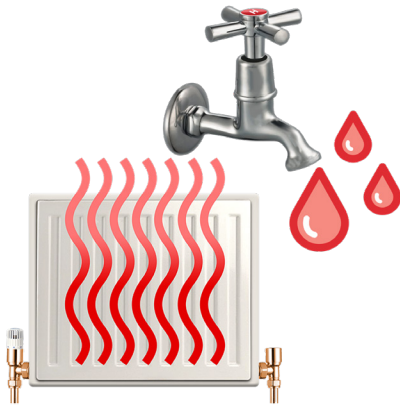


2. Energy and the Home



Making our homes more **energy efficient** not only reduces our carbon emissions but also saves us money.

Energy efficient means using less energy to heat or cool your home or to run electrical appliances.

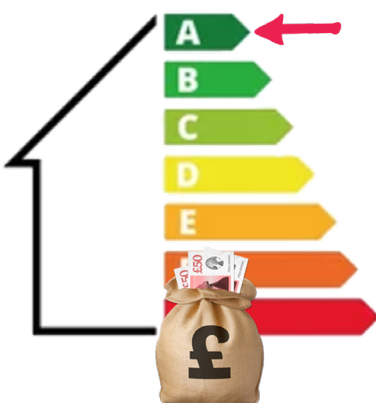


About 80% of the energy used in our homes is on heating and hot water.



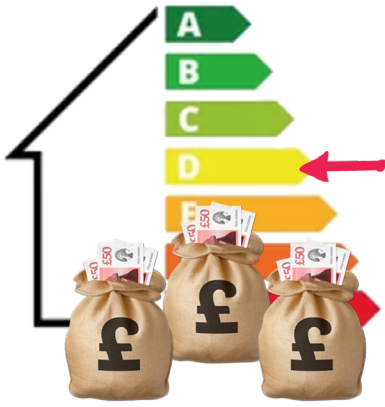
You can help to make your home more energy efficient by improving your insulation.

This will help keep your house warm in winter and cool in summer.



The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) shows you how efficient your home is.

A+ is the most efficient home and costs least to heat.



In Essex the average EPC rating is D.

This is a lot more expensive to heat than an A rated home.



Help is available.

If you are struggling with your energy bills, the [Warm Homes Essex](#) website gives you information on grant offers up to £10,000, to help people with household income of less than £30,000 a year.



If you rent your home, you should speak to your landlord who could get a grant of up to £5,000.



Everyone can apply for a boiler upgrade scheme (BUS) grant of up to £7,500 to replace their boiler with a heat pump.





A **grant** is money given to you by the local authority to spend on something specific.



You can find more advice on these websites:

- www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
- [Boiler Upgrade Scheme \(BUS\)](#)
- [Are you eligible for an energy grant for your home?](#)



There are things you can do yourself to help reduce your energy bills and your carbon emissions. For example:

- Turn the thermostat down by 1 degree.



- Only put the heating on when someone is at home.





- Run your dishwasher and washing machine at lower temperatures.



- Use refillable washing liquid or tablets.



- When you buy a new fridge, television or washing machine, make sure it has an A rating.



- On warm, sunny days, dry your clothes outside.





- In winter or when the weather is wet, use a hanging clothes airer.



- Only fill your kettle with as much water as you need.

Water

It is also important to save water.



East Anglia is one of the driest regions in the UK.

In summer 2022 Essex had a drought. We had very little rain for several months.



Everyone in Essex is eligible for a free water saving kit from [Essex & Suffolk Water](#) and [Anglian Water](#).





There are some simple things we can do to use water responsibly and cut our water bills. For example:

- Having a shower instead of a bath.



- Use low flow taps. These reduce the amount of water you use.



- Use a water butt in your garden to collect rainwater. You can use this to water your garden.



You can get help to buy a 100 or 200 litre water butt.

Go to www.getcomposting.com and enter your postcode to find out what other help you can get from Essex County Council.



Renewable energy

Renewable energy is a good way to reduce your carbon emissions.

Renewable energy comes from the sun, wind or water.



Installing renewable energy in your home will save you money as well as reducing your carbon emissions.

Go to www.solartogether.co.uk to find out what help you can get to install solar panels.





Communities can also do their bit to reduce carbon emissions through community projects. These include things like:

- Installing solar panels on village halls or schools.



- Electric vehicle car sharing groups.



- Energy saving advice for residents.



Essex County Council provides free support to groups who want to start a community energy project.





3. Food



Reducing food waste is important for us all.

It will save you money as well as reduce your carbon emissions.



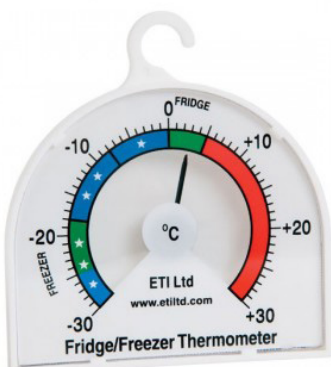
Currently, we throw away 20% of the food we buy.

This costs us £800 a year.



You can do some simple things to reduce your food waste. For example:

- Put food you can't use while it's fresh in the fridge or freezer.



- Check your fridge is between 0 degrees and 5 degrees Celsius



- Make a meal plan and stick to it to prevent buying too much



- Only buy what you need.



- Freeze any excess food in small portions.



- Before you throw food out, make sure it is out of date and not safe to eat.





- Instead of putting food into the bin, you could compost it. This will help plants to grow in the future.



Otherwise, use a food waste caddy rather than putting food in the general bin.

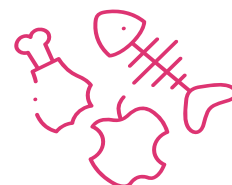


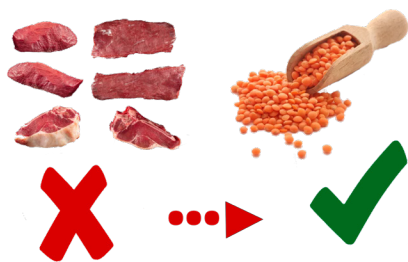
Go to www.lovessex.org to find ideas of how to reduce your food waste.

www.lovefoodhatewaste.com gives you recipe ideas to help you make the most out of the food you buy.



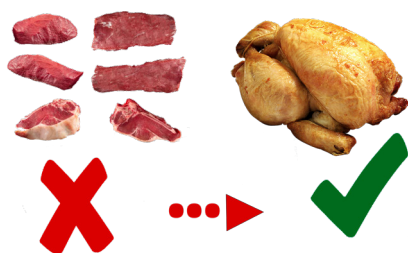
There are a number of apps such as [Giki](#), and [GreenRedeem](#) that give information about food products, including whether the packaging can be recycled and where the ingredients came from.





Your food choices can also affect your carbon emissions.

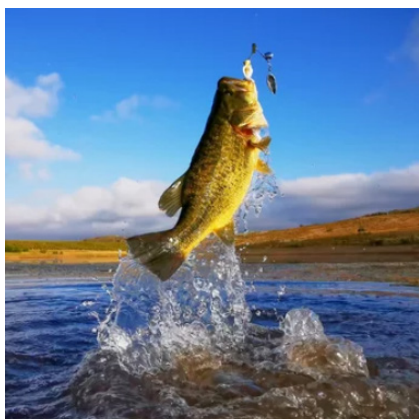
For example meat products use more carbon to produce than vegetarian alternatives like lentils.



Chicken is generally lower carbon than other meats.

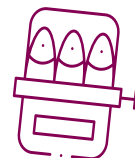


Seafood is lower carbon than meat, but stocks of some fish are low, so we have to be careful not to catch too much.



Go to www.mscuk.co.org to find out which is the best seafood to choose.

Fish caught locally is usually the best option.





Using local suppliers is kinder to the environment and helps your local economy.



Eggs are lower carbon than meat.



Vegetable box schemes are great way to support local farmers and reduce waste.

You can find out more about local vegetable box schemes and which local producers to choose at www.findlocalproduce.co.uk.



Think about your food choices, and consider eating less high carbon food.

For example:



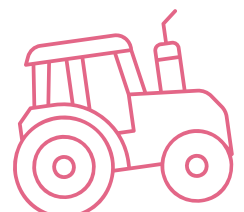
- Try having 1 meat free day per week.



- Buy local produce as much as you can.

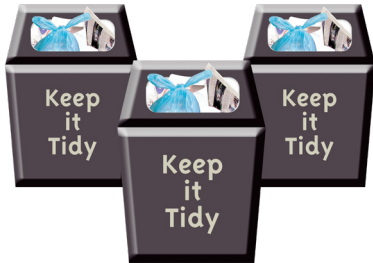


- When shopping in the supermarket, use the [food miles calculator](#) to find out how far products have travelled.





4. Waste



465 Kg

We throw out 465 kilogrammes of waste per person every year.

We recycle just over half of that.



If we each reduce the amount we throw out by 15% we would save 100 thousand tonnes from going into landfill every year.



There are some easy ways of reducing how much you throw out. Things like:

- Only buying what you need.



- Recycling as much as possible.



- Repairing where possible.

ebay



- Selling or giving an item to someone who needs it.



There are several schemes in Essex that can help you reduce how much you throw out or improve your recycling.

These include:

- [Freegle](#)
- [clothes swap events](#)
- [Love Essex champions](#)
- [Cloth nappy refunds and advice](#)





We should all try to reduce how many single use items we use.

Using re-usable bags, bottles, cups and cutlery makes a big difference to our impact on the environment.

For example:



- 1 re-usable bag could save 800 plastic bags per year.



- 1 re-usable cup could save 1,200 plastic cups per year.



You should always check if an item can be recycled before throwing it away.



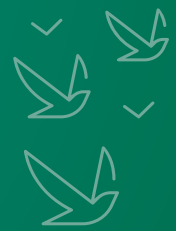


When you recycle, items should be clean and dry.



Visit [Love Essex](#) to find out more about recycling in your area.





5. Outdoors



You could grow your own fruit and vegetables.

You don't need a garden to do this, even a window box is big enough for some plants.



If you don't have space at home, you could get an allotment.

This is a small piece of land that you rent from the council especially to grow things.



If you do have a garden, you could let part of it grow wild.

This means letting it grow naturally without weeding or using chemicals.

This helps bees, insects and birds.



Composting is a brilliant way to use your garden as a **carbon sink**.

A **carbon sink** takes in more carbon than it releases.



Composting turns your food waste into soil.

This also reduces your carbon emissions because there is no need to transport and process this waste.



Once the food is composted, you can use it across your garden to improve the soil.



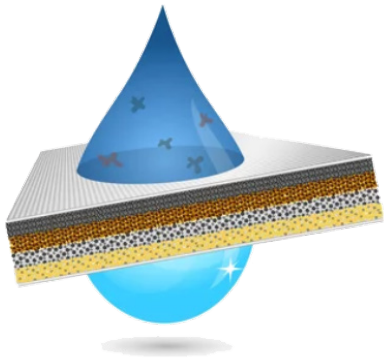
Visit [Love Essex](#) for hints and tips to help with composting. You can also find out how to buy a discounted composting bin.





You should not pave your garden.

This increases the risk of flooding.



If you do need to pave your garden you can get **permeable** paving slabs.

Permeable means that it lets water soak through.



Planting trees is another way to help climate change.

Trees take a lot of carbon from the atmosphere.



Visit the [Essex Forest Initiative](#) to find out about planting trees in your area.





Spending time in the countryside is good for your physical and mental health.



Essex has some beautiful countryside and woodland.

Visit www.esscrp.org.uk to find some brilliant walks, and [Explore Essex](#) to discover parks in Essex.





5. Useful Apps and Resources



There are a number of apps that can help you make small but important changes to your lifestyle. These include:

- [Giki](#)
- [Klima](#)
- [Carbon Cutting Essex](#)
- [Earth Hero](#)
- [Carbon Savvy](#)
- [Change It](#)
- [Eevie](#)
- [Olio](#)
- [Carbon Donut](#)
- [Too Good to Go](#)



Many town and parish councils are working to reduce carbon emissions.

Visit the [Essex Association of Local Councils](#) to find out how you can get involved.





Many organisations use social media to tell us about what they are doing and to share useful information. If you would like to stay updated on environment and climate action in Essex and beyond, here are a list of useful social media channels:

Essex-based social media pages

Facebook



- [Essex Climate Action Commission](#)
- [Essex Forest Initiative](#)
- [Essex Wildlife Trust](#)
- [Love Essex](#)
- [Eco - Essex](#)

X (formerly Twitter)



- [Essex Climate Action \(@essex_climate\)](#)
- [Essex Wildlife Trust \(@EssexWildlife\)](#)
- [Love Essex \(@loveessexuk\)](#)

Instagram



- [Eco - Essex \(@ecoEssex\)](#)
- [Essex Climate Action \(@essexclimatecommission\)](#)
- [Essex Wildlife Trust \(@essexwildlifetrust\)](#)
- [Love Essex \(@loveessexuk\)](#)

YouTube



- [Essex Climate Action Commission](#)
- [Love Essex](#)

National social media pages

- [Energy Saving Trust](#)
- [Royal Horticultural Society](#)

- [Royal Horticultural Society \(@The_RHS\)](#)

- [Energy Saving Trust \(@energysavingtrust\)](#)
- [Royal Horticultural Society \(@the_RHS\)](#)

- [Royal Horticultural Society](#)



We can do this!

