

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO

to move towards a lower energy life-style



01 GROW SOME OF YOUR OWN FOOD organically

This is the single most effective step you can take to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Oil-based pesticides, nitrogen fertilisers made from natural gas, globalised supply lines, transportation, processing and packaging are the reasons why the main use of fossil fuel energy is in food production. Try and make contact with people who already grow food in your area, see what grows for them, swap seeds, learn to make good compost or take an organic food growing workshop.

02 AVOID LONG SUPPLY CHAINS especially for food

Using less processed food, fewer ready meals, cooking more from raw materials, using food coops and bulk buying, buying locally produced goods and reducing use of supermarkets helps reduce dependency on long supply chains. This limits energy spent on shipping, processing and packaging.

03 START A SWAP CLUB

Skills, furniture, household items, clothes, home produced food etc can be successfully swapped or bartered with like-minded people in your community. This saves money & resources, reduces the need for landfill and builds community links and resilience.

04 CONSUME LESS

Our houses are full of things we no longer need, all of which we paid for, and then dispose of. Before you buy anything it may be a good idea is to ask yourself, 'Do I really need this?' Is it healthy for me, for the planet, for the people who made it? Do I already have something similar that I could make do with instead?

05 REDUCE HEATING

Wearing warmer clothes and acclimatising oneself to lower temperatures at home is very effective. This is because the heat lost, through walls and roofs, is proportionally greater at higher temperatures. Hot water thermostats on boilers can be turned down to around 50 degrees and heating thermostats gradually reduced over time. This is not recommended for the elderly or those with certain health conditions.

06 DRIVE LESS, WALK & CYCLE MORE

This is one of the most effective means of reducing fuel costs - as an added bonus it increases fitness and will save on a gym subscription.

07 INSULATE YOUR HOUSE

Imagine heating your home when fuel costs 3-4 times the current price. It's worth taking the time to make your house as energy efficient as possible, insulating lofts, boilers, wall cavities and draught proofing. Grants are available for the elderly and those on certain benefits.

08 SHARE YOUR PRACTICAL SKILLS

We need to learn and pass on practical skills to enable our communities to become more resilient. What skills do you possess and what skills could you learn from your friends, families and wider community? Our community is going to need gardening skills, building skills, cooking, repairing, sewing, bicycle fixing skills as the need to conserve resources becomes more pressing.

09 TAKE A PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE

A PDC is a great opportunity to learn a complete toolkit of practical skills to allow you to design a lower energy lifestyle for you and your family. Inspirational and positive, a design course equips you to start building for the future, safe in the knowledge that it will be far nicer than the present! Permaculture is a design system for agriculture, landscapes and a process for reclaiming our place in nature.

10 FOOD MATTERS

Producing a pound of beef requires 20 times as much fossil fuel energy as the same one pound of protein derived from corn or wheat. Cutting out meat once or twice a week will help reduce energy consumption. It uses far less energy to eat grains ourselves than to feed grain to animals and then eat them. There are a huge variety of lentils, pulses, nuts and seeds one can use to provide vegetable protein, and many delicious ways of preparing them.

11 REDUCE YOUR DEBTS

Simplifying your lifestyle could help you to reduce or get out of debt. Could you reduce your use of credit cards, overdraft and possibly your mortgage? Not having to service a debt often removes the pressure to work long hours and gives people more time to lead a more leisurely life and pursue the skills needed to live a sustainable lifestyle.

12 TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR WORK SITUATION

As fuel costs rise, travelling long distances to work will become less feasible. Could you afford to drive to work when fuel cost £2.50/litre? £5/litre? Could you bring your work out to where you are and work from home? Would it be possible to take a job nearer home? What other ideas can you come up with for a lower energy work situation... car pooling/car sharing?

Awareness raising

WATCH 'THE STORY OF STUFF'

at www.storyofstuff.com You won't feel the same about shopping after seeing this!

ORGANISE A SCREENING OF

'The Power of Community' to pass on the message

JOIN A COMMUNITY GROUP

inspire and support each other on your journey to a lower energy lifestyle

CELEBRATE!

Organise a party to celebrate any achievements on your journey towards a life less dependent on fossil fuels - such as your first crop of home grown vegetables.

READ MORE ABOUT IT

Go Mad! 500 Daily Ways To Save The Planet, The Ecologist Team, price £6.99

Join the **BILLINGE & ORRELL** Transition Group
www.billingeorrelltransition.org.uk