

TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE



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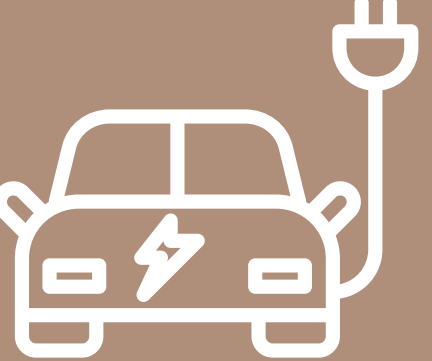


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THE URGENT CALL TO ACTION · THE URGENT CALL TO ACTION · THE URGENT CALL TO ACTION

www.havering.gov.uk/climatechange

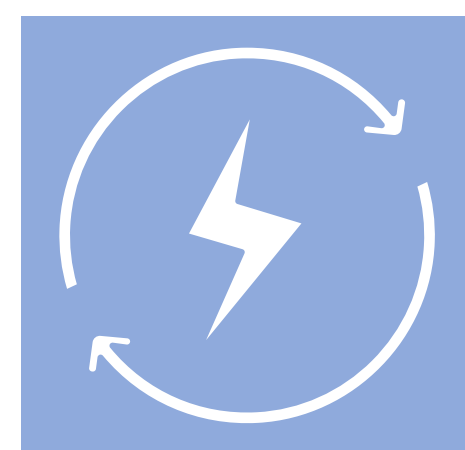


Photo credit: Mr Paul Weston



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

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Climate Change is one of the most critical issues facing us all– this is what we can all do to help make the difference for us and the generations to come.

This leaflet is a collection of key advice, tips and information to help us all cut our carbon, to reduce our impact on the planet and help us and the next generation have a better future.

The **Havering Climate Change Action Plan** outlines key initiatives, goals and objectives to meet the Council’s carbon neutral ambitions by 2040. One of its key recommendations is to signpost Havering residents to good advice and help in the transition to a lower carbon lifestyle.

So, what are the most effective individual actions that we can take? Surprisingly, the impact of certain activities can be quite different to what many of us might expect.

An Ipsos Mori survey of people around the world, compared the expected impact of various pro-environmental choices versus their actual impact. Check out the graph below to summarise what contributes the most when taking action on climate change – it might surprise you.

Climate Action Top Tips

With so much advice available on what actions you can take to make a contribution to reduce emissions¹, the following demonstrates the differences in the perceived impact of eight climate action top tips by the public, against those that actually make the most significant positive impact on reducing your emissions.

What **REALLY** reduces emissions

How the public rated its impact to reduce emissions

1



Cycling/ walking and/ or using public transport more

7

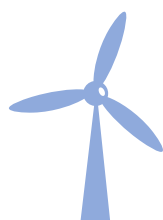
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Avoiding one long-distance flight (lasting six hours or more)

6

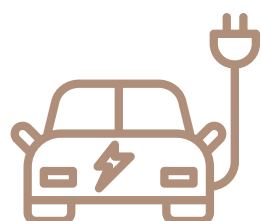
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Buying energy only from renewable sources (e.g. wind power, hydroelectric)

2

4



Replacing a typical car with an electric car or hybrid

3

5



Eating a plant-based diet

8

6



Recycling as much as possible

1

7



Hang-drying their clothes, instead of using an electric or gas dryer

5

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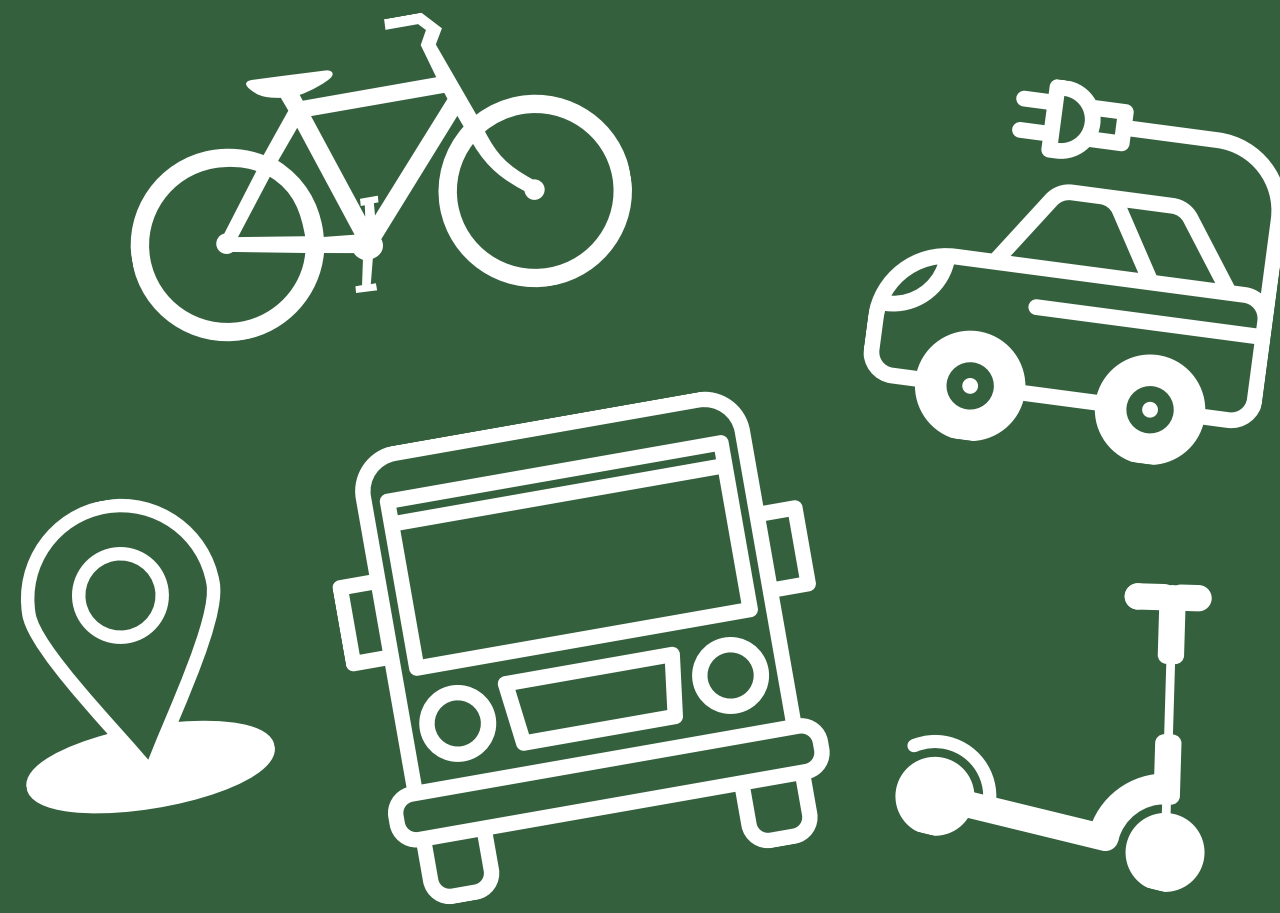


Replacing traditional incandescent lightbulbs with low energy compact fluorescent (CFL) or LED lightbulbs

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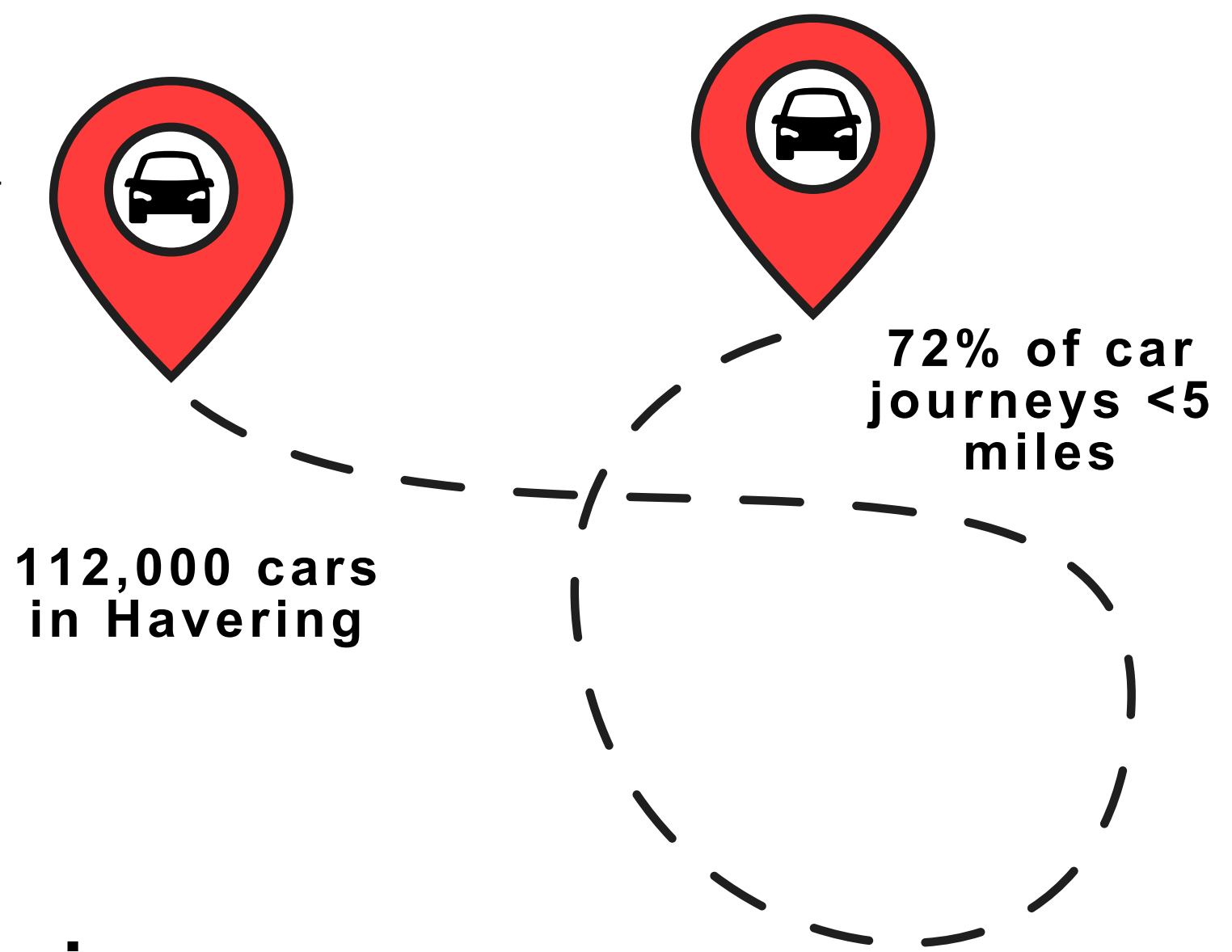
Transport

● It's time to start thinking about how we get from A to B.



Our motor cars are one of the most intensive sources of personal emissions. Driving one long journey, Havering to Edinburgh for example, would emit nearly **four times** the carbon (CO₂) emissions as a coach or a train. **One mile in an average UK car** can emit around **11 times as much**, compared to public transport per mile travelled – or 88 times the amount of CO₂ compared with an electric bus²!

There are over 112,000 cars in Havering. On average, across the UK, 25% of car journeys are under one mile³. These journeys could be walkable by many residents. Furthermore, 72% of car journeys are under five miles⁴ – a distance that could be covered comparably quickly by bike, on foot or via public transport – just with far fewer emissions. If every household in the UK replaced a one-mile car trip each week with walking or cycling, we could save multiple thousands of tonnes of carbon⁵. Think how much you could save by walking, scooting or cycling short trips to school, rather than driving.



The ideal action to take is to drive less.



Alternatives to driving

Switching shorter journeys by car to walking or cycling can improve your physical health and fitness while vastly reducing your environmental impact. It's a chance to save money on the gym and on petrol, get the legs working and de-stress!

The **Try Before You Bike Scheme** allows you to hire a pedal bike, kids bike, ebike, e-cargo bike or accessible cycle. At any point you can choose to buy the bike at a price that reduces over time - payable on an interest free plan or through using a cycle to work scheme or by simply returning the bike when you no longer want it.

Taking **public transport** wherever and whenever we can, is the next best bet. Transport for London has vastly improved its fleet to be more **environmentally friendly**, with more than 1,300 zero-emission buses operating across the fleet.

Or perhaps **share** a journey if destinations are the same, similar or en-route, halving your emissions and potentially leading to new friendships and experiences.

Or you can download apps, like Bla Bla Car.





Air travel

Flights have allowed us to be able to holiday globally, wherever and whenever we please, but they have a massive hidden environmental cost. Such as:

- London to Bangkok - 3.83 tonnes of CO₂e
- London to Disneyland - 3.51 tonnes of CO₂e
- London to Maldives - 3.41 tonnes of CO₂e
- London to Dubai - 2.19 tonnes of CO₂e
- London to Palma, Mallorca - 1.07 tonnes of CO₂e

To put this into perspective, the average UK citizen's carbon footprint is 12.7 tonnes of emissions per year⁶ – and this is a footprint considered far too high by scientists and governments worldwide committed to net-zero.

When booking holidays, consider choosing short-haul destinations instead of long-haul. The closer the destination, the smaller your travel carbon footprint.

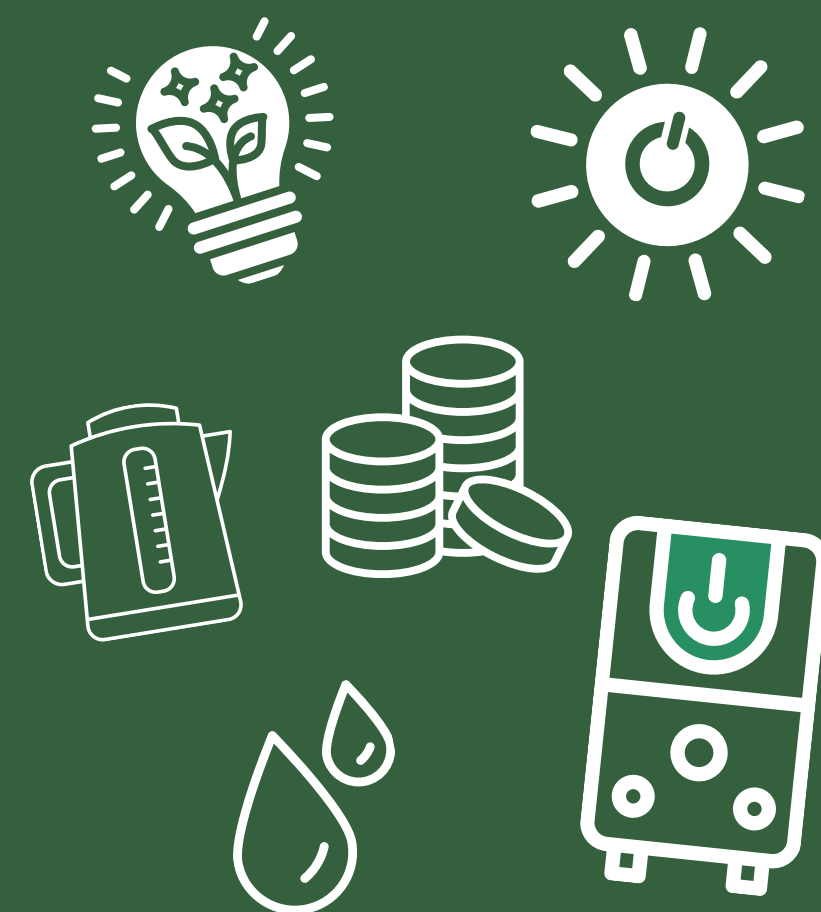
Get inspired by what's on your doorstep and focus on more local exploration by rail, road or ferry. Instead of jetting abroad, you could explore the beauty of the United Kingdom and opt for staycations and discover hidden gems within your own country.

This [calculator from Sustainable Travel International](#) can help you with calculating your travel carbon footprint.



Energy and the home

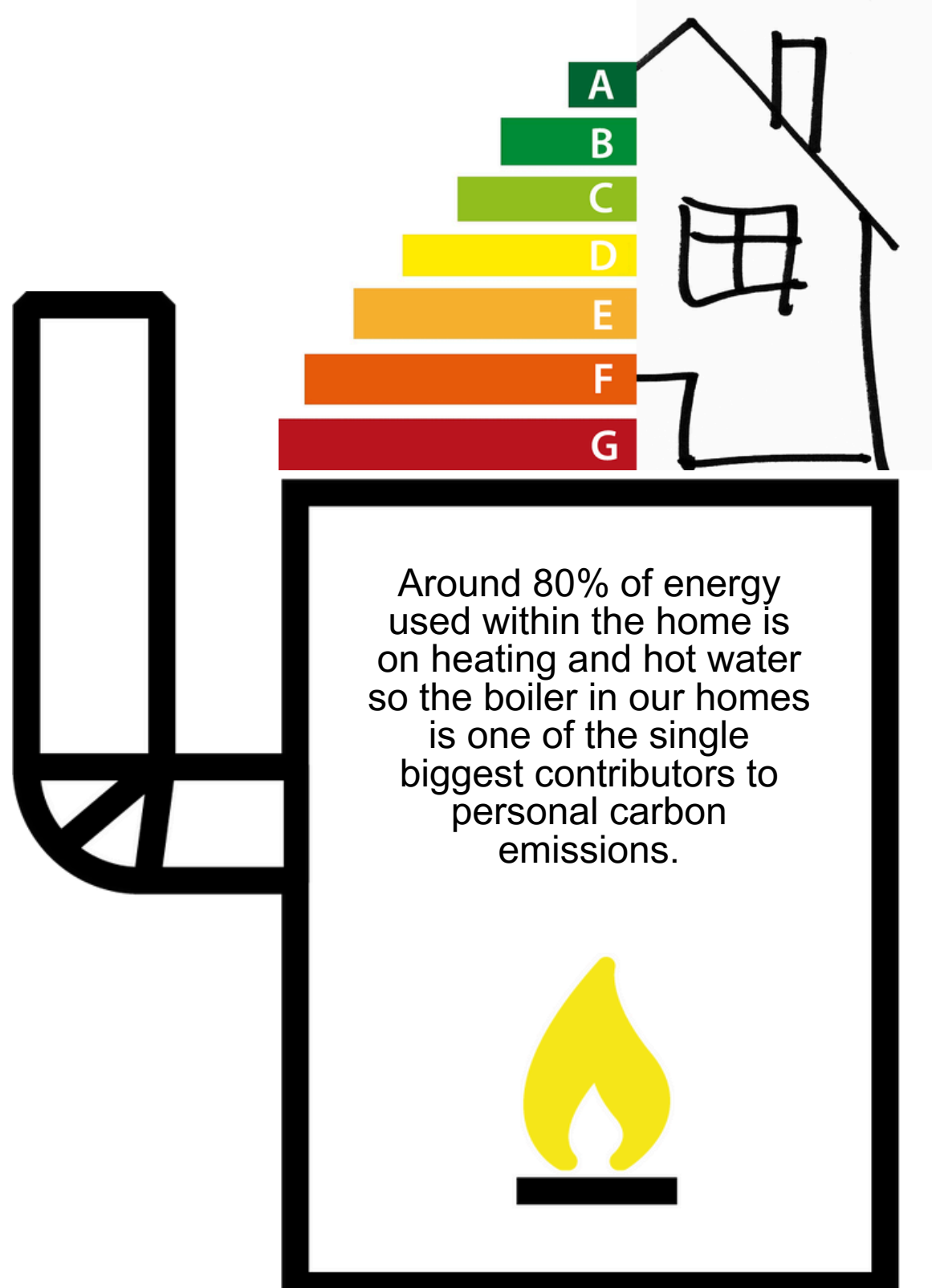
- One of the best things about improving our home's energy efficiency is that it cuts our bills as well as carbon.



A well-insulated, ventilated and energy efficient home can have much lower energy bills in comparison with the average home.

Draughty, poorly insulated homes can also be very harmful to our health too. Upgrading our homes by **improving the insulation** can help keep us warm and comfortable, improve our health and save significant amounts of money.

Our **Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)** show how energy efficient our home is, and if it's in need of improvements (below C). The **most efficient home is A+** and is less expensive to heat. Around 67% of Essex homes have a poor EPC rating of D or below, meaning most residents are paying more for their heating than is necessary and creating more greenhouse gas emissions. If you're buying or renting a new home, make sure you look into the EPC, and make sure you know the cost of any changes that will be needed in the future. For example, we will all have to change our heating over time to move to low carbon sources such as heat pumps.



Financial help and incentives

The **Energy Company Obligation (ECO4)** and **Great British Insulation Scheme** provide funding for domestic properties towards energy efficiency upgrades for residents in fuel poverty, and on low income and vulnerable to cold.

The **Boiler Upgrade Scheme** offers grants of up to £7,500 for homeowners to replace their boiler with air and ground source heat pumps as well as grants of up to £5,000 towards a biomass boiler.

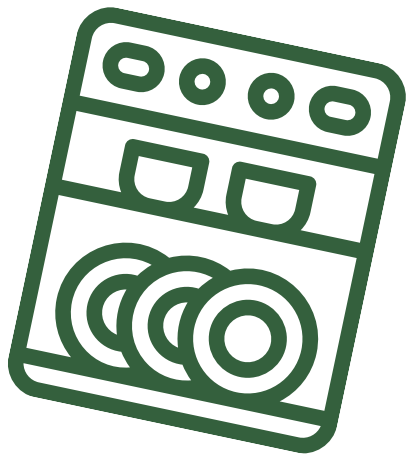
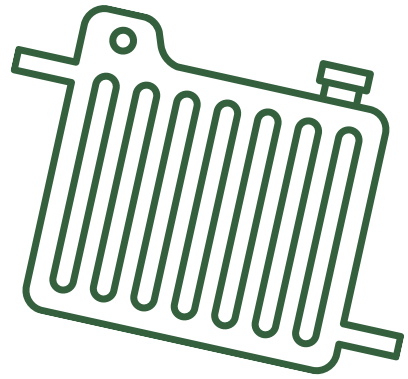
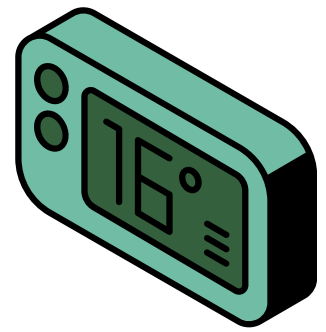
Havering Energy Doctors is a free service for all Havering residents run by Age UK. Professionals visit your home and provide advice on energy efficiency. They may also make small changes and repairs to your home, i.e. fitting draught excluders or LED lightbulbs. For more information, please email: info@ageukeastlondon.org.uk.

The **Energy Saving Trust** is another great resource with a wealth of information on what you can do to improve the energy efficiency of your home, including advice on insulation, heating and renewable energy.



Home energy saving tips

Making these small daily changes at home can help you save money on your energy bills and save energy at the same time.



- **Turning down the thermostat**, even by just one degree, will save energy. Programme heating to make sure you only have it on when someone is home.
- **Run washing machines and dishwashers on lower temperature** settings or eco-mode, so they can do the job without using too much energy. Also, only running these when you have **a full load** will decrease the number of loads, saving you energy and money week on week.

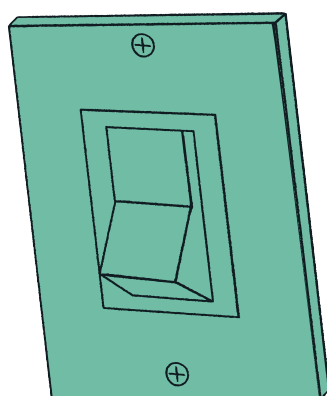


- On sunnier and warmer days, make the most of the weather by **drying clothes outside**, or on an air dryer for the winter months. If you need to use the tumble dryer, make sure it is **full** before starting.



- Simple things around the house also use energy - such as boiling a kettle. A good tip is to **only fill your kettle with as much as you need**.

- **Put your appliances on timers** so they switch off automatically at certain times when you know no one is using them.



- **Switching devices off at the wall or unplugging them entirely** helps to save more energy compared with leaving them on standby. Turning off the lights when not in use is an oldie but a goodie.



The [Energy Saving Trust](#) has lots more quick tips to save energy at home.

Reducing water usage



It's easy to forget that our water use also has a big carbon footprint.

We can take some simple steps to use water efficiently and cut our water bills. Everyone in Havering is eligible for a [free water saving kit from Essex & Suffolk Water](#). Water scarcity is a big deal in this area. Demand for water in the future is highly likely to be greater than the available water supply.

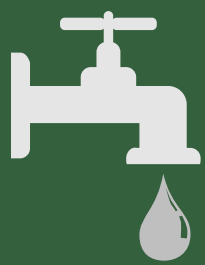
Top tips to save water at home



Use a **bowl in the sink** when washing up and use the wastewater to water your plants. Use a bowl of water to wash your fruit and vegetables



Take a shower instead of a bath. Reducing your time in the shower can save up to 18 litres of water, depending on the type of shower



Turn off the tap when you brush your teeth. A running tap wastes up to six litres of water a minute. Plug your sink basin when washing or shaving, and save up to 12 litres of water



Use a **water-saving device** in your toilet cistern. Watch what you put down the toilet. Flushing items like wet wipes and sanitary towels can result in blockages. Essex & Suffolk Water offers a [free service to fix leaking toilets](#), cutting down on water waste and saving money.



Wait until you have a **full load** before using this dishwasher or washing machine



Use a **watering can** to water your garden rather than a hosepipe



Water butts are a brilliant way to take advantage of wet weather and reduce mains water consumption. It collects rainwater for use in the garden, conserving water, whilst keeping your garden healthy



Check your property regularly for **leaks**. If you think your toilet is leaking, Essex & Suffolk Water will fix it for free where possible with their [Leaky Loo scheme](#). They may also be able to order you a free replacement part



Food

- A climate friendly diet is healthier, has less waste, more seasonality and is sourced locally.



Reducing the amount of **food wasted** at home is a good way to reduce our carbon footprint and save money.

Currently, on average we are **wasting £80 a month** of all the food we buy, around **£960 a year**⁷ – and with some foods having a larger carbon footprint than others, throwing edible food away can have a big hidden cost.



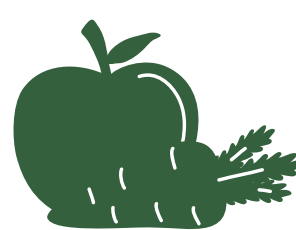
Reducing food waste in our home can be simple:

- make a meal plan. Check what you already have and create a shopping list with only what you need and stick to it.
- if you have leftovers, refrigerate or freeze them and consume at a later date.
- freeze or refrigerate anything that can't be eaten while it's fresh. Check that your fridge is set at the right temperature (between zero and five degrees Celsius) to keep food fresher for longer. Freeze food in small portions so you defrost only what you need.
- where possible, buy loose produce so you can select the exact amount that you need and avoid unnecessary packaging.
- before discarding food, make sure it is definitely out of date and inedible. Best before dates can be used as a rough indication but should be taken more seriously with foods like meat.
- some food waste is unavoidable. In these instances, we can recycle it.
- composting is a valuable solution – see the outdoors and nature section for more information.

Find **[tips on how to cut down on food waste and make the most out of your leftovers](#)**, and check out the **[Love Food Hate Waste](#)** website to learn more about how to get the **most out of the food you buy** with recipes and other top tips.

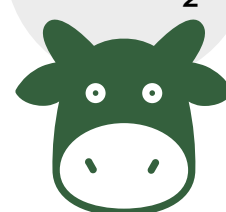
There are also various resources and apps, such as **[Horizon](#)** and **[Scrapp](#)** that provide **information about food products** and beyond. They can tell you anything from whether the packaging is recyclable to whether ingredients were sourced responsibly.

Food choices



When it comes to choosing protein, **50g of protein from beef** takes **25kg of carbon to produce**, compared to just **420g of carbon** for the *same amount* of protein from **chickpeas** or **lentils**⁸. That's a big difference!

25kg
of CO₂

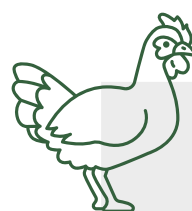


50g of protein
from **beef**

420g
of CO₂



50g of protein
from **chickpeas**

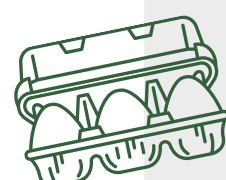


Animal sources of protein tend to be higher in carbon, but chicken emits less than other meats.

Consuming seafood, in general, has a lower carbon footprint than meat. However, fish stocks are being overexploited and **some fish carry a high environmental footprint**. Air-freighted fish from other continents, especially lobsters and king prawns, have the highest carbon footprint. Local shellfish such as mussels are always a good bet – they have a very low environmental footprint. Handline caught mackerel and hake can be good too. Buying locally caught fish is a good rule of thumb.

Eggs are also a lower-carbon source of animal protein. Why not support a local business and switch to buying locally sourced eggs.

For fruit and vegetables, try and eat foods that are in season. This means that the plants you are eating are fresher and tastier. Foods that are in season are often **sourced locally** so have a smaller carbon footprint and can often save you money!





Vegetable box schemes can be a great way to support more sustainable farmers and local producers. They can also involve **much less waste**, as they often don't come with unnecessary packaging. They also put a focus on the **seasonality of foods**, giving you more vegetables and fruits that are in season in your box. Check out [Oddbox](#), which delivers wonky fruits and vegetables that are delicious and fresh but would otherwise be wasted due to supermarket shape and size standards - **fighting food waste and carbon emissions** all at once.

✓ Making informed choices

As you can see, it's not about restricting our diets, but our choices can make a difference.

We can learn more about the **seasonality of foods**, visit local farm shops, grocers and butchers. Local produce has a much lower impact than anything imported, so look out for UK food producers.

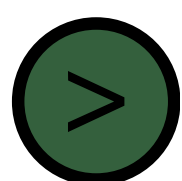
Incorporating some **meat-free days** into your week can be a great starting point – with plant-based alternatives, choices and recipes becoming ever-more available. On the days that we eat meat, we can try to find local options. Buying meat locally not only **cuts our environmental footprint significantly**, but it also boosts the local economy by supporting local farmers.

With our diets, it is important to remember that we don't have to completely cut out major food groups and that **cutting down on meat**, imported and out of season food has a major impact on our carbon footprint.

When shopping in the supermarket, we can watch out for **food which has travelled by air** with this **food miles calculator**. It is better to buy things closer to home to keep the number of miles food has travelled to a minimum. Fruit and vegetables should have information regarding their origin – so if it's come from far beyond the continent of Europe, for example, it will have a bigger carbon footprint. Eating foods which have travelled a long way can really increase our carbon footprint.



One of the most important things we can do to enrich our natural world is to learn more about and to support sustainable farming. Buying from local farms is even better!



Finding food that protects our planet can sometimes be hard but look out for **organic labels** such as [The Soil Association](#) and the [EU organic label](#).

[Veganuary](#) is a month-long challenge that encourages us all to eat only plant-based meals in January which can help us learn new and delicious vegan recipes to incorporate into our usual diet.



Waste

- Buying things, we genuinely need, buying things that are made to last, and repairing and re-using things wherever we can.



If each of us reduced our black bag waste by just 15%, Havering would save over **100,000 tonnes of waste** going into landfill each year⁹.

Every new product that we buy requires **resources and energy** to produce and transport – which almost always means associated carbon emissions. So, all of us should **really consider what we are buying** before we make that purchase.

£ Circular economy

The circular economy is a system based on the reuse and regeneration of materials and products in a sustainable or environmentally friendly way. This means avoiding single-use items and focusing more on using what we already have, repairing our items, and borrowing from others.

Before you buy something, ask yourself:



- Can I find it secondhand or borrow it?
- Can it be repaired?
- Can it be recycled?
- Has it been made locally so it has not been transported far?

↑ The Waste Hierarchy

The Waste Hierarchy ranks the actions we can take to reduce our waste and lessen our impact on the climate, from the top down, according to what is best for the environment and to prevent creating unnecessary waste.



There are several **local schemes** to help you – such as:

- [Freegle](#)
- [Big Smile Collective clothes swap events](#)
- [Havering Real Nappy Scheme](#)
- [Subsidised compost bins for your home](#)
- [Home learning course on composting](#)
- [TCL Reuse Centre for secondhand furniture](#)

The Council's Waste & Recycling Team also provides tips and tricks on how to:

- [Reduce your household waste and save money](#)
- [Rubbish and recycling - what goes where](#)
- [Recycling tips](#)

There is also information on:

- [What to do with batteries and old electricals](#)
- [Food waste reduction](#)
- [Reducing plastic](#)
- [How to love your clothes](#)

Recycling is good. But we can do better...

Research by [Keep Britain Tidy](#) indicates the public largely defaults to recycling as the first option for dealing with waste and lacks understanding that this is actually the *third best option* - behind **reducing** and **reusing**.

There is also confusion surrounding the commonly used terms 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle', with almost a third of people (30%) feeling the terms are interchangeable.

Tackling our waste



Waste prevention is something that councils and government are working with businesses on to reduce the amount of waste that is created in the first place.



Reduce the amount that we buy. Make informed choices before purchasing something. Consider whether something is built to last, good quality and that you will use it for many years to come.



Re-use and repurpose items in your home. If you don't need something anymore, see if someone else can use it by reselling or giving away.



Recycle what you can. Check your local council's website to see what can be recycled in your area. Find out what your local council collects kerbside and what needs to go to the recycling centre. Things like batteries and soft plastics are often collected at bring banks and in local supermarkets.



Avoid wish cycling which is when we assume something can be recycled when in reality it can't! This can be due to different recycling rules in different areas. Wish cycling comes from good intentions but can end up hindering the recycling process!



Councils will use recovery technologies to recover energy and materials from waste that can't be recycled



Disposing of waste in landfill is the least preferred option and councils in Essex are working to stop using landfill.



The Refill app is home to a vast network of refill stations that encourage water bottle refills to help reduce our plastic waste.



The outdoors and nature

● We're part of nature and it's part of us. Let's get closer to our precious environment.



The little actions, starting at home, can make big steps towards nature recovery, and climate change resilience in Havering.

Actions can be taken in our gardens, on our balconies and windowsills, and in our neighbourhood parks; all together creating pockets of nature that join up vital habitats, supporting wildlife to move across our landscape.



Your green and blue space

Got a garden? Why not grow your own fruit and vegetables or rewild an area of land?

By letting wildflowers grow throughout a year, **biodiversity** can increase ten-fold – promoting natural processes of pollination and other key ecosystem services. This will help bees, insects, birds, and other wildlife to maintain their habitat, to ensure the ecosystem is in balance.

Growing your own fruit and veg can also significantly cut your **dietary carbon footprint** as well as being host to a fun and engaging project to share with the family and friends.

Composting is a brilliant way to use your garden as a carbon sink. A carbon sink absorbs more carbon than it releases. It's a chance to turn your food waste into soil – a thriving ecosystem for insects and bugs, that itself sucks up carbon from the atmosphere.

This will also reduce your carbon emissions, as there is no need to transport and process this waste, and instead will turn your waste into valuable soil improver that you can use across your garden. To help Havering residents get started with home composting, our **Composting at Home booklet** offers tips and subsidised compost bins.



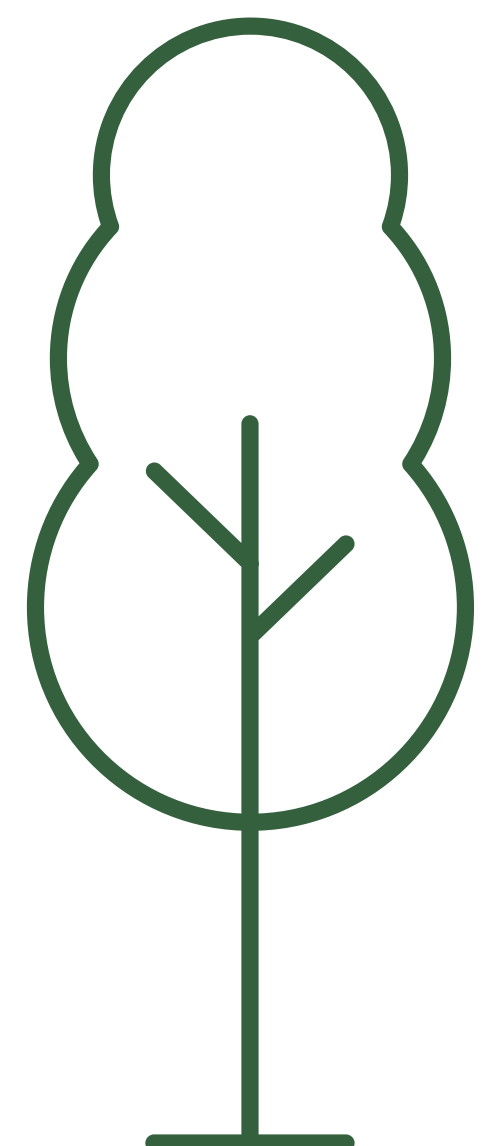
If you don't have a garden, perhaps consider an **allotment**, with more information available on the [Council's website](#). This is a great chance to enjoy the outdoors and meet new people. If that's impractical, **window boxes** or **hanging baskets** for fruit and vegetables work wonders, allowing you to grow your own without even needing a garden. Windowsills and balconies can also be used to create refuge for wildlife, in the form of wildflower planting, bird boxes and green walls.

Tree-planting is another way to take action on climate change. A tree sucks up a lot of carbon from the atmosphere as it grows, and **a mature tree can store that carbon over its lifespan**. Trees also provide protection against flood risks. Getting the family involved and learning about the importance of trees from an early age can be great fun.

If you have land that you would like to plant trees in, you may be eligible for the [Woodland Trust Tree Packs scheme](#).

For advice on best practice for tree planting in your garden the Woodland recommends [14 native trees](#) and [6 native trees for small gardens](#).

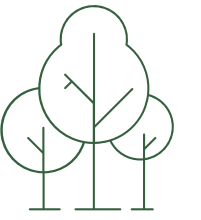
To get involved in local tree planting in your community, visit the [Thames Chase website](#) to learn more about their volunteering opportunities.





Paving your garden can dramatically increase your risk of flooding

Extreme weather events are projected to increase as the climate gets warmer. By having a greener garden, you can increase the volume of water that can be absorbed and drained, to keep you and your property safe. **Permeable paving** can help reduce local flooding and prevent problems with subsidence.



Exploring the great outdoors

Why not invest some time into exploring and connecting with the natural world out **walking in Havering's beautiful parks!**

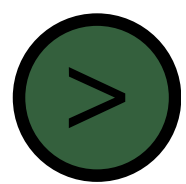
Spending more time outside, especially in the countryside, is a fine way to get closer to the environment – but also to boost your physical and mental health. It can also be great fun, with a chance to share experiences with family and friends.

Green roofs and **walls** can be created on your house, shed, or even bin shelter. Greening up your roofs and walls can help to retain rainfall and reduce risk of flooding, support biodiversity, improve insulation, and help to reduce urban heat effect.

Mini wetlands are a great source of shelter and food for wildlife! Consider creating a mini wetland in your garden, such as a **garden pond** or source of water which can be created using re-used materials such as an old kitchen sink.

Create opportunities for **hedgehogs to travel between gardens** by creating small access points at the bottom of fences and gates. You could also introduce a hedgehog house in your garden, which you can make at home or purchase from garden centre.

The **Havering Local Group of Essex Wildlife Trusts** carries out all manner of fundraising activities and events in the local area.



If you are interested in taking action for nature or working within your community to improve your local environment, get in touch today!

Consider **volunteering** with local charities and organisations in your local green and blue spaces! Through volunteering or by starting your own local group, you can initiate action to support biodiversity in your local area. Volunteering can result in good exercise, as well as meeting new people and enjoyment being part of the community. Volunteering in your local community garden, can also support efforts for community food growing and sharing of local resources.

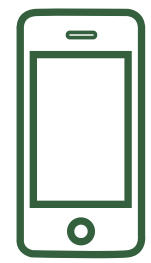
The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) identifies locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment, accompanied by a series of biodiversity priorities and actions for delivery. There has never been a more critical time to support our environment, and to work together to each do our bit, and collectively care for our natural spaces.

The National Trust **Havering and District Association** creates the opportunity to meet other people with an interest in the National Trust and take part in their activities.



Useful apps and resources

Useful apps



Carbon Calculators are really handy when you want to know the impact anything has on your carbon footprint. But there are also plenty of apps that can help you make small changes to your lifestyle. These include:

- [Capture](#)
- [Carbon Savvy](#)
- [Carbn](#)
- [Changeit](#)
- [Commons](#)
- [Earth Hero](#)
- [Freecycle](#)
- [Kilma](#)
- [Kitche](#)
- [Olio](#)
- [Pawprint](#)
- [Too Good To Go](#)

Useful resources



Havering Libraries have collections of reliable books for all ages about climate change, tips on reducing our carbon footprint and how we can care for the environment.



Climate change is real, it's now, we have to do something about it – and the good news is that we can

All of the actions outlined in this leaflet can help us to make a start in reducing our own impacts and carbon footprint. We can all act to improve our lives and our planet.

Our choices can truly make a difference and will shape Havering today and in the future.



References

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