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**go!**

Your sustainable  
choices matter.

# Sustainable living guide

By the  
University Sustainability Team

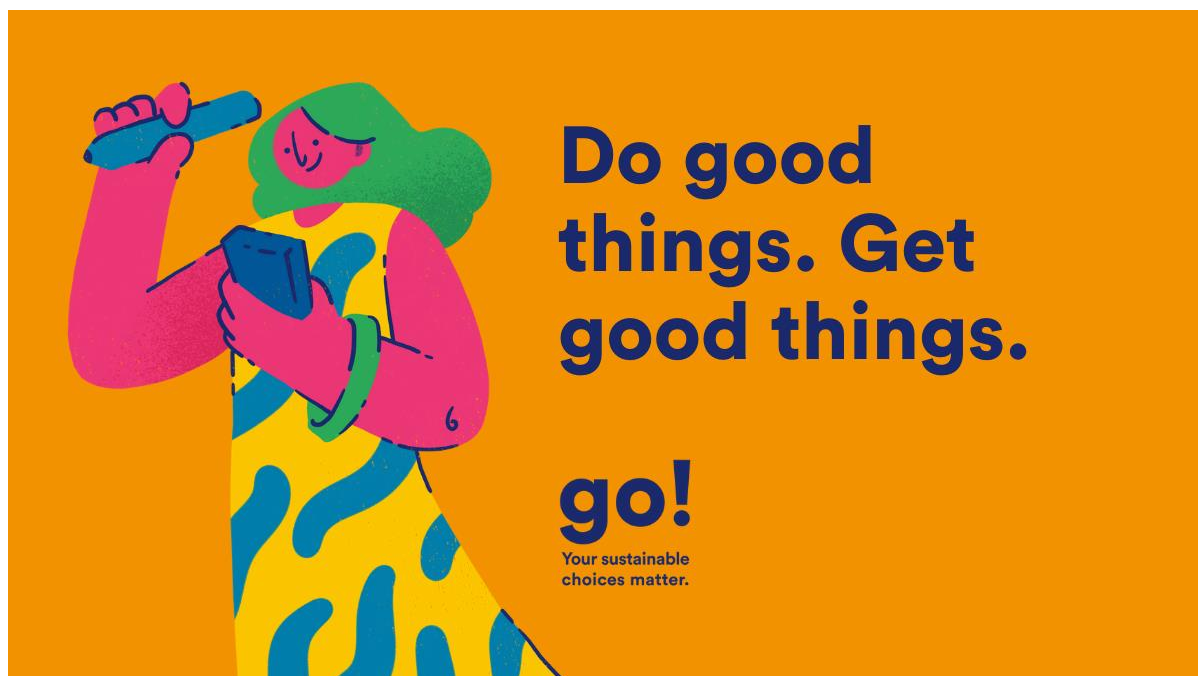


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# Introduction

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges humanity is facing. Scientists agree that it's driven by human activities such as burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial processes, which are increasing atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs).

Couple this with a global decline in wildlife and the depletion of natural resources and you get a planet that cannot sustain the developed world's current way of living.

**But, if it's human activities got us here, there are actions we can all take to reverse the situation.** Everyone has a part to play, everyone can make a difference.

Thinking about how we all travel, use energy, shop and bank... this is our chance to make a change for the better. Even the smallest actions add up to big impacts, like eating a more plant-based diet and avoiding single-use plastics. **Change is possible when we all work together.**

It can difficult and overwhelming knowing where to start – especially as a student. So we've put this guide together to help make things a little easier. It includes tips and links to useful websites, apps and places. Our aim is not that you do absolutely everything, but rather that you find it a useful reference and encouragement for living a more sustainable life.

## greenrewards

At UoN we're making it easy (and rewarding!) for you to take positive action. [Green Rewards](#) is an online platform and mobile app where you can record your sustainable activities. In return you'll earn **Green Points** and the chance to win vouchers and make charity donations. Plus, many of the actions are not only good for the planet but good for your pocket too! If a tip has a **gr** next to it, you can earn points by doing it and logging it on Green Rewards!

*The Sustainability Team*



# Travel



Transport was the largest emitting sector in the UK in 2021, responsible for 26% of net GHG emissions.<sup>1</sup> Here are some ways of making your travel more sustainable.

## Around Nottingham

### Taking public transport **gr**

- A number of bus services run between Nottingham city centre and our campuses at University Park, Jubilee, Sutton Bonington and King's Meadow. Find out more about local bus services [here](#).
- Local transport operators [NET](#), [Nottingham City Transport \(NCT\)](#) and [CT4N](#) offer discounted rates to students.



**Cycle instead of taking a bus or car.** Good for the environment, good for your health and good for your pocket! **gr**

- There are lots of cycle routes around Nottingham to make cycling easier. View this [Nottingham Cycle Map](#).
- [Nottingham Bikeworks](#) sell refurbished bikes at affordable prices. Occasionally they hold bike sales on campus. Keep an eye on the UoN Sustainability social media to find out when!
- Dr Bike sessions, where you get free bike service, are regularly run at different places around campus. Subscribe to our newsletter to get a monthly update of the times and locations. **gr**
- There are lots of places around campus [to lock your bike](#). For extra security you we recommend you use one of the University card-access bike sheds.

## Travelling between campuses

- View the [hopper bus timetables](#) to get between campuses.
- Below are the walking distances between campuses. Sometimes it may be quicker to walk than to take the bus.

Coates Building (University Park)				
8	Portland Building (University Park)			
18	10	Humanities Building (University Park)		
13	19	27	Advanced Manufacturing Building (Jubilee)	
23	29	37	10	Exchange Building (Jubilee)
25	30	38	23	33 King's Meadow



## Around the country

Travel between Nottingham and home by train or coach instead of going by car. The carbon footprint from travelling by coach or rail to London from Nottingham is about 10kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. It's about 40kg if you travel by car, and about 70kg if someone drives from London to pick you up!<sup>2</sup>

- Coach travel is an affordable method of transport between cities around the UK. Go to [this website](#) to see the options available for your journey.
- [Click here](#) for a railcard for 16-25 year olds that will give you a 1/3 off your train ticket.

# Food



Did you know that our global food system accounts for 26% of our worldwide GHG emissions?<sup>3</sup> Here are some tips to reduce the environmental impact of your food.

## Understand your ‘foodprint’

A good place to start is to work out your diet’s carbon footprint. [Use this interesting tool from the BBC to see what food has the biggest impact.](#) You might be surprised by a few things.

## Eat less meat and dairy

What you eat is much more important than where it comes from.<sup>4</sup> Transport accounts for very little of food’s carbon footprint. To stop global temperature increasing, we need to reduce the amount of meat and dairy we’re eating by more than half by 2030.<sup>5</sup>



- Try to eat more plant-based meals. Even one less meat meal a week makes a difference. Here are some simple [veggie recipes](#) to give you some inspiration. **gr**
- You can have the biggest impact by [eating less beef in particular.](#)
- Swap your milk for dairy-free alternatives. Campus cafes no longer charge extra for plant-based milks.
- [Crocus Café](#) and [Café Roya](#) are notable vegetarian and vegan local spots.
- If you want to continue eating meat and dairy, and you can afford it, eat organic, higher welfare produce or free-range. It’s better for the animals involved, your health, and the planet’s health.

## Food waste

Food waste fuels climate change and if it were a country, it would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest emitter in the world.<sup>6</sup> **gr**



**Make a meal plan to reduce waste.** Plan what you are going to eat to minimise the risk of buying more than you need.

**Batch cook meals and freeze extra portions** – saving you time and money later on when you need a quick meal.

**Cook with friends and flatmates.** A good excuse to get together whilst also avoiding food waste.

**Give away food you are not going to eat.**

- If the food is unopened and long life, consider taking it to a food bank. A list of foodbanks around Nottingham can be found [here](#).
- If it is opened or needs to be kept in a fridge or freezer, you can give it away on the app, [Olio](#). You can also get other people's unwanted food for free!

**Download Too Good to Go.** [Too Good to Go](#) is an app that allows you to buy surplus food from cafes, restaurants and shops for a reduced price that would otherwise go to waste.



# Fashion



The fashion industry emits more carbon than international flights and maritime shipping combined!<sup>7</sup> Here are some ways you can make your clothing more sustainable.

## Buy less, buy better

**Prioritise quality over quantity.** It's wiser to invest in a smaller amount of durable clothing that will last, rather than buying numerous 'fast fashion' garments that quickly wear out and get thrown out.

**If you can, buy from shops that are environmentally conscious.** [Good on You](#) lets you find out how brands are doing from the point of view of sustainability, labour and

animal welfare. You can also use it to find new shops that are environmentally conscious.

[Get what you can second-hand](#). This is good for the environment and your pocket!

- Look out for vintage clothes sales and clothes swaps happening on campus.
- Nottingham has lots of charity shops with great selections of clothing. [White Rose](#), in particular, picks out the items it sells such that there is a great quality of choice.
- [Depop](#) and [Vinted](#) are platforms on which you can buy and sell second-hand clothing.
- [Dopple](#) is a clothes swapping app for students.



[Look after your clothes to help them last longer](#). [This list](#) gives lots of helpful tips for looking after your clothes. [gr](#)

## Passing clothes on

If you no longer want an item of clothing and it's still wearable, give it to a friend, donate it or sell it on (see the suggestions above).

[If you have clothes that are not in good enough condition to pass on, you can:](#)

- Use them as cleaning rags.
- Recycle them! Here are some places that take textile recycling:
  - [Sainsbury's, Castle Boulevard](#)
  - [Sainsbury's Beeston](#)
  - [British Heart Foundation Donation Banks](#)



# Energy and Water



The proportion of energy we get from renewable sources is increasing, but in 2021, 77.3% of GHG emissions in the UK still came from the burning of fossil fuels.<sup>8</sup>

## Reducing energy use



- Fully power down electronics or switch off at the plug to reduce 'phantom' energy. [gr](#)
- Use as much natural light (and warmth) as possible by opening curtains.
- Hang your washing outside or use a clothes airer instead of using tumble dryers. [gr](#)
- Only boil as much water as you need and put any surplus in a flask.
- Turning your heating down from 19°C to 18°C cuts the energy used to heat your house by about 10%.<sup>9</sup>
- There are more energy tips on our [sustainability webpages](#).

## Reducing water use

Water usage has a hidden carbon footprint. In fact, it accounts for 6% of all carbon emissions in the UK. The bulk of the emissions comes from the energy used to heat water in the home and the rest comes from pumping and treating water as part of the supply and sewage network.<sup>10</sup>

### Reduce how much water you use in the shower or bath.

- Take shorter showers – maybe try a shower timer to help you keep to sub-5-minute showers. [gr](#)
- Run a shallower bath. Reducing your bath by just 2.5cm saves about 5 litres of water!
- Turn the tap off when you brush your teeth and wash your hands.

[Use your dishwasher](#). If you fill your dishwasher to capacity, you'll use less water than if you wash your dishes by hand.

[Use leftover water for watering plants](#). Water used for cooking pasta, rice or vegetables has lots of nutrients so let it cool and then use it to water your plants!

# Finance



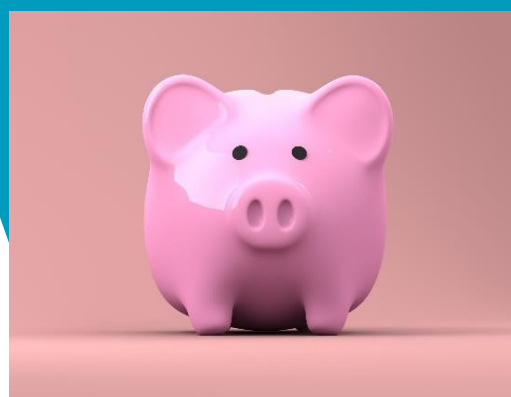
A lot of banks and pension schemes invest in [destructive fossil fuel projects](#). In the last 12 months, the Big 5 UK high street banks provided \$37bn to fossil fuel companies.<sup>11</sup>

Choosing to put your money in a bank with sustainable policies is one of the most powerful ways to fight the climate crisis.

## Banking

Banks to consider using:

- [The Co-operative Bank](#) has an ethical policy that stops the bank from financing much of the fossil fuels industries.
- [Triodos bank](#) will not lend to businesses that trade in non-sustainable products or services or use non-sustainable working processes. It also has a positive investment approach, which is centred around financing projects that have social, cultural, or environmental benefits.



If you leave a bank because of their destructive practices, let them know. The more people that do this, the more likely they are to change.

For more information about banking ethically, read this [guide from Students Organising for Sustainability](#).

## Pensions

The UK pensions industry enables more CO<sup>2</sup> than all UK carbon emissions.<sup>12</sup> If you have a pension (you may have been auto-enrolled in one when you started a job), ensuring it is invested ethically could be the most powerful single action you for the climate.

Take action with the [Make my money matter campaign](#).

# Waste



In 2018, the UK produced over 222.2 million tonnes of waste – of which, only 48.7% was recycled and 22% was sent to landfill.<sup>13</sup> Here are some ways you can improve your waste habits.

[Start by assessing where you're at.](#) This [waste audit table](#) from Zero Waste Week helps you do exactly that. Why not challenge yourself to record everything you throw away in a week and identify where you could improve?

## Reducing

[Shop at zero waste shops.](#) **gr** Bring your own containers – jars, bottles, Tupperware, whatever you have – and fill them with pasta, beans, shower gel, washing up liquid etc.

- [Waste Nott](#) in Sherwood, Nottingham, opened as a community project to provide an alternative to packaged food retailers.
- [The Good Weigh](#) in West Bridgford makes it easy for you to shop plastic free.



[Buy fruit and veg without the plastic packaging.](#) Bring your own bag for fruit and veg or buy them loose.

[Buy food in larger quantities.](#) You could get a massive bag of rice and share it with your house. You could get a sharing bag of crisps instead of 6 individual bags – often these are better value too.

## Reusing

[Use reusable coffee cups.](#) **gr** At university catering outlets there's a Latte Levy where you can save 20p each time you use a reusable takeaway cup when you buy a drink. There's also an additional 20p charge for using a disposable cup. This means customers can **save up to 40p** on their drinks just by using their own cup.

If you're buying three drinks a week, you could **save around £50 a year!**



Shop second-hand and pass on the items you no longer want.

Most second-hand stuff is cheaper than new or even free, so it's good for your wallet as well. [Some places to try:](#)

- [Freecycle](#) and [Freecycle](#) - People advertise items they no longer want for free.
- Facebook marketplace - a digital platform integrated within Facebook, where users can buy, sell, and trade various items with others in their local community.
- [Gumtree](#) - the first site for free classifieds ads in the UK. Buy and sell items, cars, properties, and find or offer jobs in your area.
- [Vinted](#) - an online platform where individuals can buy, sell, and swap second-hand clothing and accessories.
- [Depop](#) - a mobile app that allows users to create their own online shops to buy and sell vintage, pre-owned, and unique items, with a focus on fashion and lifestyle products.
- Look out for local charity shops, some top charity shop spots are Beeston, and Hockley in the city centre.



## Recycling

Only 20% of plastic gets recycled.<sup>14</sup> You can help improve this stat by Recycling Right. **gr**

[Check what is and isn't recyclable for your kerbside collection or hall recycling.](#)

Packaging that has become greasy – like pizza boxes – is no longer recyclable. Also, a lot of things seem recyclable when they aren't. If you're unsure, check out these links:

- [On campus](#)
- [Nottingham City Council](#)
- [Broxtowe Council \(Beeston\)](#)
- [North West Leicestershire District Council \(Kegworth\)](#)

**Recyclables must be [clean and dry](#) before putting them in the recycling bins!**

### Find out where to recycle other things:

- Soft plastics are plastics that bounce back if you scrunch them. Some examples are yogurt pot lids, pasta bags and bread bags. These can be placed in campus bins but council collections don't tend to collect them. Supermarkets that recycle soft plastics include:
  - Sainsbury's, Castle Boulevard, Nottingham
  - Most Co-operative's including: Market Place, Kegworth; University Boulevard, Beeston
- Clothes, shoes, books, furniture, video games, cooking equipment, crockery and pretty much anything else\* can be recycled at the [British Heart Foundation donation banks](#) found on campus and in the community. **gr**
- Used batteries, including mobile phone batteries, rechargeable batteries, cordless tool batteries and vehicle batteries, are all accepted at [recycling centres](#) and [UoN battery bins](#).
- Disposable vapes are the [fastest growing waste stream](#) in the UK. They are hard to deal with because they are made of multiple components, contain chemicals and a battery that can all be hazardous in a normal waste bin. It would be best to not use these at all when refillable ones are available, but the safest and easiest way to dispose of them is in a vape disposal bin or return it to a retailer. Many electrical and electronic shops accept used disposable vapes.
- [Pens can be recycled on campus](#) in most libraries.



\*Duvets, pillows and sharp objects cannot be recycled.

# Get Involved



## Campaigning

For big change to happen, we need to put pressure on those in power.

### Engage in politics!

- **Vote!** Vote for, campaign for and support candidates who champion emissions reductions.
- Writing to your local MP on an issue shows them what their constituents care about. Imagine if we all did this, they'd be unable to ignore it. Campaigns by environmental groups often have template emails you can send to your MP. Find out who your MP is and how to contact them [here](#).



**Sign petitions.** Show politicians and companies that you care by signing petitions calling on them to act. [Current Greenpeace Petitions](#).

**Participate in non-violent political movements.** Within 2 months of Extinction Rebellions initial protests in London, the UK declared a climate emergency and adopted a target of net-zero emissions by 2050. Lots can be achieved by a large group of people making noise.

- [Extinction Rebellion Nottingham](#)
- [Greenpeace Nottingham](#)

**Talk about the emergency on planet Earth.** With your peers, with your family, with your social media followers.

## Student societies

If you have some spare time and want to spend it helping to look after the planet and meeting other people wanting to do the same, here are some suggestions.

- [UoN Sustainability Society](#) – 'We are a student led society enabling people who care about reducing their impact on the environment to get together and



meet people with similar views. We are also encouraging others to live more sustainably in our current climate emergency.'

- [UoN Conservation Society](#) – 'At ConSoc we're all about hands on conservation in and around Nottingham! We get involved with habitat management, litter picking and like to grow our own food in our garden. Join us to get out in nature and to give back to the community.'
- [UoN VegSoc](#) – 'Vegetarian and Vegan Society aims to create a community for students interested in reducing their animal product consumption. Our socials usually focus on socialising over delicious veggie food in various veggie-friendly restaurants around the city! We welcome everyone: from seasoned vegans to the plant-curious.'
- [UoN Green Economy Society](#) – 'Our goal is to teach and develop concepts of sustainable innovation and economics. We publish our quarterly 50-page Sustainable Business Review and run guest speaker events and workshops to develop sustainable business models and participate in international competitions.'

## Work experience



- [Foodprint](#) is a social enterprise started by students at the University of Nottingham, selling surplus food at greatly reduced prices through their low-cost social supermarket in Sneinton, Nottingham.
- [Charity shops](#) Volunteer a few hours to help reduce waste and raise money for a good cause
- [Conservation Wednesdays](#) Join hands-on sessions with the university grounds team and the Conservation Society on [Wednesday afternoons](#) during term time.

# Summary

## Calculate your footprint

Whilst this guide is full of useful ideas, to really understand the areas in your life where you personally can make changes that will have the biggest impact, calculate your environmental footprint.

This [calculator from WWF](#) is one of the best. **gr**

## Go big or go home

Let's be honest, recycling and using paper straws aren't going to save the planet. We're too far gone for that and we all need to think bigger. Ultimately, the biggest actions we can all take are:

1. Consume less stuff
2. Eat more plant-based
3. Reduce your flights
4. Ditch the car
5. Bank ethically
6. Vote and make your voice count

[Take the Jump](#) have six similar shifts to try to protect our Earth and live with joy – all based on science.

## What is UoN doing?

We're committed to being truly sustainable and are taking a stand against climate change. We've pledged to become carbon neutral by 2040 and to reduce our carbon emissions by more than half by 2030. By completing some of the actions we've listed here, you can truly help us in getting there.

 [UoNSustainability](#)

 [UoNSustainability](#)

 [UoNSustain](#)

 [sustainability@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@nottingham.ac.uk)

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/sustainability](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/sustainability)

# It's time to act.



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