

Ideas from John Robinson's Dining & Discussion Group on What can we do in Cutthorpe to help the environment.

TIPS TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION IN CUTTHORPE

- Conserve energy – remember to turn off lights, computers, and electric appliances when not in use.
- Buy and use ONLY energy efficient light bulbs (LEDs) and A (good), A+ (better), A++ (even better) or A+++ (the best!) rated appliances.
- Dry your washing on a washing line and not in a tumble dryer.
- Don't leave your TV on stand-by - switch it right off at the socket.
- If you have a PC, put it in "SLEEP" mode when not required. This is almost as good as switching it right off but means it will be in the same state when you return to it as when you left it.
- When you clean your teeth, turn off the tap once the brush is damp and only turn it on again for a quick rinse.
- Do NOT fill the kettle to the brim to make a single cup/mug of tea or coffee.
- In Winter, if you're cold, put on a sweater instead of turning up the heating. In Summer, if you're too hot, open a window but don't switch on an electric fan.
- Make your own compost instead of just filling your green bin for the contents to be taken away and sold back to you or other gardeners.
- Install water butts to provide water for your garden.
- Reduce, re-use, and re-cycle as much as possible. Don't buy plants in BLACK plastic plant pots - the black plastic cannot be re-cycled. And do take the caps/tops off bottles when you re-cycle them. This allows any residual content to evaporate while ensuring that the sealed bottle won't explode when it's incinerated.
- Buy locally grown fruit and vegetables and locally made products wherever possible.
- Don't buy bottled water - the stuff that comes out of the kitchen tap is probably much purer!
- Use old towels instead of paper towels to wipe up any spills. Similarly, use "proper" handkerchiefs instead of paper ones. Both can be washed and re-used.
- Stop smoking or at least don't throw your butts on the ground. Cigarette butts are not biodegradable and contain extremely toxic soluble chemicals. One butt thrown on the ground can remain for up to 25 years, leaking chemicals like arsenic, ammonia, acetone, benzene, cadmium, formaldehyde, lead, and toluene into the environment.
- Don't drop litter! You wouldn't believe the number of cigarette packages, drink cans and bottles that are collected on the Village litter pick.
- Only buy products with minimal packaging. Take your own containers to the shops and ask for them to be used in place of the shop-provided packaging.

- Check with neighbours and reduce total driving by offering lifts if you have to use your car, set up car-pooling for regular journeys, use public transport where possible and convenient, cycle and/or walk for short journeys.
- Make fewer trips by combining errands.
- Keep your car well-tuned and maintained. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on routine maintenance, such as changing the oil and filters, and checking tyre pressure and wheel alignment.
- Avoid excessively idling your car engine - switch off if the delay is extended.
- If you can, wash your car on the lawn and not on gravel, paving or the road. That way you water your lawn while you clean your car.
- Take the roof rack off your car when you don't need it. Reducing the air resistance will give you extra miles per gallon.
- Don't carry unnecessary stuff in the boot that you don't need - any extra weight reduces the miles you go per gallon.
- Use electric or hand-powered lawn care tools instead of petrol-powered tools wherever possible.
- Be careful not to spill petrol or diesel fuel when filling up your car or petrol-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Run dishwashers and washing machines only when full.
- Choose environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- Use water-based or solvent free paints whenever possible and buy products labelled "low VOC". (VOC = volatile organic compounds)
- Tightly seal containers of household cleaning products, DIY chemicals and solvents and garden chemicals to prevent evaporation of volatile organic compounds.
- Use email rather than snail mail - it saves paper and delivery miles.
- Propose and participate in local energy conservation programmes.
- Lobby for emission reductions from power stations and more stringent national vehicle emission standards.
- Return unwanted mail to sender
- Batch cook and freeze your favourite dishes.
- Save washing up water/shower water for the garden
- Use Covermate Stretch-to-fit Food Covers which are re-usable and washable instead of Clingfilm. (From Lakeland)