Universities Partnership

Working together for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Action guide for students



CLIMATE READY → LEICESTER

Leicester City Council

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Climate Ready Leicester + Universities Partnership

Leicester City Council was one of the first councils to declare a climate emergency in 2019. Leicester City Council has an ambition to become a Climate Ready city by which means reducing our carbon emissions as close as possible to zero.

The **Universities Partnership** – a collaboration between De Montfort University, Loughborough University, and University of Leicester – supports this aim through collective climate action and the development of this guide.

This student action guide is an adaptation from the **original residents action guide**, designed with students in different living situations in mind.



Your carbon footprint

- Knowledge of the carbon impacts of everyday activities is important.
- In 2013 The Carbon Literacy Trust was formed to tackle a gap in carbon knowledge by providing Carbon Literacy training to all types of people.
- If you are interested to know more about **Carbon Literacy training** have a look at their website.
- If you want to attend a **Carbon Literacy training session** have a look on your university's sustainability page.
- If you want to calculate your own carbon footprint, you can use the free **online carbon footprint calculator** from WWF!

! **Where you see , there is a link on the Universities Partnership resource page for more information!**



What is net zero?

Net zero

Reducing the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases we emit each year from our homes, travel, etc until it is no more than the amount we remove from the atmosphere.

Climate change affects us all. Our actions where we live have an



impact at home and across the globe. We need to work collectively to achieve a Net Zero society.

From how your landlord heats your home, to how you travel, this student guide provides actions that you, your landlord and your fellow tenants can take to reduce your carbon footprint.

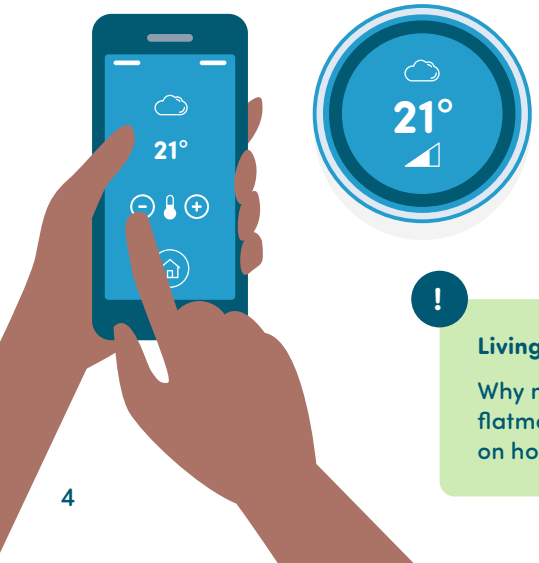
Many of the actions are simple to do and will save you money, as well as being good for the planet!

Heating your home

Did you know?

Home energy use accounts for the largest share of Leicester's total carbon emissions at around 32%.

We need to act by reducing demand for heating and move away from using fossil fuels, such as gas, to heat our homes.



Get Climate Ready:

Student actions

- Ensure the heating is turned off when you leave the property to reduce energy waste.
- Keep cool without using energy hungry fans or air conditioning. In hot weather close curtains and blinds to keep out the sun, and ventilate when it's cooler outdoors in the evening, overnight or early morning.

Home owner actions

- Add insulation. Helping keep the warmth in and reduce your energy bills.
- For example, it costs around £1200 for cavity wall insulation in an average home with a pay back of about 4 years.
- Use timers and thermostats on your central heating system and install thermostatic radiator valves to save up to 20% on your heating bill by only heating the rooms in use.
- See if your property is eligible for **free home energy saving improvements.**

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Living in student or shared accommodation?

Why not get together with your friends/ flatmates to open a dialogue with your landlord on how your home is heated and powered?

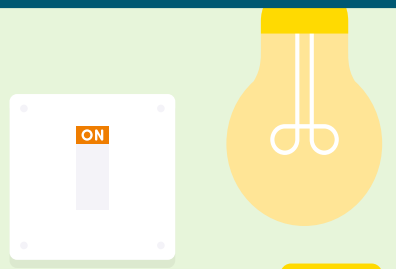
Powering your home

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Try this!

Unplug 3 devices in your home that stay on standby. Track your usage on a smart meter and see the difference in a week!

Lots of small changes = big impact.



Get Climate Ready:

Student actions

- If buying new appliances - check energy efficiency ratings and look for **A rating where possible.**
- Try using technology more consciously. AI chat bots have a significant carbon footprint. Do you really need to ask an AI that question? Or will google suffice?
- Switch off at the plug! Leaving appliances and devices on standby uses more energy.
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room.

Home owner actions

- Look on your energy provider's website and see if you can switch to one that is more sustainable!
- Talk to your energy company and install a free smart meter to show how much energy you're using in the home.
- Replace lights in your home. Energy efficient LED bulbs can last around 15 years and save up to £40 a year.

Consumer choices





Did you know?

Everything we buy as consumers has a carbon impact.

The fashion industry is responsible for about 10% of global carbon emissions and the consumer electronics industry accounts for nearly 4%. Reduce your carbon footprint by thinking before you buy and only consuming what you need.

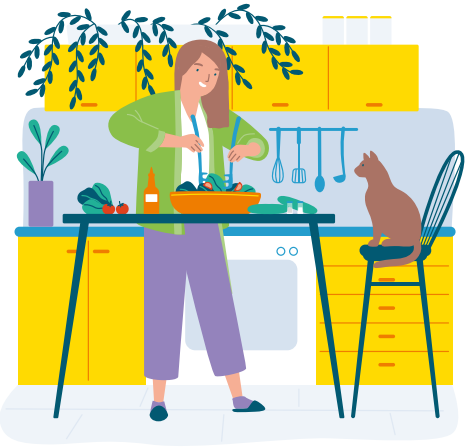
Get Climate Ready:

- Find out what your carbon footprint is using **WWF's carbon calculator.**
- Buy only what you need and consider the carbon cost of different products.
- Buy local or UK products where possible and consider transport distances of imported products.
- Keep your mobile phone and other devices for longer, rather than upgrading every year.
- Avoid fast fashion and choose clothes that last. It takes 3,781 litres of water and around 33kg of carbon to make a single pair of jeans!
- Reuse, repair or upcycle clothing, furniture, and other household items to give them a new lease of life.
- Shop around for good quality second-hand or repurposed items that will last.
- Look for the Carbon Trust's certified carbon footprint label or the manufacturer's own information on the packaging of things that you buy or on the company website.

Food choices

Get Climate Ready:

- Reduce your consumption of meat, dairy and eggs by introducing more plant-based ingredients into your diet.
- Freeze food to extend its life beyond best before and use-by dates.
- Shop smart. Use a shopping list and plan your meals in advance so you only buy what food you need for the week. This will avoid wasting food, carbon and cash.
- Buy fruit and vegetables when in season whenever possible. Check out this chart to see what fruit and vegetables are in season **throughout the year.**
- Cooking meals with your housemates can save both money and energy. Making you buy less overall ingredients and using less energy during cooking.
- Find recipes and more ways to adopt good food habits with **Love Food Hate Waste.**
- Grow food at home - join your university's **allotments or garden society.**



Did you know?

One of the most effective and healthy ways to reduce your carbon footprint is by reducing consumption of meat and dairy.

Meat and Dairy production accounts for nearly 15% of global carbon emissions.

Waste and recycling

Did you know?

Around 40% of household waste in Leicester is food waste.

Waste can be easily reduced by not buying the waste in the first place!

Get Climate Ready:



- Freshers! Say no freebies and unnecessary waste! Do not create the waste in the first place!
- Avoid buying heavily packaged and pre-packed fruit, vegetables and other food items and choose loose items instead.
- Shop at a store offering refills and swap plastic for zero waste.
- Check what materials are recycled by the council in your area and make sure you segregate those items so they all get recycled.
- Purchase clothing from charity shops and donate pre-loved items to avoid 350,000 tonnes of unwanted clothes that go to **landfill every year.**
- Repair rather than replace appliances if possible.
- Making a switch to being paperless can mean a significant reduction in paper waste!
- Carry a reusable cup and/or water bottle and save money by not buying drinks on campus.
- Donate and give away/sell items after you move out. **The British Heart Foundation** and local hospice charity **LOROS** offer a free collection service from your home for bulky furniture and other large items.

Water

Get Climate Ready:

Student actions

- Wait for a full load before running your washing machine or dishwasher, and use a low temperature setting.
- Don't overfill your kettle. This wastes water and carbon by heating up to 500 litres of surplus water every year in the average home.
- Rinse fruit and vegetables in a basin of cold water and use to water your plants.
- Turn off the tap to use 6 litres per minute less water when brushing your teeth or washing dishes.
- Use **Severn Trent Water's** free save water tips to save on water use throughout the home!
- Limit your shower time to four minutes to save around £165 per year.

Home owner actions

- Apply to Severn Trent for a free water meter and only pay for the water you use.
- Fit an aerator to your existing tap to save water without lessening the flow, saving around £30 a year.

Did you know?

Water and energy use are connected. **The average person in the UK uses around 150 litres of water every day.** Reduce your water use by reusing water and using water efficient appliances.

Water and Climate Change

We feel the impacts of Climate Change primarily through water. This comes in the form of worsening floods, rising sea levels, shrinking ice fields, wildfires and droughts.

Sustainable water management is central to building the resilience of societies and ecosystems and to reducing carbon emissions.

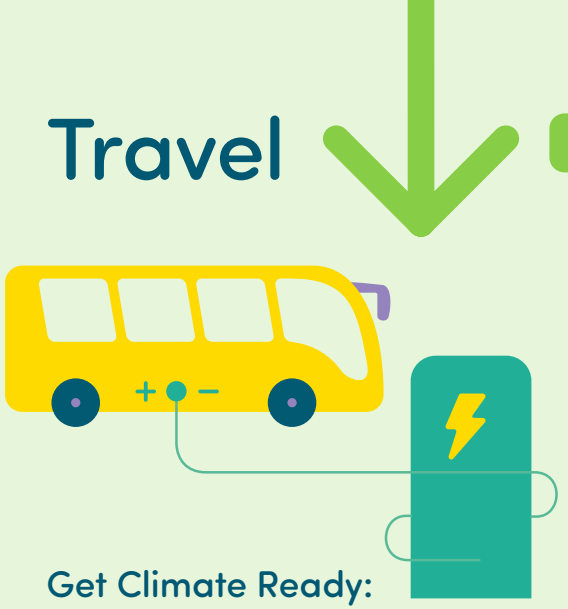
Everyone has a role to play – actions at the individual and household levels are vital.

More on this at a global level from **UN water - Water facts.**

What can you do?

You can play your part by following the actions within this guide to reduce your own water usage. Many universities also do more practical events such as big river clean-ups! Have a look on your university's sustainability page to find these types of events!

Travel



Did you know?

In Leicester, 70% of emissions from road transport are from petrol and diesel cars. Around 30% of these emissions come from short journeys.

Consider your reasons for travelling, why are you going there? Is it necessary? And is there a more sustainable option for travel available?

Get Climate Ready:

- Travel around Leicester by bus with all routes to be electric by March 2027.
- Take a **cycling course** to improve your skills. Check out the **Ultimate Guide to Cycling** for more advice and tips, or look at DMU's Daria project if you go to DMU.
- Get rewards for walking, running and cycling which you can redeem for high street vouchers or donate to charity. Download the free **BetterPoints app**.
- Avoid plane journeys, especially short haul fights. If air travel is unavoidable choose an airline with higher occupancy rates and more efficient aircraft.
- **Change to an electric vehicle and find out where you can charge them across the country.**
- Use the train + coaches for longer journeys or car share with friends and family.
- Leicester's Active Travel Fund programme is creating new, safe and permanent spaces around the city for walking and cycling. Find out more about these and public transport options on the **Choose How You Move website.**
- Many universities have shuttle buses which can be an affordable, sustainable and fun way to get around campus and the wider area!

Call to action!

What can you do today?

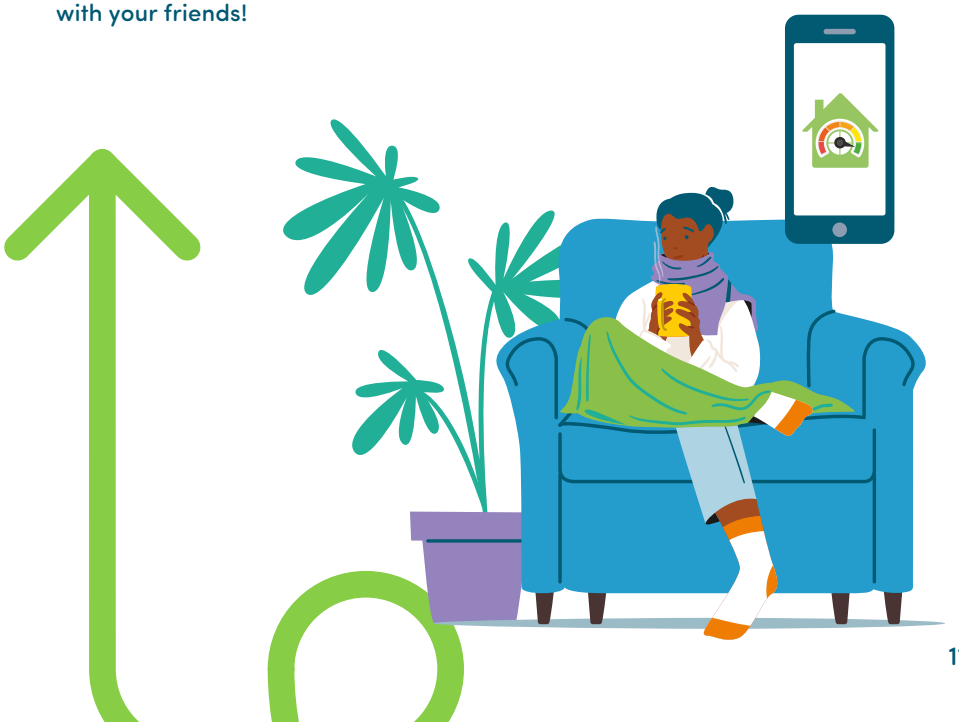
- Calculate your carbon footprint using the **WWF carbon footprint calculator.**
- Sign up for your institution's Carbon Literacy course.

What can you do tomorrow?

- Deepen your understanding of **carbon emissions** and help to educate your friends and family.
- Embrace your institution's sustainability related opportunities and join their sustainability initiatives, either by yourself or with your friends!

Long term goals?

- Make sustainable choices in day-to-day living.
- Encourage people in your local communities to act more sustainably, maybe by starting sustainability related groups or by spreading your sustainable knowledge.
- Use your voice and support campaigns to make climate friendly behaviours more affordable and achievable for everyone.



Universities Partnership

Working together for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland



CLIMATE READY→ LEICESTER

Sign up to be a Leicester Environmental Volunteer and help maintain Leicester's parks and green spaces.

Leicester City Council