

## **Cultivating Sustainable Habits**

Communities progress through the efforts of individuals. Many small actions add up to big results over time, or if enough people engage with them. The following tips, which cover nine key resources, don't just feed into a bigger picture. Each one can save you money and make you more resilient as well!

**ENERGY** – Always remember to turn devices off when you've finished with them for the day. Leaving them on standby wastes a surprising amount of electricity!

**FOOD** – Cut down on food waste by shopping with a list and planning ahead to use up leftovers. Buy food from local suppliers wherever possible.

**WATER** – Don't waste water! Keep your plumbing system in good repair. A dripping tap can waste 15 litres of water every day.

**HOUSING** – Most houses have double glazing and good insulation these days. Try turning your heating thermostat down by a degree or two, or cutting an hour off the heating time. If you only have single glazed windows, put up a set of thick winter curtains as well as your normal ones, leaving a few inches of space between them. This double layer of cloth helps keep the cold out.

**TRANSPORT** – Cars are very useful, but we rely on them too much. Make at least one journey a month by other means. Cycle, or get the bus, to the market. Walk to visit friends in the next town. It's important to support all the transport options available.

**WASTE** – Avoid buying disposable items. Get cleaning products in bulk and fill up re-useable containers. Buy refillable pens, start using rechargeable batteries for your gadgets.

**COMMUNICATION** – The 'gate poster' has come into its own during the pandemic. Local businesses were able to advertise food delivery services with the help of their community. Do you know where you could display information so that your neighbours will see it? It's a good way of communicating. If you're having a clear-out, maybe you could sell a few things rather than taking them to the tip?

**CLOTHES** – Take good care of your clothes. If you do, you can afford to invest in good quality items, which last much longer. Learn how to check seams, zips and labels to recognise quality clothes in charity shops.

**ENVIRONMENT** – Look after your local wildlife. A healthy environment is a direct benefit to you. Birds are important in controlling insect pests. Wetlands mitigate flooding. Walks in nature are known to be important for our mental health.