

SECTION I

LOOKING AFTER YOUR ENVIRONMENT

This section includes:

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Many of the things we do as part of our everyday lives including how we heat and light our homes, what we do with our rubbish, how we travel and what we buy have an impact on the environment. For example the fossil fuels we use to heat our homes and run cars add to global warming and the dumping of rubbish in land-fill sites wastes many resources that cannot be replaced, uses valuable land and causes pollution.

We can all do our bit now towards keeping the world in working order for ourselves and future generations. Below are some of the ways that you can help.

Save Energy, Save Money

- Remember to switch off lights and other electrical appliances when not in use.
- Invest in some energy efficient light bulbs, they not only use less energy but last longer and cost you less money to run.
- If buying new appliances such as fridges and washing machines, look out for their energy efficiency ratings (A is the most efficient rating).
- Turn your central heating down by just 1°C, this can reduce your energy bills by 10%.
- If your home is poorly insulated contact your Neighbourhood Housing office to see what help may be available.



Be Water Wise

- Put a water saving device such as a water hog or a plastic bottle filled with water, into your toilet cistern to reduce the amount of water used each flush.
- Turn the taps off when brushing teeth and if you have leaking taps ask your Neighbourhood Housing Office to repair them.
- Take a shower rather than a bath and use 2-3 times less water.
- Make sure you have full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher before switching them on or use the half load button on washing machines where appropriate.
- Collect rainwater in a water butt for watering the garden and washing the car.



Special offers on water butts are available. Call 01423 556852.

About saving water

- To find out how to save water and avoid pollution in your home and garden, call the Environment Agency 08708 506506.
- If you see a water leak in the street, report it free to Yorkshire Water: 0800 573553
- For a free 'water hog' please contact Yorkshire Water 0845 1242420.

Think Before You Travel

- Share a lift to work and to the shops and school.
- Sign up to Harrogate car share on www.harrogatecarshare.com – a free service to help you find a lift-sharing partner.
- Cycle or walk for shorter journeys if you are able, this will also help keep you fit
- Try using the bus, train or share car journeys to work or school with friends and relatives
- Use local shops and buy local food, support your local farmers' markets, held at Ripon and Harrogate. This reduces the distance food has to travel.
- Keep your car well maintained and drive sensibly to save fuel and improve road safety.



Conserve the Natural Environment

You can help the Harrogate District's wildlife at home and at work -

- Encourage wildlife into your garden, put up bird tables and bat boxes.
- Choose plants, which are native to this country or scatter a wild flower mix at the back of your garden.
- Don't use peat. Help save our peat bogs by buying alternatives to peat, now widely available from garden centres.
- Try organic gardening methods – replace chemicals with natural alternatives.
- Avoid the use of genetically modified (GM) plants and produce. Harrogate Borough Council supports a policy that no GM crops or produce should be grown or sold in the Harrogate District.



Watch your Waste

- **Reduce** the amount of packaging you buy and avoid buying disposable items.
- **Re-use** carrier bags when shopping, and refill bottles or containers .
- **Repair** products such as domestic appliances.
- **Recycle**; use the Council's recycling collection service or take your newspapers, cans, and glass bottles to mini recycling centres around the district.
- **Compost** your kitchen and garden waste at home. Garden waste can also be composted at the civic amenity sites at Harrogate and Ripon. Special offers on



home composters are available. Call 01423 556852.

- **Buy Recycled** products, for example recycled paper, recycled kitchen rolls.

What the Council is doing.

As part of the Council's strategy to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon dioxide emissions of all houses in the District, the Housing Division has been improving the energy performance of your homes as part of the Planned Maintenance programmes of work, in the following ways:

1. Installing or improving loft insulation.
2. Installing cavity wall insulation where this is possible.
3. Improving the insulation of external walls using other methods where possible and when costs allow.
4. Installing double glazed, draught-proofed windows.
5. Installing double glazed and insulated external doors.
6. Installing condensing gas boilers where possible, when installing new or replacement heating systems - this type of boiler is the most efficient gas boiler available and the Council only uses the best performing models, rated as "Band A".
7. Ensuring that boiler installations have the best controls, to make the system work in the most economic way.
8. Fitting factory-insulated hot water tanks, when they are used, (most boilers installed now are "Combi" boilers, which only heat water when you need it), to keep the stored water hot for longer.

In addition to this, the Council is looking towards the future and to new technologies that will further improve the environmental performance of your homes and reduce heating costs in council homes. These new technologies include renewable energy that is sourced from the general environment, such as heat and light from the sun, or wind power. Ground Source Heat Pumps have already been fitted to some council properties. These systems take heat from the ground, (which is warmed up by the sun), and uses a compressor to boost that heat so that it can be used to provide space and water heating for the house. It is expected that the heating costs for these homes will be about one third of what they used to be.

If you want further advice on general environmental issues or energy efficiency please contact the Environmental Strategy Team on 01423 556802 or at energy@harrogate.gov.uk