



NEW YEAR, NEW YOU, NEW GREENER FOOTPRINT

22 WAYS TO SHOW YOU CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURE ACROSS HEREFORDSHIRE IN 2022

AS HEREFORDSHIRE WORKS TOWARDS BECOMING **CARBON ZERO BY 2030**, THE GREENER FOOTPRINTS CAMPAIGN HAS PUT TOGETHER A RANGE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY-LED PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS THAT REQUIRE NEXT TO ZERO EFFORT – SOME OF WHICH ARE ALREADY WELL PRACTICED AND OTHERS WHICH ARE VERY LITTLE KNOWN.

All have been put forward to help everyone living in the county to take simple green footsteps to lower their personal carbon footprints, protect nature and wildlife, whilst at the same time helping to improve health, save money, establish new networks and friends, as well as open up new interests and career and job opportunities.

According to research undertaken by Environmental charity, Hubbub, last year one in six people resolved to reduce their impact on the environment, ranking the environment higher than resolutions about romantic relationships, relationships with friends and hobbies. So, let's ensure we go even further this year – get started now with our list of 22 ways to become greener in 2022.



MAKE YOUR HOUSE WARMER

1. Not everyone can afford new cavity wall insulation but there are cost effective ways to keep draughts at bay around trouble spots where heat and cool can escape. Use foam strips and door brushes in doorways, use rubber seals around windows and beading in between stripped floorboards, invest in a chimney draught excluder and consider hanging thermal lining curtains. See some advice from the [Centre for Sustainable Energy](#) and the [Energy Saving Trust](#) when it comes to draught proofing

2. Insulation is a great way to reduce heat loss and lower your heating bills. A good place to start is topping up your loft insulation to 30cm as 25% of building heat is lost through the roof if uninsulated. For more ways to insulate your home see these tips from [the Energy Saving Trust](#).

There's still time for residents to get funding to upgrade the energy efficiency of their properties with home improvements. Funding is first-come, first-served and all work must be completed by March 2022. More information is available [here](#).

3. Double or triple glazing can be a major investment but there are also magnetised and film versions available, where a second pane can be stuck over the top superficially. They are designed to fit different size and types of window, and come at about one-fifth of the cost.

4. Most of us might wonder what a radiator reflector is – but it could make your house warmer and save you money every year. Much of radiator heat is lost through the mounting wall. Introducing a reflector will result in 95% of it bouncing back. In a house with five radiators, reflectors could save £20 a year from energy bills.

BE LESS WASTEFUL

5. Cut down on food waste by ensuring food does not go off unnecessarily – give your food a long shelf life by storing it at the appropriate fridge temperature and fully utilising your freezer. Also be creative with leftovers. You can find some great advice on [The Great Collaboration](#) and [Love Food Hate Waste](#) websites on how to minimise your food waste.

6. Regift those unwanted Xmas presents rather than binning them. [Research from Finder](#) estimates that around 21 million of us receive at least one unwanted gift each year. Use platforms like Vinted to give your unwanted gifts a new home. Look out for brands that operate schemes where they will buy back your unwanted clothes, trainers and games or offer you a voucher. If you can't regift think how an unwanted gift can be reused such as altering an item of clothing to suit.

7. Keep your smartphone for longer – their manufacture is a major carbon emitter. Switching to SIM only deals and buying refurbished phones from the likes of giffgaff, Music Magpie and Backmarket, which all come with product guarantees, will also save you lots of money. The same goes for laptops, printers and monitors all of which have secondary markets.



REVIEW YOUR GAMING, IT AND SMART TECHNOLOGY HABITS

8. The gaming industry has not been known for its sustainability, but it's cleaning up its act so gamers can now buy carbon-neutral peripherals and return used products for recycling by the producer. For more information, read the article [Gaming gear to help minimize your carbon footprint in the New Year | TechRadar](#)

9. [The Carbon Literacy Project](#) estimates that sending an email with attachments can emit 50g CO₂e. Taking into account the number of emails an average office worker receives, this amounts to up to 0.6 tons in a year. So cut down your email footprint by reducing the size of attachments, avoiding sending unnecessary emails and getting rid of unwanted email correspondence by unsubscribing from those mailing lists which you no longer wish to be on. Not only will you enhance your environmental impact but your inbox will be much more organised.

10. Stream movies through your smart TV, not your game console. Smart TVs and their plugins use just a few watts to stream movies. By using your game console, energy use is about 10 times higher, because they aren't optimised to play films.

11. Use a laptop whenever possible, rather than a desktop computer. Laptops take less energy to charge and run.



OPT FOR A LOW CARBON DIET

12. The new year is always a time when people plan to eat more healthily so why not make 2022 the year when you took the decision to go on a low carbon diet. Not only will you be doing your bit for the planet but you can also improve your health at the same time. According to the British Nutrition Foundation plant-based diets have been linked to a reduced risk of heart disease, strokes and type 2 diabetes. They can also lower blood pressure and cholesterol. A plant-based diet involves upping protein sources from plants, meaning more fruit, vegetables, tofu, tempeh, and oat milk with your tea, coffee or cereal.

Pawprint estimates that a fully plant-based diet could save a former meat-eater around 2.6 tonnes CO₂e per year, the same as driving 4,700 miles in the average car. For those that enjoy their meat, consider a Meat free Monday or lower carbon meats such as chicken. Going for organic and locally sourced products can also save carbon emissions by reducing the pesticides used and food miles travelled. Read this blog by Pawprint for more inspiration [The low carbon footprint diet: a new year's resolution that's good for you and the planet. \(pawprint.eco\)](https://pawprint.eco/blog/the-low-carbon-footprint-diet-a-new-year-s-resolution-thats-good-for-you-and-the-planet)

CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM

13. Make this the year that you're more conscious than ever before about what you're buying. When you're tempted to buy something, ask yourself: "do I really need this?". Could you buy it second hand or could you borrow from a member of your family or a friend? Don't always get drawn into buying more than you need through Buy One Get One Free or similar promotions.



SAVE WATER, SAVE ASSOCIATED ELECTRICITY DEMANDS

14. When we use water we don't realise that water companies need to treat and pump water into homes and buildings. You can reduce water consumption and therefore the electricity associated with getting it into your home by requesting a water meter, making a conscious effort to take short showers instead of baths, using cold water where possible and making sure washing machines and dishwashers are loaded up to their maximum. [Friends of the Earth](https://www.foe.co.uk/en/what-we-do/water-saving-tips/) have shared a range of water saving tips to reduce emissions.

BE SINGLE AND MICRO PLASTIC MINDED

15. Minimise your consumption of single use plastic which does so much harm to the environment. There are many things you can do such as, use a refillable water bottle and coffee cup, drink tap water instead of bottled, buy unpackaged fruit and veg, reuse your grocery bags or even better use reusable or tote shopping bags.

16. Shop at retailers that offer refill options – many retail manufacturers now provide refillable products such as detergents or cleaning products and there are shops dedicated to selling refillable foodstuffs.

17. Look for textile options that are not nylon or polyester as their micro fibres are essentially micro plastic. It is estimated that every time the washing machine is put on, an average of nine million microplastics are released in the form of microfibres, into the water system. As these can't be filtered out by most wastewater treatment plants, more than a third of the microplastics that end up in the ocean comes from our washing machines which can be fatal to marine life. Microplastics can also make their way into our drinking water and the food we eat. Instead consider natural fabrics such as cotton, linen or bamboo and look at retrofitting a microfibre filter, such as Planet Care, to your washing machine.

DRESS SUSTAINABLY

18. Don't shop until you drop – think before you buy: the average person owns 115 items of clothing, and nearly a third of these clothes haven't been worn in the past year. Also think about shopping second hand – there are lots of new popular platforms such as Vinted and Depop to support recycling of clothing. Some of the supermarkets also sell preloved items such as Asda that launched vintage clothing in some of its stores in 2021.

TRAVEL SUSTAINABLY

19. In the UK we make 15.3m car journeys to work every year involving just the driver, so sharing can save cars on the road and cost of travel. If you drive a car to work regularly, it can reduce your carbon footprint by up to 10% every year. Use the Liftshare app recommended by Herefordshire Council. As the average car spends 80% of its time parked up at home, also consider joining a car club. Most car clubs use electric, hybrid or low emission models and evidence shows that each car club vehicle used removes up to 14 private cars from the roads.

20. Cycle and walk more. It's much more cost-effective and healthier. Encourage your employers to take up the [Government's Cycle to Work scheme](#), consider purchasing an electric bike for longer distances. You may want to use a less costly, refurbished bike or hire single and tandem bikes. Herefordshire is a cycling friendly county so [check out routes](#) and [cycling maps within Herefordshire](#). For walks and trails across the county please access further information [here](#).



SUPPORTING NATURE-RICH COMMUNITIES

21. There are a wide range of ways that you can contribute to a rich natural environment. Keep your garden or greenspace chemical free by not using herbicides and pesticides as they will kill butterflies, moths and other pollinating insects. Rewild your garden and introduce features that benefit wildlife such as: plant pollinator-friendly plants to help butterflies, moths and other pollinators; ponds; bird boxes; and bug hotels. By creating your little spot of nature in your garden, this will help local wildlife to thrive. Also consider joining a local tree-planting scheme and help create healthier habitats for wildlife by improving soil, air and water quality as well as pulling carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. For more tips on supporting nature in your community visit the websites of [Rewilding Britain](#) and [Herefordshire Wildlife](#).

DO YOUR BIT IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

22. There are many ways in which you can do your bit in the local community. Get involved in local climate and nature action groups or meetups in your area. Vote for local parliamentary candidates that are putting the climate and nature at the heart of their manifestos. Volunteer for community projects that are being put in place to address climate change and safeguard the natural environment or enrol for a course at [Herefordshire and Ludlow College](#) – from [forestry](#) to [environmental technology](#). And don't forget to get behind the activities and initiatives of the Greener Footprints Herefordshire campaign and encourage others to do so.

For more information on getting involved in local climate and nature action activities get in touch with the likes of [Herefordshire Green Network](#) and [Herefordshire Wildlife](#).

The information for the Greener New Year's Resolutions has been drawn from a number of sources including: [The Great Collaboration](#), [TechRadar](#), [Pawprint](#), [Footprint](#), [New York Times](#), the [BBC](#), [Metro](#), Friends of the Earth, [Yorkshire Evening Post](#), [Rewilding Britain](#) and [Butterfly Conservation](#).

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