

GREEN LIVING GUIDE

for Livers' Out



**Every small step leads
to big change**



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Introduction

Everything we do has an effect: upon people nearby; upon people the other side of the world; upon us. We are now, more than ever, aware of our effect on others in the world, whether through human-induced climate change, or through poverty caused by unfair working conditions. This awareness leaves us with an opportunity to make positive choices: for example, by limiting our carbon emissions, or buying products produced following ethical standards. The Green Living Guide offers ideas for students living out of college to lead a more environmentally sustainable life...and maybe save some money too!

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- Washing your clothes at 60°C is expensive. Washing clothes at 30°C means you use around 40% less electricity.
- Tumble dryers use a lot of energy; use a clothes horse instead, or hang your clothes outside!
- Only use the washing machine when you have a full load because the economy or half load setting on some machines can use more than half the energy of a full load.
- Only boil the amount of water necessary when using the kettle.
- When cooking, choose the right size pan, fill it with only as much water as is needed and keep the lid on.
- Cut your food into smaller pieces so it will cook quicker.
- By opening the oven door to take a peek at your food, you lose energy that could've been used to cook the meal.
- Cooking with your housemates can save energy as well as money and effort!
- If getting new appliances, insist on getting ones that are A-rated on their energy efficiency.

Water:

- Wash fruit and veg in a bowl rather than under a running tap.
- Use a washing up bowl rather than the sink as it holds less water.

Cleaning:

- Use homemade cleaning products as they don't use harsh chemicals; or, purchase environmentally friendly products (such as [Ecover](#) or [Bio D](#)).
- Use concentrated products as water is the main ingredient in many commercial cleaners and transporting it wastes energy.
- Choose products packaged in recyclable materials.

Bathroom**Water:**

- Never leave the tap running when brushing your teeth.
- Having a short shower rather than a bath will save water as well as the energy used in heating the water, so is doubly good for the environment!

- Install a water saver in your toilets to save water when you flush the toilet (e.g. www.hippo-the-watersaver.co.uk)
- Report all dripping/leaking taps to your landlord to be fixed, as they can waste a lot of water over time.

Cosmetics/Toiletries:

- Some creams and perfumes are tested on animals or contain harsh chemicals. To find out what's contained in the products you buy go to www.cosmeticdatabase.com; you can just enter the name of the product and it tells you what the cosmetic contains and gives it a mark out of 10 on how 'hazardous' it is.
- For organic products try www.greenpeople.co.uk.
- Personal items can cause blockages in pipes if they're flushed down the toilet, so make sure you dispose of these items sensibly; and why not try www.spiritofnature.co.uk for a source of more environmentally friendly products.

Bedroom

- Put an extra blanket on your bed or wear pyjamas so you can turn your heating down more at night.
- Save all your used/scrap paper for rough printing and writing notes on, and then recycle it all when finished with.
- Print on both sides of the paper.
- Turn off your computer/laptop/monitor when not in use, even if it's only for a couple of minutes; leaving them on standby still uses lots of energy.
- Only charge your phone and laptop when needed and only until their batteries are full again; most chargers can fully recharge their appliance in a few hours, so don't leave it on all night!
- Refill your ink cartridges rather than buying new ones, or recycle used ones; contact your college reception for the location of the collection boxes.
- Get a plant to remove some carbon dioxide!

Recycling

- The following is a list of what can be recycled and where to put it for Durham and Stockton:

Durham

Green Box: all steel and aluminium tins and cans; all aerosols (without their tops); all glass bottles and jars of any colours

Green Bag: all plastic bottles, carrier bags, yoghurt and butter containers; all types of cardboard and paper (including juice cartons, wrapping paper, junk mail and envelopes)

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/Pages/Service.aspx?ServiceId=7383>

Stockton

Blue Bag: all paper (including envelopes, magazines and junk mail)

Blue Box: all tins and cans; all clear, brown and green glass: all batteries (within their own bag)

White Sack: plastic bottles, carrier bags, yoghurt and butter containers, plastic wrapping; all cardboard (except pizza boxes)

<http://www.recycleforstockton.co.uk/kerbsidecollection/>

General

- If you are lucky enough to have a garden, make compost from all your peelings etc. from when you cook! Organic waste in landfill sites produces environmental pollutants, such as methane, which contribute to climate change. Find out more at www.recyclenow.com/compost.
- Use rechargeable batteries instead of buying new ones all the time.
- Donate all your unwanted books, crockery, cutlery, clothes, electricals and furniture to the [Green Move Out](#) scheme at the end of each term; these items will then be resold to students in the next academic year, with all money being donated to charity.
- When going out, instead of buying bottled water, bring your own from home; tap water in Durham is just as good as bottled water and is much cheaper!
- If your contract allows for you to change your energy supplier, why not go with a greener company that use renewable power? 2 good examples are www.good-energy.co.uk and www.ecotricity.com.
- For many more energy (and money!) saving tips, visit the [Energy Trust website](#).

Shopping

Ethical Shopping

Buying things is necessary, but not always good for the planet. That's why ethical shopping is important. It helps minimise the effect that consumerism has on our environment, and can help the producer too.

The first thing to ask yourself as an ethical consumer is "do I really want it?" The second question to ask yourself is "do I really need it?" If the answer isn't "yes" to both questions, it's simple...don't buy it! Not only will you be cutting down on your level of consumption (hence helping the planet), you'll have a bit more cash in your pocket too!

Food Shopping

Where possible, buy local food. Buying food produced in the UK is good for the environment because it travels less, saving on fuel and lowering carbon emissions. It also gives a boost to the economy by supporting British farmers. In Durham and Stockton there are some great places to buy local food, including:

- Durham
 - Durham Indoor Market for vegetables, meat and fish (Market Square)
 - Bakeries across the city
- Stockton
 - The Market (High Street; Wed, Fri and Sat, 10am-4pm)
 - Bakeries across the town

You could also try out a **box scheme**, where local produce is delivered to your door; www.farmaround.co.uk, www.theorganicfarm.co.uk and www.newclosefarmshop.co.uk are 3 such schemes, but there are plenty more; just have a quick search online.

There are also plenty of places where you can buy **Fairtrade products**, such as St. John's Just World shop, Oxfam.

If you do buy from a large supermarket, you could cut your carbon footprint by having it **delivered to your door** as the delivery van will go to many places in one trip, instead of your single trip to the shop and back. All the big companies now do this easily **online**, and you can sometimes ask for it to be delivered with no plastic carrier bags, which is even better!

Clothes Shopping

The most ethical way to shop for clothes is second-hand shopping!

Durham is great for charity shopping. With so many students living here, lots of the clothes donated are from young people, and you'd be surprised with what some students get rid of!

Most of Durham's charity shops are located on **North Road**, but there are also a few dotted around the city (e.g. Cancer Research UK on Silver Street) so go and explore. In Stockton, the majority of charity shops can be found on the **High Street**.

Many shops now also do a large range of **Fairtrade clothes** (usually made from Fairtrade cotton) so why not spend a few moments checking out which labels are Fairtrade before you go out shopping (e.g. [Gossypium](#) and [People Tree](#)); the [University Retail Office](#) also has a range of Fairtrade clothes for all your stash needs!

Stationery and Books

Recycled paper is available from WHSmith and online, whilst The Oxfam Bookshop sells **pens and pencils** made from recycled materials and wood from well managed forests.

When buying books, opt for buying second hand where possible. If you can't buy them from students in older years who don't need them anymore (www.purplebooks.co.uk), the Oxfam Bookshop has an academic range. If buying books for your own leisure, most charity shops have a good range, and don't forget to take them back to a charity shop afterwards to repeat the reuse cycle!

General Tips

Don't use plastic carrier bags; use reusable bags! Reusable bags last ages and are now very easy to get hold of (most supermarkets sell them for only a few pennies!); and if you're really keen, you could get an organic or Fairtrade cotton bag to help the environment even further. **Make sure you've always got a reusable bag on you** in case you ever need to buy something whilst out and about. If you do have any plastic carrier bags, make sure you reuse them as much as possible and then recycle them afterwards in your Green Bag (Durham) or White Sack (Stockton) from the Council.

Buy products with minimal packaging. Where this can't be avoided, try and buy products where the packaging can be easily recycled. ([Click here](#) for more about recycling.)

Buy Fairtrade products; not only are the workers and producers guaranteed a minimum fair price for their work, working conditions are monitored to ensure the workers are treated fairly, the products are checked to be of the highest quality, and everything is **produced in a more sustainable way**. This all ensures you know that you are helping communities and protecting the environment every time you purchase Fairtrade.

Use the internet; there are plenty of websites now that specialise in sustainable products, products made from recycled materials and Fairtrade products. See the Links page for a starting point. There are also great places to get second-hand items, often for free! Check out groups.freecycle.org/durham [freecycle](http://groups.freecycle.org/stockton), groups.freecycle.org/stockton or the Free/Offered tab on DUO.

Travel

Did you know that travel accounts for roughly 24% of the average Briton's CO₂ emissions? So, with many more environmentally friendly options out there, why not use your time at Durham to start travelling green!

Feet: it seems obvious, but your feet were made for walking! The majority of all journey's you'll ever want to make in Durham can be done by foot, and it's great exercise too!

Cycling: for an average journey of four miles in an urban area, cycling is the fastest mode of transport, is great exercise and a way of enjoying the local scenery. There are also many bike racks across Durham and Stockton, so it is very easy to cycle! www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/travel/cycling is a great place to get information about cycling in Durham and Stockton, whilst www.sustrans.org.uk provides information about the National Cycle Network.

Bus: travelling by bus is useful if you have a lot to carry; www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/travel/public is a brilliant place to look for bus timetables (check out the Travel Planner on the right-hand side). If you're travelling between Durham and Stockton, there's the **free X1 bus service** (www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/travel/intercampusbus)

Train: by booking in advance and using a 16-25 Railcard you will make your journey at least a third cheaper than usual! Click on www.nationalrail.co.uk for more details.

Car: If you do have to travel by car, sign up to a **car sharing scheme** (the University has it's own one at www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/travel/carshare) and plan your journey so that you don't drive further than is needed. Learning to **drive more efficiently** is also a great benefit for the environment; you can find tips at www.whatyoucando.co.uk/travel_drive. You could also check out www.commonwheels.co.uk for more ideas. Also remember that you're only allowed a **maximum of 2 cars** per household in Durham City, so only bring one if you really need it!

Bike Shops for bikes, accessories an repairs

Many of the following shops offer discounts to students so make sure you check if you want to save some cash!

Durham:

- Cycle Force 2000 (Providence Row) - 0191 384 0319
- [MTS Cycle Sport](#) (Marshall Terrace) - 0191 384 8174

Stockton:

- [Skinnergate Cycles](#) (Brunswick Street) - 01642 606 520
- F.R.A.D.E. (Unit 1, Phoenix Workshops, Britannia Road) - 01642 608 791
- Halfords (Bridge Road) - 01892 625 430

At Queen's Campus, Stockton, there are also bikes available for hire. For more information, go to www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/travel/cycling/qbug

How to Get Involved

Below is a list of some of the ways that you can get involved in living a greener life. They range from things you can do in college, university, the local community and national/international groups covering a wide range of topics, from conserving the environment and sourcing local food, to improving education and travelling habits. It is by no means an exhaustive list but is a great way to get started and find a way to help the planet.

[Greenspace Student Environment Group](#)

A student-led group working to reduce the University's environmental impact, promote awareness of environmental issues, support College Environment Officers and encourage students to live in a more sustainable way for the rest of their lives. greenspace.students@durham.ac.uk

[College JCR Environment Groups/Committees](#)

These groups work to reduce their own colleges' environmental impact and promote awareness to their staff and students. Contact your [College JCR Environment Officer](#) to find out more.

[Durham University Allotment Society](#)

A group who tend a patch of land near Trevelyan; some colleges also have their own allotments, so contact your College JCR Environment Officer to find out how to help, or maybe create a new one!

[Conservation Society](#)

A society who carry out conservation tasks to improve the local countryside, including tree planting, hedge laying, shrub clearance, habitat management and footpath repairing.

[Durham Bicycle Users Group \(DBUG\)](#)

Aims to make it easier for anyone who uses a bicycle in Durham, whether it's everyday for commuting, or just for leisure time.

[People and Planet](#)

The University's chapter of the global organization that focuses on campaigns and awareness raising relating to alleviating poverty, defending human rights and protecting the environment.

[Student Community Action \(SCA\)](#)

A community of student volunteers active in a variety of areas, including the environment in projects such as [Green Schools](#) and [Litter Picks](#).

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[Development Abroad](#)

A society that aims to promote sustainable development in the less developed world through awareness campaigns, workshops, talks and other activities.

[Climate Durham](#)

Climate Durham (of which Durham University is a partner of) is a coalition of residents, businesses and organisations seeking to inspire every individual, household, business and organisation in Durham to adapt to a low carbon lifestyle.

[Transition Durham](#)

Transition Durham is a group that links to and supports groups within Durham that focus on food and energy.

[Slow Food UK](#)

A community which focusses on food and its impact upon the environment.

[Durham Organic Gardeners Association \(DOGA\)](#)

DOGA aims to promote organic gardening through monthly events, including talks and visits to gardens.

[GoCarShare](#)

A place where you can organise or participate in car-sharing across the country with other Durham University students. Includes a Facebook tool so you can see who you might want to share with.

[One Hundred Months](#)

A website showing a deadline for climate change as well as how you can make a difference.

Links

The following links are a great way to get involved in living a greener life, but they are by no means the only places for ideas so feel free to use these as a starting point. Listed below are links mentioned throughout the guide, but also a lot of others that we just couldn't fit in!

How to get involved

www.dsu.org.uk/allotment
www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/dbug
www.dsu.org.uk/peopleandplanet
www.dur.ac.uk/community.action
www.dsu.org.uk/developmentabroad
www.climatedurham.org
www.transitionnetwork.org/initiatives/durham
www.slowfood.org.uk
www.doga.org.uk
www.onehundredmonths.org
www.wearewhatwedo.org
www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/climate-change

At home

www.lightbulbs-direct.com
www.cosmeticdatabase.com
www.greenpeople.co.uk
www.spiritofnature.co.uk
www.recyclenow.com/compost
www.good-energy.co.uk
www.ecotricity.com
www.recycleforstockton.co.uk
www.durham.gov.uk
www.mpsonline.org.uk

Shopping

www.fairtrade.org.uk
www.traidcraft.co.uk
www.purplebooks.co.uk
www.gossypium.co.uk
www.naturalcollection.com
www.hug.co.uk
www.peopletree.co.uk
www.farmaround.co.uk
www.theorganicfarm.co.uk
www.newclosefarmshop.co.uk
groups.freecycle.org/durham_freecycle

Travel

www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace/travel
www.sustrans.org.uk
www.nationalrail.co.uk
www.whatyoucando.co.uk/travel_drive
www.commonwheels.co.uk
www.gocarshare.com

Durham University

www.dur.ac.uk/greenspace
Student Environment Coordinator:
greenspace.students@durham.ac.uk
DSU Environment and Ethics Officer:
dsu.environment@durham.ac.uk