

# 100 things you can do about climate change



Steve Shelley

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*Practical tips to protect your family, your business  
and your community from climate change*

# 100 things you can do about climate change

Practical tips to protect your family, your business and your  
community.

An e-book

by Steve Shelley

Taken from Steve's book

THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT  
Everything you need to know about climate change

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# INTRODUCTION

Climate change is upon us. Its effects in terms of extreme weather patterns, and the accompanying social and economic upheaval, have become only too evident. But even though it's being called an emergency, tangible action is surprising by its absence.

After publishing *THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT*, and getting involved in some local community climate action groups, I've been asked on numerous occasions what, in practical terms, people can do. After all, the big picture can seem overwhelming. Equally, it can seem that small steps taken by individuals may have little overall impact.

Actually, the truth is the opposite: it's only by the collective effect of many individual actions that we can hope to achieve anything. If we fail to act, we seal our doom. At least by choosing to do something, we stand a chance.

But it's complicated. You will see from the list that follows that we really need to unwind our entire consumer lifestyle. That's what has caused the problem. There is no single thing that will make a difference, rather it must be a collective choice to change the way we live. Don't try to be a hundred percent better, rather be one percent better at a hundred things.

We need to reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases. We need to halt the destruction of the natural environment, and restore it where we can. And we need to vastly reduce the volume of waste we produce. But it can be done. This little book tells you how.

In summary: BUY LESS, BURN LESS, WASTE LESS.

Steve Shelley

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# Little things with a big impact

1. Reduce your energy consumption: lighting, heating, cooking, travelling.
2. Switch from gas and oil to electric~~as~~ and when you can.
3. Reduce long distance travel.
4. Think twice before burning anything: gas, petrol, wood, waste, everything.
5. Never let your engine idle.
6. Reduce your frequency of buying things, especially clothes, gadgets and appliances.
7. Buy local whenever possible.
8. Avoid pre-packaged items whenever possible.
9. Be aware of the impact of your choices.
10. Boycott irresponsible products and organisations and consider carefully where you put your investments.

## In the home

11. Natural gas burns to water vapour and carbon dioxide, both dangerous greenhouse gases. In the long run, cleaner renewable energy will reach the home as electricity, so start converting your appliances from gas and oil as budgets allow and opportunities arise.
12. Switch your electricity supplier to one which is 100% renewable. You may need to do some research on this.
13. Be ruthless about switching things off, especially heaters and lights. Get all the family to do the same.
14. Fully switch off appliances that have a standby mode.
15. Make sure all your lightbulbs are long life, low wattage, preferably LED.
16. Make sure your roof, walls and windows are insulated and drafts eliminated. If necessary, get an expert to come and check.
17. Don't waste water. Don't leave taps running while you're brushing your teeth, for example. Get everyone in the family to make this a habit.
18. Be less wasteful: your rubbish is mostly packaging and food waste, you can reduce both easily by just thinking about what you buy and where you shop.
19. Recycle everything you can but don't assume the contents of your recycling bin will be actually recycled: challenge your local authority.
20. Take stuff to charity shops and recycling 'banks', but do some homework on how and whether these various materials actually get recycled.

21. The disposal of cosmetics and beauty products is a major problem. Try to reduce the amount, and whenever possible, go for natural materials.
22. Wet wipes and plastic stemmed cotton buds are especially non-biodegradable. Look for alternatives.
23. Household laundry is a major source of waterborne pollution. The effluent is laden with detergents and billions of micro-plastic particles from our clothes are flushed into the drains every time you run the washing machine. They end up in the sea, a carcinogenic risk in our food chain. Watch your laundry habits and run your wash only when you need to, with full loads.
24. If you have the space, air dry your clothes on a rack rather than run a dryer.

# Out shopping

25. Stop being an unconscious consumer. Don't buy things you don't need.
26. Try not to be suckered by 'special offers' and other 'bargains'. Just buy the things you really need.
27. Don't let life become a spree of acquisition of things you'll have to get rid of some day.
28. Prefer products with long life built in, replace them less often, and check their efficiency ratings (eg TVs, washing machines, fridges).
29. Get things fixed rather than replace them.
30. Don't buy new clothes and cosmetics so often.
31. Buy clothes (and other things) made from natural materials whenever possible.
32. If shopping is a habit or a pastime, take pride in coming home with empty bags and just enjoy the experience.
33. Avoid single use plastics.
34. Try to avoid buying things wrapped in multiple complex plastics.
35. Re-use your shopping bags time and time again.
36. Shop in local shops run by local traders selling locally produced products wherever possible. It helps support your own community and it helps reduce costs and emissions associated with long distance freight.
37. Try to avoid instant gratification deliveries. The jury is out as to whether the carbon cost of home delivery is more or less than for personal shopping expeditions, but doing without for longer is definitely the better option.



# Clothing

38. Many clothes are made from artificial fibres, plastics by another name. But the plantations that produce cotton, and the amount of water used to transform it into fabric, also stack up badly on their environmental impacts. Try to stay aware and make rational choices.
39. Favour natural products in general, though you may have to scour the labels with a magnifying glass to determine exactly what things are made of.
40. Extend the life of your clothes by buying better quality in the first place and keeping in use for longer.
41. Consider charity shops as places to both buy and dispose.

# Travel and transport

42. The movement of people and goods around the world is one of the biggest uses of energy, and one of the most serious causes of airborne and waterborne pollution. It's a major contributor to climate change and, when you factor in the vast infrastructure of ports, airports, highways and everything that goes into it, it's also a big contributor to habitat loss. Ships, trucks and planes are amongst the worst emitters of greenhouse gases. Be aware of how you contribute to this.
43. Motor vehicles are one of the big problem areas. Get ahead of the curve and learn about fuel efficiency, low emissions, electric options, and simply driving less.
44. Shorten or stop your commute – live near your work, work near your home, or work from home. Travelling a significant distance to and from your place of work is a waste of time, a waste of money, and it's bad for the environment.
45. Walk or bike, it's more healthy anyway.
46. Use trains and buses, share cars.
47. Use public transport where it's an option. Lobby your local council if it's not.
48. Become a 'Less Frequent Flyer'.
49. Holidays and overseas travel are always going to be important but there are plenty of options closer to home that involve less travelling and less hassle.

# What you eat

50. The use of large areas of land for rearing livestock is one of the greatest contributors to deforestation. Burger King, for example, is reckoned to be one of the most destructive forces of Central and South American forests. Stop eating their products (and those of their competitors).
51. Tropical plantation crops like palm oil, tea, cocoa, pineapples and bananas are equally destructive of the natural environment. Even so-called 'sustainable' oil palm plantations cause massive destruction and reduce biodiversity. Be aware!
52. Palm oil is an ingredient in a huge range of foods, cosmetics and toiletries, but manufacturers do not always label it as such. Avoid it if you can.
53. Transporting foods around the globe, especially by air, is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. Avoid out-of-season 'goodies' that have been flown half way round the world.
54. It would help persuade those who produce such foodstuffs to change their strategies if we consumed less meat and fewer processed foods.
55. In the UK, you could be forgiven for thinking that sheep farms are our natural countryside. They're not. We need to reduce our consumption of beef and lamb (sorry!).
56. Favour free range pork and poultry for their lower adverse impacts.
57. Prefer foods that are produced locally whenever possible.
58. Don't buy ready made snacks and meals, make your own.
59. Eat more vegetables and fruit, it's more healthy anyway.
60. Learn where your foods come from and what goes into them.

61. Reduce your food waste.
62. Use refillable water bottles rather than buy disposables. In most parts of the UK, and the rest of Europe for that matter, tap water is perfectly drinkable.
63. Avoid 'treats' that we just don't need. Crisps, for example, provide little or no nutritional value and their packaging is for the most part completely unrecyclable.

# Nature

64. Natural spaces are essential to our well-being. They should not be seen merely as places to build on. Support initiatives to leave land natural.
65. Support rewilding projects that restore our natural landscapes.
66. Formal gardens can look lovely but they tend to be rather sterile from the point of view of the bees, butterflies and birds which should be buzzing around them if all were well. Reserve a portion of your garden to grow wild as a kind of 'cultivated wilderness'.
67. Plant meadow grass, wild flowers and trees wherever you can find space.
68. Grow your own herbs, fruit and vegetables, and encourage your family and friends to share the delight in doing so.
69. Encourage people to grow things in otherwise wasted spaces and to sometimes just let it run wild. I'm thinking of roadside verges, hedgerows, carparks, graveyards, office premises, schools, colleges, churches, hospitals.
70. Reconnect with nature, go for walks, take hiking holidays, do things outdoors and encourage your kids to enjoy life in the wild.
71. There are 11 million cats and 9 million dogs in the UK. This trade and its support is a massive industry in its own right. And it's far from 'natural'. Cats kill our wild birds and small mammals. It's what they're good at. Dogs too keep small mammals like hedgehogs at bay. The explosion in pet ownership coincides precisely with the crash in the number of birds and mammals around us. It also coincides with a massive rise in childhood allergies. Just saying.

72. Biodiversity is essential for our wellbeing. Get involved in surveys and initiatives around birds and insects and their alarming reduction. Encourage your kids to do the same.
73. If we're living amid an environmental emergency, we shouldn't be culling wild species like foxes and badgers. Support campaigns that put wildlife above domestic animals.

# People

74. Engage with people and share your knowledge, insights and concerns.
75. Talk about climate change and your response to it with family, friends, neighbours and workmates. Get a conversation going. It helps people cope with the confusion and worry.
76. Face up to nay-sayers, and watch out for fake news. The machinations of vested interests are already at play and sometimes it can be hard to figure out what is true and what is not.
77. Ignore the rhetoric. Opinions are highly polarised, even though no-one has all the answers.
78. Educate yourself and your kids about the climate and the environment and check that your local schools do too. Ignorance, wilful and otherwise, is worryingly widespread.
79. Don't let your kids give up on school and college. The ability to learn, to adapt, and to figure out new ways of doing things will always be the most valuable way to ensure our future.
80. Join community action groups.
81. Write to your MPs and councillors. Insist they take this seriously and actually do something.

## At work

82. Talk about climate change and share these tips with your workmates and bosses at your place of employment.
83. Tell people about your own plans and encourage people to get involved.
84. Become a climate bore.
85. Ask your bosses to set up an employee support programme and participation scheme.
86. Make sure they formulate their own climate strategy.



# Emergency planning

87. The probability is high that extreme weather events and other forms of social and economic disruption will become more common. These may be beyond the immediate ability of public authorities to handle effectively. Think through what kind of things could affect you, your family, your community or your business. I'm thinking floods, drought, heatwaves, food and fuel shortages.
88. Put in place some contingency plans just in case.

# Personal responsibility

89. Try to stay objective and fight back against the mental manipulations of marketers persuading us to buy things we don't need.
90. Stay healthy and keep away from doctors. Pharmaceuticals are consumed in vast and often unnecessary quantities.
91. Don't wait for politicians to act – there are no votes in this and the pay off is too far away. Hopefully, this can be made to change with enough of a groundswell.
92. Although no-one wants to talk about it, the biggest threat is the planet's vast population and its continuing growth. Take responsibility by having fewer children and encouraging yours to do the same.

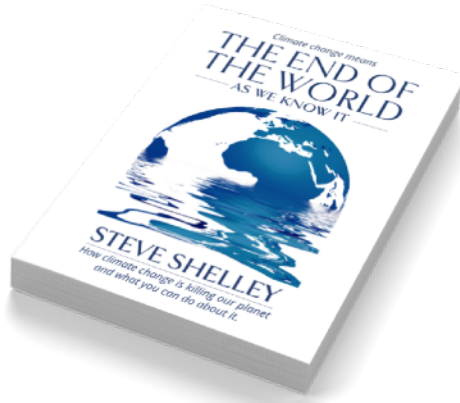
## New sets of values

93. Significant impacts will be achieved more effectively through conscious lifestyle choices rather than by fine tuning what we're doing at the moment.
94. Think of life as defined by relationships and experiences, rather than by income, bank balance or possessions.
95. Stop buying things you don't need just for the sake of shopping or possessing something new. If this defines your existence, realign your life with something more meaningful and less damaging.
96. Think of it as uncaring to have more than two children, and even that's too many. It's not a 'blessing' to have several children or grandchildren as we once thought it was, it's a curse on the planet.
97. It's cool to be green and to hug trees, in fact it's disgusting not to.
98. Work with your friends, family, neighbours and workmates to debate a new vision of what makes life good, what to aspire to, what's OK and what's not.
99. Business should not be defined solely by profit and growth but also by a duty of care to people and to the planet.
100. Don't wait for others to act: take personal responsibility.

These tips are taken from 'THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT', available on Amazon:

> <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1916201407>

or direct from the author by emailing [ss@steveshelley.org](mailto:ss@steveshelley.org).



“The beauty of ***The End of The World As We Know It*** is that it spells out in plain English exactly what all of us need to know. Steve Shelley does not mince his words. He writes with pace, authority and brevity, condensing the exhaustive findings of experts into a few pithy sentences. We have reached a tipping point. The planet will survive man's reckless stewardship – but will we? There is no time to waste. Each of us can make a difference. This book tells you how.”

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# About the author

Steve Shelley BSc (Hons), MA

Steve is the original founder the UK's Bottle Bank scheme. He is a former PWC director and international consultant, with a track record in strategy, leadership and change and their convergence with the environment.

Steve has carried out strategy assignments for national parks authorities in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, as well as for a wide range of conservation NGOs, development agencies and corporate clients. He also has extensive experience in the travel sector and was a founder of the Ecotourism Society of Kenya. He has worked too in the energy sector as a technical advisor.

Steve coordinates the business group in Hope Valley Climate Action. He is an affiliate of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and a member of the Centre for Alternative Technology.

Steve provides training on climate change awareness and consultancy to help organisations and communities develop adaptation strategies.

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## *Climate change means*

# **THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT**

Climate change and the destruction of our environment are a real and present danger to our civilisations, our communities and our lives. This is not hearsay, it's not opinion, it's hard fact. Our generation has consumed, burned and wasted more in one lifetime than in all the rest of human history. The Earth has had enough: it's fighting back.

This book tells you everything you need to know and suggests what we all now need to do. If you want anything like a secure future for your children, this is essential reading.

You will learn:

- how Britain's Industrial Revolution sparked the surge in fossil fuel emissions that has ultimately led to climate change
- what causes climate change and what its effects will be
- why scientists, UN experts and politicians don't have a viable plan
- how the climate shapes our bodies, our lives and our cultures, and how a changing climate will change us
- what a post-climate change, post-consumer society might look like
- and what you, your family and your businesses can do to help yourselves and help save the planet.

Climate change and environmental destruction may herald the end of the world as we know it, but we have a window of opportunity to consciously create a new, fairer and ultimately more meaningful society. Read this book and find out how.

**Rarely is a book so relevant and so important.**

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