

# ***Thursley Climate and Sustainability Action***

## ***Eco-friendly Living – it's Eco-logical***



**This article is about calculating our Carbon Footprint and various carbon offsetting options.** In previous articles we've looked at improving energy efficiency and switching to low carbon fuels as ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Understanding how much greenhouse gas we are responsible for is the first step in making changes to our lifestyle. Offsetting it is an interim solution until we have decarbonised our energy system.

**We've put a calculator on the Thursley Parish Council website** (see link to it on our Climate Action page). It's in the form of a spreadsheet which calculates the carbon emissions from the various categories of household activities (Home heating and power; Transport, including cars, trains and flying; Food and other expenditures). You'll need to gather some information to be able to use the calculator, and you'll find more detailed guidance about using it on the website. All the information is stored on your own computer, so there's no need to worry about who else sees this data. However we'd be interested in your overall results because we are trying to develop a baseline estimate of the Parish's carbon footprint and this will help us. The UK average is 8.8 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per household, but I expect ours to be much higher than this. My household is about twice this!

**There are a number of carbon offsetting options** we can use. Typically these support Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) certified carbon reduction programmes across the world in a range of projects that include carbon avoidance and clean or

renewable energy generation. Many are within developing countries, where they also provide additional social benefits. It costs £6 to 13/tonne CO<sub>2</sub>e, so is not that expensive to offset a year's worth of emissions. You'll see details of programs offered by Carbonfootprint.com who have provided us with the calculator. These days most airlines offer you the option to offset the carbon emissions when you fly, so this is easy to do. There are offsetting options from some fuel suppliers too. Shell offer carbon offset diesel and petrol fuels if you are part of their Go+ loyalty program and Certas offer an offsetting option for heating oil (using Carbonfootprint.com).

**Of course, another way** is to support offsetting directly in your community by donating to the **Thursley Tree Planting Initiative!** At £5/tree it's a similar cost to the other carbon offsetting schemes.

**Don't forget, use the link** to the Thursley Parish Council website and check your household carbon footprint. Please share your results with us so we can develop the Parish baseline carbon footprint. **We can then give you feedback about the progress we've all made in future years.** If you want more information about these ideas or help with the calculator, please don't hesitate to contact:

[jdswift.thursleypc@btinternet.com](mailto:jdswift.thursleypc@btinternet.com).

[https://www.thursley-pc.gov.uk/Carbon Fingerprint Calculator.aspx](https://www.thursley-pc.gov.uk/Carbon_Fingerprint_Calculator.aspx)

CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent