

Stop It Getting Even Worse

Although many of these consequences are now sadly inevitable, we have to prevent an even worse catastrophe. We must keep the pressure on the UK government to end the use of fossil fuels as soon as possible, and demand they use whatever influence they have to encourage other countries to do the same – including financial help for countries in the global south who will suffer more than us, even though their emissions are much lower. The solutions we need for a just transition away from fossil fuels already exist – it just requires the political will to make it happen. The good news is that a happier, healthier world is possible if we make the right decisions.

Prepare For The Future

As national and international supply chains break, and normal services become unavailable, we will need more resilient local communities. This means ensuring that basic human needs are met within the local area.

- Build and participate in community projects, and get to know your neighbours. We will all be reliant on each other so we need to start building mutual trust and cooperation now
- Think about what skills you, your family and your community might need in the face of deepening environmental and social crises. Your list might, for example, contain items like learning to grow food, or to repair machines, plumbing, and wiring

- No-one has the time or aptitude to learn all the skills we might need, so concentrate on the ones you are good at or have an interest in. By building up our local communities there should be enough diversity to cover all the angles. Start building a small, relevant library, take classes and share your new skills with others

Events in coming years— distant global events, and ones that affect you personally—will provoke feelings of grief, anger, and sadness. These are inevitable and healthy emotional responses but you may want to consider ways of coping with these stresses, such as:

- A grounding exercise like music, painting, prayer, yoga, martial arts or meditation
- Talking about your feelings to family, friends, community group or church
- Reconnecting with nature
- Learning more about the causes of the predicament we're in, and the possible solutions, then take action. Even the smallest actions are self-affirming.

It's going to be rough going at times, but we'll be OK if we work together.

Everything is going to change sooner than you think...

References for this leaflet can be found on the online version on our website



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“I think we are headed for major societal disruption within the next five years. [Authorities] will be overwhelmed by extreme event after extreme event, food production will be disrupted. I could not feel greater despair over the future.”

Gretta Pecl, a lead author for the IPCC 6th Assessment Report

A survey of hundreds of the world’s leading climate scientists has found that most of them believe the global temperature will rise to somewhere between 2°C and 3°C by 2100. This is way beyond the internationally-agreed upper limit of 1.5°C and would result in devastating consequences for everyone.

Given the complexity of the climate system, scientists vary somewhat in their estimation of exactly what will happen when, but they do all agree that the situation is much worse than is being reported in the media or understood by politicians. It’s still worth fighting for change because every fraction of a degree of heating avoided can make a difference, but we must also prepare for the consequences which we are only just starting to witness.

Consequences

The extra heat in the atmosphere and the oceans, primarily caused by burning fossil fuels, means more energy in the climate system. This in turn means more extreme weather happening more frequently across the world.

The stress of climate change puts us in danger of the collapse of society - even here in the UK - within our lifetimes.

THE EFFECTS IN THE UK MIGHT BE:

Very hot temperatures. More erratic weather patterns increase the likelihood of severe heatwaves and droughts in summer. We have already seen temperatures of over 40°C and wildfires in the UK.

Stronger and more frequent storms.

High winds, huge hailstones, heavy rain and flooding. In 2023/24 the prolonged rain, made more likely by climate change, meant crops could not be planted or grown as usual. This has resulted in higher food prices.

Very cold temperatures. There is a risk the Gulf Stream will collapse, which would result in cold air from the Arctic coming south causing extremely cold winters.

Impacts On Daily Life

Within the next 20 years the extreme weather could result in:

- Deaths and ill health, including an increase in disease and the appearance of new diseases to the UK such as Malaria, Dengue and Zika
- Loss of crops both domestically and overseas, leading to higher food prices and shortages
- Business closures
- Building collapses
- Vehicles not working, people with limited mobility confined to home
- Shutdowns of public transport and services such as GPs, hospitals and schools
- Wildfires causing damage to lungs, crops, buildings and ecology
- Water shortages, possible lack of drinking water
- Problems with frozen water supplies

- Mass displacement of millions of people from where it has become too hot to live. Mass immigration to areas seen as more liveable (probably including the UK) – leading to increased strain on UK resources
- Wars and conflicts over food, water and resources, which are already happening elsewhere, leading to further disruption
- Further damage to ecosystems – further depletion of wildlife (with the added consequence of problems with pollination and food chains)
- Power outages
- Steep rises in insurance premiums or insurance becoming unobtainable
- Flooding (resulting in more sewage discharges)
- Loss of GDP due to closure of workplaces and schools
- In the longer term, sea level rise leading to flooding of major cities and coastal towns, rendering them uninhabitable

...so what
can we do?