

The Dorset Green Living Project

(info updated following covid-19)

This project has been made possible through Sustainable Dorset and has been funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. It is based on an initiative first started by Transition Town Totnes which is part of the Transition Network. This is a grassroots organisation that aims to increase self-sufficiency to reduce the potential effects of climate change and economic instability. The "Transition Network", founded in 2006, has inspired the creation of many community building sustainable projects around the world.



The European Union and the UK government have declared a climate emergency. What can we as individuals do about climate change? If you are looking for ways in which to live more sustainably but don't know where to start, then the Dorset Green Living Project is a perfect place to begin. It helps you to take easy steps to reduce your carbon footprint and live a lower energy lifestyle. At the same time, you'll make new friends and hopefully build up a strong and resilient community around you. For the survival of us and the many other species that we share this planet with, we need to reconnect with the natural world and one another.

The project:

We are looking for people to form groups of around 6-8 households (following covid-19, this number has now changed and can be anything from individuals up to 6 households). A group could consist of an interest group, a group of colleagues at work or preferably people that live within the same community. A guidebook will be supplied to each household. It contains 8 chapters including an intro and a conclusion (although this will be about where to go next rather than finishing). The other 6 chapters will cover the following: food, energy, transport, waste, water and community building. It's important that the project is taken on as a group as this allows a platform for good discussion over the many topics included within the guidebook and helps people by offering support and tackling these huge issues together.

At the beginning and at the end, everyone taking part will need to complete a carbon footprint calculation. That way we will be able to see how successful the project has been at lowering people's energy use. At the beginning, each group will arrange a date for their first meeting and the project co-ordinator will join them to get things started. Each group will make their own rules and decide on the best way to run the project. They will decide on who will host and who will lead each meeting, how often it will meet and for how long.

At each meeting the group will discuss the issues within each chapter of the guidebook and set themselves some individual carbon reducing goals. Within each chapter, there are proven and practical ideas and information on the energy that can be saved in that particular area. The guide was originally written so that the ideas were affordable and achievable for most people. Following each meeting, participants will try and achieve their goals before the next meeting. When they meet again, they will evaluate how things have gone and set themselves some new goals. It is recommended that the group meets at least every 3 weeks; it's also a good idea to have a social in between meetings to keep it fun and maintain momentum although this is not essential but just a suggestion. There will be support from the project coordinator at the end of a phone or email if needed.

We will also be providing a hard copy to each household taking part in the project. The guidebook is also available in electronic format by signing up for free on the Sustainable Dorset website at <https://greenliving.sustainabledorset.org>. For anybody wishing to get involved or to find out more information, please contact Rachel at earthjamb@outlook.com.

Also worth having a look at are two videos made by Transition Totnes following the success of their Transition Streets programme which followed the same structure and guidebook (although the Dorset Green Living Project is updated and Dorset specific)

<https://youtu.be/NVpNds94IzE>
https://youtu.be/r1y_6MT_M0c