



Our Mission Statement: We aim to support the environment by increasing awareness of our members and community and by undertaking sustainable environmental projects.

MESSAGE from ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP:

Happy New Year to you all! The beginning of a new year is when many of us think of New Year's resolutions and some changes we can make for the better, so it could be a perfect time to look out those Environment Pledges made at the start of our Environmental Area of Focus journey. Tips on lowering greenhouse gases and improving biodiversity are everywhere. Several of our Club members have acquired electric cars – I know all talk mostly very positively about it but find out more from them. Other options are less car journeys, walking or cycling, using public transport and cutting down on flying (when it's even viable with Covid restricting things). Can you eat less meat to generate less methane from livestock, eat local produce or grow your own? ...and plant trees and pollinators! Can you make household items and clothes last longer, pass them on and when they are spent ensure materials are recycled? How can you influence Government, local authorities and businesses, or campaign with an environmental organisation, sign petitions etc? Do you check what you buy is sustainable, or can you just plain CONSUME LESS? Can you switch to renewable energy and waste less, a huge cost as well as an environmental concern? Do you act like it's an emergency, encourage friends and family to take action, tune in to the stories of communities suffering extreme climate events and think about how to address climate justice, and so on.....? Well good luck with your resolutions, and let's try to make them last (infinitely) longer than the new gym membership!

John Ballard, Club Environment Champion

PROJECT UPDATE:

A group of our members at the December Litter Picking session. As Friends of Cheam Memorial Garden, we continue to take care of the garden and its surroundings periodically. (Photo by John Ballard)



Environment Group in December 2021:

- John and Gary attended a meeting with Sutton Council on Dec 9th about the Queen's Green Canopy which is going to be the part of Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Some areas to work on are:

1. "Park Friends" groups to consider if they wish to have a tree planting project as part of the Queens Green Canopy and share advice and ideas with other Friends groups.
2. Think about the type of planting that would be suitable for your park and discuss with the tree officers who are happy to advise on ideas.
3. When we meet again, groups are to confirm their intentions and say what they would like to do as part of this project. That could be a single standard tree, sponsored trees (as proposed at Oaks Park), woodland planting with whips, or a combination.
4. Groups to think about how they will fund the planting and also the practical support they will need from volunteers and the Parks Service, so that we can together start to put together a planting programme.

As our Rotary Club is Friends Group for the Cheam War Memorial Garden which is relatively small, we will look to support tree planting activities and celebrations at parks elsewhere in the Borough.

- The Morsbags project is going well – sewers are in the process of making and distributing more bags using donated waste fabric. Stitches with whom we have been partnering, announced that in December we have reached 1,000 bags. The second Morsbags Pod we are associated with at "Craft My Day" continues to show steady activity in making Morsbags and distributing them through the boutique Mia Strada.



(Photos: Stitches Academy, Cheam)

- The deadline for the Young Environmentalist Competition has been extended to January 10th, to enable the few last-minute inquirers to submit their projects.

- We are still waiting to hear about our application for the National Lottery Fund grant for our "Sewing for the Future of our Planet"

FOOD WASTE

We are thinking about having our next Club project based around the topic of FOOD WASTE.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT NOT TO WASTE FOOD?

When we think about Climate Change, what are the things that are doing the most damage to our world? Burning fossil fuels, cars, airplanes? Wasted food???

When we waste food, not only does it waste money but it also has a big impact on our environment.

According to research by Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), a charity which works with businesses, communities and people to help reduce waste and use resources in an efficient way, did you know that every day we waste 20 million slices of bread and this creates greenhouse emissions equivalent to over 140,000 cars every year!

WHAT IS FOOD WASTE?: Food waste is food we don't eat.

In the UK, households waste 6.6 million tonnes of food and 4.5 million tonnes of that is edible food – food that could have been eaten. The rest are the inedible parts like teabags, bones and eggshells.

WRAP says that the amount of edible food wasted in the UK could fill 8 Wembley Stadiums.

WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM? The process of getting food on our plates takes a lot of time and resources such as water, energy and transportation.

Transportation of food and rotting of food can produce greenhouse gasses which are damaging to the environment.

For example, by shopping in small local shops or by growing your own vegetables, you can help to reduce your food miles – meaning your food has not travelled far so less fuel has been used and this is better for air pollution.

Some statistics:

-If everyone in the UK stopped wasting food at home for just one day, it would have the same impact on greenhouse gasses as planting half a million trees.

-0.9 million bananas are wasted in UK homes every day.

-It takes 65 billion litres of water to grow the potatoes we waste at home every year.



QUESTION: Do you know where most of the food waste in the UK comes from?

1. Supermarkets,
2. Our homes,
3. Restaurants

ANSWER: 70% of total UK food waste comes from our homes.

Most wasted foods are: Potatoes, bread, milk and fizzy drinks.

The tomatoes wasted at home every year have the equivalent greenhouse emissions of 51,000 cars.

It takes 330 billion litres of water to grow the bananas wasted at home every year.

WRAP have given some suggestions on what you could do at home to help.

-Use your leftovers. Turn last night's dinner into something delicious for lunch, rather than putting it in the bin.

-Try freezing food. Did you know that you can freeze eggs, yogurt and cheese?

-Keep some fruit in the fridge. Apples and citrus fruits will last longer in the fridge rather than in our fruit bowl.



And Some Global Statistics:

1.5 billion tonnes of food is wasted globally each year. This is 1/3 of all food produced for human consumption (source FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of UN)

70% of global freshwater is used for agriculture.

30% of greenhouse gas emissions is created by global food production.

We would like to have “Food Waste Prevention” as the topic of our next project for the Club. Do you have any ideas as to what kind of project you would like to work on? Please share your ideas with us and prepare to get involved!

Email us on: environment@cheamsuttonrotary.com

ENVIRONMENTAL CALENDAR IN JANUARY:

10th January – Houseplant Appreciation Day

Indoor plants do much more for us than just add that pop of colour to the home and office. Plants help purify indoor air quality, removing airborne pollutants that can cause throat and eye irritation.

Have potted plants in the house or at the office. Swap plants with friends and colleagues



29th January – Seed Swap Day

It could be fun to organise a Seed Swap party and enjoy getting new seeds and exchanging gardening ideas in preparation for spring planting.

Hampshire Rotarian Shelagh Moore has recently published a children's book  with an environmental  theme, with encouragement to care for the planet  and educate young minds about the world around them.



OTHER FEATURED LINKS:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54466096> (This is the source of our article)

<https://www.energylivenews.com/2017/05/16/eu-food-waste-produces-170m-tonnes-of-co2-a-year>

If you are looking for those New Year's resolutions, then maybe this handy guide will help:

[Download the Greenpeace Guide to Life](#)

10 tips for combatting carbon: <https://www.rotarygbi.org/.../10-tips-on-combatting-carbon/>

[Buying and Running an Electric Car \(Speak Up for Our Planet\)](#)

As featured in this month's Rotary magazine and the District bulletin, have a go at installing the [Treekly app](#) to turn Footsteps into Forests (When joining a Group, there is one already set up for our Club number, which is **19609**).

(The Treekly App can be downloaded from App Store on Apple or Google Play on Android)

[Our plan for a more sustainable Sutton](#)

https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200670/environmental_sustainability/2025/what_can_you_do

