

# Together we can tackle climate change

CLIMATE CHANGE is not something for the future – it's affecting us all already, with average temperatures across the world rising every year.

## How will climate change affect London?

In London the biggest source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that cause climate change is from energy use in our homes.

London is a developed area, and dark surfaces such as pavements and rooftops reflect less light than green spaces, so they absorb more heat from sunlight. This means cities get warmer during the day and less cool at night. This can worsen air pollution and means buildings and transport networks require more air conditioning to make them comfortable.

London is also more at risk of flooding than any other city in the UK. This is because a large area of London lies within the River Thames floodplain.

London is one of the driest capital cities in the world, with water supplies per person similar to Israel. Climate change could reduce the amount of water available, and increase demand in summer, making water shortages a possibility.



Debris left by Hurricane Dean as seen 20 August, 2007 in Kingston, Jamaica.

## Climate change impacts on our family and friends in the Caribbean

How we behave here, can have a negative impact on our friends and family in other countries. This is because cities are responsible for three quarters of the planet's carbon emissions, so it is important that London plays a leading role in stopping climate change.

Small islands in the Caribbean are in danger of sea level rises caused by climate change as over half the population live close to the shoreline. A small increase in sea level will dra-

matically reduce the size of beaches and possibly damage tourism and make people homeless.

## Temperature rises

The Caribbean is set to get hotter too, and warmer temperatures means more energy will be needed for air conditioning and refrigeration. There will also be increased risk of new pests and diseases.

## Extreme events

Jamaica is already in danger from tropical storms and hurricanes. Rising sea temperatures due to global warming may mean these extreme weather events happen more often and more violently. Apart from the damage hurricanes can cause to buildings such as hotels, extreme weather also negatively impacts on tourism.

Climate change may have already affected the island's coral reefs with the death of large numbers of corals due to bleaching caused by rising coastal water temperatures.

## Farming

Jamaica relies heavily on farming, in particular sugar cane that makes up around 45 per cent of the island's export crop business. Changes in temperature and CO<sub>2</sub> levels will affect farming because it will cause soil erosion making crops difficult to grow and less rainfall will also harm production.

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## Top tips to help save the planet and save you money

Making your home more energy efficient doesn't just make environmental sense – it makes economic sense too!

■ **TURN IT OFF** – Turn off your lights, don't leave electrical appliances on standby and unplug your mobile phone charger. If every London household turned their appliances off standby, we could save 465,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> and £115m each year!

■ **WASH AT 30 DEGREES** – Modern washing machines and powders are designed to work at cool temperatures. If every London household washed its clothes at 30 degrees, we could save 98,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> and £23.5m per year!

■ **USE ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHT BULBS** – If every Londoner used energy efficient light bulbs, London's carbon emissions would be cut by 500,000 tonnes. They also last up to ten times longer than traditional bulbs and use up to 80 per cent less electricity, so each bulb can mean savings of up to £60!

## FREE INSULATION

If you're over 70 or are in receipt of benefits, you may be entitled to professionally fitted insulation for FREE. Call 0845 070 5059 to find out if you are eligible.

## Act NOW!

We have around ten years to stop climate change causing permanent damage. But we all need to act now, and act quickly. We must change the way we live and live less wastefully. If we don't make small changes now, we will have to make bigger sacrifices in the future.

To find out how you can make a difference visit: [www.london.gov.uk/diy](http://www.london.gov.uk/diy)  
To find out more about climate change visit: [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

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*Today's Challenge*<sup>™</sup>