Chapter 7 Summary

Economy & Resources

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The linear economy – in which products are made, used, and thrown away – creates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during manufacturing, transportation to the customer and disposal. This behaviour is ecologically damaging. We need an economic model that enables us to thrive while not exceeding environmental limits.

To Do This, We Need To:

Avoid Waste And Create A Circular Economy...

...through redesigning products, to reduce their environmental impacts and improve their reusability and recyclability, purchasing less, repairing, sharing, reusing, buying second hand, and recycling.

Reduce Emissions From Unavoidable Biodegradable Waste And Wastewater Treatment.

This means significantly reducing avoidable food waste, preventing biodegradable wastes from entering landfill, and reducing emissions from treating wastewater.

Use The Purchasing Power Of Devon's Organisations...

...to benefit the environment and local communities. Higher value must be placed on the carbon and social impact of procurement decisions to reduce emissions and support the local economy. Locally embedded anchor institutions can influence other organisations with their actions.

Support Communities And Businesses To Transition To Net-Zero.

They should be supported as the net-zero transition causes sectors to shrink or grow, while new sectors emerge. Citizens should have access to the skills needed for a net-zero economy.

Completing these actions will: (i) save money through more efficient resource use; (ii) create new jobs to progress the net-zero carbon economy; (iii), and boost community cohesion via a collective effort to improve resource management.

Actions:

Everyone:

- Help create a culture of ‘enoughness’ by reusing, sharing, swapping and repairing items. Buy second hand. Recycle them when they’ve reached the end of their life
- Use recycling facilities and compost food waste
- Choose banks with a strong ethical investment policy

Actions:

Communities:

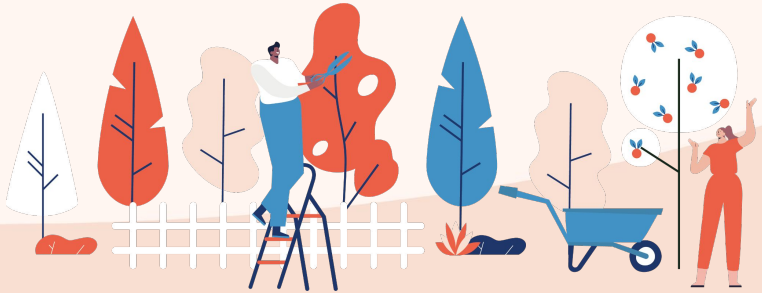
* Establish waste and resources projects, such as repair cafés, clothes swaps, libraries of things, and community fridges
* Crowd-source funds for community-led initiatives

Actions:

Organisations:

- Embed local social and environmental value further into tendering procedures, e.g. specify reclaimed and recycled materials, and support community-owned and local companies
- Create a sustainability strategy to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover resources
- If you're a food business, use the Courtauld Commitment free toolkit to reduce your food waste and emissions and find opportunities for unavoidable wastes to be used as a resource by others

Actions:

Local Policy Makers:

- Deliver targeted communication to empower people and businesses to adopt more sustainable consumption habits, prevent waste and shift to a culture of sharing, reusing and recycling
- Improve the reuse facilities at Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Align Devon's household waste collection services as far as viable
- Consider reducing the frequency or volume of black bin collections
- Collect a wider variety of separated materials for recycling, including collecting food waste separately
- Work with government to incentivise the recycling of materials based on their carbon intensity as well as weight, and to improve commercial waste data
- Enhance the capture of emissions from waste-water treatment
- Support immature industries and new models that have the potential to contribute to delivering net-zero
- Provide training and support on the transition to net-zero to schools, businesses and individuals
- Continue to engage with government on the design of the Extended Producer Responsibility schemes
- Support innovations in finance for net-zero including regional banks, municipal bonds and crowd-funding