BLEED GREEN, LIVE GREEN

A FRESHER'S GUIDE TO SUSTAINABLE LIVING

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER · LUCEM SEQUIMUR ·

What Does it Mean to Bleed Green?

Yes, we know that we're always told climate change is a one-way ticket to doom and gloom and you need to do a-z to save the planet. We're not trying to give you a lecture. This isn't a *rule*book, just a handbook with some top tips on how to live sustainably and make uni life easier! Including some great ideas from current students

So what does Bleed Green actually mean? As the main colour of the University, Bleed Green symbolises the unity between past and present students, celebrating University life.

Climate change is a big, long-lasting change in the Earth's temperature and weather mainly due to human activity such as burning fossil fuels[1]. This has real impacts on life on earth which can be seen today! Depending on what we do now, our climate's future is still up in the air. There are so many different pathways climate change can take, with temperature rises (compared to pre-industrial levels) varying from 1.5°C(alright) all the way to 5°C(yikes)[2]! (There's still hope for the future. Even small changes by one person can make a difference!

Myth 1:

Climate Change is natural

No, this is not the case. The speed of the change in temperatures and weather patterns are far too fast for it to be natural.[3]

Myth 2:

Climate Change only makes the world warmer

Yes temperatures will get warmer but climate change is about changes in weather too. Extreme weather events like droughts, wildfires, floods and storms are all becoming more frequent and more severe.

Myth 3:

I can't do anything to help

Yes you can! Although alone it may feel like you are not making a difference, **YOU ARE**! All change starts with the individual, but big corporations and governments need to do their bit as well. Together at Exeter we can help to make progress.

Starting uni is a great time to start new habits, we are here to help you make ones that help you save money, effort and the planet at the same.

In the Kitchen

It's your first night at uni and now you need to cook dinner! This is a great time to get into some eco-friendly habits that can make your life easier.

Meat Alternatives:

Yes, we know you must have heard this a million times, but as a student, reducing meat consumption can actually be cheaper for you and much better for the environment! Think about the price of a can of chickpeas compared to a packet of chicken breasts and the wide range of new recipes you can try.

Here are a few Insta accounts that show some amazing plant based recipes:

@gameofvegan

@calumharris

@veganbyrebecca

Seasonal Food:

Buying food that's in season in the UK helps to reduce air miles as well as being so much cheaper in shops, just another way to reduce the price of your food shop! It often tastes better as well.

The Best Before Date:

OK, we are all worried about eating food that's out of date – remember this is best before and a lot of food is still perfectly fine to be eaten a few days after this – just make sure there is no mould, bad smell or funky colour and you should be good to go!

Single use Plastics and Cling Film:

Cling film has so many easy swaps: tin foil, beeswax wraps, reusable bags and boxes. This will save money in the long run as you won't need to keep buying rolls and rolls along with reducing the amount of single use plastic and waste.

Food Waste Bins:

Food waste bins are available at many halls at Exeter. Using these bins reduces the amount of waste that goes to land fill. If you don't have one you can just ask at your reception.

"Meal Prep! Its cheaper, gives me more free time spent not cooking and reduces food waste"

Energy and Water

The classic: everyone knows not to leave the tap running when you brush your teeth, and we are not going to repeat it (oh wait…). Here are some things to consider without forcing yourself to become a cold shower lover!

Heating:

Having the heating on is fine but having the window open as well is pointless —you are not trying to heat the whole of Exeter! In the winter it's ok to wear a jumper in your room, and try to only have the radiator on if your are in your room.

Bills:

Second year seems like such a long time away but getting into good habits in your first year will really help reduce your bills for next year. Yes, we know accommodation bills are included and leaving lights on, radiators on full blast and long, hot showers seems like a treat but good habits start now!

Bathroom:

Long, hot showers are nice but it can often be like a sauna in there after. Shorter showers are also so helpful when sharing a bathroom. This will also save so much water, cutting down your shower by 5 minutes will save 23,000L across a year[4]. Think about the energy needed to heat that water!

Days Out

The hills of Exeter may make it tempting to jump in a taxi anytime you want to go out, but the money and miles add up! Here are some tips to be mindful of when you are out and about.

Public Transport:

Being a small city, Exeter is very walkable, but if you really need to travel somewhere, think about using buses*, trains or even the e-bikes* rather than taxi. They are often a lot cheaper, especially with student discounts.

Beach:

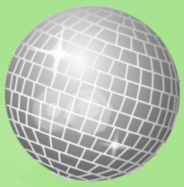
With so many beaches easily accessible by train, it's a great day out when the weather is good. It is so important not to litter on the beach. For a fun trip why not go to Ex-mouth for a Sunday beach clean?*.

Shopping:

We all know the adrenaline you can get from buying something new, but think: do you really need it? If yes, try and source it from a responsible brand and avoid fast fashion and low quality items. Also think about going to a charity shop, or even the thrift store that comes to the Great Hall!*

"I take my reusable shopping bag with me for shopping and groceries"

Nights Out



Clubs and Pubs—you're probably not really thinking about the environment when enjoying a pitcher at spoons or a classic TP venom, but some easy switches can make a night out a little easier on the planet (but maybe not on your hangover).

Pre Drinks:

Whether you're preing at your own accommodation or someone else's, why not take your own cup and a drink you have mixed yourself? Once pres have finished, if you are taking a drink for the road put the empty bottle/can in the bin rather than chucking it in a bush or on the side of the road—most clubs in Exeter have bins by the queue if you can't find another one.

Outfit:

People don't expect you to wear a new outfit every time you go out. It's perfectly fine to re-wear an outfit that you like. In the words of Lizzie McGuire: ' I might be an outfit repeater but at least I'm not an outfit rememberer'.

Transport:

When you can't be bothered to walk home, it is so easy to just jump in a taxi. But don't forget the Uni Night Bus that runs on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. It's only £2 and runs until 4am!

On Campus

Being wasteful is an easy trap to fall into on campus; if the Market Places plastic wrapped snacks and *Exetah's* finest Pret.

Seminar and Study Rooms:

If you are using a room on campus and your are the last person to leave, check all the lights are off and the windows are closed. It only takes seconds and helps to save energy!

Take-away Drinks:

When having a long day on campus, you might need a quick caffeine fix or another drink to get you through the day. All coffee outlets on campus offer a discount if you bring your own cup!

"Recycle waste! I collect litter floating around on campus, I bring my own cup, meal prepped lunches to heat up and my own tea bags."

Lunch:

If you are going to be on campus for lunch, a great way to save money and help the environment is to pack your own, and the microwaves around campus can heat up leftovers. If you don't have time, why not have the £2 meal*, made with sustainably sourced food. Don't forget to put any waste in the correct bins!

Does Exeter Really Bleed Green?

We know that this handbook may have given you the impression that you are solely responsible for the Earth's 'doom and gloom', as if your 20-minute hot shower is our planet's last straw. Although individual action does have an important role to play, the greatest difference is made at an institutional level. This is why it is important to be aware of, and to keep the pressure on the University of Exeter to achieve their own climate policies.

One of the University's largest goals is to be carbon neutral (net- zero) by 2030[5]. In the meantime, the Uni has committed to a further 5 years in partnership with Shell, a company that has no current intention to move to net-zero emissions in the next 10-20 years. The majority of Shell's investments continue to be in fossil fuels... not exactly a step in the right direction![6]

Your unrecycled cans from pres aren't the problem. The University, like many big institutions and corporations, ultimately holds the power in the fight against climate change. The partnership with Shell is an obvious contradiction to their goals, and demonstrates that the University is prioritizing profit over the planet, despite their supposed concern over a climate emergency.

Activism makes a difference. If you feel inspired, check out these Instagram accounts (*these are also societies at the university):

@Shelloutcampaign

@bethechange.exeter*

@slowfoodexeter*

@exetercommunityalliance

It's not the end of the line, but we have to act now. We can and should remain hopeful about our future and the climate.

***Handy Websites:**

Traveling by bus: www.exeter.ac.uk/about/sustainability/travel/buscoach/

£2 meals: www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/campusservices/eatandshop/eatanddrink/supersavourkitchen/

Vintage Folk, the thrift group who come to the Great Hall: www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/vintage-folk-ltd-52414409413

E-bikes: www.co-bikes.co.uk/

Exmouth Beach Clean: Facebook @Plastic Free Exmouth

A 2023 Grand Challenges Project

Created by:

Amie Hill, Arhant Khullar, Clara Livesey, Nat Marshall, Roberto Omuga and Harri Taylor

1.Met Office. What is climate change?. [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2023 Jun 7]. Available from: https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/what-is-climate-change

2.Hausfather, Z. Explainer: How 'Shared Socioeconomic Pathways' explore future climate change . [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2023 Jun 7]. Available from: https://www.carbonbrief.org/explainer-how-shared-socioeconomic-pathways-explore-future-climate-change/

3. WWF. 10 Myths about Climate Change. [Internet]. [cited 2023 Jun 7]. Available from: https://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/here-are-10-myths-about-climate-change

4.Commercial Washrooms Ltd. How Much Water Does a Low Flow Shower Head Save?. [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2023 Jun 7]; . Available from: https://www.commercialwashroomsltd.co.uk/blog/knowledgebase-faqs/how-much-water-does-a-low-flow-shower-head-save.html

5.University of Exeter. Environment and Climate Emergency Policy Statement. [Internet]. 2022 [cited 2023 Jun 7]; [3 pages]. Available from: https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/campusservices/sustainability/docs/Environment_and_Climate_Emergency_Policy_Statement.pdf

6.University of Exeter. Our strategic partners: Shell. [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2023 Jan 2023]. Available from: https://www.exeter.ac.uk/business/about/partners/shell/

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