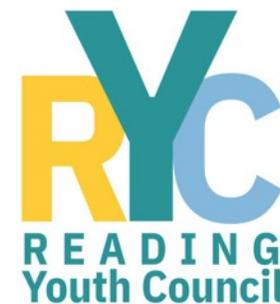


READING YOUTH COUNCIL
CONFERENCE 2021

PRESENTS:

REMAINING
HOPEFUL





Our Environment Workshop



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle; a well-known slogan to keep people thinking about their environmental impact. Our environment campaign is centred around these ideas, to reduce the footprint we leave on the planet.

Whether it means climate change, plastic pollution or fast fashion, we believe that to reduce, reuse and recycle can have major benefits for our blue planet.

That is why we have produced a booklet for you to show how your small actions can make a monumental difference (this can be read on our RYC page on the website).



Recycling do's and don'ts in Reading

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 Please recycle me (wash me out first)	 I can't be recycled yet
 Plastic bottles (e.g. drinks, milk, toiletries, detergent)	 Plastic bags, film and wrapping
 Plastic pots (e.g. yoghurt, cream, snack, soup)	 Black plastic trays
 Plastic trays (e.g. fruit punnets, meat/cake trays)	 Glass bottles and jars
 Plastic tubs (e.g. ice cream, margarine, sweets tubs)	 Kitchen towels, tissues or wet wipes
 Paper and card	 Food waste
 Cartons (Tetra Pak) cartons (e.g. juice, milk, soup cartons)	 Nappies and sanitary products
 Clean foil and foil trays	 Coffee cups
 Tins and cans (e.g. drink cans, food tins, biscuit or sweet tins – please rinse)	 Textiles (clothing, bedding, duvets)
 Empty aerosol cans (e.g. deodorant, air freshener, hairspray, de-icer)	 Polystyrene
 Shredded paper (must be contained in a small cardboard box or envelope)	 Any other items

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The Environment in 2020

Climate change has impacted us, we have experienced record temperatures and are left to reflect on what we can do to live an eco friendly lifestyle.

Whether that's from recycling, partaking in online climate strikes, or journaling your thoughts and educating peers, recognise that we are doing our bit as a society to look after our planet. RYC will continue to work with local climate organisations to ensure we deliver on our campaign, especially focusing on the plastic pollution policy.

Now in 2021, let's keep this up and set targets that contribute to a healthier environment!

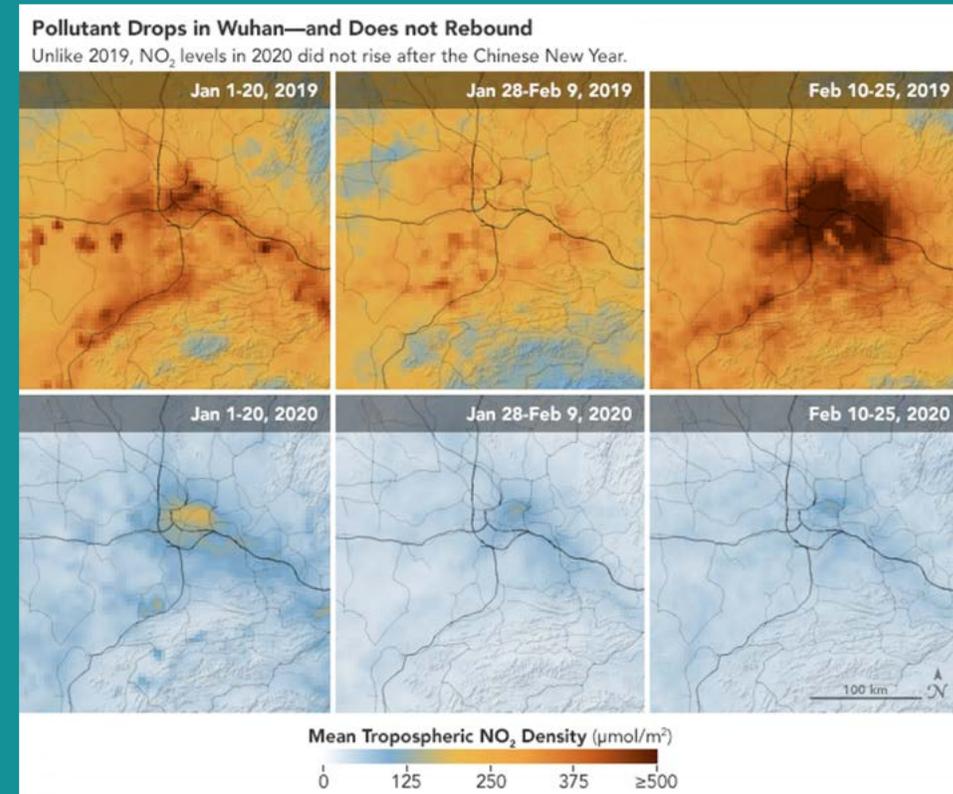
The impact of staying at home

- Despite the struggles of the pandemic, in a few months we have seen a large and mostly positive impact on the climate than any other previous geographical or man-made phenomenon.
- Carbon dioxide levels have massively decreased and we have been able to reduce our carbon emissions to never before seen levels. If this 5% reduction in yearly carbon emissions continues for the next few years, we will reach net 0 by the year 2050. This is key to our journey in slowing down the warming of our rapidly heating planet.



The impact of staying at home

- The massive drop in pollution from greenhouse gasses can also be attributed to the drop in the use of fossil fuels by industry, which could be indicative of a wider future trend.
- The lack of transport hasn't just helped with climate change; levels of air pollution have dropped significantly. Air pollution fell to such a degree in China it was clearly visible in Beijing and the reduction in pollution has allowed us to breathe easy for the first time in decades.



Online shopping and COVID

- Although emissions have gone down greatly, our lives have become more digitally focused, forcing us to use online shopping to get essential items. On average, excess packaging produces more waste and emissions per item and our internet usage has increased from the 3.7% of total emissions in March 2020 to about 6% in December 2020.
- From September to December 2020 – UK online fashion and food sales reported up to 40% increase!
- Emissions and plastic pollution are also increasing due to online orders. Orders are not usually done in bulk, leading to more deliveries, more trips and excess packaging, continuing the cycle of releasing more carbon emissions.
- The fashion industry accounts for about 10% of global carbon emissions, and nearly 20% of wastewater. Fast fashion release dyes into water supplies - 90% of wastewater is untreated in developing countries.



How to Sustainably deal with Covid-19

- In the age of coronavirus, the environmental damage of our now drastically altered lives, is not being told enough.
- Disposable masks are one of the biggest worries for those concerned about the planets wellbeing, with disposable masks being washed into the sea, damaging the natural world.
- Even whilst not outside, we need to remain eco-conscious.
- Turn off the lights - it's very easy to forget basic things like turning off your lights when they're not in use
- Take shorter showers - the impact of long showers and baths upon the environment is damaging and detrimental.
- Use reusable facemasks – you can find out how to make your own fashion face mask [here!](#)



How all this ties into what we want as a Youth Council



We want to make sure that everyone across Reading has the opportunity to contribute to the improvement of the environment.

The pandemic has opened our eyes to what kind of drastic measures must be needed to enact change as well as the solidarity between people in admiring what the pandemic has done for our environment.

We hope that the pandemic has allowed people to truly appreciate the improvements that environmental work could bring to the health of us and the planet.

We want the pandemic to pass but the environmental improvements to remain. We can only do this with your support and help.





Pledge to help the Earth in 2021

Zarah Khan, Reading Member of the Youth Parliament 2018-2021

To help the Earth in 2021, I will continue to reach out to organisations that aim to combat food waste to stop litter and plastic from polluting our environment. ‘Protecting The Environment’ has always been a fundamental campaign to personally work on, as the climate crisis is interlinked with our mental health and how we view the world.

Climate change is not just a one-off action plan, this is supposed to be a new lifestyle that everyone adopts to save our planet. It’s okay to feel anxious about climate change, but journaling your thoughts will help change your outlook on your surroundings. Remember we can all help on an individual scale, whether that is by tree planting or recycling etc. Looking after the Earth is our moral duty.

After the lockdown, I aim to call on the government to pressure businesses and schools to reduce growth in single-use plastic production and consumption, design products and packaging for recycling, as well as support a new law to phase out non-essential plastics to start using efficient substitutes that are biodegradable so that plastic waste exports can be reduced overall and green spaces can be preserved for wildlife.

You are not alone with your fears for the climate; continue making your voices heard, reach out to people, inform and educate others. Because that’s how we become a step close to making real change.

What will you pledge?

Now you have heard what we are all doing for the environment in 2021 - we want to know what you are going to do!

Return to the event in survey monkey and write down a personal pledge that says what you are going to do for the environment in 2021.

Some ideas:

- Buy less fast fashion
- Use the recycling checklist in the provided booklet to encourage your family to recycle correctly
- Walk to school instead of taking the car





**Thank you for reading :)
Please continue with this event by
returning to the survey.**

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