

## **Theme : The Environment**

### **Furious commuters drag Extinction Rebellion protesters from top of Tube**

*Sky News*, By Alix Culbertson, October 17, 2019

*Climate change activists carry out London-wide protests in defiance of a police ban as leaders try to get the ban lifted.*

Angry commuters have pulled Extinction Rebellion protesters from the top of a Tube as activists disrupted services across London.

At Canning Town station in east London dozens of commuters were seen pulling two campaigners, dressed in jacket and tie, from the top of a Jubilee Line Tube train after they unfurled a banner which said "Business as usual = death".

The pair used a ladder to climb onto the roof, prompting an immediate reaction from commuters, including one who threw his sandwich at them. A drink was also hurled at one of them.

One Tube user reportedly shouted: "I need to get to work, I have to feed my kids."

As one of the protesters kicked a commuter to stop him from climbing up the carriage, the man managed to grab the activist's leg and pull him to the ground.

The two protesters were then seen being attacked on the platform by the campaigners before they were arrested.

Elliot Laughlin, who was livestreaming the incident for the Extinction Rebellion Facebook page was beaten up by the crowd before some commuters helped him.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHOr2WH7V1k>

### **Revise, reuse, recycle: how to be a sustainable student**

*The Guardian*, By Naomi Larsson, October 16, 2019

*From cutting out beef to repairing old clothes, here are some tips for freshers who want to be green at university*

As university doors opened in September for a new year, an estimated 6 million people across the world took to the streets in a historic week of climate action.

The power of this youth-led uprising reflected the urgency for action on the environment. So what now? For freshers starting a new chapter at university, deciding how to live your life is vital. Here are some ideas for how you can be sustainable as a student.

#### **Eating**

What you put on your plate matters: nearly a quarter of all greenhouse gases come from agriculture, and most of those are from meat and dairy. Cutting out meat (if you're able to) is an easy way to reduce your carbon footprint, and you'll save money too.

A meat-free diet has been recommended as the "single-biggest way" an individual can reduce their

impact on the planet. Meat and dairy consumption result in excessive land use, industrial emissions, methane, water use and deforestation.

Universities are now reacting to this: Goldsmiths has scrapped the sale of all beef products from its campus as it seeks to become carbon neutral by 2025. “The growing global call for organisations to take seriously their responsibilities for halting climate change is impossible to ignore,” the university’s warden, Frances Corner, said.

This year scientists devised a planetary health diet, presenting a way to address the environmental (and health) impact of our food choices. It recommends the global average consumption of red meat should be cut by half, while vegetables, fruit, pulses and nuts should double.

Whatever you choose to eat, try to shop locally and seasonally. You’ll most likely avoid the plastic packaging you find in supermarkets, and these products will have a lower carbon footprint. If you have the space – even just a windowsill will do – try growing some of your own herbs or vegetables; it’s amazing what you can get from just a window box planter. You can also reduce food waste by planning meals in advance, eating leftovers and sharing meals with friends.

## **Dressing**

Forget fast fashion: keeping your clothes for as long as possible has much more than just monetary value. In the UK, clothing has the fourth-largest environmental impact after housing, transport and food. We throw away more than half of our fast-fashion items within less than a year.

So recycle your clothes, mend them, or accessorise them. If you don’t have those skills see if there’s a sewing society you could join, or head to a repair cafe where people mend clothes for free. Try clothes swaps with friends, and instead of buying new items head to a charity or second-hand shop.

If you want to buy new clothes, says Ynes Patat, a fashion student at the University of Northampton, “look at brands that appeal to your style but research to see if they do have sustainable qualities, like Patagonia or Pact (they prize themselves on being organic, GOTS-certified, fair trade and eco-friendly). Even some high street stores are turning to more sustainable fashion.”

## **Living**

For some freshers, this will be your first time living alone, which means doing your own decorating, washing, cooking and cleaning. There are simple ways you can change your habits to live more sustainably. Wash your clothes at a lower temperature, and opt for a bamboo toothbrush or more eco-friendly sanitary products. Invest in a clothes horse so you stop using a tumble drier (you’ll be surprised how much your energy bill goes down). When shopping, see if there’s a zero-waste shop nearby – Sheffield students’ union has opened a store selling dried food, household products, toiletries and kitchenware all free from plastic packaging. Just turn up with your own container.

Of course, the easiest way to make a difference is to cut out flying. A return trip from Manchester to Berlin produces about 214 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>; there are 15 countries where the average person produces less CO<sub>2</sub> in a year. If you’re planning a weekend away with new friends, try and travel by train or bus instead.

## **Campaigning**

Individual actions matter, as they demonstrate commitment and provide an alternative to how we

can live. But campaigning and activism are important too. University campuses can be the perfect place for this: 91% of students are now concerned about climate change, according to a survey from the NUS. If you don't know where or how to start, see if there are any societies at your university like Extinction Rebellion or UK Student Climate Network. Look at People and Planet's university league – where does your university rank and what needs to change? Students of the fossil free campaign, for example, have brought on huge changes by calling on their institutions to divest from fossil fuels – and 76 UK universities have now committed to divest.

## **Rising social stigma around flying is misplaced**

*Sky News*, October 22, 2019, By Hannah Thomas-Peter

The Swedish have a word for climate guilt associated with flying.

It is "flygskam", which translates in English to "flight shame".

The movement spearheaded by Greta Thunberg, who famously sailed from Sweden to the US to avoid air travel, is having an effect.

In Sweden rail bookings are booming, and one travel magazine said that 64% of those who chose to reduce their trips abroad last year did so because of climate change.

And one recent survey that polled people in the US, UK, Germany and France found that 1 in 5 had reduced the number of flights they took in 2018.

Now, I've only been Sky's climate change correspondent for a few months, so I'm allowed to ask some heretical questions.

And as I watched Extinction Rebellion activists target London City Airport recently, I started seriously considering this one - is flying really that bad?

I'm going to be in trouble for even writing that down.

It is also a selfish question, because I fly a lot.

But before the howls of outrage drown me out, here's what I think.

In the "yes, it's absolutely awful, how dare you even consider that a topic for debate" column, there are some compelling arguments.

The main problem is that global air travel keeps increasing and is expected to continue to do so at a rate of about 5% per year.

4.3 billion passengers flew on 46.1 million flights last year.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation predicts that in 2020 global aviation emissions will be 70% greater than they were in 2005.

And while airlines are trying to make their aircraft more efficient and experiment with biofuels, at the moment there simply are not viable (by which I mean scalable and affordable) alternative technologies and fuels for the industry to switch to, and precious few on the horizon.

These issues prompted one study to predict that if the rate of growth and lack of green alternatives

continues, by 2050 air travel could be responsible for one quarter of the world's carbon budget if we are to keep temperature rises within 1.5C of pre-industrial levels.

This leads us on to the next problem, which is the climate injustice of air travel.

Just a few percent of the world's population can afford to fly, and when they do so, they can emit more carbon in one flight than another person in a less developed country does in an entire year.

Add all of that to the fact that planes spew other harmful gases and chemicals into the atmosphere at a height that compounds their harmful effects and it's enough to make anyone feel guilty.

I can feel the flygskam rising.

But there's another side to this story.

While flying might take up a significant part of an individual's carbon footprint, currently the aviation industry is responsible for just over 2% of global carbon emissions.

That's much, much less than agriculture, forestry and other land use (around 25%) and electricity and heat production (also around 25%), according to America's Environmental Protection Agency.

Even the global fashion industry accounts for over 8% of carbon emissions - more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined.

To me, that 2% of global emissions happens in return for extraordinary benefits.

I'm not just talking about individuals being able to go on holiday and to see friends and family.

I'm also talking more broadly about the rapid movement of people and goods in an interconnected world, and all of the cultural, social and economic benefits that come with that.

Giving up or severely curtailing flying means, to an extent, giving up something that knits us together; an essential part of our modern life.

It is an almost pure sacrifice in ways that other big changes that tackle the climate crisis are not.

For example, eating a plant based diet and going car free or dramatically reducing driving not only significantly reduces our carbon footprint but is better for our health.

Having one less child is certainly better for our wallets, as is living in energy efficient homes, and buying less in general, particularly clothes.

Am I suggesting that those who are lucky enough to fly should be able to hop on planes like they are buses for as long as they want? No. The price one pays for polluting behaviour, no matter the benefit, is for another column on another day.

But I am suggesting that the rising social stigma around flying is perhaps misplaced, and that there are other admittedly tough, big impact actions that we should look at doing first.

## **Vocabulary from the articles :**

activist / campaigner : militant  
to lift a ban : lever une interdiction  
commuter : banlieusard  
to disrupt : perturber  
unfurl : (se) déployer / dérouler  
to hurl at : lancer / jeter violemment sur  
to grab : saisir / agripper  
to kick : donner un coup de pied  
platform : quai  
to beat up : passer à tabac / tabasser  
sustainable : durable  
to cut out : éliminer / arrêter  
fresher : étudiant de première année  
uprising : soulèvement / révolte  
greenhouse gas : gaz à effet de serre  
to save : économiser  
diet : régime  
warden : directeur (de prison) / gardien  
to devise : concevoir / imaginer / échauffer / ourdir  
carbon footprint : empreinte carbone  
to grow : faire pousser  
waste : gaspillage  
leftovers : restes  
housing : logement  
skill : compétence  
to repair : réparer  
to mend : raccommoder / réparer / repriser / guérir / se remettre  
to swap with : échanger / troquer  
charity : association caritative  
second-hand : d'occasion  
commitment : engagement  
to divest : débarrasser / priver  
spearhead : fer de lance / mener, être à l'origine de  
booking : réservation  
compelling : irréfutable / convaincant  
to switch to : passer à  
to spew : cracher / jaillir  
harmful : nocif / nuisible  
shipping : transport (to ship : expédier)

## **Thematic vocabulary : Chapters 16, 17, 18**