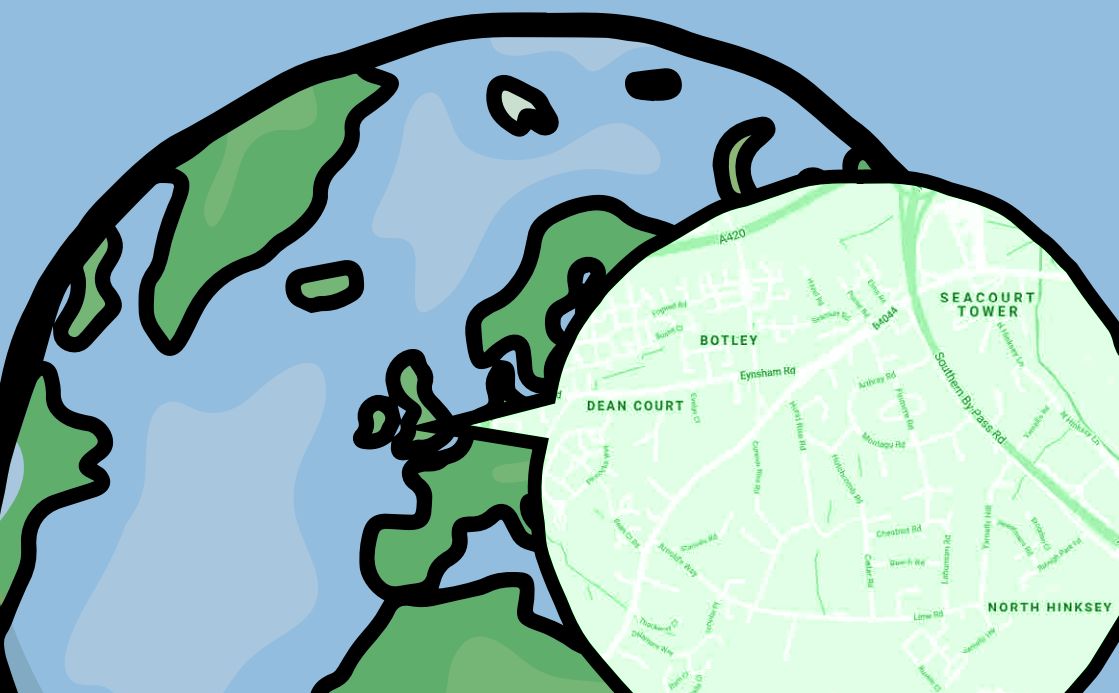


A Sustainable Botley

YOUR LOCAL 'GREEN GUIDE'

Making Botley an even
better place to live.



Better Botley, better planet!

Everyone wants a better place to live - better homes, better schools, cleaner and safer streets, nicer green spaces.

But where we live isn't just about our neighbourhood. We all share the same planet and we are all faced with a changing climate. In Oxfordshire we may be shielded from the worst impacts of the climate crisis but we cannot ignore it. If we want our neighbourhood to get better and stay better we all need to act.

Sometimes the news makes the problems look so huge that it seems there's nothing we can do. It's easy to say that 'someone should do something' but that's only part of it. Governments can set targets for change but that change needs to happen everywhere: we must be part of it.

We can help make Botley an even better place to live. This guide is about what we can do as individuals, as households, in our schools and workplaces, and in our Botley and North Hinksey community. There's a lot going on here already and we hope that this guide will help make more happen in the years to come. We hope you find it helpful.

Contents

This guide has seven sections. Each has ideas on what we can do: there is a full list of relevant local organisations that can offer advice on our website here: northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/greenguide/

- 1. Cutting waste**
- 2. Energy use**
- 3. Transport**
- 4. Eating well**
- 5. Greener Gardening**
- 6. Nature/greenspace/wildlife**
- 7. Making our voices heard**

This guide has been produced by North Hinksey Parish Council.
Many thanks to Jan McHarry for her help and advice.
Sharing of this information is encouraged.

» 1 *Cutting waste*

Everything we buy and use has an environmental impact. 'Reduce, reuse, recycle' may be a familiar slogan but we can all help to cut waste by reusing as much as possible and thinking about what we buy.

Recycling saves energy, resources, and money. Turning aluminium cans back into new ones saves 95% of the energy originally used to manufacture them.

Over 80% of household waste can be recycled. Here in the Vale of White Horse we have one of the highest recycling rates in England (63.3%) but over a quarter of food waste still ends up in the wrong bin. It should go into the small 'food caddy' for weekly collection, so that it goes to a local reprocessing plant which produces gas to make electricity and a soil conditioner for nearby farms.

Not sure what can be collected in our door-to-door recycling collections? Check here: <https://bit.ly/valewasteinfo> . Household waste can also go to County Council Waste and Recycling Centres: <https://bit.ly/oxwastetips>

New waste initiatives keep emerging so keep an eye on local newsletters and social media.

Ways you can make a difference

- » Avoid single-use cups, plastic bottles and disposable cutlery – find durable alternatives
- » Share, borrow or hire household equipment / garden tools you use infrequently - see <https://shareoxford.org/>
- » Buy in bulk, use concentrates and refillable items to avoid unnecessary packaging
- » Donate quality goods to charity stores / collections / organisations helping vulnerable people, or advertise on freecycle.org or local e-platforms
- » Food scraps? Fruit peel? Egg shells? Compost at home or put in the food waste caddy
- » Need some ideas for avoiding food waste? See www.lovefoodhatewaste.com
- » Help to 'close the loop' and support UK markets – buy 'recycled content' products.

» 2 Energy use

Our homes account for around 20% of the UK's 'greenhouse gas' emissions. Fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas – are the main source of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and costs are rising.. We need urgent government action, but we can all play a part in cutting energy use.

As we move towards a 'net zero' economy the ways we heat and light our homes will need to change. Doing this can save money and have health benefits.

Ways you can make a difference

- » Involve everyone in your household in simply using less energy: resolve to save 10% over the year. There's good advice here: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy>. Think: Shorter showers; Use a lid on saucepans; Only boil the water you need in a kettle; Don't run hot taps unnecessarily.
- » Draught-proofing doors and windows, insulating hot water tanks and pipes and having sufficient loft insulation will all help save energy and money.
- » Not sure how much energy you use? A smart meter can help make real savings. Many energy providers are now supplying these.
- » Switch to a green energy supplier – you may save up to £200 a year doing this.

When replacing household appliances, look for energy efficiency ratings (via labels) and eco-saving features (to reduce energy demand).

Doing home improvements? This is the time to invest in some 'eco-renovation' that can make a big difference – Cosy Homes Oxfordshire can advise: <https://cosyhomesoxfordshire.org/>

'Better Homes, Better Health' offers free, professional advice to Oxfordshire residents on keeping warm in winter and reducing fuel bills, and on funding and grants for energy home improvements for vulnerable households (those suffering from a long-term health condition, being in receipt of a non-means tested benefit or on a low income or living in a property that has a low energy performance). See: www.bbbh.org.uk or call 0800 107 0044.

» 3 *Transport*

How we get around affects our health as well as our climate. Car travel is one of the biggest sources of urban air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Using a car less helps you to get healthy and cut air pollution as well as doing the right thing for our climate.

We also need better, well-connected and affordable public transport and safer cycling routes and safer streets for all users. But there's actions we can take now so think 'Active travel': making more journeys by physically-active means such as walking and cycling.

As Botley grows so traffic levels increase. The Parish Council supports plans for a 20mph speed limit on our residential roads. See 'Making our voices heard' for ideas on how to support plans to manage traffic.

Ways you can make a difference

- » Reduce your car use. Change one journey a week and try the train, bus, cycling or walking. If you're already doing this, can you go further?
- » If you have a bicycle, set yourself a target to cycle at least four days a week (this will be good for your health!).
- » Encourage members of your family to cycle: if you're nervous about cycling you can get training and advice from local organisations like Cyclox.
- » Botley has good bus services – cheaper than driving and parking in the city.
- » Encourage and take part in schools initiatives such as Walk to School Week, and actions that reduce 'idling' engines.
- » Report potholes or pavement damage at <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>
- » Encourage venues to have information in their publicity on getting there using public transport or walking.
- » **Next time you replace your car:** make the switch to an electric model.
Or could you join a car club and hire one as needed?
See: <https://www.co-wheels.org.uk/oxford>

» 4 *Eating well*

Climate change, Brexit and Covid-19 continue to highlight problems in our current food and farming systems and the UK's reliance on imported food. Food and farming contributes over 20% global greenhouse emissions, mostly from meat and dairy products. UK households still waste 4.5m tonnes of food a year that could have been eaten, worth £14bn. Industrialised production has weakened our connections to the food growers and farmers. Making changes in what we eat can be good for our health, our economy and our planet.

Locally-grown food cuts 'food miles' pollution from transporting it around the world and helps links the producer with the consumer. Organic farming produces food with care for human health, the environment and animal welfare. 'Fairtrade' food supports ethical production across the world.

Ways you can make a difference

- » Buy locally-produced and seasonable food whenever you can – support local markets and food suppliers or vegetable box schemes.
- » Find out about healthier food choices and eating well. Try to reduce meat and dairy consumption. Discuss eating less meat with your family. Support schemes that promote healthy eating in schools, colleges, care homes and workplaces.
- » Use the Botley Community Fridge or join the Botley Community Larder to save waste and money: <https://foodforcharities.com/botley-community-larder/>
- » Shop ethically. Look for the Fairtrade logo and try to switch to some products.
- » If you have the space (a garden or allotment) grow some of your own food. Swap seeds and surplus produce, share skills and encourage children to have a go.

» 6 *Nature, greenspaces and wildlife*

Need a breath of fresh air? A walk on the wild side? Botley and North Hinksey are full of possibilities. From river-banks to churchyards, from nature reserves to parks, you don't have to be a long-distance walker to find a quiet space or a good view. Some sites welcome volunteers to help look after them. Please help to keep our green spaces pristine, free of litter and dog mess, respect signs and fences and report anti-social behaviour.

» 5 *Greener Gardening*

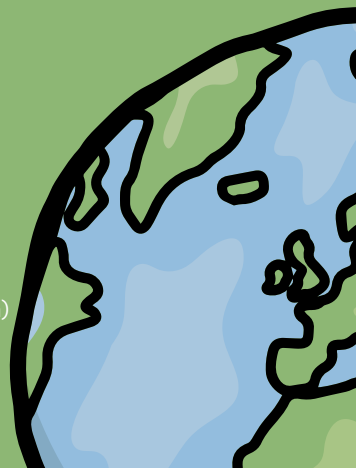
Botley is fortunate to have a lot of gardens. These can look good, provide space for growing food and flowers, and be a home for wildlife. The RHS gardening charity runs a Planet-Friendly Gardening Campaign to help us all to do more in whatever spaces we have. Gardening is good for our health and wellbeing. Good gardening practices can address other problems - having a permeable paved surface or careful planting on a house drive can help avoid unnecessary water run-off and flooding.

Ways you can make a difference

- » Avoid using unnecessary chemicals and peat-based compost
www.gardenorganic.org.uk
- » Leave a wild patch somewhere in your garden and create a mini log-pile
- » Entice bees and other pollinators by growing flowers, shrubs and trees that provide nectar and pollen throughout the year. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) has free advice on wildlife gardening www.rhs.org.uk
- » Got no garden? Try a window-box of herbs, salad vegetables, wildflowers or a hanging basket of edible fruits (try strawberries, chillis, tomatoes) or a mini-fruit tree in a container. Or look into getting an allotment.
- » Invest in a water-butt to capture rainwater from roofs (houses, sheds, greenhouses)
- » Make your own compost or leaf mould to use as a soil conditioner or mulch.
- » A small pond or a child-safe water-feature can bring wildlife into the garden
- » Hedgehogs are getting rare. We have a lot in Botley – help them move between gardens by ensuring there is a small gap in fences and boundary walls..

Get involved!

- » Offer help on volunteer work days, ongoing site management or occasional litter-picks
- » Support community tree-planting, open days and community gardening activities
- » Encourage wildlife in your garden (see Gardening section)
- » Join the Botley Health Walks or use their map.



» 7 *Making our voices heard*

There's a lot that we can change in our lives (as we've shown in this guide) but much bigger changes must be made - by our government and councils, and by businesses and large organisations.

As citizens we can help make those bigger changes happen, simply by asking for them. We need our local decision-makers and planners to make future developments align with zero carbon strategies. MPs and councillors tend to act on issues where they know their voters are concerned, so writing and talking to them about green issues really can make a difference.

There are many local plans – from the County Council's Oxfordshire 2050 Plan to the North Hinksey Neighbourhood Plan. All these influence our lives and all have public consultations when they are being planned. This is the most important time to make your voice heard – once a plan is agreed it's harder to get it changed. Check local social media and keep an eye on these plans as they go forward.

Most people are worried about climate change but often don't discuss it. Simply talking about climate change with family, friends, and work colleagues can help people feel more confident to actually take some action.

Get involved! The best way to make a difference is to work with others who share your concerns. There are many groups locally and across Oxford who will welcome your involvement. Some do practical work to look after our green spaces – others may be pushing for change. Don't feel you need to be an 'expert' – just speak up for what you want to see happen. **This is how we create an even better Botley!**

A list of local and Oxford organisations that can offer help and advice is here: northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/greenguide/



North Hinksey Parish Council