

# Climate Change Interest Group – Sponsored by Maresfield Parish Council

## Local Climate Change Challenge

The Climate Change Interest Group is made up of local people and our aim is to challenge Maresfield Parish residents to make changes in a variety of areas for the good of the environment. We hope you feel inspired to join in with some of our suggestions and would welcome your feedback. We always welcome new members to our group. Come and join us by getting in touch with ...

### July/August 2021 Saving Water in the Garden

In our March issue we talked about saving water in the home. This month, we would like to take this further by giving you ideas about how you can save water in the garden.

Even though water does not appear to be in short supply in our parish this year, using less water actually means you are:

- **Reducing energy use.** Cleaning wastewater (or 'grey water', as it's called) is an energy-intensive process.
- At peak demand up to 70% of our water supply can be used in gardens, which forces suppliers to use groundwater and take it from streams. This can cause environmental damage and increase water prices.
- **Saving money.** If you're on a water meter, these tips could save you a bob or two.

#### Tip 1

Install a water butt to your drainpipe and use it to water your plants, clean your car and wash your windows. A water butt can collect around 5,000 litres a year. Rainwater contains nutrients that your plants will love. **Collecting water also means that you and your plants will be able to cope in case there is a hose pipe ban.**

#### Tip 2

Water your garden with a watering can rather than a hosepipe. A hosepipe can use as much as 1,000 litres of water an hour. The use of a watering can could save you £300 a year. If you do use a hose, fit a trigger gun to save water and up to £210 a year on your bills. When watering your plants aim directly at the roots rather than scattering water on the leaves. Plants soak up water from the soil, so water on the leaves will only evaporate and go to waste. Encourage your plants to develop deep root systems by watering them less frequently. A good soak once every 10 days is sufficient for most plants although this wouldn't be sufficient for some of your thirsty veg garden plants. It is better to intensively water so that plants get a good soaking that gets into the ground rather than a little water every day that stays on the surface and evaporates. Established trees, shrubs and lawns do not need watering.

Weeding also helps your plants to thrive, as weeds compete with other plants for nutrients and water. Weeding regularly allows your plants to soak up more goodness for themselves.

### Tip 3

Recycle water – you can use cooled bath, shower, or washing-up water to water your plants. Just make sure it is not too greasy and don't reuse water that contains strong cleaning products such as bleach, disinfectant or dishwasher salts which are harmful to plants.

### Tip 4

Plant some drought tolerant plants such as the Agave, Striped-stemmed Aloe, Palms, Watsonias, Sea holly, Cape Daisy, Lavender, Mimosa and Verbena, to name a few. For more ideas, check out the Royal Horticultural Society website. These plants not only save water, but also save you work.

### Tip 5

Mulching your plants (with bark chippings, heavy compost or straw) and watering in the early morning and late afternoon will reduce evaporation and also save water. Mulching flowerbeds, and around the base of shrubs and trees in spring, prevents moisture from evaporating during dry spells. Mulching the surface of hanging baskets traps moisture.

When making up hanging baskets and containers add water-retentive granules or gel to compost, or use compost with them already mixed in.

### Tip 6

In a heatwave, animals need water too. Instead of watering your lawn, leave out a container such as a bowl or casserole dish so that birds can drink and have a bath. Bees and other insects need a saucer with water and stones in it.

And now sit back, enjoy the sunshine, watch your garden grow, listen to the birds and take pleasure in your garden.



Our group meets, currently via zoom, once per month and you are welcome to join our meetings, please contact Nancy for details or with any feedback or suggestions you may have.

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