



# Virtual Climate Conference

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020,  
10.30am – 1pm



## ...MORE ANSWERS FROM OUR PANEL...

### Questions to Liz Atherton – Ten Tonne Challenge Project

- **What companies are safe to buy from?**
- **Can you tell us some of the best/worst companies to buy from?**
- **M&S made a big push on sustainability. Are they still a good choice?**

When you're shopping remember that if the company is doing anything green or eco then they will shout about it! Check companies' websites and the clothes labels. Look for natural fabrics, recycled fabrics (adidas now sell items made from recycled materials for example), Fairtrade, look for local makers in your area, or buy good quality second hand items.

As mentioned H&M have big ambitions for using only sustainable fabrics and M&S have great environmental initiatives. Patagonia are a great brand and People Tree are very ethical (but expensive).

Shops that have had some really bad press recently - BooHoo! They are linked to modern slavery with very questionable practices in their UK factories and linked to the Leicester covid outbreak. Companies like ASOS have a policy of incinerating items under £10 that are returned to them - so, think twice before you buy online.
- **What is your opinion on uniform manufacturers?**
- **How much plastic coating is on uniform?**

Lots of school uniform items come from supermarkets that prioritise profit over the environment. So, they have been made cheaply by people in countries like Bangladesh and China and shipped across the world. Your uniform might have travelled further than you have! Uniforms are treated with lots of chemicals to make them stain and wrinkle resistant and fire retardant. Some of this is for our safety but some is for our convenience. These chemicals come out of the fabric when we wash our clothes and so go into our waterways affecting us and wildlife.

What you can do - learn to mend your own uniform. Wash it less often and on a lower temperature.

<https://www.fashionrevolution.org/uk-blog/back-to-school-the-irony-of-classroom-ethics/>
- **How much plastic is wasted from uniform wrappers?**

This is a great point. So many of the clothes we buy, especially when we buy online, come wrapped in layers of unnecessary plastic that is non-recyclable. You can refuse the plastic in a shop and you can buy less online. Be aware - some companies now write 'this plastic is recyclable' on their bags **but this plastic can't go in your recycling bin** and if put in there might

mean none of your bin is recycled. This plastic has to be taken to bag collection points which are in lots of supermarkets.

- **How much of a problem is green cleaning?**

I think the UK pupils said they were asking about Green Washing? Which is a huge problem. As UK consumers have become more vocal about the environment, some companies pretend to be 'green' just for publicity. We need to be critical. Look at your favourite brand's website and see what they're actually doing about the environment and human rights. If you don't think they're doing enough then write them a letter telling them what you want to see.



**Questions to Laura Robertson-Collins (Councillor for Greenbank and cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability, Liverpool City Council)**

- **Considering schools have the potential to contribute towards mitigating climate change; from renewable energy infrastructure to educating the youth. Do you think local authorities have provided enough support to schools in working towards this goal?**

The requirement for such support is possibly infinite ...but council officers and councillors will always try to provide any support as requested. Current priorities include encouraging walking / cycling (ie not driving) to school, reducing waste (and composting if appropriate); planting wildflowers and trees; reducing energy / changing to reusable sources. NB schools are directly responsible for their own budgets, not the council, so can set their own priorities

- **How can you encourage residents to live more sustainably when convenience foods are so affordable and people would rather use transport than walk?**

Behaviour change is very difficult ! people may know they should do something - but still not do so... And many people do not understand reality of the climate emergency , or the serious decline in bio-diversity etc. We are all responsible - local councils and councillors can help by providing space for allotments and community food growing; prioritising active transport (see the new pop-up cycle lanes) and also public transport (and we need government to re-regulate this to be under local authority control again, esp to bring down fares); providing on-street chargers for electric vehicles etc. We have stopped cars driving down Hanover street this week in Lpool, and should have a Clean Air Zone in the city centre next year. BUT there is a lot of resistance to much of this from many people....Councils would like to tax take-away food shops more, or prevent them opening - we are not able to do so however.... 🙄

- **Electric vehicles...**

Are a short-term solution , yes, but the aim HAS to be less cars. There were 20m in UK in 1990, there are 40m now. This CANNOT go on!! Regardless of the use of fossil fuels - there simply is not enough space in our city streets for this...

***My ask to everyone: Please contact your local councillors - everyone has THREE councillors, regardless of party affiliation - so contact yours and ask them what they are doing in their local area about the climate emergency (in the ward they represent, not at city-wide level). If you know a vacant site or under-used space that can be planted with wildflowers or used for food-growing then ask them to action this, etc. It does not matter what political party they are in - all councillors can affect change locally (and have some funds to do so) - and they will do so if voters (and future voters!) ask them to...***

