



Sustainability Assembly

Wed 19 February

1- 5.30 pm

Jubilee Lecture Theatre

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[#SustainableSussex](#)

[#GoGreener](#)

Sustainability Assembly

Session 2: Living & Working Sustainably

Chair: Jason Oliver

Buildings: Matthew Arnold

Food: Martha Knott

Single use plastics: Megan Youngs

Mobility: Charlotte Rae



Sustainability Assembly

Session 2: Living & Working Sustainably



Buildings

Matthew Arnold & Scott Noble

Energy & Environmental Manager, SEF

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Living and Working Sustainably at Sussex

Buildings

Sussex
Estates and Facilities

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 Interserve

Buildings

- Built Environment
- Utility Journey
- Waste and Recycling



Built Environment



Listed
Buildings

Opportunities
for
Improvement

Improvements
in
Development



Utility Journey



Metering

It's Use

Self
Generation



Waste and Recycling



Reduce

Re-Use

Recycle



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Session 2: Living & Working Sustainably

Food

Martha Knott

MSc Global Biodiversity Conservation,
Life Sciences



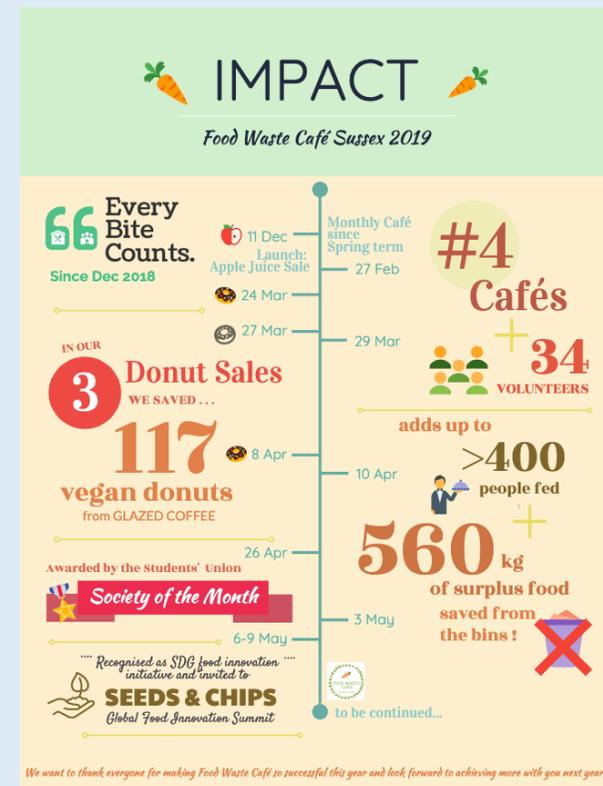
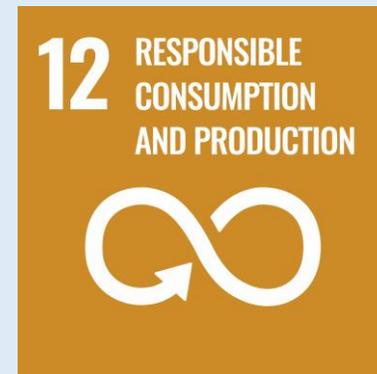
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Food at Sussex

Martha Knott

MSc Global Biodiversity Conservation student
Food Waste Café Sussex Committee Member



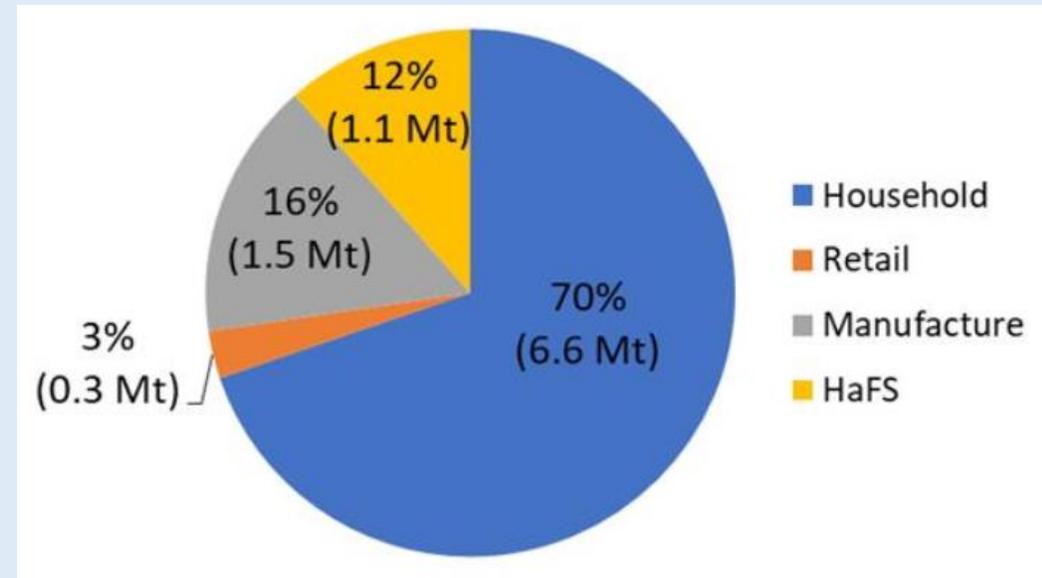
Issues around food on our campus

- The provenance of our food
- Sustainable food options
- Food waste



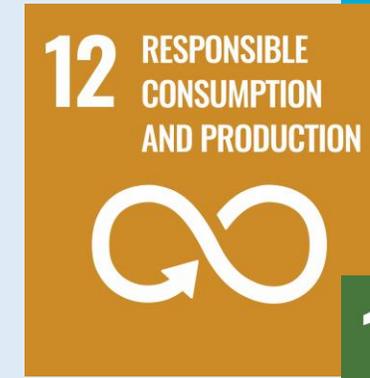
Food Waste

- ~9.5 million tonnes of food wasted annually - 70% edible (2018)
- ~1/5 - 1/4 of purchased food wasted annually
- Why do we have a food waste problem?



Why is this a sustainability issue?

- Agriculture
- Climate Change
- Poverty and hunger
- Water use



Food waste at Sussex

- Food waste from outlets
- Food waste from residences
- Our place in the Brighton and Sussex community



What can we do?

- FareShare
- The Real Junk Food Project
- Gleaning Network
- Brighton and Hove Food Partnership
- Apps: Olio and TooGoodToGo



Sussex so far...

- Food Waste Café Sussex
- Sussex Food Bio-processor
- Eat Central - TooGoodToGo
- Food waste bins in staff and department kitchens
- Food waste included in University and SU policies



Questions:

- Can food waste measures used elsewhere be adapted to life at Sussex? If so, how?
- How can we improve residence food waste contamination rates?
- How can we engage more students to improve their own shopping/cooking/waste habits? Both on and off campus?
- How much should be done through policy vs through grassroots organising?

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Session 2: Living & Working Sustainably



Single Use Plastics

Megan Youngs

BA Geography, Global Studies

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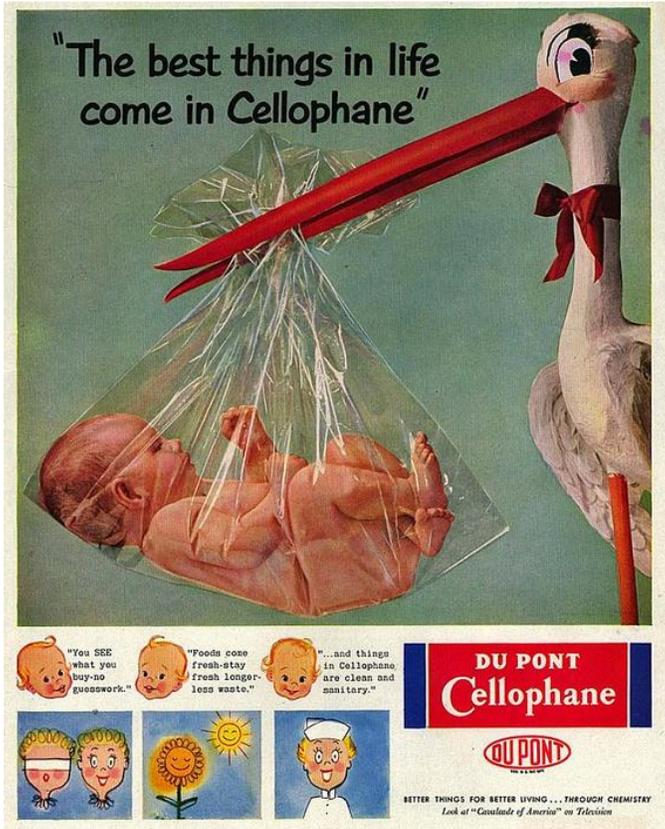
Sustainable living
education for everyone
living, learning and
working at Sussex.



Is this zero-waste, plastic-free living trend a privileged fad?

A completely zero waste lifestyle could be considered privileged, with not many alternatives out there, the prices of items are high and access to certain shops is limited.

BUT the lifestyle of consuming less, refusing the unnecessary, borrowing, and choosing second-hand is accessible to most and this is what the university should be focusing on. Not just the ban of single use plastics...



Has convenience gone too far?

"It's pretty amazing that our society has reached a point where the effort necessary to extract oil from the ground, ship it to a refinery, turn it into plastic, shape it appropriately, truck it to a store, buy it and bring it home is considered to be less effort than what it takes to just wash the spoon when you're done with it."

Source Unknown

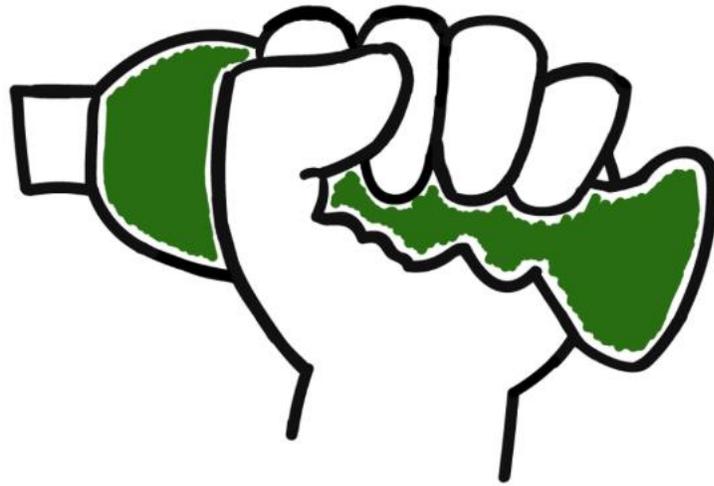
Plastic is useful!

- Hygiene
- Prevention of Food Waste
- Low weight = Low Co2 emissions when shipping
- Convenient
- Safety
- Efficiency



Morrisons ditches cucumber sleeves between March and October when the cucumbers are being sourced from British growers. From November to February, they are imported from Spain and Greece, in which they need plastic to keep them fresh.

plastic-Free



Sussex

If we ban all single use plastic...

- It could restrict science research at Sussex
 - Other materials such as bioplastics will probably be brought in = lack of infrastructure to deal with these
- It could be inaccessible for some. Plastic bottles are cheap and aren't necessarily single use, it's just how we consume the item.
- More glass and metal drinks containers = more Co2 emissions from shipping
 - Will the ban be invisible? Is it just greenwashing?

Environmental concern, nudging and policy implementation will lead to behaviour change...

FOR STUDENT CHANGE:

More funding into well thought out, university wide campaigns about single use ITEMS and consumption

FOR STAFF CHANGE:

Implement policies where departments are taxed for unnecessary plastic and are held accountable for every plastic procurement

Changing the culture of consumerism

Staff

University Procurement Guidelines for Departments and Partners (SU, Sussex Food and SEF):

What are unnecessary items?

Can it be reused?

Can it be recycled?

Have you contacted suppliers asking for no unnecessary or recyclable packaging?

Provide evidence that there are no other alternatives



Students

Provide incentives for not buying single use items.

Educating people on the impacts they are having by buying single use products.

Taxes on single use items will change people's behaviour towards the value of the material.

A University and student-led campaign will access all communities at the university.

The Nudge Theory: A campus wide change

The nudge theory proposes that we use the underlying subconscious processes influencing our decision making to “nudge” individuals in the direction that would be best for their well-being
(Thaler & Sunstein, 2009)



Most of our single use items are in our existing shop outlets
(SU Shop and the Co-Op)

Using the Nudge Theory as a solution:

Change shop layouts with re fill stations (coffee machines, cold water fountains, soft drink pumps)

and zero waste options at the front of the store. These would need to be subsidised by the University if they are more expensive than their single use item competitor.

Single use items will have their own isle titled 'single use items'.

Make reusing the norm and single use a luxury.



How do we go about campaigning and making it an integral structure in every single Sussex student and staff's day to day life?

Is this realistic in a 5 year time frame? If not, why?

Moving Forward/Backward

Why can't we have fresh produce shops on campus?

Does Sussex have bigger fish to fry?

Do you agree/disagree that consumption campaigning is more important than plastic campaigning?



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Mobility

Charlotte Rae

Lecturer, Psychology



The climate impact of academic flying... and what can we do about it?

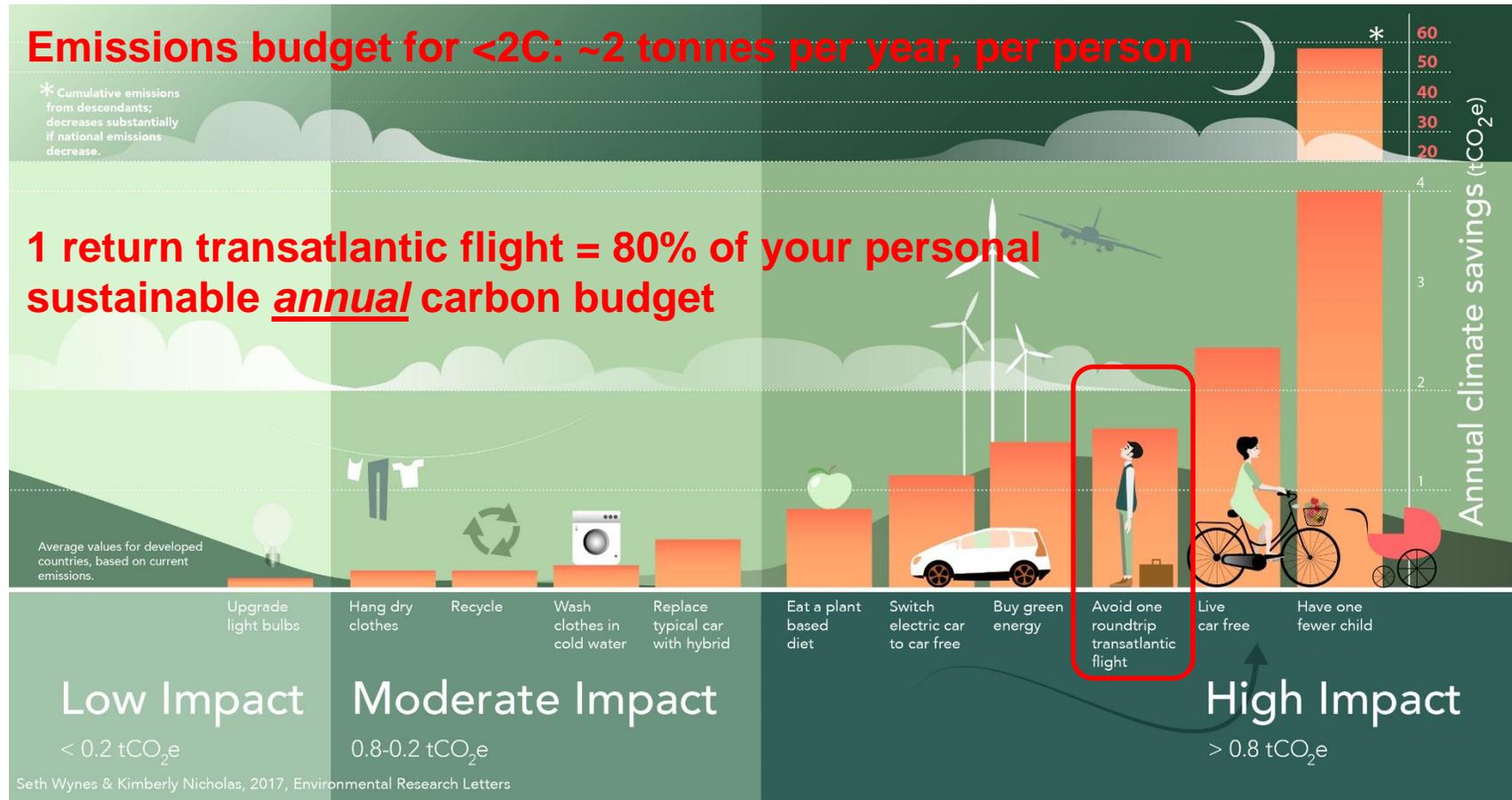
Dr Charlotte Rae
School of Psychology

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@NeuroRae

www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/abc-lab/climate-change



Why is air travel a problem?



Wynes & Nicholas (2017) *Environmental Research Letters*

Slide adapted from Kim Nicholas <https://www.slideshare.net/kimberlynicholas/academic-flying>

Why do academics fly?

- Conferences
- Invited talks
- Examine PhD vivas
- Collaborations
- Field work

Cultural narrative that these are crucial to career success

However, recent evidence suggests:

No relationship between air travel and metrics of academic productivity & influence - publications & citation rates*

*Wynes et al (2019) *Journal of Cleaner Production*

How frequently do we fly?

Example new Lecturer

- Conferences: 1-2 a year
 - Invited talks: 1-2 a year
- = 5 tonnes CO₂

Example Professor

<https://flightlessprofessors.org>

10-15 flights a year
= 20 tonnes CO₂

15% of UK residents take 70% of flights.

50% of UK residents did not fly at all last year.

>80% of the world has never flown.*

Estimates for aviation's contribution to global emissions are 2-10%.

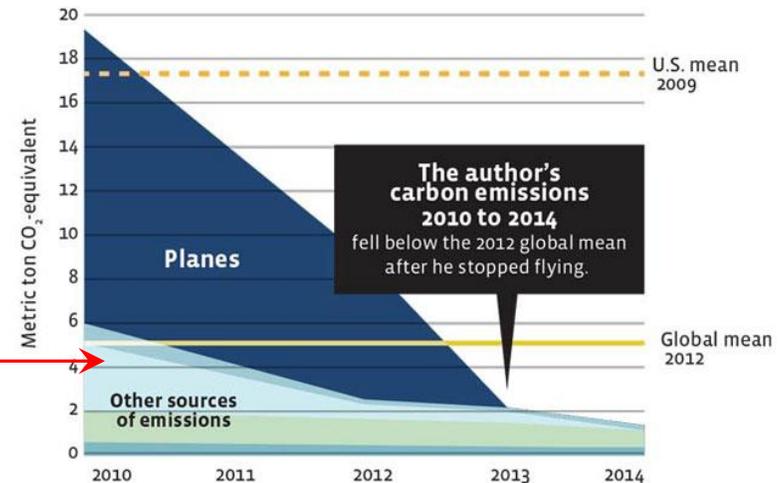
That's because most of the world never gets on a plane.

**Reasons to be Cheerful Podcast* episode 110, October 2019

Why is reducing flying so important?

Carbon footprint of Dr Peter Kalmus (climate scientist), before & after they stopped flying.

going vegetarian →



Reducing flying is the single biggest action one individual can take.

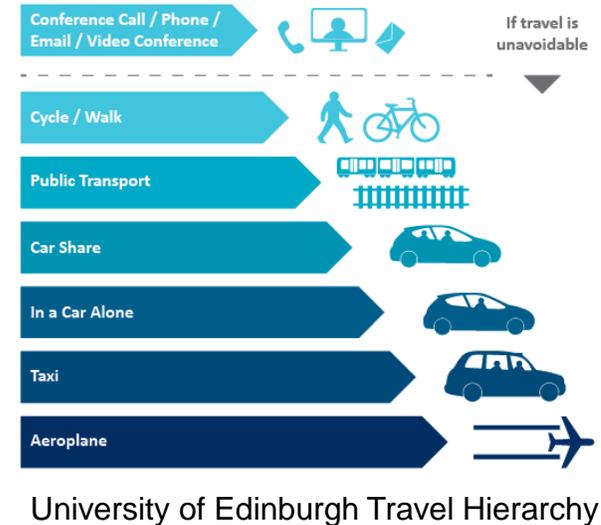
(See #flyingless FAQ, <https://academicflyingblog.wordpress.com/>)

Can't I just offset?

- Now widely acknowledged to be very problematic
- Tree-planting, energy efficiency – all needs to happen anyway
- Trees will not absorb amount needed fast enough for IPCC targets
- Poorly regulated industry
- ...enables us to continue 'business as usual' and avoid confronting the 'inconvenient truth'...

What are our other options?

- Remote presenting, video-conferencing
- Train (10-20% carbon footprint of flight)
- Combine trips



Some flying will still be necessary, by some staff...

...but we need to much more carefully assess the potential benefits in light of the huge carbon costs

(See #flyingless FAQ, <https://academicflyingblog.wordpress.com/>)

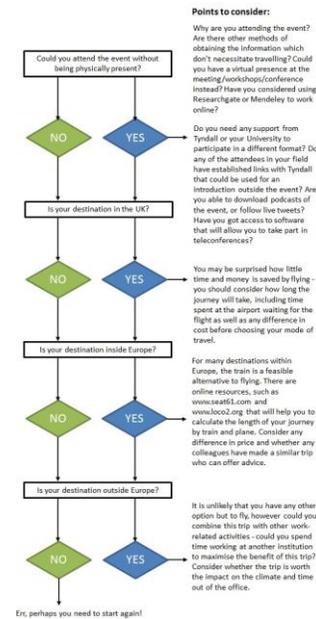
What are the barriers to sustainable travel?

- Remote presenting
facilities – at presenter's end, & audience's
- Train
time, £, organisation
- **Cultural expectations**

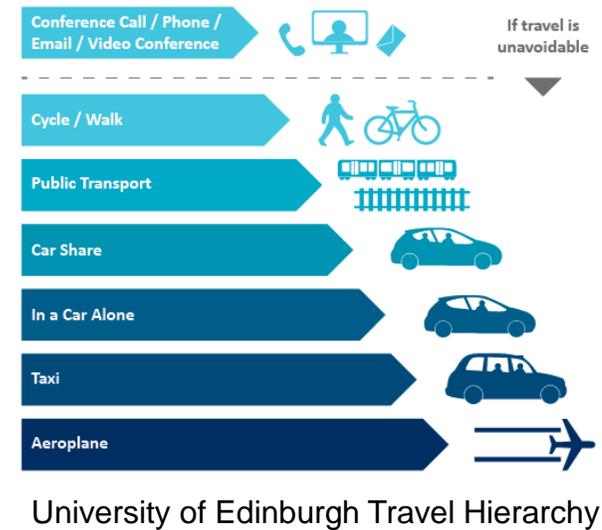
What could we do at Sussex?

Sustainable Staff Business Travel Policy

- Travel decision tree / hierarchy



Tyndall Centre Decision Tree



What could we do at Sussex?

Sustainable Staff Business Travel Policy

- Travel decision tree / hierarchy



- Remote presenting facilities:

both for us to present remotely,

and to host remote speakers from other institutions

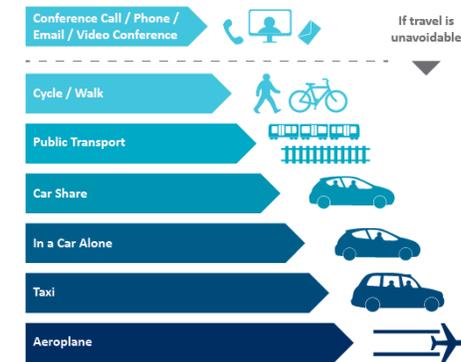


- Train-over-plane travel fund scheme



- Frequent flyer levy

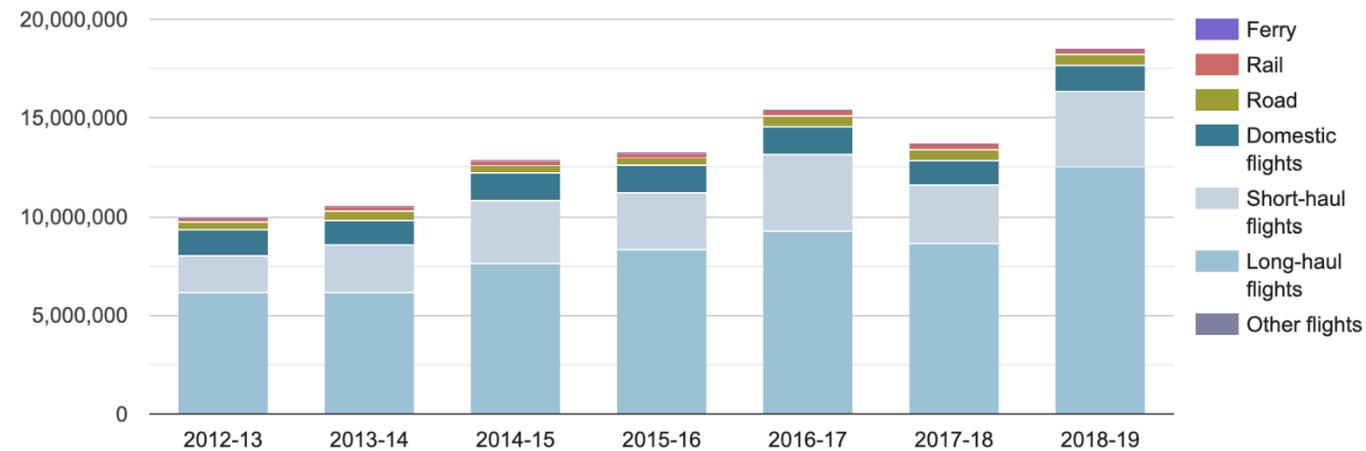
increasing surcharge with each additional flight per year*



*Reasons to be Cheerful Podcast episode 110, October 2019

What are other universities doing?

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH



Kilograms CO₂e / Academic year

To see the report for a particular year, **click on the column.**

CARBON EMISSIONS

COST

DISTANCE

COUNT

What are other universities doing?



LUCSUS
CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABILITY
STUDIES

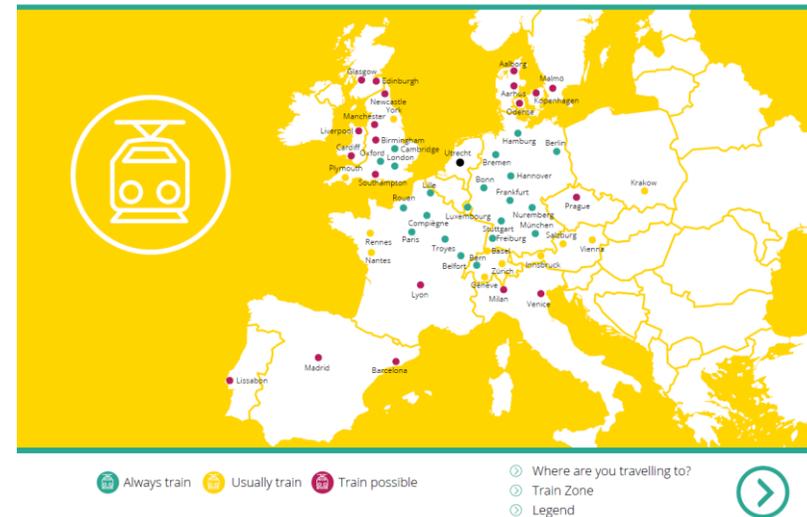


Utrecht University

- Track carbon emissions
- Personal reduction targets
- Destination <12 hours: train
- Planned train-over-plane fund



The Train Zone map



Caveats & intersectionality issues

Caveats

- I'm from UK; I don't do fieldwork; I'm faculty

Intersectionality

- Reducing travel: different impacts on faculty (who have job security), versus early-career researcher (building networks)
- Remote digital interactions: foster participation of those who can't travel for family, health, personal reasons
- Sussex is an International University with a vibrant & diverse staff – and student – population (which is really important)

Importance of social norming

- Cultural expectations cue our behaviour
- Change culture: change behaviour
- This is what has more impact from your individual action (reducing your own flying), rather than the actual emissions themselves
- Gives politicians and other sectors a mandate for action
- Other universities are talking about this too...

Sussex Strategy 2025

DISRUPTIVE
BY DESIGN

Designed to be different, the University of Sussex has a distinguished tradition of disruptive and experimental interventions.

kindness

integrity

inclusion

collaboration

courage

The climate impact of academic flying... and what can we do about it?

Dr Charlotte Rae
School of Psychology

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www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/abc-lab/climate-change



Resources – footprint of (academic) flying

Kim Nicholas (Lund University): slides on academic flying

<https://www.slideshare.net/kimberlynicholas/academic-flying>

#flyingless FAQ

<https://academicflyingblog.wordpress.com/>

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1URRRh4zMSpvtZY08F9-Rkx0qkNNmfzIzqOlqZWKxkE/edit>

Reasons to be Cheerful podcast, episode 110, '(F)air miles: the case for a frequent flyer tax'

<https://www.cheerfulpodcast.com/rtbc-episodes/fair-miles>

#FlightFree2020

<https://flightfree.co.uk/>

Resources – other universities

Tyndall Centre Travel Strategy

<https://www.tyndall.ac.uk/travel-strategy>

Edinburgh Business Travel

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/what-we-do/travel/business-travel-outside-edinburgh>

Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies

https://www.lucsus.lu.se/sites/lucsus.lu.se/files/lucsus_travel_policy.pdf

Utrecht Travel Differently

<https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/sustainable-uu/travel-differently>

Tyndall Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct to support a low-carbon research culture:

- **Monitor and reduce.** I will keep track of the carbon emissions of my professional activities, and set personal objectives to reduce them in line with or larger than my country's carbon emissions commitments (see 'Set your targets below).
- **Account and justify.** I will justify my travel considering the location and purpose of the event, my level of seniority, and the alternative options available.
- **Prioritise, prepare and replace.** For activities that I organise, I will chose the location giving high priority to a low carbon footprint of travel of the participants, and I will encourage, incorporate and technically support online speakers and webcasts to reduce unnecessary travel.
- **Encourage and stimulate.** I will resist my own FoMo (Fear of Missing Out) from not attending everything and work towards sensitizing others to the need of the research community to walk the talk on climate change.
- **Reward.** I will work with my peers, Institute and Funders to value alternative metrics of success and encourage the promotion of low-carbon research as a realisable alternative to a high-carbon research career.

Before you travel: Check the decision tree below. It will help you identify low-carbon travel alternatives and maximize the benefits of your travel emissions.

Decision Tree

<https://www.tyndall.ac.uk/travel-strategy>

Can't I just offset?

Kevin Anderson

(Ex-Director, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research UK)

“Offsetting is worse than doing nothing. It is without scientific legitimacy, is dangerously misleading, and almost certainly contributes to a net increase in the rate of global emissions growth.”

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