



BOLLINGTON CARBON REVOLUTION

Appendix 3: Saving Water

Introduction

Water is a limited resource and to manage this resource we should, in order of importance: reduce, reuse, recycle. It is usually easier to reduce use of any resource than find or produce more of it.

If considering an ecological footprint it should be remembered that water supply and sewage are a very small proportion of it – generally less than 2%. The direct energy cost of purifying and delivering water to households and cleaning it after it's been made dirty is equivalent to ~ 80kg of carbon dioxide emissions per household per year.

51% of water extracted is for domestic water and this is the fastest growing area for water demand. Each household uses 70% more water than it did 30 years ago. The best way to supply this increasing demand is for all of us to use less. Why?

- It will reduce demand to potable (drinking quality) water
- Reduces the environmental impact of purifying and transporting water
- Reduces demand for groundwater and threat to rivers of over-abstraction
- Improves sewage treatment
- Reduces water and sewerage bills
- United Utilities leaflet 'All about Water meters 2006-2007'
www.unitedutilities.com/resources/files/926_All%20about%20water%20meters%20.pdf

Method of research

Information on how Bollington can reduce its water consumption was gathered through the following sources:

- The researchers course work notes from her MSc Architecture: Advanced Environmental and Energy Studies
- The internet, in particular www.unitedutilities.com and www.waterwise.org.uk
- 'The Water Book' by Judith Thornton.

List of ideas

Install a water meter

77% of UK properties are not metered. Installing a water meter will, for many people, reduce their water bill. In the case example of this study, a property on Shrigley Rise with a Rateable Value of £555 paid £69.42 per month in water charges in 2004.

A water meter was fitted in November 2004 and the initial estimate of monthly water charges was given as £35.51/month. This was found to be too low and in 2006/7 the monthly charge is £53.72 per month, with a volume charge of £1.12 per cubic metre.

There is a Vulnerable Customer Scheme for metered households 2006-2007. If they receive certain benefits, have large family or member of household has medical condition which results in lots of water usage then can have bill capped at that of the average household. In 2006/7 this is £311. Further information can be found at:

www.unitedutilities.com/resources/files/1015_Vulnerable%20Customer_0607_for%20web.pdf

Use water wisely

United Utilities have produced a guide to using water wisely:

www.unitedutilities.com/resources/files/1016_A%20guide%20to%20using%20water%20wisely.pdf

Further water saving tips can be found at: www.waterwise.org.uk

Examples include:

1. Putting a save a flush bag in the toilet cistern could save you as much as 5000 litres per year.
2. Use a shower timer (like an egg timer) set for four minutes this dramatically raises awareness of water conservation.
3. Perform a simple water audit to calculate household water use. The result will determine where the biggest water savings can be made e.g. 35% in toilets
4. Do not leave tap on whilst brushing teeth
5. Use washing up bowl rather than washing up in sink
6. Think before using the hot tap. Depending on the plumbing system the 'deadleg' can waste 10 litres of water.
7. Buy A rated water appliances
8. Get a water butt to use for watering the garden
9. Water the roots and not the leaves of plants either early in the morning or in the evening – to avoid wastage

Challenge your surface water drainage charge

A reduction of your water bill can be requested for surface water drainage. This is rain and other water that falls on your property. Wastewater charges can be reduced if this does not drain into the public sewer.

Funding required

Funding to supply householders with information and free water hippos.

Recommendations for action

1. Information should be made available to householders on how to make both cost and water savings
2. As part of this householders should be encouraged to undertake a household water audit to see where water savings can be made

Possible methods of collecting data

The objective is to collect data to demonstrate impact and improvement.

1. A household water audit could be included in a pack for schools for the children to audit their home
2. If an exemplar building goes ahead in Bollington (maybe the restoration of the old toilet block beside the bus terminus at Ingersley Road) it could have highly efficient water appliances, eg. waterless or reduced flushing urinal, spray fittings on taps (reduces water usage -80% and hands are wet)