

Week five – shopping thoughtfully

One of the advantages of living in a free market economy is that we have choices about what we buy and how we buy it. What we often lack is information about how things are produced and a full understanding of the implications of a particular product choice (materials used, expected working life of the product, practicality of repair). By exercising informed choice we put pressure on producers to work in more environmentally conscious ways.

Actions

Choose two or three of these:

- Buy only what you need
- Repair and reuse rather than replace
- Check through the products you bought last year. How useful were they?
- Buy second-hand goods
- Make a list before you shop for food/household goods to avoid buying things you don't need
- Cook from primary ingredients (e.g. use fresh vegetables rather than processed food)
- Use the Mailing Preference Service to remove your name from junk mail lists
- Subscribe to a magazine like *Ethical Consumer*
- Eat vegetarian
- Eat vegan

Researching and campaigning

Choose one of these:

- Research the environmental behaviour/records of the companies you buy things from
- Write to your MP about improving labelling information on food and household goods