

# EMERGENCY!

Cartoons about climate change  
by young people in Westminster





Andia

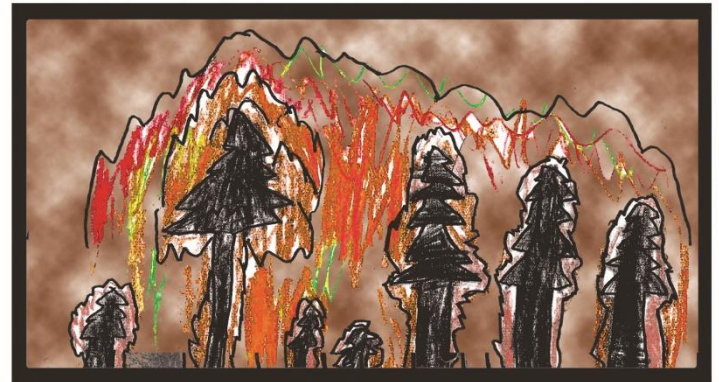


Julietta

Almost every day our TV news carries reports about weather-related catastrophes around the world.



Kane



Gabriel



Khalon



Christopher

Fires rage out of control.



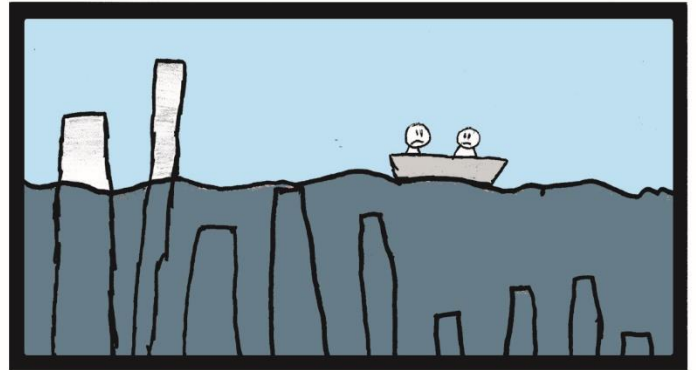
Gracie



Jethro



Danny



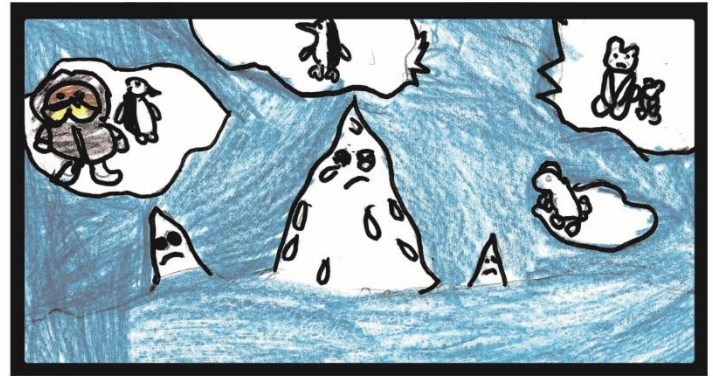
Zaid

Storms cause devastating floods.





Julia



Maja

The polar ice caps are melting. Summers can be very cold. But what is causing this to happen?



Rie-Rie



Cairo

# What is Climate Change?

'Climate' describes the type of weather we expect to have in a particular area. We think of the North Pole as having a cold climate, and continents near the equator as having a hot climate.

The UK has always been in the middle - sometimes hot, sometimes cold, but mostly inbetween.

Over the last fifty years things have begun to change. Temperatures around the world have increased faster than they ever have before. 2019, 2020 and 2022 were the three hottest years ever recorded. When the atmosphere heats up it has an effect on the climate. The ice at the North and South Poles has begun to melt, which raises the sea-level and has led to flooding. Hot countries have got even hotter, causing devastating fires and drought.



Seva



Salma



Soje



Maya

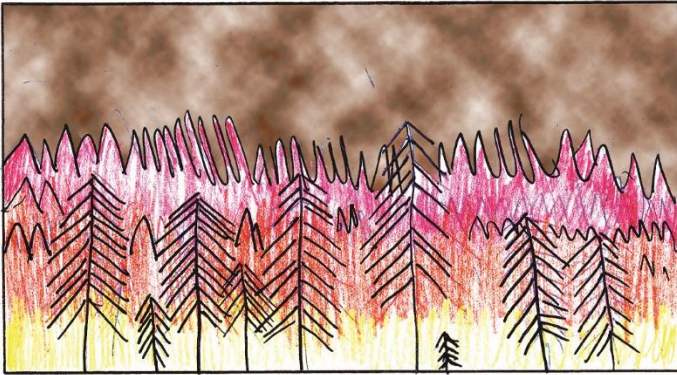
Experts agree that, globally, 2023 was the hottest year on record and that July was probably the hottest month in 120,000 years. The UK missed most of it but just a few hundred miles away in Europe killer heat and extreme weather destroyed lives and livelihoods.



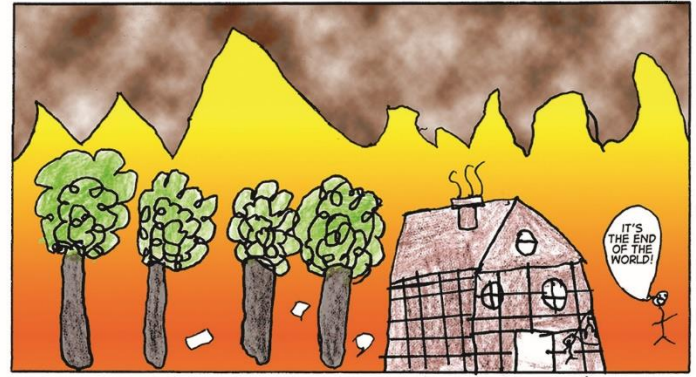
Ishy



Ikhlos

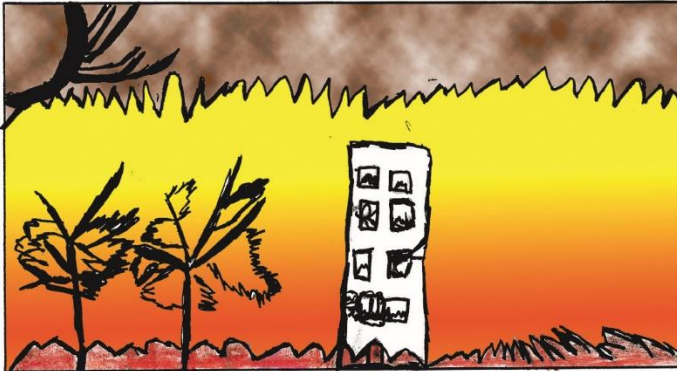


Hebe



Yasin

Extreme heat also affects plants and animals. Droughts destroy millions of crops, making the food still available more expensive. Pets can suffer, especially if left without water. Fever-carrying mosquitoes and huge spiders could become common in the UK by 2040 if our climate continues to get warmer.



Kris



Fawa





Haysan

During a heatwave trees, grass and vegetation become so dry that the slightest spark can set off fires that might spread across a massive area. In 2022 the UK's temperature reached 40° C. Firefighters in London battled 12 fires in one day, and over 20 million square metres of land were affected.



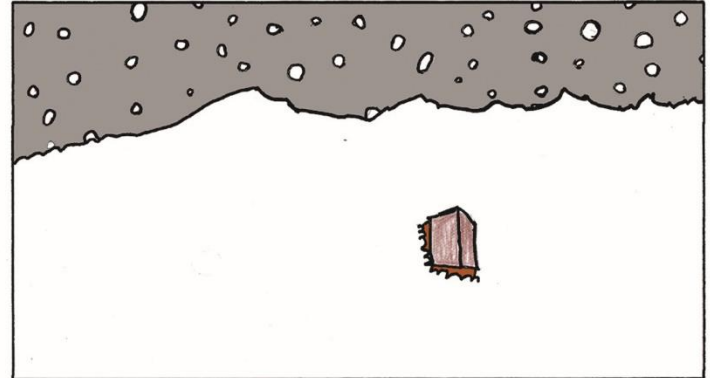
Omar



Dani



Ayan



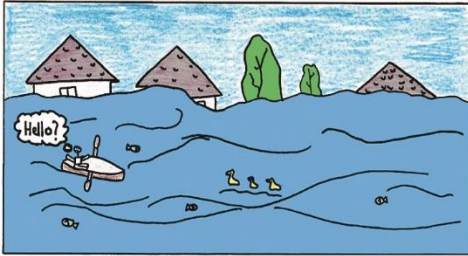
Aya

Global warming not only causes fires, droughts and flooding, it can actually make parts of the Earth colder.

As the North and South poles warm up, cold air is pushed away, reaching countries nearer to the equator. In 2023 cold air from the north reached the UK earlier than predicted, making November far colder than usual and bringing the earliest snowfalls in 15 years.

In early 2023 over two metres of snow fell in some parts of California USA, the biggest snowfall ever recorded in what is usually one of the country's warmest states. This pattern has repeated in other countries around the world that are not expecting or prepared for extreme snow events.

Our planet's climate has always changed (in the time of the dinosaurs Britain had tropical weather) but these changes happened slowly over thousands of years. Now our climate is changing at a much faster rate than at any time in Earth's history.



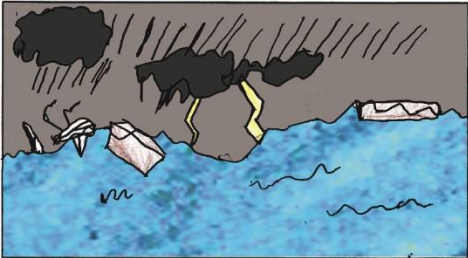
Maria



Jessica



Maya

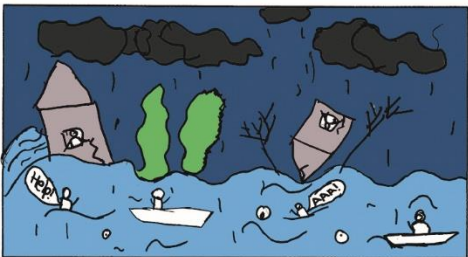


Belal

As our atmosphere gets warmer ice and snow at the North and South Poles begins to melt, raising the sea-level. This has caused floods affecting people that live near rivers and the sea.



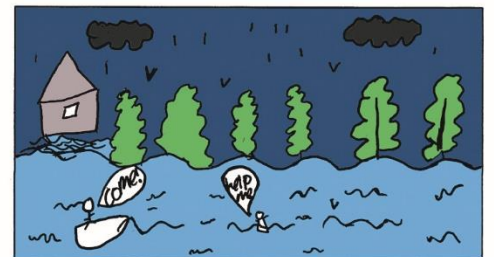
Oscar



Sofia



Etan



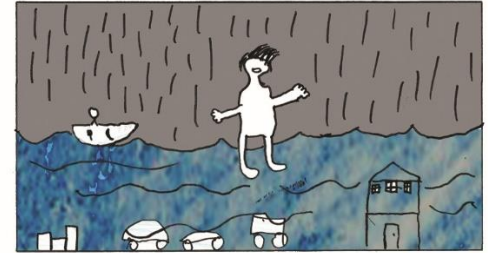
Alia



Lily



Jamal



Konstantinos

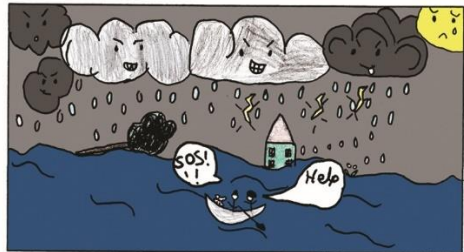


Tommy

As oceans warm up more water evaporates into the atmosphere, forming giant rainclouds that can release a year's rain in one day.



Oscar



Rayya



Janna



Joseph



Yui



Rion

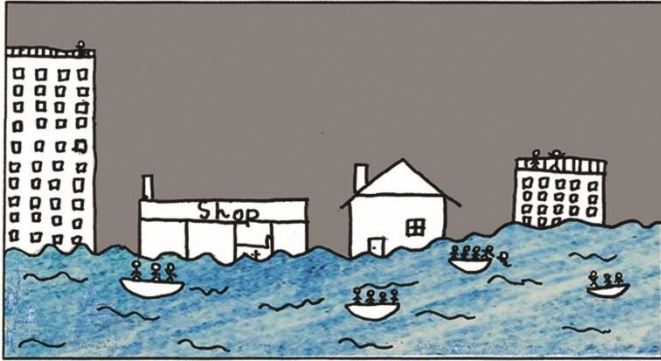
Climate change has disturbed the atmosphere so much that heavy storms and hurricanes have become more common, another cause of flooding and harm to lives and property.



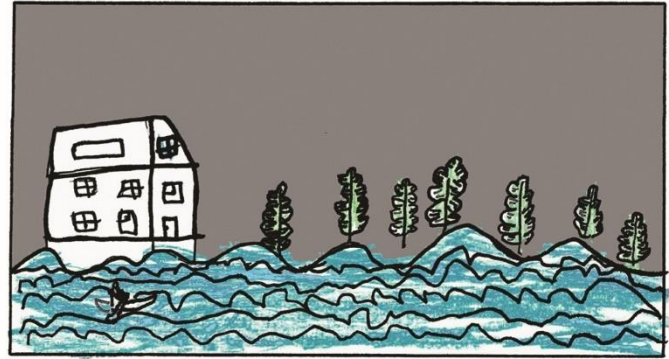
Amaan



Hayden



Daichi



Vova

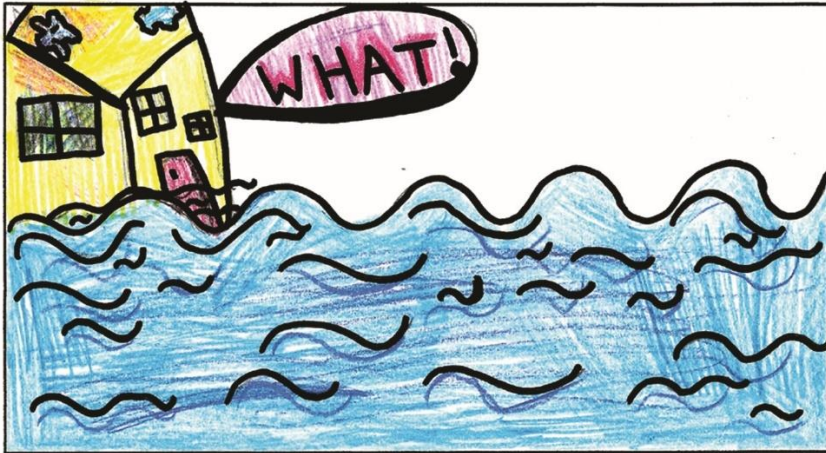
2022 and 2023 saw major flooding in countries around the world, including Australia, Brazil, Pakistan, South Africa, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Nigeria, Italy, Greece, The Phillipines, Turkey, Libya, USA and the UK. Millions of people were affected and thousands lost their lives.



Kian



Jon

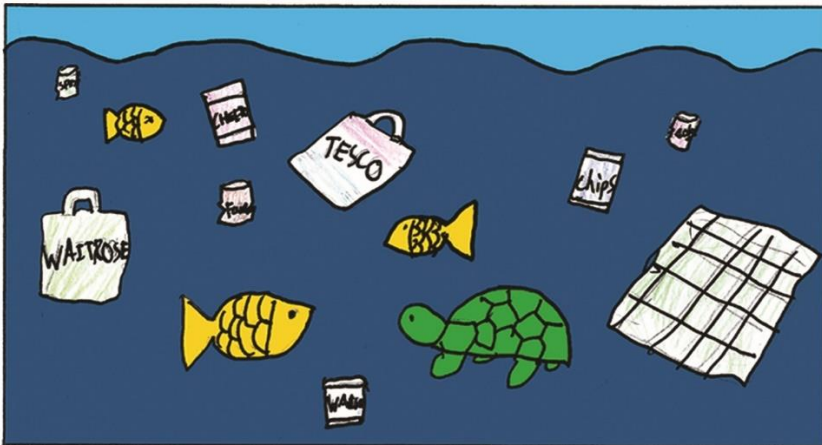


Ellie



Sofiya

When flood waters return to lakes, rivers and the sea they take with them a lot of the mess created by their damage, which is harmful to fish and other marine life.



Rina



Salima

# What causes Climate Change?

There are two main causes of man-made climate change: greenhouse gases and carbon emissions.

## Greenhouse gases

A greenhouse is a building made of glass that we use to grow plants that need a warmer climate than the UK's. The glass in a greenhouse allows warm sunlight in and then traps it, making the air inside hotter. 'Greenhouse gases' exist high up in the atmosphere and trap heat in a similar manner all around the Earth.

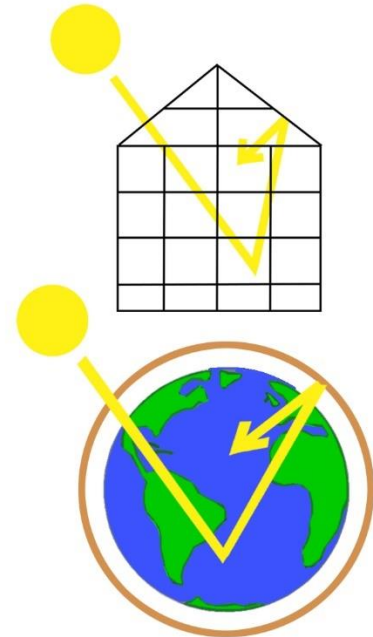
## Carbon emissions

Carbon emissions come from fossil fuels (wood, coal, oil, petrol) that all contain carbon. When it escapes - is emitted - as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) it rises through the atmosphere and forms an invisible blanket over the world.

Another greenhouse gas is methane, which has 25 times the warming power of carbon dioxide.

Both of these do occur naturally and without them the Earth would be too cold to support life. But these gases are also created by human activities and because of this the amount of carbon dioxide and methane has increased by 50% over the last 250 years.

Experts think that this has caused our atmosphere to heat up and our climate to change more quickly.





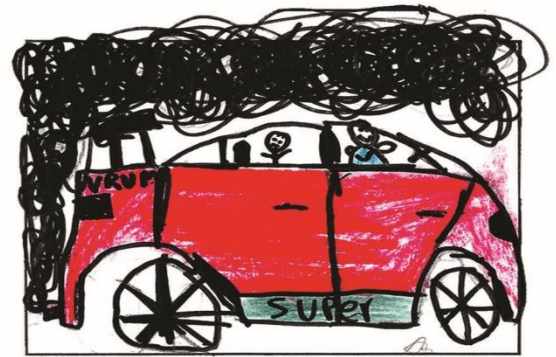
Whenever we burn something - wood, coal, oil, paper, petrol, etc - the smoke released into the atmosphere contains carbon dioxide. An ordinary barbecue won't cause any harm to the environment (unless sparks from it start a fire in dry conditions) but petrol-driven vehicles produce thousands of times more smoke, and have been doing so all around the world for 120 years.



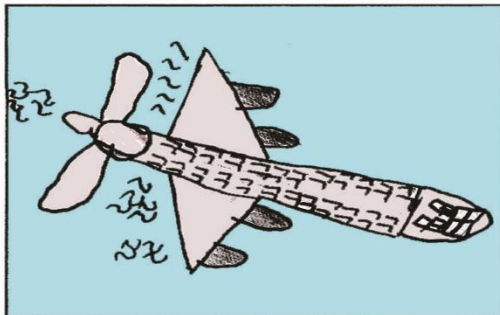
Chamil



Elise

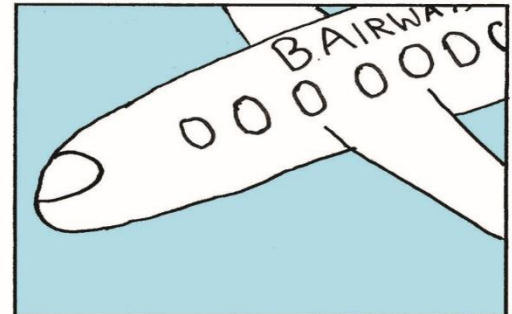


Seva

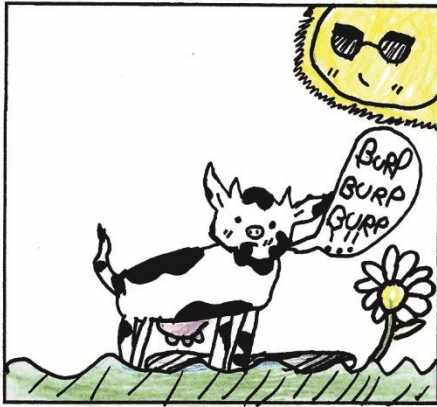


Kian

One return flight from the UK to the USA emits as much carbon as heating your house for an entire year.



Hebe



Rayya

### **Where does methane come from?**

Methane is emitted by rotting vegetation, but the main source is animals, mainly cows. When cows digest grass it releases methane into their stomach, causing cows to burp every 90 seconds.

There are roughly 1.5 billion cows on the planet, burping out nearly 700 billion litres of methane every day.

The excessive demand for beef in the fast food industry has led to so many cattle being reared over the last 100 years.

### **What are Fossil Fuels?**

Fossil fuels are made from plants and animals that decomposed millions of years ago. They are found deep underground and take the form of coal, oil, and natural gas, the main sources of carbon emissions.



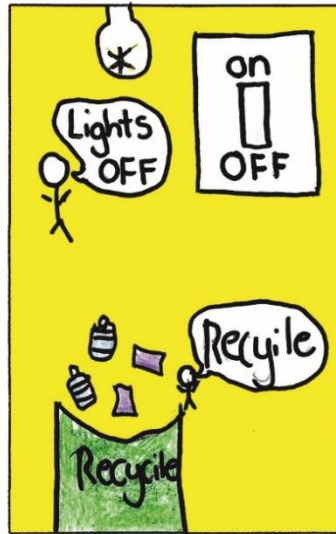
# How can we limit climate change?

While governments around the world argue about how to prevent the Earth getting any hotter, what we all learned from the Covid pandemic is that if each and every one of us make lifestyle changes we can help to reverse a global catastrophe.

Here are some suggestions from young people in Westminster.



Elise



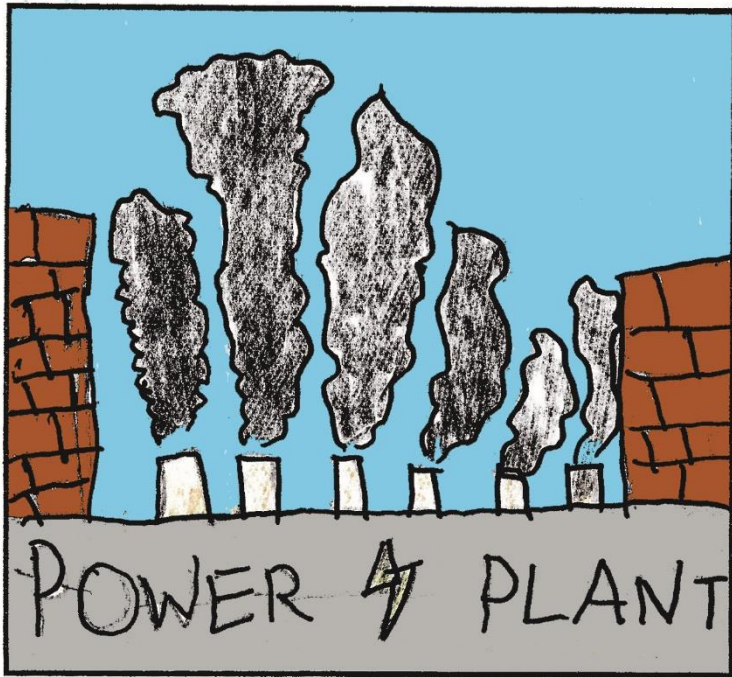
Jessica

## Recycling

There are lots of things we can now put into recycle bins at home or in the street: paper, cardboard, glass, many plastics - they can all be crushed up and made into new items such as cups, food containers, bottles, books, toilet paper, newspapers, comics, using far less energy than making them from scratch.

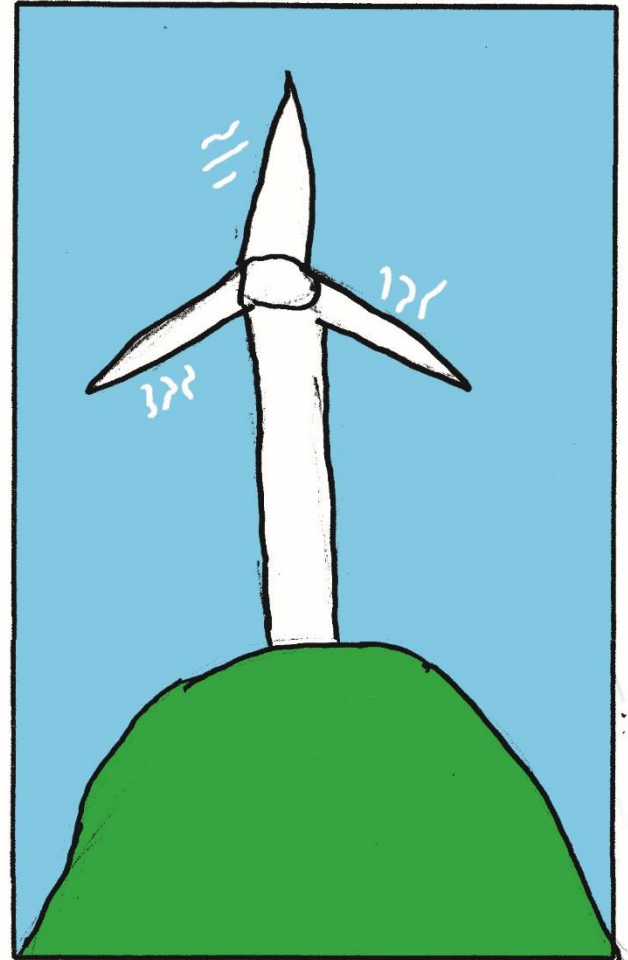
## Saving Energy

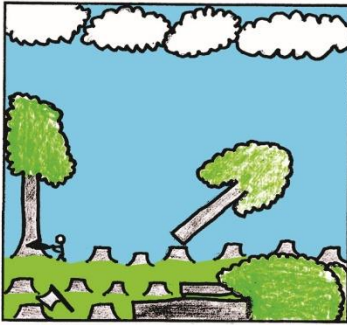
Simply turning off lights and appliances such as TVs and computers when they're not in use reduces the amount of carbon that power stations release into the atmosphere.



Ayan

Coal powered energy plants pour tens of millions of tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere every year, but with wind farms there are none, and wind provided 27% of the UK's energy in 2022. More wind farms around our coast will eventually allow us to phase out coal altogether.





Daichi



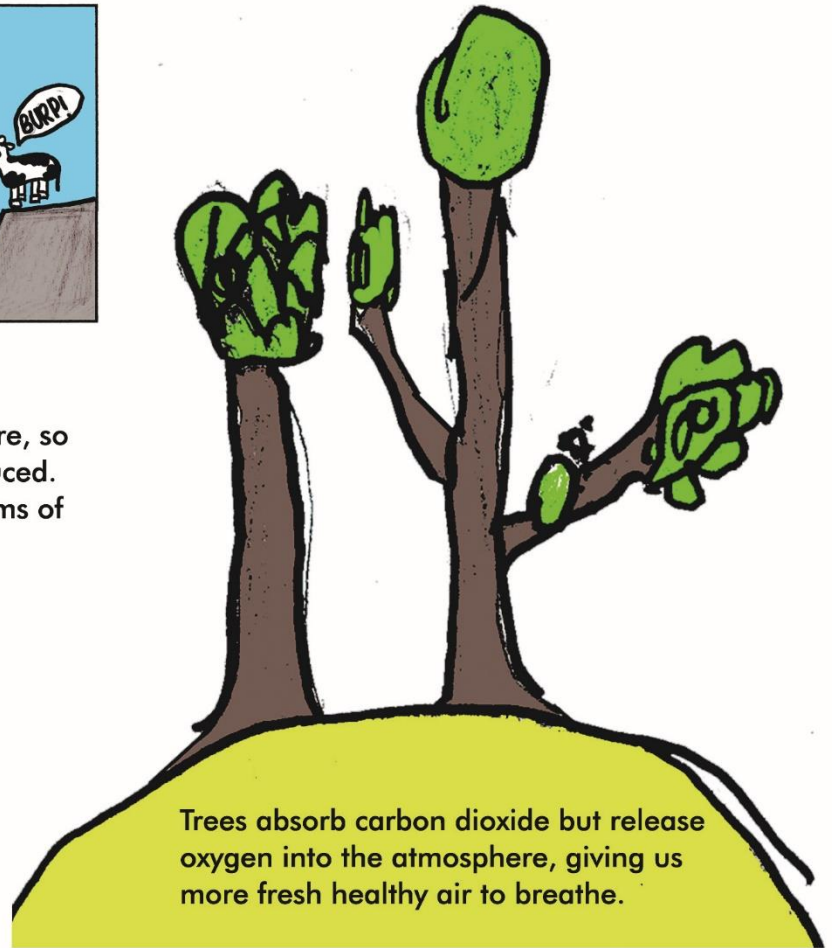
Lily

### Save Trees

Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, so the more trees we have the more carbon is reduced. In a year, one single tree can absorb 22 kilograms of carbon dioxide.

Having fewer trees increases the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. Trees are usually removed for three reasons: to create fields for raising sheep and cattle; to be turned into paper, cardboard and timber; to make way for train lines, and motorways.

Reducing the amount of meat we consume, recycling paper and re-using wood, and improving existing roads and railways will all help us to keep more trees.

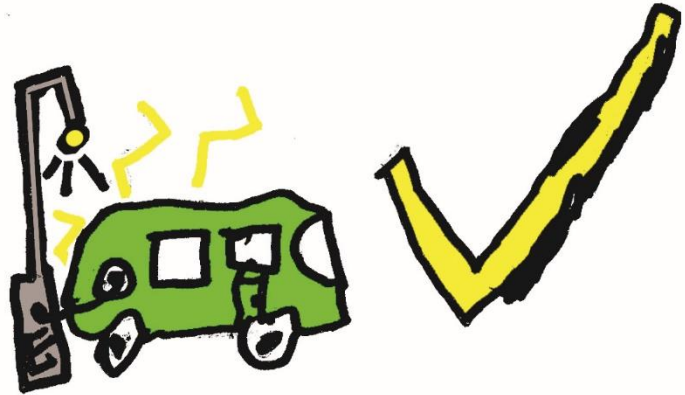


Trees absorb carbon dioxide but release oxygen into the atmosphere, giving us more fresh healthy air to breathe.

Omar

## Electric Vehicles

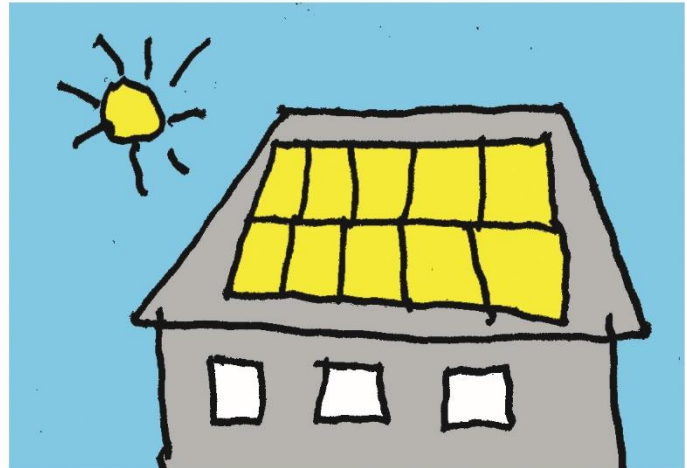
Some London buses have run on electric power for several years, and recently electric cars have become more popular. They release no carbon filled exhaust fumes or any of the other chemicals that are bad for our health. There are street-side charging points being installed across London, often built into lamp-posts and the cars are on average £600 cheaper to run than petrol-driven vehicles.



Tommy

## Solar Panels

These can be fixed on top of buildings and they convert sunlight into electricity without producing any harmful greenhouse gases.



Stephen

# Westminster's Climate Emergency Action Plan

We've learned about the causes of Climate Change, the effects of Climate Change and what we can all do to try and slow it down. Westminster Council has plans of its own.

Westminster's Climate Emergency Plan aims to reduce carbon emissions to zero by the year 2040. Here are just a few of the plans in place.

## Energy Efficient Buildings

Work is underway to improve buildings so that they do not need to use as much gas or electricity created by power stations.

## Solar Panels

There will be more solar panels installed on rooftops across the city. These store the sun's energy and convert it into electricity with no carbon emissions.

## Transport

More pedestrian areas and bike lanes, encouraging people to walk, cycle or use e-cycles to get around. Increasing the number of charging points for electric vehicles so that there are 1500 across Westminster. Switching all council collection and delivery vehicles to electric models.



Amelia

You can find out about all of Westminster's plans here: [www.westminster.gov.uk](http://www.westminster.gov.uk)

# EMERGENCY!

In 2023, pupils from St Edward's Catholic Primary School in Marylebone, and Barrow Hill Junior School in St John's Wood came to The Cartoon Museum to discuss Climate Change - its causes, effects and potential remedies.

They put their thoughts down as cartoons, and this booklet is the end result.

Produced with the generous support of Westminster's Community and Culture Fund.

The Cartoon Museum is committed to making the world more climate-conscious through our exhibitions and projects. In 2023 we participated in the Mayor's Business Climate Challenge and reduced our own carbon emissions by over 10%.

