

York Quakers meet the challenges of sustainability
A Report by the Sustainability Group

Cleanliness may, or may not, be next to godliness, but for F/friends in York AM cleanliness is high on the agenda regarding sustainability.

Changes Here are just some of the changes that people are making to keep clean sustainably and ethically:

- Using soap bars instead of handwash, using solid shampoo and rock crystal deodorant, to reduce the use of plastic.
- Changing to bamboo, instead of plastic, toothbrushes and using chemical-free toothpaste.
- Buying ecology-friendly cleaning materials.
- Using period pants or moon cups instead of disposable tampons, pads and liners.
- Washing on low-temperature cycles to save energy.
- Reducing microplastics in the environment by washing acrylics less often.
- Washing less often, using showers or sharing baths to save water and energy for heating ... remember the Government campaign in the 1976 drought to 'Save water, bath with a friend', and the arguments over who gets the tap end?

Difficulties But making these changes is not challenge-free. Here are some of the issues that F/friends have shared:

- Finding ethically produced cleaning products that are not harming wildlife or habitats, especially products that do not use irresponsibly produced palm oil.
- Avoiding single-use plastic packaging, and finding shops that refill bottles with cleaning materials, or use paper, card or tin packaging, or sell unpackaged products.
- It takes longer to shop, reading labels with ingredients in tiny print.

- The cost of some products makes the sustainable choice unaffordable where the budget is tight.

Ideas And here are some ideas from F/friends to think about:

- Shop where you can refill bottles and take your own boxes, such as Bishy Weigh on Bishopthorpe Road...or encourage your local shop to offer this.
- Use solid soap and shampoo instead of bottles.
- Use period pants instead of tampons, such as Modibodi.
- Use an eco-laundry bag, Guppy bag for example.
- Make-your-own shampoo, body lotion, disinfectant or washing powder.

“ ” In F/friends' own words:

'We haven't looked at microplastics ... but should do.'

'Many Friends operate on a philosophy of 'do I need it' rather than 'do I want it' and recognise the trap of using or buying things to try and improve mood.'

'Small actions can be meaningful, intentional and 'beautiful'. It reminds me of that saying by Margaret Mead about 'Small actions by small groups of people...being the only thing that ever changed the world'. Let's hear it for small people doing small things that might make an impact somewhere at sometime!'

Prepared by:
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