



News from Westminster

16th March 2007 Phil Hope MP

Labour's commitment to tackle climate change

The evidence that human activity is changing our climate becomes more compelling by the week. So is the knowledge of the disastrous effects it will have on our lives – but more importantly of our children and their children - if we don't act.

Nor do we have much time. There may be as little as a decade to stop adding to the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere before it's too late to prevent irreversible climate change.

I can promise that this Government is taking action.

Our Climate Change Bill announced this week is the first of its kind in any country. It will further help Britain move towards a low carbon economy by putting a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 onto the statutory book.

Because this is a long-term problem, we will also put a target to reduce this country's emissions by 60 per cent in 2050 into law. We will make sure that we get to these ambitious reductions by introducing statutory carbon budgets that will run over a five-year-long period and robust annual reporting to Parliament to make sure that we do not fall behind. We will also create an independent authority that will work with Government to deliver these targets.

We need tougher standards on insulation and to stop wastage from light bulbs, fridges and televisions and computers on standby.

As Gordon Brown has announced, we are committed to give people more information about their energy bills and encourage them to take up "smart meters" so they now how much energy they consume. So when you leave your lights on, you know how much it will cost you.

Our ambition does not stop there: within ten years, all new homes will have to be zero carbon and our aim if that every home for which it is practically possible will be low carbon.

Even little changes can make a big difference. See my "ten simple steps" below.

We all need to work together need if we want to tackle climate change.

If we succeed, then our children can look back with pride at our generation. I will vote for the Climate Change Bill - because as your MP it is my duty to help the Government succeed in tackling climate change.

10 simple steps

Everyone can do their bit to tackle climate change and make a big difference. Here are ten simple steps that everyone can do. For more information go to www.est.org.uk/commit/

1. Only boil as much water as you need. But remember to cover the element if you are using an electric kettle.
2. Turn your thermostat down by 1c. This could cut your heating bills by up to **10%**.
3. Don't leave appliances on **standby**.
4. Install cavity wall **insulation**. A third of the heat lost in an uninsulated home is through the walls. Cavity wall insulation is easy to fit and could save between £130 and £160 a year.
5. Top up your loft insulation to 270mm. It is so easy to install you can do it yourself. Its **not expensive** and could save as much as £180 to £220 a year.
6. Install **three energy saving lightbulbs** – they last up to 12 times longer than ordinary bulbs and could save up to £100 over the lifetime of the bulb.
7. Install a **condensing boiler**. An old boiler is usual a wasteful one. Replacing it with a condensing boiler could save a third on your heating bills.
8. Buy appliances with the **Energy Saving Recommended** logo.
9. Wash your laundry at 30c. This could save up to 40% of the energy of washing at higher temperatures.
10. Don't use the car for short journeys. Go for a walk instead!

New hope for mesothelioma sufferers

On Tuesday, new proposals were announced by Secretary of State for Work and Pensions John Hutton, to provide faster compensation to all people diagnosed with mesothelioma.

It is very good news that the government has committed to speed up compensation for sufferers of mesothelioma in Corby and East Northants.

Mesothelioma is a dreadful disease that devastates the lives of many people.

Currently too many people die before they get compensation, or they find they aren't eligible because they contracted the disease from living near a factory or being exposed to a relative who worked there, rather than working at the factory themselves.

That is an awful injustice, so I welcome the

government's commitment to get legislation through Parliament so everyone with mesothelioma can claim, irrespective of their employment history.

Currently only people who contract the disease from exposure to asbestos at work are eligible to claim a lump sum from the state. The new proposals would provide up-front financial support (within six weeks) to people who were previously not eligible, including those who were:

- exposed to asbestos from a relative (e.g. from their overalls);
- exposed to asbestos environmentally (e.g. lived near a factory using asbestos);
- self-employed; and
- those who can't trace their exposure to asbestos.

Top tips for top mums



Phil with young mums at the Family Matters group in Corby

Tackling overweight and obesity in children is complex because there are many factors which contribute to the problem.

I think we have been successful in raising awareness of the importance of good nutrition and exercise, putting that awareness into action has proved more difficult for some families in Corby and East Northants.

Thursday saw the launch of the Healthy Living Initiative, a new programme which I think will help families lead healthier lives.

The first element of the Healthy Living Initiative, 'Top Tips for Top Mums,' will help parents improve their children's diets and share their own experiences.

Over the next 12 months Labour will be announcing a series of initiatives which will link organisations across the public, manufacturing, retail and voluntary sectors to help support families to live a healthy life, based on a balanced diet and increased physical activity.

I'll let you posted about what we are doing to promote healthy eating.

Have a look for yourself on
www.5aday.nhs.uk