Charter for Climate Friendly Growing

WASTE Always remember the waste hierarchy before throwing something away.

Eliminate - prevent waste from going to landfill by avoiding creating it. Look at the sources of waste you have and think what you can eliminate from that.

Reduce - minimising the amount of waste that goes to landfill by using less of a wasteful product or by adapting wasteful processes. For example, using paper potters instead of plastic pots.

Reuse - using products that are well built and can be used over and over meaning that they don't go to waste. For example composting waste food and plants to create compost for next years growing.

Recycle - any waste that can be eliminated, reduced or reused should be recycled. Recycling is a last resort as it is energy intensive. For example some packaging can be recycled at doorstep collections.

CARBON What is it and how can it help our gardens?

Peat - peat bogs soak up carbon from the atmosphere and locks it away in the ground over million of years. When peat is extracted to be put into compost it releases the locked away carbon into the atmosphere, so its always best to use peat-free compost.

Biochar - is a created from coppiced plants, it is similar to charcoal. It is a really easy way to add carbon into the soil to help your plants grow. Often it can be bought from local coppice workers and garden centres.

Composting - plants use carbon as they grow and store it inside of them. By composting plants you can keep that carbon in your garden and use it to help grow plants in the future.

WATER Plants need water to grow but it is a precious resource. How can we protect it?

Rain water - Where possible collect the rain water off the roof of your house, shed or greenhouse and use it to water plants. They prefer it to tap water too.

Dusk and Dawn - if you water plants early in the morning or in the afternoon the water will get a chance to soak in before the sun is fully up which will evaporate the water.

Mulching - using an organic mulch like compost or bark mulch helps keep water in the soil.

Reduce watering - sometimes it is not necessary to water plants at all. Water can be saved by not watering the lawn and only watering borders when the really need it.

BIO-DIVERSITY We are lucky to share our gardens with wildlife. What can we do to keep wildlife happy?

Re-defining Perfect - Sometimes the most well-trimmed and neat gardens don't encourage wildlife. Leaving longer patches of grass or similar can create food and shelter for wildlife.

Gardening chemicals - some chemicals can be damaging to wildlife such as pesticides and fertilisers. Gardening chemicals can help in the garden but there are many wildlife friendly alternatives such as comphrey feed.

Habitats - gardens are a really good opportunity to allow wildlife to live in the city, thinking about creating habitats in your garden is a great way to encourage wildlife. It can be as simple as leaving perennial plants over the winter or installing a bird box.

ENERGY Everything we do requires energy including growing plants. What can we do to be climate friendly?

Plant miles - plants you buy in garden centres often have been grown all around the country or even the world which means lots of energy has been used in transporting them. Try and buy locally grown plants or grow your own from seed.

Plastic free - plant pots are made of thick plastic that uses lots of energy to make and to break down. Try using alternatives such as paper potters or reusing pots.

Single use plants - annual plants such as bedding plants that have to be grown again every year need a lot of energy to grow and transport. Try planting perennial plants that come back year after year.