

How we help to look after the environment

A report from the
Public Services
Ombudsman
for Wales



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Introduction



This report explains how the **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)** helps to look after the **environment**.



The **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)** is a government organisation that deals with complaints about public services.



Public services are provided by an organisation that is part of the government, like health services and local councils.



The **environment** is the world around us. It includes the air we breathe, the water in rivers and the sea, and all plants, trees and creatures.

Looking after the environment



All parts of the government must help to look after the environment.

This includes:



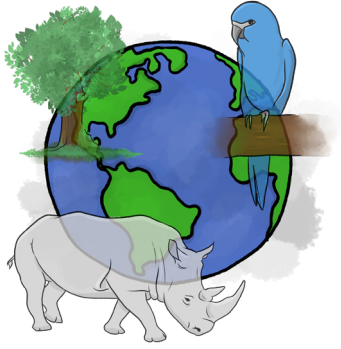
- Helping to protect the planet we live on, including all living things
- Not causing **pollution**
- Only buying things that can be **recycled**



Pollution is something that harms the space around us. For example dirty chemicals in the air. Noise, heat and light can also be types of pollution.

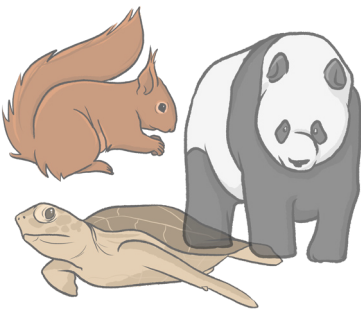


Recycled means turning rubbish into something new and useful.

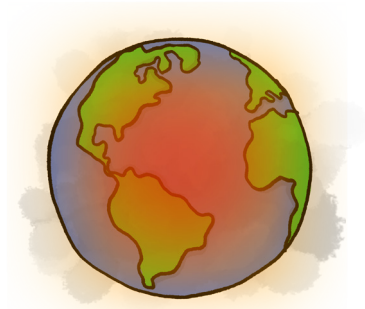


Why we have to look after the environment

In the last 50 years the world has lost a large number of creatures and plants.



Many types of animals and other creatures could die out very soon.



Pollution is making the whole world warm up.

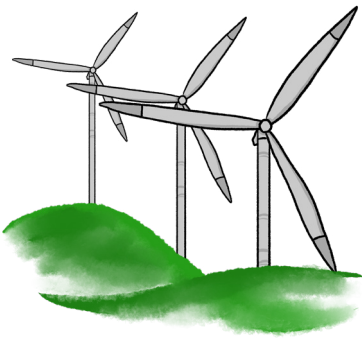


This is difficult for all living things and is causing more floods and storms.

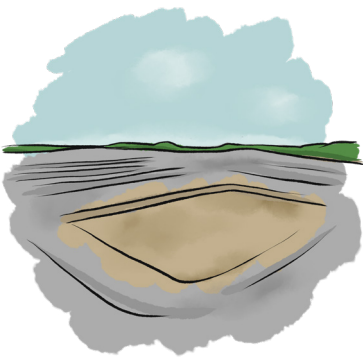


Electricity

A lot of electricity is made by burning oil or gas. This causes pollution.



Some electricity is made by the power of the sun and wind. This doesn't cause much pollution.



Recycling

In the past, most of our rubbish was put into big holes in the ground.

But there isn't enough space to carry on doing this.

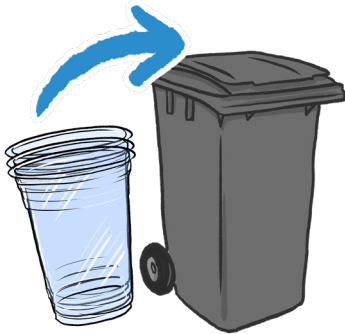


Some waste is burnt to make electricity, but this causes pollution.



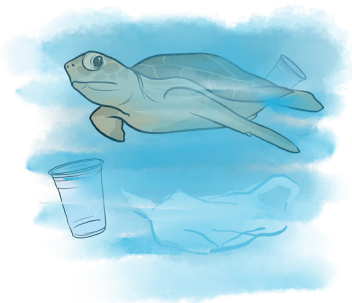
The best thing to do is recycle, and turn our rubbish into something new that is useful.

Plastic

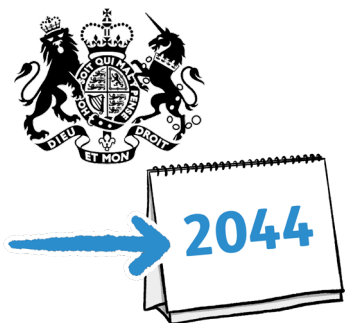


People use plastic for many different things.

A few types of plastic can be recycled, but most plastic is just thrown away.



Plastic waste is causing serious problems. It is damaging our environment and harming living creatures.

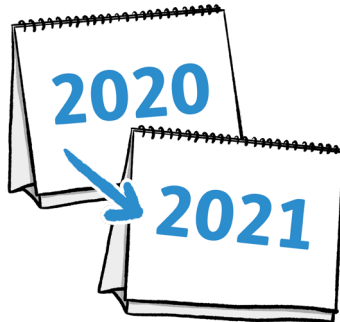


The government wants us all to stop using plastic in the next 25 years.

How we look after the environment



The Welsh Government says that we must:



1. Look at how our work affects the planet and living things

Our plans for the next 2 years include:



- Checking that we are looking after the environment with everything we do

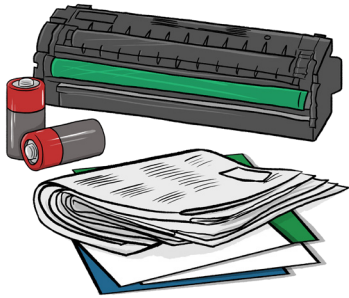


- Thinking about the environment when we buy things

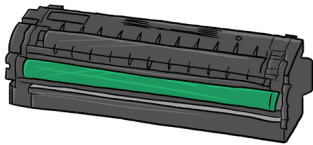


2. Stop making things harder for the planet and living things

The things we have been doing so far include:



- Changes in the office:
 - Recycling all our waste paper, batteries and **toner cartridges**



Toner cartridges contain the ink powder for:

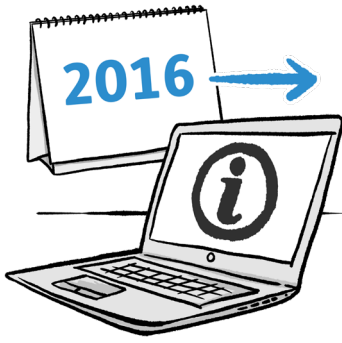
- Photocopy machines
- Computer printers



- Putting separate bins in our office for rubbish that can be recycled

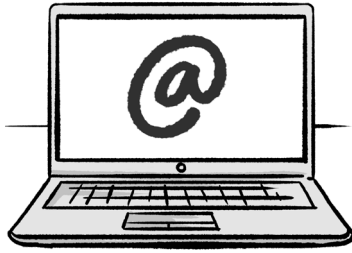


- Trying to stop using paper in the office.



Since 2016 we have:

- Put some of our records onto computers, so we don't need paper records



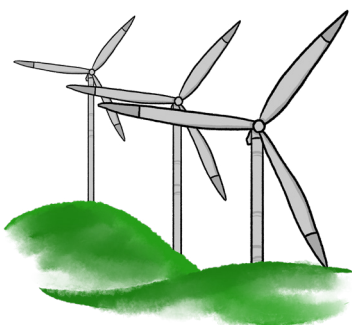
- Used email instead of letters to communicate with people



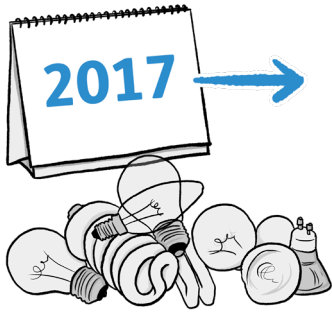
- Plastic cups:
 - We have stopped providing plastic cups and plastic bottles of water



- Staff have to use cups and glasses that can be washed and used again



- Heating our offices:
 - We are heating our offices with electricity. Some of this electricity will be made without causing pollution



- Lighting:
 - Since 2017 we have changed all our light bulbs to a type that uses a lot less electricity



- Travelling to work:
 - We encourage our staff to travel by bus and train. This is much better for the environment than travelling by car



- Some staff work from home some of the time.

This means they don't cause pollution by travelling to work



3. Think about the planet and all living things in everything we do

Senior managers at PSOW are responsible for this.



They write reports about how we are looking after the environment.

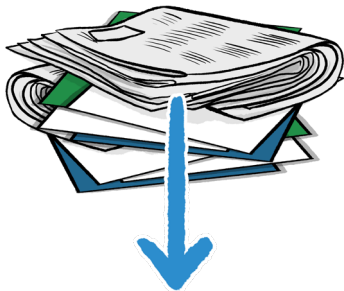
The next steps



We will carry on checking that we are making things better for the environment.



Over the next year we plan to help the environment by:



- Reducing the amount of paper we use even more



- Increasing the amount of paper that is recycled



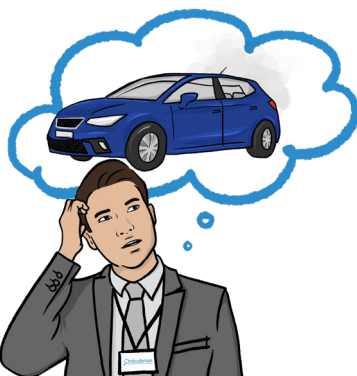
- Checking on how our staff travel to and from work



- Checking on how our staff travel as part of their job



- Looking again at how we choose what we buy



- Helping our staff to think about how much pollution and waste they make

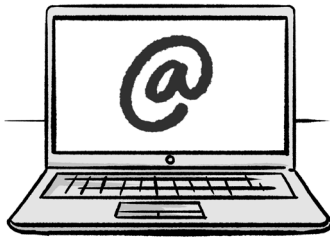
For more information



If you need more information please contact us by:



Telephone: **0300 790 0203**



Email: **ask@ombudsman.wales**



Post:

**Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae Pencoed CF35 5LJ**