

# MAY 2019

## **Influencing the bigger picture**

I hope everyone saw the documentary by David Attenborough last Thursday called “Climate Change: The Facts”? If you missed it, it’s still on iPlayer. I’m so pleased that finally, a lot of the new science data, and images from across the world, have been culminated into a one hour programme. It was very well made, and gives me hope, that if lots of people see it, it won’t be too late to save our home.

One point they made, was that if we had been working towards a renewable energy based society since we first found out about climate change in the 70s, the task ahead of us wouldn’t be as difficult. But we can’t look back to what should have been, only work towards a better way today. There is a big drive now towards “divesting from fossil fuels”. If you haven’t heard of this term, it means we need to pull investment from fossil fuel companies, and instead invest in renewables. Some pension companies like legal and general have recently committed not to fund fossil fuel projects.

It’s easy to feel powerless as an individual against these worldwide issues, but there are things we can do to influence this.

You can vote for MPs who help to campaign for these issues. You can write to your existing MP and tell them that you want their support. The government is still funding and supporting fossil fuels; this has to stop by public demand. Online petitions have been around for years now, they get results and they couldn’t be easier to sign your name. A website called “go fossil free” has a petition to sign for every county!

Petitions on [www.petition.parliament.uk](http://www.petition.parliament.uk) will get debated in the House of Commons if they reach over 10,000 signatures, and you get zero junk mail for signing these.

And finally, the best way to show these big companies we really mean business is by voting with our money. Even if you don't have much, most of us will have some money in a bank. However ethically you try and shop, the banks will use your money for whatever they like. If thousands of us were to switch from banks that fund fossil fuel projects, and send them an email telling them why we have switched, they will soon realise they have to change. A quick google search will tell you which banks are the "cleanest" in their investments, and which are the "dirtiest". Websites such as "ethical consumer" are really helpful in making the choice.

In numbers we have power. The biggest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.

written by Helen Gillingham