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## **Tips for green shopping**

Shopping is part of life's routine. We are fortunate nowadays to be faced with choice in almost everything we buy. There are various criteria we can apply in making our choices, such as cost, convenience or quality. But there is also something else we can look at – what is the impact of our choices on the world in which we live?

Our buying decisions can have an affect on the natural environment, on our local economy, on the sustainability of production processes or on the amount of carbon in the atmosphere.

To help us make greener choices in what we buy, there are a number of questions we can ask when we look to purchase something. What is it made from? How was it produced? Where was it produced? How did it get here? Where do the profits from its sale go?

The answers to the questions won't always be clear, and sometimes you might have to balance out competing considerations – for example, produce that is local but non-organic versus produce that is organic but transported from a distance.

Here are some general tips if you want to shop greener and promote sustainability.

Read the label – ask yourself if the item is from a sustainable source.

Shop locally – you will be supporting your local economy as well as saving on the carbon emissions of travel.

Buy locally produced goods – support your local producers, for example by shopping at the farmers market held on the first Sunday of the month from

10am to 1.30pm in Haslemere High Street. The produce is fresh and you can talk to the producers themselves.

Take your own bags – the world doesn't need any more plastic shopping bags.

Use charity shops – 'reduce, recycle, reuse' is the green mantra. Charity shops are the high street's great recyclers.

Use auction sites like e-Bay, free goods sites like Freecycle and sale sites like Gumtree – you can often get good quality used items very cheaply. They are also great ways of getting rid of unwanted possessions – getting cash for them and saving on landfill.

Get together with others and buy basic items in bulk – larger packs of many basic goods are cheaper and come with less packaging.

Don't forget the library if you are looking for a book or DVD – read and return.

Finally, and most important of all – buy only what you need. Avoid waste – it will only end up in landfill.

For further information visit [www.transitionhaslemere.org](http://www.transitionhaslemere.org) or email [transitiontown@haslemere.com](mailto:transitiontown@haslemere.com)

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