

A close-up photograph of several hands holding small green plants with dark soil. The hands are positioned around the plants, suggesting a collective effort in gardening or agriculture. The background is a soft-focus green field.

Consumer Climate Change Survey 2022

The Abri logo features the word "Abri" in a white, sans-serif font. A red curved line arches over the top right of the letters "ri".

Abri

Creating communities,
empowering lives



Contents

About Abri's consumer climate change survey 2022.....	4
Current understanding and concerns of climate change.....	6
What action should we take to tackle climate change?	8
Personal motivation and responsibility to tackle climate change...	12
Energy efficient homes.....	14
Climate change and eating habits.....	18
About Abri.....	22

For more information, please get in touch with Abri's Press and External Affairs team at pressoffice@abri.co.uk.

About Abri's consumer climate change survey 2022

"Abri is one of the largest housing providers in the South and South West of England, looking after some 80,000 customers across 35,000 homes. Our name means 'shelter' and it's our purpose to make sure more people have a safe, warm, and sustainable home.

We're committed to playing our part in achieving the Government's 2050 net zero target and recognise the huge impact the social housing sector can make. This is not just by cutting carbon emissions from our homes, but also by helping our customers with the lifestyle and behavioural shifts that support long term change.

As a housing provider, we work closely with organisations and peers across the housing, building and construction sectors to meet the challenges and opportunities of decarbonising the UK's existing homes, as well as building the net zero carbon homes of the future. But it's not just the physical changes to our homes and workplaces that will make the difference to our planet. We're creating a culture of low carbon thinking at Abri, engaging and empowering our colleagues, customers and communities to make positive steps to reduce our shared footprint.

To help us to understanding how best to engage with and support our customers and communities to follow greener lifestyles, we commissioned a comprehensive piece of research with YouGov. We surveyed over 2,000 adults across the UK to understand the nation's opinions, attitudes, understanding and behaviours towards the environment and climate change. This has given us invaluable insights into how the nation currently feels about climate change and what we can do to make a difference, both at individual and higher levels."

Rose Bean, Executive Director of Assets and Sustainability, Abri

Get in touch

If you'd like to know more about the research or would like to speak to one of our sustainability team, drop us an email at pressoffice@abri.co.uk.



All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,116 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 02-06 December 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+)

Current understanding and concerns of climate change

The topic of climate change seems to have gathered pace over the past few years, fuelled by the 2021 COP26 summit, numerous television documentaries, and changing government legislation on green issues.

However, how does the nation feel about climate change, and how much is really known and understood? Our research discovered that, while the majority of adults think we're in a climate emergency and are concerned for how future generations will live, many also feel powerless to take action.

According to UK adults, what are the most important issues facing the country at this time? Where does the environment sit within this list?

- 51% think health is the most important issue facing the country
- 38% the economy
- 37% immigration and asylum
- 29% the environment
- 22% Brexit
- 17% housing
- 16% crime
- 13% terrorism
- 12% welfare and benefits
- 10% education
- 8% defence and security
- 6% pensions
- 5% family life and childcare

Knowledge and understanding of the term 'net zero carbon' varies among UK adults:

- 25% recognise the term 'net zero carbon' and know exactly what it means
- 46% recognise the term and have an idea of what it means
- 17% recognise the term but don't really know what it means
- 4% don't recognise the term at all or know what it means

71%
of UK adults think we're in a large climate emergency

When asked to describe how they feel about climate change, the most frequently used words by UK adults were 'powerless' (37%), 'frustrated' (32%), and 'anxious' (29%)



70%
of UK adults are concerned about how future generations will live as a result of climate change

Almost three quarters of UK adults (73%) think weather patterns in the UK have become more extreme* in the past decade
*extreme weather includes heatwaves, heavy rainfall, storms and flooding

"Understanding how the nation feels about climate change, and the associated levels of knowledge and understanding are invaluable insights to us as a housing provider. It will shape how we engage with our customers and communities in our journey to net zero, and help us to provide the right support and information.

As a sector, we can guide the future of our homes and how they're built. But we can also help to positively influence how homes are lived in – not just for the sake of the planet but to improve the lives and wellbeing of our customers. These insights will equip us with the right tools to start positive conversations and understand what's most important to our customers and communities when we're talking about climate change."

Rose Bean, Executive Director of Assets and Sustainability, Abri.

What do people think contributes most to climate change?

- 53% said deforestation
- 42% said petrol and diesel powered vehicles
- 38% said using fossil fuels to power/heat homes and buildings
- 27% said aeroplanes
- 21% said methane emissions from livestock
- 16% said emissions from landfill or waste
- 7% said methane emissions from fertilisers used in farming
- 5% said traditional construction of homes and buildings
- 5% said cement production

What are people most worried about being impacted as a result of climate change?

- 31% said loss of wildlife habitats
- 29% said loss of animal species
- 28% said increased levels of deforestation
- 23% said poorer air quality, increasing the risk of allergies, asthma and lung conditions
- 23% said increased temperatures

What action should we take to tackle climate change?

Acknowledging we're in a climate emergency but knowing how and when to take action could be two different things for people. Encouragingly, there appears to be a sense of urgency for UK adults when it comes to tackling climate change, with over two thirds (68%) saying that global action to tackle climate change needs to happen 'immediately'. To further understand what this could look like, we explored the changes or actions people would be willing to make, and what they already do to help tackle climate change.

When, at all, does global action to tackle climate change need to start?

- 68% think action needs to happen immediately
- 11% don't know when action needs to start
- 8% think action needs to happen within the next year
- 7% don't think we need to take any action

What would most help society to make more environmentally friendly choices?

- 47% said limiting the availability of single use plastic products/packaging
- 28% said wider access to grants to make homes and buildings greener
- 27% said greater awareness of the impact of climate change
- 27% said better public transport
- 26% said wider infrastructure for electric vehicles and charging points
- 24% said wider facilities for recycling
- 17% said cheaper alternatives for meat and dairy products
- 15% said clearer language and communication on climate change
- 7% said increasing prices to travel abroad
- 6% said promoting local holidays and suppliers
- 10% said they don't know

Over a quarter of UK adults (28%) are already cutting back on meat and dairy products to help tackle climate change

In the next five years, 41% of UK adults said they would be willing to reduce how often they eat meat and animal products on a weekly basis to help lower their carbon footprint

40% of UK adults would be willing to use public transport more frequently to help lower their carbon footprint

What, if anything, do people currently do to help tackle climate change?

- **77%** recycle paper/cardboard
- **72%** recycle plastic packaging
- **69%** recycle glass
- **55%** recycle aluminium packaging
- **42%** always switch off appliances and don't leave them on standby mode
- **40%** buy products with recyclable packaging
- **29%** avoid buying plastic products
- **28%** cut back on meat and dairy
- **28%** buy local produce
- **23%** use a green energy supplier
- **22%** walk or cycle to work or a place of education
- **16%** grow their own fruit and vegetables
- **11%** eat a plant-based diet
- **8%** only buy products and services from sustainable brands
- **8%** share bath water
- **6%** use a hybrid vehicle
- **5%** use an electric vehicle
- **3%** offset carbon emissions when flying

40% of UK adults would be willing to buy second hand clothes to help lower their carbon footprint

53% of UK adults would be willing to switch to a green energy supplier to help lower their carbon footprint

While only 5% of UK adults say they currently have an electric car, 43% said they would be willing to switch to an electric car to help lower their carbon footprint

"There's a clear sense of urgency across the nation to take immediate action to tackle climate change. As a sector, it's important that we use this opportunity and momentum to engage with our customers and communities on topics such as retrofit and greener living.

"From the research findings, UK adults are already extensively recycling and making careful purchases. However, it's great to see wide public appetite for other sustainable measures such as using electric vehicles, taking public transport and switching to green energy suppliers. These insights are invaluable for housing providers to understand how we can deliver carefully designed, sustainable communities that benefit both the planet and our customers' desired lifestyles."

Jonathan Rickard, Head of Sustainability and Design, Abri



Personal motivation and responsibility to tackle climate change

While UK adults acknowledge we're in a climate emergency and think global action to tackle climate change needs to happen immediately, our research discovered that people are divided over how much of a role they think they personally play. We also explored what motivates people to tackle climate change, and who might influence them to make environmentally friendly choices.

Who should be most responsible for tackling climate change?

- 63% said the national government
- 51% said businesses and industries
- 34% said the general public
- 31% said energy companies
- 23% said international organisations (such as the UN, EU, IMF)
- 9% said the local council
- 6% said environmental organisations and charities.

How much personal responsibility, if any, do people think they have to help tackle climate change?

- 43% think they have a large personal responsibility to help tackle climate change
- 46% think they have a small or no personal responsibility to help tackle climate change
- 10% don't know
 - > Of the 46% UK adults who said they have a small or no personal responsibility to help tackle climate change, the reasons given for feeling this way were:
 - 30% said there are too many conflicting opinions about climate change
 - 26% said they can't afford to make any changes
 - 16% said they're unsure where to start
 - 12% said it's not their responsibility
 - 11% said it will make their life more complicated
 - 9% said they don't care about climate change
 - 8% said they don't understand the science behind it
 - 4% said they don't have the time

Half of UK adults (56%) said they're motivated to take personal action to tackle climate change based on the media coverage they see or hear



Nearly one in three UK adults (30%) say it's important to them to work for an employer that has a clear sustainability strategy to help tackle climate change

Who or what tends to influence people to make environmentally friendly choice the most?

- **25%** said public awareness campaigns on TV, radio and social media
- **20%** said news media
- **20%** said environmental charities
- **17%** said their family
- **17%** said TV documentaries
- **13%** said their friends
- **13%** the government
- **8%** said their partner
- **2%** said their employer
- **2%** said their colleagues
- **2%** said celebrities or public figures
- **1%** said their neighbours

There's a clear divide across the nation when it comes to how much personal responsibility people think they have in helping to tackle climate change. Of the 46% who said they had a small or no personal responsibility to help tackle climate change, it's important to look the perceived barriers and understand how we might be able to help overcome some of these.

As housing providers, we have a prime opportunity and responsibility to provide key information, support greener ways of living, and change the narrative on climate change. Even the smallest changes can have a big impact on the environment, and it's important that everyone, regardless of income or background, is given the chance to play their part."

Rose Bean, Executive Director of Assets and Sustainability, Abri.

Energy efficient homes

The UK has set strong sustainability targets, and cutting carbon emissions from homes and buildings will play a significant part in the UK's journey to net zero. This sentiment is echoed in our research findings, with four out of five UK adults (80%) saying it's important for them to live in an energy efficient home. Our research also found that while the desire to make homes more efficient or environmentally friendly is there, concerns over cost and a lack of understanding of where to start are current perceived barriers.

How important is it to UK adults to live in an energy efficient home?

- Four out of five UK adults (80%) said it's important for them to live in an energy efficient home.
- Living in an energy efficient home is more important to older generations, with 90% of UK adults aged 65+ saying it was important to them compared to 60% of 18-24 year olds.

What, if anything, concerns UK adults about their current home?

- 31% said their home is expensive to heat
- 16% said their home is expensive to power
- 16% said their home has damp/mould issues
- 16% said their home is draughty
- 15% said their home is too cold
- 12% said their home is single glazed or has poor quality windows
- 12% said their home has no or poor wall insulation
- 7% said their home has no or poor roof insulation
- 2% said their home is too hot
- 2% said their home has an unsafe roof or walls

Four out of five UK adults (80%) said it's important for them to live in an energy efficient home

31% said their home is expensive to heat

"We know that living in a safe, warm, and sustainable home supports health and wellbeing, improves life chances, and helps to tackle fuel poverty. This remains our core purpose and values as an organisation as we move forward in our own journey for all our homes to be at least EPC C by 2030 and net zero carbon by 2050. The sector undoubtedly has challenges ahead with retrofitting existing stock and delivering zero carbon homes of the future, but it's a target that we're collectively committed to reaching.

"It's encouraging to see the nation's appetite for retrofit, with a third of UK adults (33%) saying they'd like to install solar panels; 31% saying they'd like to install triple glazed windows; and over a quarter (27%) saying they'd like to change their heating system to a clean energy option. As a housing provider, we have a unique platform to engage with customers and support them through any changes in their homes; explaining the benefits, helping with installation, and providing a high level of aftercare."

Jonathan Rickard, Head of Sustainability and Design, Abri

If cost wasn't an issue, what changes would UK adults most like to make to their home to make it more energy efficient?

- 33% said they'd install solar panels
- 31% said they'd install triple glazed windows
- 27% said they'd change the heating system to a clean energy option
- 18% said they'd like better wall insulation
- 16% said they'd enable used water to be recycled
- 16% said they'd change appliances such as washing machines, fridges and cookers, to more energy efficient models
- 14% said they'd install an electric charging point for an electric vehicle
- 13% said they'd like better roof insulation
- 13% said they'd change lightbulbs to LEDs
- 13% said they'd plant trees and wild plants in the garden to encourage biodiversity
- 5% said they'd install window shutters or shades

When thinking about making improvements in their home to make it more environmentally friendly/efficient, what UK adults said that:

- 20% said they know what to do and are currently doing it
- 31% said they know what to do to but are not currently doing it
- 6% said they know what to do but don't want to do anything
- 17% said they don't really know what to do but want to do more
- 5% said they don't really know what to do and don't want to do anything
- 20% said they don't know
 - > Of the above adults who said they don't know what to do and/or aren't doing anything to make their homes more efficient/environmentally friendly, the reasons given were:
 - 58% said they can't afford to make changes
 - 16% said they can't make significant changes as they don't own their home
 - 15% said they're unsure where to start
 - 9% said it's not an immediate concern for them
 - 8% said they don't know what changes are necessary
 - 5% said they don't have the time
 - 4% said it's not their responsibility
 - 4% said their home is already environmentally friendly/efficient and doesn't need further changes
 - 3% said they don't care enough to do anything
 - 3% said it will make their life more complicated



Climate change and eating habits

In recent years, several studies have suggested that reducing our consumption of meat and animal products is one of the biggest ways we can reduce our environmental impact. This was echoed in our research, with two thirds of UK adults (61%) knowing that eating a diet high in meat and animal products has a large carbon footprint.

Our data also revealed that, while most people don't want to adopt a completely plant-based diet, 41% of UK adults said they'd be willing to reduce how often they eat meat and animal products on a weekly basis in the next five years to help lower their carbon footprint.

Almost a third of UK adults (32%) said they would be unwilling to reduce how often they eat meat and animal products on a weekly basis in the next five years to help lower their carbon footprint.

When asked why they would be unwilling, the top reasons given by these respondents were:

- > 47% said they would miss eating meat/dairy too much
- > 31% said they wanted to keep supporting meat and dairy farmers
- > 21% said eating meat and dairy products is part of their culture
- > 19% said they don't believe that eating meat or dairy products can increase your carbon footprint
- > 19% think that plant-based/vegan diets lack nutrition
- > 14% said they don't think about their carbon footprint when they eat
- > 12% think plant-based/vegan diets are restrictive
- > 12% said they don't think they'd like the taste or texture of a plant-based/vegan diet
- > 10% think plant-based/vegan diets are expensive
- > 10% think that plant-based/vegan diets are boring
- > 7% said they had current health reasons
- > 5% think that plant-based/vegan diets are hard to follow
- > 4% said it's too much effort to change their diet
- > 3% said it's difficult to socialise and eat out in restaurants if you follow a plant-based/vegan diet

41% of UK adults said they would be willing to reduce how often they eat meat and animal products on a weekly basis in the next five years to help lower their carbon footprint

5%
of UK adults said they've already adopted a complete plant-based diet

Almost two thirds of UK adults (65%) said they would be unwilling to adopt a complete plant-based diet within the next five years to help lower their carbon footprint.

When asked why they would be unwilling, the reasons given by these respondents were:

- > **49%** said they would miss eating meat/dairy too much
- > **26%** said they wanted to keep supporting meat and dairy farmers
- > **24%** think plant-based/vegan diets lack nutrition
- > **19%** think plant-based/vegan diets are restrictive
- > **17%** think plant-based/vegan diets are expensive
- > **16%** said eating meat and dairy products is part of their culture
- > **13%** said they don't think they'd like the taste or texture of a plant-based/vegan diet
- > **12%** said they don't believe that eating meat or dairy products can increase your carbon footprint
- > **11%** think that plant-based/vegan diets are hard to follow
- > **11%** think that plant-based/vegan diets are boring
- > **9%** said they don't think about their carbon footprint when they eat
- > **7%** said they had current health reasons
- > **4%** said it's difficult to socialise and eat out in restaurants if you follow a plant-based/vegan diet
- > **3%** said it's too much effort to change their diet

Almost one in five UK adults (17%) would be willing to adopt a complete plant-based diet within the next five years to help lower their carbon footprint

Almost two thirds of UK adults (61%) think that eating a diet high in meat and animal products has a large carbon footprint

72%
of UK adults think that eating locally sourced food has a small carbon footprint

"Climate change is a serious issue for everyone and everyone should feel empowered to play their part in the fight against it. Even the smallest actions can reduce your carbon footprint and make a big impact. Making some climate-friendly changes to our diets can be a really easy way to make quite a significant difference. This could include reducing the amount of meat and animal products we eat, reducing food waste, and embracing locally sourced food. Living sustainably often offers huge cost savings too – a win-win for both people and the planet. With the right support and information, we can inspire customers and communities to try different ways to reduce their individual carbon footprints and keep the climate change conversation going."

Rose Bean, Executive Director of Assets and Sustainability, Abri.

About Abri

Abri is one of the largest housing providers in the south and south west of England with 80,000 customers across 35,000 homes.

We exist to create thriving communities and empower lives. It's our central mission and one we fully believe in. But what does that look like in real terms?

Between 2020 and 2025 it means we're investing £15 million in communities to increase employment, improve health and wellbeing and empower people to take the lead where they live. And it means building at least 12,500 new homes by 2030.

We believe everyone has the right to a safe, warm, and sustainable home, and to be part of a community where everyone has the opportunity to belong, grow and thrive. So our priorities are:

1. **build more homes;**

2. **invest more in our existing homes;**

3. **100% customer satisfaction;**

4. **create thriving communities;**

5. **create a great place to work;**

6. **to manage our business to the highest standards;**

7. **climate change: the challenge of a generation.**

Find out more at www.abri.co.uk



Rose Bean
Executive Director of Assets and Sustainability, Abri

With over 16 years of experience in housing, Rose drives Abri's strategic responsibilities for asset, sustainability, and regeneration programmes.

She is a great advocate for climate change and dedicated to enhancing the level of carbon literacy across the organisation. As a naturally curious leader who is passionate about the sector, Rose regularly researches new theories and concepts to empower us to build homes and communities that are safer and smarter.

Rose has led on numerous projects from delivering and implementing change on fuel poverty, piloting trials on renewable technology to introducing a culture of low carbon thinking at Abri.



Jonathan Rickard BA(Hons) DipArch RIBA
Head of Design and Sustainability, Abri

Jonathan has extensive experience in the housing sector, and is a chartered architect by trade, with more than 30 years' experience in practice. Jonathan is responsible for developing design criteria and carbon reduction strategies for Abri to make sure that the homes and communities it builds support people to live sustainably and thrive in their communities.

He's also the driving force behind the retrofit of Abri's existing stock, making sure there is a business-driven agenda to reduce the carbon footprint from all activities. Jonathan is a champion of good design, ensuring placemaking, robust construction and high levels of sustainability are integrated into the homes Abri build. Jonathan regularly contributes to the work of housing groups and is past chair of the RIBA in Hampshire. He's also a corresponding member of the RIBA housing group and a Board Member of BCHA, as well as a Trustee of the BRE Trust.

abri.co.uk

Abri is a trading names of Abri Group Limited (a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, no. 8537 and a charitable registered provider with the Regulator of Social Housing no. L4172) and The Swaythling Housing Society Limited (a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 no. 10237R and a registered provider with the Regulator of Social Housing no. L0689). Registered office: Collins House, Bishopstoke Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 6AD.

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

The Swaythling Housing Society Limited provides management services for subsidiaries in the Abri group. Further corporate information is available at abri.co.uk

