

## PRESS RELEASE

### A STANDOUT IN THE OVERCROWDED FIELD OF CLIMATE CHANGE BOOKS

If anyone needed a lesson in how mass human behaviour affects the environment, just look at what the last year has shown us. What's not to like about clearer skies, cleaner air, the cacophony of birdsong, the sweet smell of spring and, not least, no cruise ships blighting the magnificence of Venice? The roads haven't been so free from congestion since the mid-1950s. Could we just keep the silver lining?

Colin Hastings, an organisational psychologist and author of three practical self-help management books, is convinced that everyone can play their part in creating a permanent and radical reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. His unique step-by-step behavioural approach is the subject of his latest book, *The Carbon Buddy Manual*.



Hastings' career as a specialist in teamworking and organisation change provided the perfect skill-set for creating *The Carbon Buddy Manual*. It lays out a step-by-step guide to turning good intentions and resolutions into practical action. The manual has 12 chapters, starting with one entitled 'Warming Up', and ending with the final one, 'Cooling Down'. In this last section, readers pull together their carbon-reduction action plan, assembled gradually piece by piece in the process of working through the book.

In addition to discussing very practical carbon-reduction options, the manual also anticipates (and helps find ways to overcome) all the psychological challenges, disappointments, reflections and personal changes that readers will encounter along the way.

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The title tells you a lot. It is a manual – not only a ‘how-to’, but also a ‘why-not?’ Hastings’ premise is that we can each do an enormous amount to reduce our ‘personal pollution’, as he calls it, one step at a time. But, although possible, it’s a major undertaking done on one’s own. So he also suggests that we will be most successful when each of us teams up with a chosen ‘Carbon Buddy’. Buddies can be friends, colleagues, family members and members of interest groups. All that’s needed is a joint commitment to help each other through the highs and lows of tackling the issues along the way. Hastings’ own Carbon Buddy is his wife, Helen, a retired psychotherapist. They have spent the last ten years using a variety of methods to reduce their ‘personal pollution’. ‘Without our mutual mix of support and challenge at key moments,’ says Hastings, ‘we would not have stuck at it. The lessons from all that practical experience have found their way into the manual.’

The manual defines a very simple and clear goal (‘cool planet’), as well as a step-by-step approach to carbon footprint reduction through carbon footprint measurement, setting priorities, evaluating alternative solutions and making realistic action plans. This practical thread is complemented by a more reflective section examining the psychological and behavioural factors that help and hinder personal and lifestyle change.

Having got to grips with personal pollution, Hastings encourages the reader to think more widely about how to contribute to the problem of scaling up the number of people seriously taking action. The manual gives guidance on the key process of ‘propagation’, demonstrating many ways in which individuals can encourage others to become part of the wider process. The goal is to build rapidly a critical mass of quiet ‘can-do’ people, both nationally and internationally. From such exponential growth comes very real bottom-up, individual-driven change.

In summary, *The Carbon Buddy Manual* looks at the problem of behavioural and lifestyle change from the viewpoint of individual consumers and households, dealing with the day-to-day realities of trying to respond to climate change. It is they who are the key workers in this emergency. In particular, it shines a light on and helps to navigate through the obstacles – practical, financial and psychological – that distract and derail even the most motivated. Hastings suggests that it will be the international effort put into understanding these ‘process barriers’, and the creative thinking at all levels producing solutions to overcome them, that will dictate the scale, speed and effectiveness of individual behaviour and lifestyle change. There can be all the right new policies, technologies and suggestions, but unless these are widely adopted by individuals and households, progress will not follow. *The Carbon Buddy Manual* is a small contribution to this very large problem, providing readers with a step-by-step process for navigating through the obstacles and sustaining motivation, a tool both for getting started and for keeping going.

The manual has a related website ([www.carbonbuddyproject.org](http://www.carbonbuddyproject.org)) which explains about the funding of the wider project and the many ways in which individuals can help to grow it rapidly. It also provides short cuts to further sources of targeted information.

The roots of the project lie way back when Hastings’ younger son Matt graduated from Falmouth University in 2007 with a degree in Environmental Resource Management and Renewable Energy. He received his degree with his two-week-old son in his arms. ‘That was my lightbulb moment,’ says Hastings. ‘Seeing my son carrying my first grandchild and realising that my generation was not leaving them a great future, was a real wake-up call. The future is all about them.

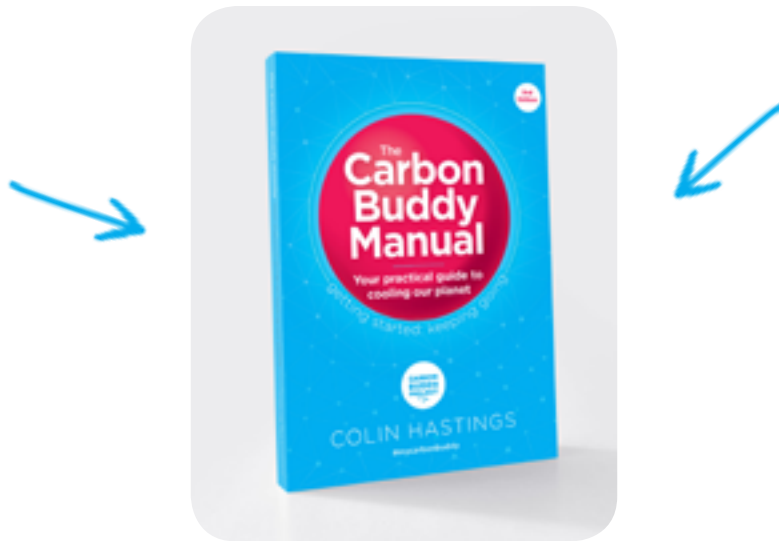


‘Climate change has understandably not been at the top of people’s agendas over the last year,’ says Hastings. ‘But as we emerge from lockdown, I sense that it is becoming more centre-stage, and that many people will bring what they have learned about urgency, persistence, cooperation, sacrifice and loss to the climate challenge. I hope that *The Carbon Buddy Manual* will be a key tool to help individuals rediscover and apply that same amazing spirit in the urgent search for a new low-carbon future.’

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And so the seed of a much-needed environmental revolution is propagated.

*Colin Hastings*



***The Carbon Buddy Manual is available in two formats:***

**PAPERBACK:** available in 14 countries, printed and distributed locally. Further details [here](#).

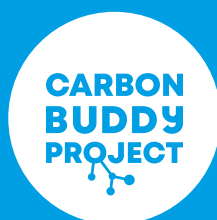
**KINDLE EBOOK:** downloadable via Amazon/Kindle

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