

What is my personal responsibility to the Environment?

On 1st January 2023 the World Meteorological Organisation published a number which we all need to remember. The number is 418.2 and refers to the parts per. million of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere. This number rises year on year. Many scientists believe that this year we may pass the 1.5 Celsius mark for warming since 1750 which was considered vital to avoid the worst effects of Climate Change.

The UN report on Climate Change was rather ominously entitled "The Closing Window" and calls for the "rapid transformation of societies." We need to cut carbon emissions by 45% by 2030, which is only 7 years away.

In September 2000 I took my last flight. I had flown from Boston to Gatwick on a Boeing 747, and the aircraft had burnt around 82,353 litres of fuel. Whilst aircraft are now more efficient, I concluded that I could no longer personally justify flying. That was a choice I freely made , but the Travel Industry reported on the 13th January that record numbers of people are booking flights. Millions of people are making a different choice from me!

Without resorting to "Virtue Signalling" the planet does not take account of the reasons that lie behind the decisions we make. It is governed by the laws of physics, and the models now being produced are indicating that we are in a great deal of trouble - ask the people of California!

From an ethical point of view, I can only conclude that everything I do has an effect on other people and other species. The heat-wave in 2022 in the UK is thought to have produced 2,227 extra deaths, and this year the Met. Office is predicting the hottest year on record.