



# “Keep Cool and Carry On”

A TTK contribution to The Climate Coalition's Great Big Green Week  
2023 - an expanded version of the event hand-out



## What we can learn from life in hot climates\*:

- Time your activities (only “Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the noonday sun”). Take a siesta at midday if you can!
- Keep an eye on relative temperatures outside and indoors - when it’s hotter outside than indoors, after about 11.00am, close windows, especially south-facing ones, draw curtains etc to keep the heat and the sun out, and open windows at night. Early morning is the coolest time to undertake heavy work.
- Learn to love shade - awnings, gazebos, parasols, trees and climbing plants (especially deciduous ones which will shade you in summer and let the light in in winter) ...

## Get to know your home:

- Heat rises, so upstairs and roof spaces will be hottest (NB, insulation does *not* make your house hotter in summer!).
- Pay special attention to south-facing rooms and windows.
- Retreat to your coolest (probably darkest) room at the hottest times; sleeping downstairs, if you can, may be more comfortable.

## Feasible home improvements\*\*:

- Consider **low-emissivity window film**; manufacturers say that low-E films reflect between 70% and 80% solar heat gain in summer and conserve over 50% interior heat in winter. The thermal image on the right shows the difference a patch of low-E film on a window makes.



- External **shutters and blinds**, like the ones on Mediterranean houses, work best but aren’t appropriate for most UK homes, though heat reflective internal blinds can keep the heat out in summer and in in winter.
- **Use a fan** with a timer to help you get to sleep at night.
- **Air conditioning** increases energy use and CO2 emissions so is not recommended (unless you buy your electricity from a supplier specialising in renewable energy), but if nothing else works in your home, you could consider it for just one room, and installing the type of heat-pump that can heat your home efficiently in winter and cool it in summer.

**Visit cool spaces:** go for walks in woods, visit churches...

## Water:

- Drink lots
- Save what you can, use small shower-heads, re-use “grey” water in the garden or for flushing the toilet...

\* See also **Earth Notes: Manage the Heat Maltese Style** by Damon Hart-Davis for more advice on using your windows and blinds like the Maltese at <https://www.earth.org.uk/manage-the-heat-Maltese-style.html>

\*\* For (quite sensible) government 2023 Information on how to stay safe in hot weather, including how to keep your home cool see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beat-the-heat-hot-weather-advice>, and for more on energy-efficiency see <https://www.ttkingston.org/ttk-groups-and-projects/energy/>.