

Language for ...

the environment

1. Do you recycle your rubbish?

Derek: I do try. I separate out my typical food waste from paper, and that sort of thing.

Lizzie: I try to recycle as much as I can, but sometimes it's confusing about what can be recycled and what can't be recycled. But, mainly plastics and glass, yeah.

2. Are you happy with what you're doing or could you do more?

Lizzie: I'm quite happy with what I do. When I go to the supermarket I try not to take those little plastic bags if you're selecting fruit and vegetables, I try not to use them.

3. Do you 'compost' your food waste?

Derek: The short answer is no. I think it might be easier if you're, say, living in a house with a garden – I live in a first-floor flat, so I think that's not the ideal environment for composting. I don't think my neighbours would particularly like me for that!

Lizzie: I don't compost my food waste. There's nowhere to do it.

4. Where you live, is it easy or difficult to recycle?

Derek: I think it's difficult. In the block of flats where I live there's just one bin for recycling and everything goes in that. I think it should be separated out, but there's no provision for that. I don't think the area where I live in is particularly good at promoting recycling.

Lizzie: I think on the surface it's quite easy to recycle. You've got a separate bin for your recycling products to your general waste, so from that aspect it's relatively straightforward and simple.

5. Do you ever think about your ecological footprint? Does this affect what you buy? Or what you do?

Derek: I do think about it, yes. I think about it in terms of travelling into work – I use public transport. I like to walk, so I would probably walk rather than, say, take a taxi or something like that. I think companies can do a lot to try and help us, as well. And I'm thinking about some companies who when they do send you products that you've bought online there's a huge amount of packaging. I think they could do a bit more to reduce that.

Lizzie: I certainly don't make big life changes, so for example I will continue to travel by plane, but I do think about it on an everyday scale. I try not to waste food, for example. I try not to take loads of plastic bags at a supermarket. I try not to waste water. I try not to do all of those things.

6. Do you think attitudes to recycling are changing, and why? Are we doing enough?

Derek: I think attitudes are changing. There's the whole debate around the amount of plastic that ends up in the oceans now as well, and there's a *lot* being said about that. There's a lot still to be done, though, I think. Like, local councils in the UK need to step up and be more mindful of their recycling policies and helping residents to recycle better. So it needs to be a combined effort. I think people are more concerned about it and trying to do more about it, but we need help.

Lizzie: I think there are lots of things that are happening, we've got the revolution against coffee cups and continual throwaway plastic that's used every day. But it will, I think, obviously take a long time to kind of mitigate any of the negative effects that we've seen over the previous years where we've happily used plastic and not really thought about the impact of throwing that away every day.