Thought for the Week

Week beginning Monday 6th January 2020

What is happening in these pictures?

What is happening?

1.I**n Australia, fires have burned an area larger than Denmark and the Netherlands put together.** This bushfire season began in the Australian spring and the blazes spread far and wide. The vast volume of dust and ash generated has turned the glaciers and snow-capped mountains of New Zealand's South Island brown.

2. **Thousands of people are giving up meat to become vegan for January** – and their resolution may continue through the year for a variety of reasons. Many of these reasons are to do with the impact of meat production on the environment.

https://news.sky.com/story/australia-bushfires-death-toll-rises-as-3-000-army-reservists-are-deployed-11900782

https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/vegan-vegetarian-meat-climate-emergency-scientists-environment-a9185956.html

3. **A series of new records for high temperature were broken in the UK in 2019**... the highest winter and summer temperatures ever recorded.

4. **Northern England and southern Scotland have seen an increase in flooding of more than 11%.**

The UK has seen a pattern of severe flooding over the past 10 years which the Environment Agency says is linked to an increase in extreme weather events.

5. Norway's glaciers may melt away completely by 2100 The glaciers retreated 33 metres on average in the course of last year alone, when a lot of heat records were measured. 2018 was one of the years with the greatest decline since the measurements began.

As we start a new year, consider the following questions in pairs or in your groups

Discuss - What are your thoughts about the future of our planet?

What can we do to try to help reverse the effects of climate change?

Do the events of the past few years worry you? What in particular concerns you?

Have you changed your opinion on to climate change? If so why?

This year we should all be making a real effort to be more sustainable and to reduce our carbon footprint.
What are the small things that can make a difference?

1. **Walk, bike or use public transport** - Cars are more polluting than any of these things
2. Change your diet - **eat a more plant based diet.** Apparently if cattle were a country they would be the third highest emitter of greenhouse gases after China and the USA!!
3. **Take fewer flights** - A normal transatlantic round-trip flight can release around 1.6 tonnes of CO2 – almost as much as the average yearly emissions of **one person in India.**
4. **Buy less stuff** - Reduce, Recycle, Renew - the **clothing sector represents around 3% of the world's global production emissions of CO2,**
5. **Complain** - If you see unnecessary waste or packaging in your local community, complain about it and exercise your consumer rights. Hold those in power to account!!

Remember - It's not all doom and gloom

- UK carbon emissions were 44% below 1990 levels in 2018.
- More of Britain's electricity was generated from zero-carbon energy sources than fossil fuels last year, the first time this has happened since the Industrial Revolution.
- Every day we see more individuals, organisations, businesses, and governments responding to the climate crisis. People are coming together to take concrete steps to reduce the worst impacts of climate change.

Discuss - What changes will I make this year to reduce the impact of climate change and help the planet?

Happy New Year 2020