

A better way to control CO 2

There are things the government could do to speed it on its way towards net zero.

The most obvious cause of more CO 2 being generated in the UK is inviting in 600,000 extra people in a year. Every person brings with them a carbon footprint. Putting in all the extra homes, surgeries, schools and infrastructure will require a lot of cement, bricks and energy for construction. It's not sensible to get all of us to cut our CO 2 output if we offset that with large scale migration, driving UK figures up again.

The government should be more interested in cutting its carbon footprint. It could substitute more online meetings for many of the trips abroad by jet plane. It could save more energy in public buildings with better insulation, usage patterns and controls. It could encourage more local food growing to cut food miles, instead of promoting wilding and imports.

The railway needs to cut its CO 2 per passenger mile travelled if it wants a green endorsement. It runs too many diesels, often leaving the engines running when stopped in stations. It runs too many near empty trains, upping the CO 2 per passenger substantially.

It is quite tempting to say we should have a few more net zero targets. Lower migration and lower inflation would be popular.