

Climate realism

Allegra Stratton, the official Climate change spokeswoman, has been struggling to find things we could all do to advance their chosen cause of heading to net zero carbon dioxide emissions. She has suggested not rinsing crockery before putting it in the dishwasher, and freezing surplus bread for use on another day. Some think these ideas will not go very far.

She has also presided over a welcome delay to introducing expensive heat pumps and ripping out perfectly good gas boilers . She has said she prefers to run an older diesel car to buying an electric vehicle which she should be able to afford because of the diesel's range on longer trips.

Meanwhile the Leader of the Opposition has demanded a more taxing target for getting emissions down, without pausing to tell us exactly how this could be done. Is he suggesting earlier elimination of internal combustion engine cars? Will car travel be slanted to the better off who can afford electric vehicles? Is he thinking of making foreign travel dearer to stop mass jet travel? Does he think long haul planes should be reserved for the elite attending climate conferences? Does he want to accelerate heat pumps and get people to trash the boiler? Does he want to make us all vegetarians?

All these behaviour changes would require a wide range of laws, subsidies and taxes to direct and nudge or bludgeon us into the lifestyle he wants us to follow. Time to ask the Leader of the Opposition what he is doing about his personal heating, travel and diet if he wants the rest of us to change.

I do pass the Stratton test. I scrape dishes into the waste before the dishwasher, and do freeze part of a larger loaf until I need it. Job done?