**Ymarfer 11**

Human beings are remarkably adaptable. Over millennia they have spread across the globe to live in virtually every climate our planet has to offer. But during the coming years humans will have to adapt further still.

There is substantial evidence that climate change is affecting many aspects of the world around us. Weather patterns are shifting, extreme weather is becoming more commonplace and temperatures in most parts of the world are rising.

Floods across the UK in 2007 and the heatwave of 2003 are a stark illustration of the devastating effects that extreme weather events can have. During the summer of 2003 the heatwave resulted in over 2,000 excess deaths across England and Wales, and the 2007 floods caused by heavy rains led to 13 deaths and more than £3 billion pounds worth of damage to the UK infrastructure.

Although it cannot be said with certainty that these events were a direct consequence of climate change, such events are occurring more frequently, and they provide a glimpse of what could happen in the future. For those in health protection, planning for climate-related changes and, where possible, adapting to their likely effects, is critical.

As well as preparing for the health impacts of climate change, we can help prevent the worst of these impacts as urgent action to reduce individual and corporate carbon footprints continues. We will then also reap the health benefits of a low-carbon society, with cleaner air and more active, healthier lifestyles to help combat obesity, cancer and heart disease.

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