



- **Luscombe Drinks' interview with owner**
– sourcing the finest quality organic fruits from trusted growers.

- **The slowest waste materials to decompose**
– how long do different materials take to decompose?

- **CUP26**
– football's biggest climate competition engaged 25,000 schools.

- **Subscriber Offer**
– gift set of eco-friendly beeswax wraps from WaxWrap.



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MEDIA

Obki is a new, fun and engaging kids' brand targeting 5- to 9-year-olds with a unique focus on the positive actions children can take to help slow down climate change.

TRAVEL

Up Norway's newest journey takes ski lovers to the Sunnmøre Alps, famous for their skiing and amazing views.

HOME

Winter weather always makes us feel like making our interiors more cosy, warming and inviting. It's the time for blankets, soft furnishings and warm wood tones and colours.

A Word from the Editor

Seasons greetings! Thank you for reading our third edition of Eco Living Magazine. We are very excited to report that we have won an award for Best Emerging Sustainable Lifestyle Publication-UK by Global Green Business Awards 2021. This is such an outstanding accolade.

The world is moving towards a low carbon future. Clean energy, like wind and solar, is now the cheapest source of electricity in most countries; many of the world's car makers are shifting to make only electric and hybrid models; countries around the world are starting important work to protect and restore nature; cities, states and regions across the world are also committing to reduce emissions to zero.

The UK was the first country to pledge to reduce carbon emissions by 78% by 2035. We will completely phase out coal power by 2024 and will end the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030.

The Prime Minister has set out a Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution to help us reach our climate commitments whilst creating thousands of highly skilled jobs. Around the world, we are also seeing progress, together with the United Nations, Italy, France and Chile.

We hosted the Climate Ambition Summit, which brought together 75 leaders from around the world. It was a major stride forward, with new commitments on climate announced by every leader who joined. It's an important indicator that we are all serious about getting carbon emissions down now. Even so, we're going to need much more; that's why the next six months will see the UK push others not to flinch from the big policy decisions: ending coal power, phasing out polluting vehicles, making agriculture more sustainable, tackling deforestation and supporting developing countries with finance.

In this issue of Eco Living Magazine, we have lots of interesting articles for you to read, including one about Direct Line. The company has recently launched the UK's first model village with only electric-powered cars, as an eco-blueprint to demonstrate how electric vehicles will benefit the environment. It demonstrates how a small change in a small village can make a huge difference to the planet, once it is upscaled.

Another really clever initiative is Treedom, an organisation that gives back to people, communities and the planet, through the gift of tree planting. Treedom is the first ever website that allows you to plant a tree from a distance and follow its sustainable impact online. Over 850,000 people have already planted a tree, resulting in over two million trees globally, which has supported farmers and ultimately helped in the greening of our planet!

We do hope you enjoy this edition, and may we take this opportunity in wishing our readers a Merry Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year



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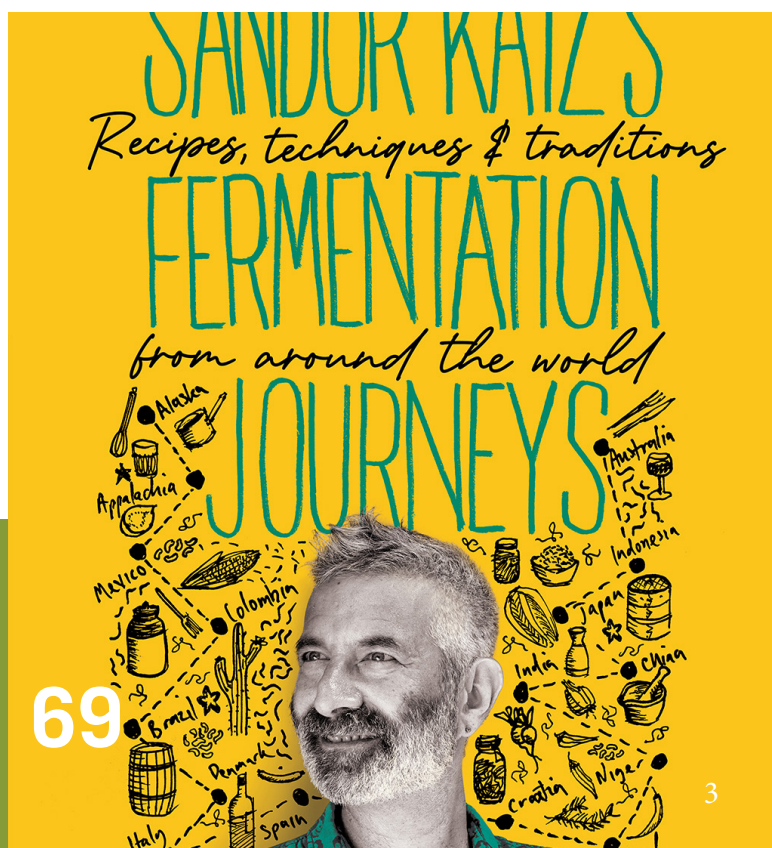
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Christmas lights illuminate the country

Fourteen illuminated trails across the UK including seven new trails ...

The countdown to Christmas is on! With fourteen outdoor light trails, choreographed to music, unveiled in historic and iconic venues across the country, there's never been a better time to plan your festivities with friends and family. Designed for visitors of all ages to enjoy, My Christmas Trails are a unique way of celebrating the festive season outdoors.

Each magical trail is created to showcase the natural and unique environment of the individual location, so wrap up warm and be transported into a winter wonderland, surrounded by millions of twinkling lights and amazing illuminated installations, all choreographed to a soundtrack of varied Christmas classics.

Independent street food vendors bring a delicious twist to the tasty treats on offer. Have yourself a holly, jolly Christmas and complete your walk under the stars with a spiced winter warmer, hot chocolate, or a toasted marshmallow, with someone special.

My Christmas Trails provide an unmissable opportunity to surround yourself with sparkle.

SOUTH & SOUTH WEST

NEW FOR 2021

CHRISTMAS AT KILLERTON, Exeter: 26 Nov 2021 – 2 Jan 2022

A magical trail, featuring spectacular lighting set to a soundtrack of favourite seasonal tunes, transforms the landscaped grounds and gardens of the National Trust's Killerton, near Exeter, into a winter wonderland.

There will be burnished lantern trees filled with flickering flames, neon strings stretched between towering trees, walkthrough Christmas bauble-trees, an arch of hearts, a carpet of gently glowing white roses and, perhaps, a glimpse of Father Christmas.

Killerton House, Broadclyst, Exeter EX5 3LE

<http://ChristmasatKillerton.co.uk> | #christmasatKillerton | #mychristmastrails

NEW FOR 2021

CHRISTMAS AT KINGSTON LACY, Dorset: 3 Dec 2021 – 2 Jan 2022

A new enchanting trail illuminates the beautiful garden of the National Trust's Kingston Lacy, Dorset. The grounds of the elegant country mansion will be transformed into a winter wonderland. Walk by elegant rainbow Christmas trees, a giant bauble tree and through heart-shaped arches, then under colourful strings stretched between towering canopies and beside a carpet of glowing white roses. Independent street food vendors bring a delicious twist to tasty treats with winter warmers and more.

Kingston Lacy, Wimborne Minster, Dorset BH21 4EA

<https://christmasatkingstonlacy.seetickets.com/raymondgubbay/christmas-at-kingston-lacy> #christmasatkingstonlacy

CHRISTMAS AT BLENHEIM PALACE, Oxon: 19 Nov 2021 – 2 Jan 2022

This Christmas, take a chance to see Blenheim Palace like you've never seen it before! The illuminated trail returns but follows a brand new route that takes you across the South Lawn and into the woods beyond. View the moon and the stars reflected in the Lake – as the constellations seem closer than ever before, firework trees fizz with lights that flash up from the undergrowth and along the branches. There are stars and baubles where you least expect them, a rainbow effect in the laser garden and, for the first time in the UK, a new installation from French light artists TILT, Bloom rises high into the night sky. Favourites like the Water Terrace fire garden and Christmas Cathedral have also returned.

Inside the Palace, **The story of the Nutcracker** has been re-imagined, with each of the rooms exquisitely transformed and filled with hidden surprises. Explore the Palace's state rooms, each one exquisitely transformed and filled with hidden surprises – from the toymaker's workshop on a frosty Christmas Eve, through the glistening Land of Snow and on to the candy-cane Kingdom of Sweets, adorned with the sweetest of treats and larger-than-life gingerbread men. It's a fairytale world where nothing is quite as it seems, from a dashing Nutcracker Prince and an army of mice to a Sugar Plum Fairy and a music box with a difference.

Taking place beneath the stunning backdrop of the baroque Oxfordshire Palace, visitors can escape the bustle of the high street and soak up the yuletide atmosphere at The Christmas Market, from 19 November to 19 December. The traditional wooden chalets showcase a range of festive treats from designer-makers and artisan food and drink producers.

Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, OX20 1PP
[Christmasatblenheim.seetickets.com](https://www.christmasatblenheim.seetickets.com) |
 #christmasatblenheimpalace

CHRISTMAS AT STOURHEAD, Wilts: 26 Nov 2021 – 2 Jan 2022

Marvel at the delights of the National Trust Stourhead's unique gardens, adorned with unique decoration. This family-friendly magical festive trail in the heart of the Wiltshire countryside is flooded with enchanting illuminations, all choreographed to a soundtrack of much-loved seasonal music.

There will be neon strings stretched between towering trees, a walk through a tunnel of hearts and on to larger-than-life mistletoe, a flotilla of festive, brightly coloured boats bobbing on the lake, giant colour-changing flora, and plenty of fantastic selfie moments. Warm up with hot chocolate, winter warmers and toasted marshmallows from independent food stalls.

Stourhead, Mere, Wiltshire, BA12 6QD
[Christmasatstourhead.co.uk](https://www.christmasatstourhead.co.uk) | #christmasatstourhead

SOUTH EAST

CHRISTMAS AT BEDGEBURY, Kent: 19 November 2021 – 2 January 2022

Now in its fourth year, this leafy after-dark light trail has returned to the High Weald countryside. Greeted by the sights and sounds of Christmas, experience Bedgebury in a whole new light as you wander beneath unique canopies drenched in seasonal colour.

The one-mile magical winter trail is a place where fairytale meets fantasy, with something for everyone. There are: giant colour-changing lilies; fields of light and burnished lantern trees filled with flickering flames; neon strings stretched between towering trees; larger than life colourful flora; and plenty of fantastic selfie moments.

Bedgebury National Pinetum & Forest, Goudhurst, Kent.
 TN17 2SJ www.christmasatbedgebury.co.uk |
 #christmasatbedgebury

CHRISTMAS AT KEW, London: 17 November 2021 – 9 January 2022

A botanical world filled with seasonal cheer. Christmas at Kew is a magical light trail across Kew Gardens, making the perfect festive winter evening. Journey through the mesmerising flickering flames in the Fire Garden; spot larger-than-life illuminations and say hello to Father Christmas along the way. Enjoy the annual after-dark festivities with family and friends, as you discover sparkling tunnels of light, dancing waterside reflections, and trees drenched in jewel-like colour, on your way to the panoramic Palm House light display.

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, TW9 3AE |
<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/christmas> |
 #christmasatkew

EAST of ENGLAND

NEW FOR 2021

CHRISTMAS AT WIMPOLE, Royston: 26 Nov 2021 – 2 Jan 2022

The Wimpole Estate grounds have been transformed into a winter wonderland by a new light trail this Christmas. Walk through the enchanting fairy glen, go among the flickering flames of the fire garden and marvel at the Edison trees. Each installation is created to showcase the stunning natural scenery of this ancient arable land and elegant house, all choreographed to a soundtrack of much-loved seasonal music. There are burnished lantern trees filled with flickering flames, neon strings stretched between towering trees, singing trees, larger-than-life mistletoe and, perhaps, a glimpse at Father Christmas, too.

Wimpole Estate, Arrington, Royston SG8 0BW
[Christmasatwimpole.co.uk](https://www.christmasatwimpole.co.uk) | #christmasattwimpole |
 #mychristmastrails



CHRISTMAS AT BELTON, Lincs: 25 November 2021 – 2 January 2022

National Trust's beautiful Belton House in Lincolnshire has welcomed its glittering illuminated trail back this year. Get your Christmas sparkle on, and be surrounded by over a million twinkling lights, colourful trees and amazing illuminated installations, transforming Belton's majestic gardens into a winter wonderland. Look out for: the incredible Carol of the Bells – lighting up the night sky with colour-changing spheres of light; Triangulate Tunnel, where moving lights, colours and patterns dance in time to the music; and marvel at the Neon Tree as its branches, interwoven with multicoloured neon lights, move in the wind. There are giant water lilies, singing trees and a tunnel of hearts leading to larger-than-life mistletoe, so there's plenty of selfie moments along the way.

**Belton House, Grantham, Lincolnshire,
NG32 2LS** [Christmasatbelton.co.uk](https://www.christmasatbelton.co.uk) | #christmasatbelton

NORTH of ENGLAND**NEW FOR 2021**

CHRISTMAS AT GIBSIDE, Tyne & Wear: 26 Nov 2021 – 2 Jan 2022
Christmas at the National Trust's Gibside, Tyne and Wear, is more than jolly and bright as the Georgian landscape gardens, forged in an industrial past, are transformed into a winter wonderland by a brand new illuminated trail. There are trees interwoven with neon, colourful strings stretched between towering canopies, singing trees, larger-than-life illuminated crystals, plus snowflakes, and stars dripping from branches – all choreographed to a soundtrack of much-loved seasonal music.

**Gibside, near Rowlands Gill, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear
NE16 6BG** [Christmasatgibside.co.uk](https://www.christmasatgibside.co.uk) | #christmasatgibside | #mychristmastrails

NEW FOR 2021

CHRISTMAS AT DELAMERE FOREST, Cheshire: 26 Nov – 31 Dec 2021

A brand new Christmas trail, featuring enchanting illuminations and Christmas tunes, add sparkle to Forestry England's Delamere Forest in Cheshire. Inspired by the landscape itself, visitors can explore a festive adventure in a world of trees, dramatically drenched with stunning lights and set to the soundtrack of seasonal favourites. The family-friendly trail features dragonflies, singing trees and shimmering reflections that cast light into hidden places. A Christmas Cathedral with a thousand pea lights has been woven into the forest landscape, lighting hidden nooks of the deep forest. Internationally acclaimed lighting artists Pitaya's new work Blossom is making its UK debut. See the forest in a different light.

**Delamere Forest, Linmere, Delamere, Northwich, Cheshire,
CW8 2HZ** [christmasatdelamere.co.uk](https://www.christmasatdelamere.co.uk) | #christmasatdelamereforest | #mychristmastrails

NEW FOR 2021

CHRISTMAS AT TEMPLE NEWSAM, Leeds: 26 November 2021 – 2 January 2022

A magical trail, featuring spectacular light installations, and enchanting visitors with classical Christmas tunes, transforms the estate's 'Capability Brown' landscaped grounds and gardens.

There is a carpet of gentle colour-changing spheres, neon strings stretched between towering trees, a flotilla of festive, brightly coloured boats bobbing on the lake, glitterball snowmen and plenty of selfie moments along the way.

Temple Newsam Rd, Leeds LS15 0AE
[christmasattemplenewsam.co.uk](https://www.christmasattemplenewsam.co.uk) | #christmasattemplenewsam | #mychristmastrails

**CHRISTMAS AT DUNHAM MASSEY, Cheshire:
19 November 2021 – 2 January 2022**

Discover new immersive installations as the magical winter trail is bigger and better than ever at the Georgian house and gardens at Dunham Massey, Cheshire.

The park's eponymous deer have been honoured with giant glittering counterparts, light a wish, spot the elves and see flowers as you've never seen them before – as you enter into a world festooned with seasonal cheer set to soundtrack of festive classics.

Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Cheshire. WA14 4SJ
<http://Christmasatdunhammassey.seetickets.com>
#christmasatdunhammassey | #mychristmastrails

SCOTLAND**CHRISTMAS AT THE BOTANICS, Edinburgh:
26 November 2021 – 2 January 2022**

The Royal Botanic Garden has once again been transformed into a winter wonderland with a million lights and seasonal sounds filling the air with festive fun, and inviting all ages to enjoy this most magical trail.

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Arboretum Place, EH3 5NZ
www.rbge.org.uk/whats-on/christmas-at-the-botanics-2021 | #christmasatthebotanics | #mychristmastrails

NORTHERN IRELAND**NEW FOR 2021**

**CHRISTMAS AT HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE & GARDENS, Belfast
Fri 3rd Dec – Sun 2th Jan (except 6th, 7th & 25th Dec)**

A stunning new illuminated Christmas trail is bringing festive sparkle to Belfast for the first time this year. The magical after-dark trail at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, featuring spectacular lighting and enchanting visitors with classical festive tunes, transforms the estate's beautifully landscaped grounds. Wander through the flickering flames of the fire garden or under the millions of lights of the Christmas Cathedral. Why not rest a while on the Mistletoe Bench with loved ones and marvel at the illuminating take on the 12 days of Christmas? Don't forget to look out for Father Christmas – an unforgettable experience for all ages.

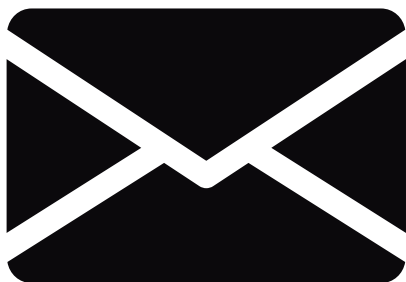
**Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, The Square, Hillsborough.
BT26 6GT** www.hrp.org.uk/hillsborough-castle | #christmasathillsborough | #mychristmastrails

My Christmas Trails are brought to you by Sony Music, working with venue partners to transform heritage land-scapes into magical winter wonderlands.

Trails are created by Culture Creative. For more information please contact: Matt Dixon matt@flamingo-marketing.co.uk | T: 01637 808220



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WaxWrap is offering the first 80 subscribers a free WaxWrap set with a retail value of £16.

WaxWrap, eco-friendly beeswax wraps, are newly launched in the UK. The full range includes pre-cut sheets, handy bags and on a roll format. Roll out the wrap and play an active part in the war against plastic consumption by switching to WaxWrap, a sustainable, re-usable beeswax wrap designed to keep food super fresh. www.waxwrap.uk

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We are working in partnership with SettleUp Earth to fund the planting of one tree for every magazine or subscription sold. This directly funds the reforestation of mangrove forests in Mozambique.

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Social media:



New Life Wood takes “lives and goods that others would discard”

New Life Wood is a registered charity collecting and reusing waste wood in the most environmentally beneficial way, while creating jobs and training for disadvantaged people. The service is based on the principles of the circular economy; by saving wood, it is building a more sustainable society. New Life Wood promotes community reuse – one of the most powerful tools available to fight waste. This labour-intensive activity provides a wide range of disadvantaged people with a way to build their confidence and self-esteem. They are able to learn new skills, helping them to overcome barriers to finding employment.

Set up just over three years ago, New Life Wood is a **not-for-profit organisation**. It is one of around 30 social enterprises dotted around Britain which are members of the Community Wood Recycling network.

All the Community Wood Recycling member social enterprises (from Brighton, where the idea first took root, to Glasgow where used whisky barrels are crafted into stunning furniture) have similar aims: to help steer people from tough times through collecting and sorting unwanted wood, encouraging its reuse and, in training people how to make things from it, raising self-esteem.

With New Life Wood, EVERYTHING collected is reused or recycled - nothing is returned to the waste stream. Reusing wood is ten times more efficient than harvesting, milling, and transporting virgin wood. Even the collection methodology saves carbon! Three and a half tonne collection trucks use less than half the fuel of a skip lorry, greatly reducing CO2 emissions, pollution, and the impact on the road.

Peter Hall, New Life Wood's manager, says:

“We are breathing new life into the wood and into the lives of the people working with it. The wood recycling is important and we're passionate about what we do, but what matters even more to us is working with and helping to support vulnerable adults, including those living with a history of addiction, mental health challenges and ex-offenders. We help build confidence for people living with anxiety and low self-esteem.

Putting it simply, we take lives and goods that others would discard, and provide the means to see those lives and goods renewed and become a valued part of our community.

As an organisation, we aim to reflect our Christian ethos, and help to transform, restore and enrich lives. We offer our work placements an invitation, in a non-pressurised loving environment, to learn more about the Christian Faith which underpins our work.”

Despite the pandemic, last year, New Life Wood diverted 230.9 tonnes of wood from the waste stream, creating 4.5 jobs and ensuring 29 volunteers were trained. Indeed, the Essex project has been so successful that it has now opened a new 1200 sq ft woodstore with extra workshop and retail space, and there are plans for a community hub – complete with coffee and cake for visitors to the park.

Find out more about Community Wood Recycling at www.communitywoodrecycling.org.uk and New Life Wood at www.newlifewood.org.uk.





The future of mental health at work

Avee Viravaidya, Membership Manager of Huckletree West, explores a few parts of new office life that make a difference to employees' well-being ...

As we start to shift back to the office, whether full-time or part-time, there's a sense of normality returning. However, there is a new focus on mental health in the office – one where we can see the benefits first-hand.

Here, I'll explore a few parts of new office life that we've seen make a difference to employees' well-being.

Creating spatial awareness

First and foremost - dedicating space specifically to wellness must be a universal standard. We're a big believer in the power of spaces and hope our Huckletree West Hub is a leading example of this. We have a fantastic meditation Yurt that our community can use individually, or they can join one of our headspace heaven sessions. To further complement the interior design, we've invested in surrounding plants, which not only breathe life into our decor but have been proven to help relieve stress. According to BloomBoxClub – a monthly plant subscription startup – plants help us feel relaxed, while alleviating the body's response to stress. Monthly subscriptions like these make for great incentives for employees.

One of our members, Butternut box – a bespoke dog food brand – has also helped invigorate team morale with weekly socials. Their leaders realised the importance of having the team back but understand that things must change. So, the layout of the office was rearranged and they created room for break-out spaces. Other members, such as Colart, the international art materials supplier, got rid of half their desks.

One of our members, Butternut box – a bespoke dog food brand – has also helped invigorate team morale with weekly socials. Their leaders realised the importance of having the team back but understand that things must change. So, the layout of the office was rearranged and they created room for break-out spaces. Other members, such as Colart, the international art materials supplier, got rid of half their desks to create a tea and prayer room. We're seeing this more and more – a move away from workspace towards breathing space.

A typical office space limits what you can do. We're finding, though, that friendships and social groups are forming between companies in our hubs due to the communal breakout space, helping to create communities within our wider ecosystem.

Exploring the office again

Flexibility and balance have been more crucial than ever, recently. Prolonged working from home can be detrimental for many - from those juggling childcare to young people in house shares – 64% of Gen Yers and 80% of high-performers were missing the office during the spring 2020 lockdown (JLL). The office's physical space can give a sense of sanity, a welcomed change to the same four walls.

We've also seen a clear trend in workers choosing to WFH Monday and Fridays whilst being in the office mid-week, and our members love this freedom. This is often due to child care commitments or working from residencies that are further afield. There are clear benefits for workplaces, too, with 89% of British workers believing that flexible working would boost their productivity (Canvas8).

Partnerships are the future

Companies are now competing with each other on cutting-edge wellness policies, to ensure staff retention. One easy win here is offering free food, which many do.

Members are booking meeting rooms daily for extended periods, bringing a greater need to feed the team. Consequently, we now offer optional catering to meeting rooms, when people book them, via companies like Feedr, which offers fantastic options for prepared meals.

In the future, our wellness packages will include food and sessions with partners of ours, like Peloton. These partnerships are designed to give our members yet another way to relax and escape the busy workday and work-life, and we expect partnerships to lead the way in the future.

Mental health is finally getting the recognition it deserves in the office, but more is needed to continue this beginning of a conversation. It's up to businesses to ensure that support is in place for their staff, and to accommodate their needs to avoid burnout.



Earthly Biochar helps mitigate climate change

Earthly Biochar is an innovative start-up on a mission to tackle the issue of excess carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the resulting climate change emergency through biochar – a stable form of carbon, soil improver and method of carbon capture. The planet protector plans to scale biochar production in the UK, turning waste biomass into biochar.

Lottie Hawkins (26), Founder of Earthly Biochar, commented: “I first heard about biochar at a lecture back in 2018 and immediately became fascinated. I started learning about it over dinner every night – reading about it, finding published literature, and watching YouTube videos showing how it works. I was shocked this was the first time I was hearing about this fantastic soil improver and incredible solution to climate change. And I wasn’t alone. Biochar had a cult following in 2018 but very little awareness among the general public. I was convinced there had to be a reason that biochar hadn’t taken off in the UK and I started a journey to solve the issue.”

The process of creating biochar involves heating wood in a specific way, so that carbon, which otherwise would have been released into the atmosphere, is crystallised, captured and stored. When one tonne of biochar is made, it prevents two and a half tonnes of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere. It is so effective that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Project Drawdown describe biochar as a nature-based carbon sink, expected to prevent 2.2 - 4.4 billion tonnes of CO2 from entering the atmosphere by 2050.

When applied to soils, biochar can also improve soil health, crop yields, and resource efficiency. This is because it is extremely porous, making it excellent at retaining water and nutrients, promoting plant health and root growth. Earthly Biochar uses ‘waste’ resources to make this an affordable, effective soil conditioner, which also helps mitigate climate change. The company has also developed the UK’s first biochar kiln for gardeners to make biochar at home. The company recently won the Young Innovator of the Year Award from the Princes Trust and Innovate UK.

The planet has a finite number of resources, yet they are being depleted at a rate of one and a half earths per year. That means 50% of next year’s resource budget is used up each year. This is the definition of unsustainable. Tackling this problem is a shared responsibility. People across the UK are starting to take steps to make positive change, from corporations down to consumers. Earthly Biochar is all about making it easier for everyone from horticultural industries down to gardening enthusiasts to play their part.

Hawkins continued: “We see biochar as one of our best tools in the fight against our climate emergency. And we see the UK becoming a driver for the movement, with more carbon-conscious individuals wanting to explore alternatives to peat-based composts and reach net zero. Our vision is to get to a place where biochar is rolled out as a practical solution on a mass scale, to improve sustainability across all agriculture and horticulture industries.”



Plant a tree from a distance, thanks to Treedom

Treedom is an organisation that gives back to people, communities and the planet, through the gift of tree planting. As we start to look ahead to the Christmas season, after another unpredictable year – there is nothing more important than giving back. By purchasing a tree for a loved one this Christmas, you can help reduce CO2 footprints and enable farmers in countries across the world to generate their own income, provide for their families and become economically sustainable.

Treedom is the first ever website that allows you to plant a tree from a distance and follow its sustainable impact online. Over 850,000 people have already planted a tree, resulting in over two million trees globally, which has supported farmers, and ultimately helped in the greening of our planet! Trees also offer many benefits for biodiversity, providing food and shelter for hundreds of wildlife around the world, as well as absorbing harmful CO2 emissions.

Once you have planted a tree (for yourself or a loved one), you can name it, attach a digital message, and visit its online diary with information about the species, your impact and regular updates about the project and the community.

There are many species to choose from – with the giant Baobab being a particularly festive choice. Traditionally designated gathering points for local communities, Baobabs are often decorated for Christmas celebrations. In Nelson Mandela Square in South Africa, a giant Baobab is covered in sparkling lights, from root to leaf!

So how exactly do you go about gifting a Treedom tree? Simply go to <https://www.treedom.net/en/> and choose the tree that you wish to gift. You can then decide to dedicate it to your loved one by email, message, or by a print-at-home card. Treedom will then assign your sapling from a nursery on the other side of the world, where it will be looked after until it is given to a local farmer to plant on their land. Treedom provides farmers with the know-how and technical support for planting and managing trees, geolocating and photographing every tree.

This year, why not gift something that gives back to both people and the planet? Treedom is the perfect unique Christmas gift this year.



‘Humans for Earth’ explain their purpose and aims

Someone rightly said: “We might not have caused the climate change but we are definitely seeing its side effects”. While the century sees unprecedented levels of devastation due to the havoc caused by human activities on the planet, there are also some humans who are giving it their all to protect it as well. We, Humans for Earth, cover their stories. Our organisation wants the voice of these humans to be heard loud and clear, no matter what we are here; to save our home as a mark of respect for our ancestors and as a duty towards our coming generations. The fight for climate change is real and we want to empower our warriors with a platform from which they can inspire the eight billion population of our earth.

Our journey

People have often asked us who we are and how did we decide to start this. Well, our founder is Aparna, an engineer by profession and a climate change activist by profession. She attended the World Sustainable Summit in New Delhi, in March 2020, and that changed everything for her. She then decided to start her own organisation, covering sustainable stories from around the globe. So far, she has covered stories from London, Africa, India, Belgium, and many other such inspiring stories. What’s more is that our organisation has been nominated for the Top Tier Global Impact Awards as well!

When I first heard her doing this, I couldn’t resist myself to join her in this. Together we amassed a total of 4000+ followers on Instagram. Social media has been our major tool to connect. We leverage the power of social media into something good and, for us, it turned out to be the game changer.

Our mission has always been to unify the global response of climate change into one movement. So far, we have interns working under us in order to convert our pipeline project into reality. We will be launching our ‘Lets Plant’ drive and ‘Feed the Strays’ program, along with our first sustainable virtual summit, soon. All of this has been a dream come true for us. We are so excited that, together with change makers, we are here for a cause.

Way forward

We started with local neighbourhood stories; today, we not only host regular interns from across the world, but we are also making an impact by uplifting the individual’s response of climate change.

We believe that it’s never too late to start a change which can cause an impact on the society. This has been our aim since the start. We want you, dear reader, to make an impact as well. A lot of damage has been made already, but maybe your small efforts can have a huge impact on saving this earth. You are not alone, my dear warrior. If you have started, we are here to hear your voice, amplify it and take it ahead as much as we can. We will applaud you for your efforts.

So readers, what are you waiting for? Go, get up and be a warrior. After all, you don’t want to leave a destroyed earth for your future generation. Remember, don’t just be a human, be a human for earth, be a human with a cause.



COP26: Colombian President visits Soapworks

In November 2021, the President of Colombia, Iván Duque, Colombian Ambassador in the UK, Antonio Jose Ardila and the British Ambassador to Colombia, Colin Martin-Reynolds, visited Soapworks, the UK's leading manufacturer of soaps and cleansing bars.

President Duque was in Glasgow for COP26, and visited Soapworks to celebrate the company's strong links with Colombia, investment in sustainable manufacturing and use of certified sustainable Colombian palm oil.

Soapworks is part of the Colombian owned Daabon Group – global leaders in certified and sustainable palm oil. In addition to soap, Soapworks manufactures sustainable solid format haircare and facial cleansing bars – supplying to many of the world's leading beauty brands.

The delegation was shown round the factory to see how responsibly sourced Colombian palm oil is being used to improve the sustainability credentials of the beauty and personal care sector.

The President cut the ribbon on new machinery that will enable Soapworks to expand production, innovate new sustainable products and provide plastic-free and recyclable packaging options for customers.

The visit finished with a presentation showcasing the traceability and sustainability of its Colombian RSPO certified palm oil.

Jan Wels, Managing Director at Soapworks, said:


"It was a huge honour to welcome President Duque and showcase how we're using Daabon's responsibly sourced palm to create exciting, sustainable bar soap and personal care products that not only work, but are kinder to the planet."

Astrid Duque, Managing Director of Daabon UK, said:

"The day was a great reminder that, despite being oceans apart, Colombia and Scotland remain united by the same sustainable goals. It showcased how we can work together to produce new solutions with lower carbon footprints to help protect our environment."

As part of its ongoing programme of sustainable development, the Daabon Group has invested heavily in advanced new machinery at the Soapworks factory.

This programme is part of a wider campaign to improve the sustainability of the beauty industry, as Soapworks supports the growing trend of consumers and brands going 'back to bar' – switching from liquid based personal care to solid format, to help eliminate unnecessary plastic and cut waste.



To celebrate COP26, the company unveiled 'Coastal Shores' - a sustainable, vegan soap made from certified sustainable palm oil from Daabon, and inspired by the essence of the Scottish coastline. Designed as a blueprint for the beauty industry, it was distributed for free to key delegates at COP26.

It is now being sent to local stakeholders, industry influencers and beauty brands across the UK to promote COP26.

Founded in 1988 by Body Shop entrepreneur Dame Anita Roddick, Soapworks supplies customers across the globe, from luxurious and sustainable brands through to disruptor brands and high-volume retail.

The company uses its products to inspire social and sustainable change. In 2020, Soapworks donated more than 500,000 soap bars to help fight covid, and to support vulnerable communities and refugees in countries affected by war, disease, natural disasters and deprivation.

Additional information about Soapworks can be found at: <https://www.soapworksltd.co.uk/>.

Luscombe Drinks' interview with owner

Luscombe Drinks is a family-owned business passionate about crafting the very best tasting organic drinks. Sourcing the finest quality organic whole fruits from trusted growers around the world, the company expertly blends these with Dartmoor spring water to create their award-winning range of fruit juices, crushes, bubbly, sparkling waters, tonic waters and mixers. They are proud holders of a Royal Warrant, a member of the Soil Association and have won 90 Great Taste Awards from The Guild of Fine Food.

luscombe.co.uk

The following is an interview with Gabriel David, founder and owner of Luscombe Drinks:

Where did the vision of the company come from?

I grew up living three miles up a single-track maze of lanes; my social life was inextricably linked to being able to drive to see friends, so drinking soft drinks in pubs was the order of play. After endless Lime and Soda and Britvic 55, I decided to create better soft drinks – things I wanted to drink when out. I was not alone and we have built a business on the strength of this simple trend.

The core light bulb moment regarding taste and flavours came from living amongst small farmers in Sicily some thirty years ago, while travelling. I remember going out to collect lemons from the village lemon grove. I collected windfall fruit to make a lemonade which I shared with my village friends. They were quick to point out the 'over maturity' of the fruit and how the balance was upset by the reduced acidity of the mature fruit – additionally, the floral nature of these lemons had been masked by their over-ripeness. I thought, wow they taste that subtly! That is really interesting. It truly hit a nerve because they were absolutely right – it was out of balance because the fruit wasn't at its best. The lesson: choose simple ingredients, perfectly ripe and ready to harvest and process as little as possible, and this is exactly what we do at Luscombe to this day.

How long have they been trading?

I returned to Devon in 1997. It was autumn at Luscombe, the family farm, and cider-making season had begun. My father invited me to take over the tiny ailing cider company which he'd started in 1975. He made very good cider, a County Show champion, but it was not commercially viable as it appealed to so few. So, we diversified into organic soft drinks and became the first drinks brand to gain organic accreditation from the Soil Association.

Since those days, we have grown from one to a staff of 25-30 passionate people and revenues of around £6m. Today, Luscombe supplies drinks to a dozen countries worldwide, producing nine and a half million bottles a year. This year, we were awarded the prestigious accolade of a Royal Warrant and also increased our haul of Great Taste Awards for our organic fruit juices, crushes, bubbly, sparkling waters, tonic waters and mixers to a staggering 90.

How often do you bring something new to the company?

2021 has been an exciting year for the team at Luscombe. Three years ago, we planted an orchard which we believe to be the largest agroforestry method of growing elderflowers, with 2,000 trees sitting on a 50-acre field run by the Agroforestry Research Trust, based at Dartington Estate. This harvest was the first true season, with the trees coming of age and offering up a proper crop of flowers which we used to create our first certified Organic Elderflower Bubbly. Next year will also see us introducing some delicious new flavours to the range.





Flossing takes care of your teeth

Have you ever wondered if there was a way to take care of your teeth that doesn't involve compromising on your green ambitions? Well, wonder no more! Following the launch of DenTek's eco range, including Earth Friendly Sustainable Birch Wood interdental brushes, it's possible to make choices that are both good for your oral hygiene and for the planet.

According to Mihir Shah, principal dentist at a clinic in Battersea, 77% of tooth decay starts between the teeth. He explains that many of us are neglecting the tooth surfaces that are more susceptible and those who don't floss are at a much higher risk of tooth decay or even irreversible gum disease. How can we tackle these hidden problem areas and 'mind the gap'? The solution lies with a regular flossing routine.

The pandemic and lack of access to a dentist has seen bad habits creep in. For too many of us, taking care of our teeth means brushing once (hopefully not!) or twice a day – only 31% of us floss on a regular basis. Yet, brushing your teeth with a toothbrush alone cleans just 60% of the tooth. To hit the other 40% that the toothbrush can't reach, oral hygiene tools products such as floss picks and interdental brushes are a must.

Previously, however, there has been a problem: limited eco-friendly options when it comes to selecting a product for reaching those problem areas. That's why DenTek is on a mission, starting now, to source the most sustainable materials possible to create their oral hygiene products and transform their entire offering to use free-from-single-use plastic.

Their newly launched interdental brushes have been made using birch wood, which creates less waste and uses less energy in the manufacturing process, even than rival eco materials such as bamboo. The wood itself absorbs less water, which means that the wire brush won't split from the handle when used in the bathroom environment. DenTek also plants more trees than they use and, because birch is a climate positive material, the trees work to reduce additional carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

As Jennifer Hudson, Senior Brand Manager from DenTek, explains, a proper brushing and flossing routine is essential for good oral health, preventing everything from tooth loss to mouth cancer.

Jennifer says: "The health of your teeth can play an extremely important role in your overall wellbeing, and a healthy smile is often one of the first things people will notice about you, so it really pays to invest in the health of your teeth with a proper oral care routine. That means brushing twice a day for roughly two minutes and flossing at least once a day, as well as cleaning your tongue, which is a part many of us forget but can make a massive difference to our oral health. In fact, 90% of bad breath comes from poor tongue hygiene. Currently, there is a backlog of 17 million NHS dentist appointments – so there's never been a better time to start flossing!"



Seedball helps to create wildlife oases

Seedball is a multiple award-winning not-for-profit organisation, which was developed to boost biodiversity and help increase native wildlife.

As conservation scientists with PhDs in the discipline, the founders – Emily and Ana – are on a mission to help increase the abundance of British wildflowers and the array of wildlife that depends upon them.

Co-founder Emily explains the idea behind the company: “We believe that, if we can all better use whatever space we have available to us (whether a back garden, balcony, window box, little patio, etc), together we can have a hugely beneficial impact on our local ecosystems. The last 50 years have seen huge declines in pollinators and other garden wildlife, but we can do something to reverse this. For us, we want Seedball to inspire a wildlife gardening revolution while providing a very handy way of going about it!”

The company is making it possible for everyone, including people with little or no gardening experience, to create wildlife oases by simply scattering the Seedballs on to the ground or into pots. Not only this, but they are committed to working with a wide range of organisations, charities and schools to help spread the word about the importance of it.

Seedball is part of Project Maya, a non-profit social enterprise working to inspire more people to grow native wildflowers from seed to help support bee, butterfly and other garden wildlife populations. Each year, Project Maya donates seed balls to hundreds of schools and community groups, to help support their nature projects.

The unique products Seedball produces are balls made of clay and peat-free compost, containing 30 to 100 seeds per ball, and a touch of chilli powder to deter slugs and snails. The wildflower Seedballs come in mixed or single variety packages that are developed to help reverse the decline in pollinators and garden wildlife.

Seedball offers a wide range of seed varieties, as well as gifting options and gift sets like a hedgehog mix, Italian herb kitchen and bee mix, and is sold online and stocked in over 500 stores nationwide, including Kew Gardens, The Natural History Museum and Dobbies garden centres.

Follow the brand on Instagram and blog at seedball.co.uk to keep up-to-date with their plans, new product launches and to be part of the Seedball community.



Cleaning up oceans with Serious Soaps

The eco-entrepreneurs behind Serious Tissues, the UK's first carbon neutral toilet paper tackling deforestation with every roll, are taking on another challenge: cleaning up ocean plastic pollution with their latest household innovation, Serious Soaps. The newly launched collection of zero-waste, plastic-free laundry strips and soap bars keeps clothes, hands and the ocean clean, as, with every pack sold, 1kg of ocean-bound plastic is collected – the equivalent of 50 plastic bottles.

Serious Soaps is revolutionising cleaning, enabling customers to clean their homes and the ocean at the same time. The new range of concentrated laundry strips and bar soap is completely plastic-free, keeping plastic out of the ocean by replacing bottles of handwash or detergent.

Chris Baker, a co-founder of Serious Tissues, commented: "The health of our oceans is vital to the health of our planet. But we're filling them with plastic. If we carry on as we are, there could be more plastic than fish by 2050. Plus, oceans play a key part in the fight against climate change. For the past 200 years, oceans have absorbed up to 40% of the CO2 we've produced, but the microplastic now in our seas is disrupting this. Just like we need trees because they absorb CO2, we need to protect our oceans for the same reason. And we need to start now. That's why we've launched Serious Soaps."

Every aspect of the new Serious Soaps range has been designed to be as sustainable and ethical as possible. The bars of soap are made in the UK using vegetable oil and shea butter, meaning they're completely vegan, cruelty-free and have a very small carbon footprint. Similarly, the innovative ultra-concentrated laundry

strips are designed to simply dissolve in the washing machine and leave your clothes fresh and clean, all without a plastic bottle in sight.

The super lightweight and slim design of the strips also means that they are 95% lighter than traditional laundry detergent and much lighter. As a result, far less CO2 is produced when transporting them.

Taking the ethical aspect of the business one step further, Serious Soaps has partnered with rePurpose Global to retrieve and sort ocean-bound plastic. For every pack sold, 1kg of plastic is removed – the equivalent of 500 crisp packets. As well as tackling ocean plastic pollution, this partnership also supports a project in Goa that helps women in the region.

Although this latest range is focused on tackling ocean plastic pollution, instead of deforestation like its toilet paper predecessor, all the products from this sustainable start-up are designed with the same end goal in mind - fighting climate change. Chris continues: "We're a serious company with a simple idea: if you want to change the world, change where you spend your money. Our plan is to create a whole range of household products so people can save the planet from their own homes. First toilet paper, now soap - next, well, watch this space."

The Serious Soaps range is available to purchase from the Serious Tissues website. A pack of 32 laundry strips costs £12.60 when on subscription, and the soap bars start from £4.50 on subscription.

www.seriousissues.com

Clean your home with conscience

The days of shopping without a second thought are over. We're becoming increasingly aware of the waste we produce, the harmful products we use, and the devastating effect this is having on the planet. There is a huge need to reduce the hazardous products that end up poisoning our oceans and environment.

With just 14% of the plastic packaging used globally currently being recycled, and eight million tons ending up in the ocean, along with the toxic ingredients used in many household products, it's time to make a change to how we clean our homes.

There are lots of eco and refillable cleaning brands out there, but what makes Clean Living different and why are its products winning so many awards when put up against the competition? Well, the company sees no sense in creating a plastic bottle, filling it with 99% water and transporting it around the country multiple times. Instead, high quality 100% recyclable aluminium bottles that can be refilled using sachets of concentrate are used. These are then topped up with tap water at home.

Not only does this significantly reduce plastic waste, but it makes parcels lighter and reduces the number of lorries on our roads, thus drastically cutting back on CO2 emissions. A freepost envelope is included, so that you can return your empty sachets to Clean Living, to take care of recycling.

What really makes Clean Living special is biological formulations. It's the only brand in the domestic space offering cleaning solutions that harness the power of healthy bacteria. Yes, cleaning your home WITH bacteria!

Instead of using harmful, toxic ingredients, the company embraces the power of nature, taking plant-based solutions and supercharging them with healthy bacteria. These create enzymes when they come into contact with dirt, grime and grease, for a powerful and deep clean. Each time a product is used, these clever formulations build up a protective barrier to the stunt regrowth of harmful bacteria and keep your home sparkling for longer. Clever, eh?

Importantly, all of the products are pH neutral, cruelty free and completely non-toxic to pets and aquatic life. What's more, as well as providing a powerful cleaning punch, they'll leave your home beautifully fragrant with a range of natural scents, including Amber & Sandalwood, Freshly Cut Lawn, Limoncello, and Crisp Apple.



Being more mindful doesn't mean more hassle! It can be tempting to reach for a plastic filled product off the supermarket shelf. This is why Clean Living offers a handy Refill Subscription Service. Customers simply select which products they want to receive and how often. There is no minimum spend and it's completely flexible, in case you need to make changes.

The company is so confident that customers will love Clean Living that it offers a 30-day money-back guarantee if you aren't 100% satisfied with the results.

Clean Living's multi-award-winning Complete Cleaning Kit provides everything you need to clean your home with conscience, including the Biological Multi-Purpose Cleaner, Glass Cleaner, Biological Bin Odour Eliminator, Biological Odour and Spot Remover, Kitchen Cleaner and Degreaser, Drain Maintainer, Limescale Remover and Biological Bathroom Cleaner, as well as a host of eco-friendly cleaning accessories. It comes in a handy cardboard caddy, to make getting the housework done even easier.

Clean Living is available to purchase directly from the Clean Living website, or via its network of environmentally conscious Brand Ambassadors across the country.



bide: an eco-brand and social enterprise

Ten years ago, Amelia Gammon started to rethink what impact her lifestyle was having on the planet. She was already vegan, but as she started planning a family the reality of the climate crisis really hit home.

After discovering the providence of popular eco-cleaning products, the ingredients used, the manufacturing process and the packaging, she realised that they didn't meet the strict environmental and ethical criteria for which she was looking. Too often, green or eco products have a high price tag that make sustainable living a middle class privilege. So, she decided to produce her own.

Enter bide: an eco-brand and social enterprise, making it easy to live an eco-conscious lifestyle with accessible swaps, starting with their plastic-free, zero-waste and vegan cleaning products.

bide was established to address two major challenges impacting all of us: exponential growth in unemployment, expedited by covid-19, and the climate crisis calling for mass adoption of sustainable practices.

Building the UK's most ambitious home manufacturing network, bide creates the opportunity for marginalised women to earn from home. Instead of using factories to produce its cleaning products, bide brings the factories to people's homes. It thrived during the pandemic because bide's business model is rooted in the two major trends: remote working and e-commerce shopping locally.

bide partners with charities such as Working Chance, an employment charity for women with convictions, and other partner charities that support refugees, women with alcohol and drug addictions, women seeking shelter and people with disabilities. Every time you use bide, you're helping shift the distribution of wealth and opportunity for everyone to be able to be valued contributors to our economy.

bide's founder Amelia Gammon said: "bide was formed in reaction to the pandemic. At our core, we care deeply about the planet and the people who inhabit it. I wanted to help more people adopt sustainable lifestyles, but I could also see that the gap between the haves and the have-nots is widening at an alarming rate. As a society, we need to shake up our value system and prioritise the distribution of wealth and opportunity for everyone to be a valued contributor to our economy."

bide was awarded Ethical Consumer Magazine's Best Buy label, and its products – toilet bombs, dishwasher tablets, washing-up liquid, and more – are toxic-free, free of palm oil, cruelty free and vegan. All the pre-recycled and compostable packaging is sourced in the UK, too. Every time you place an order, bide plants a tree on your behalf.

In 2021, bide raised £22,000 in crowdfunding and, since then, the enterprise has grown. Now, for 2022, it is entering pre-seed investment, and aims to raise 20 times more than the crowdfund! This will help bide work with more charities, increase the impact of its work, and launch new categories of products.

Find out more: www.bideboxes.com.

PRODUCTS



Discovering Amity Blue in Australia

Strolling at the Agnes Water Market, I am attracted by the colourful Amity Blue stall displaying beautiful towels. Feeling the very soft fabric and reading that they are made from 80% recycled plastic, I know I am on to something special.

Katie, the business owner, is very passionate and explains that 20 plastic bottles make one large towel, which gives them amazing properties: sand-free, super absorbent, quick drying and anti-microbial!

Totally seduced, I indulge in purchasing one with a zipped pocket for my keys and phone. Since then, my beach adventures have been an absolute dream!

Never will you experience a wet car seat or a smelly towel forgotten in your bag or in the car! The Amity blue towel truly is a revolution when it comes to all its benefits and, being made from recycled plastic, you also contribute in helping the environment.

Pro surfer and former World Champion Layne Beachley says that she also loves Amity Blue products and the ethos.

Since then, I added the beach mat for the kids to play on, our collie gets a quick dry with its own towel from the doggie range and we would never go back to old tea towels now that Amity Blue offers a super absorbent range with extra quick dry off. Being antibacterial just makes these products absolutely perfect!

Find them all online at www.amityblue.com.au; free shipping, Australia wide.

Products we love



Whitworths SHOTS

Whitworths SHOTS (RRP: £2.00 per 4x25g pack) are versatile pick-me-up snacks you won't want to put down. Now 100% recyclable, Whitworths SHOTS get the sustainable tick of approval, making for a guilt-free snack on-the-go.

With less than 100 calories in each pack, and containing 25% indulgent pieces and 75% dried fruit goodness, they are both nutritious and delicious - in the palm of your hand. Flavours within the range include Chocolate & Hazelnut, Fruity Biscuit, Berry & White Chocolate, Toffee & Pecan, Raisin & Chocolate and Orange & Chocolate.

Whitworths SHOTS are available in Asda, Morrisons, Ocado, JS and Poundland stores, plus Whitworths online.

Anti-bacterial knickers

I had an emergency c-section owing to diabetic complications, and discovered that there were no anti-bacterial knickers to aid healing for an immuno-compromised wearer. I was high risk for infection, and beyond angry!

LGBTQ friendly Dandelion Weatherstone offers vegan, funky, anti-bacterial post-surgery knickers (suitable for cancer surgery, too) with a same day delivery option. The design helps to reduce the risk of pain and diastasis recti (six-pack separation). I also offer a payment plan and a 'no decline' policy if anyone vulnerable or cash-strapped asks for sponsorship.

I have a non-profit link up with Tree-Nation for my customers to plant a tree if their baby sadly passes away, and I'm also now affiliated with a hypnotherapist to whom I refer those customers.

My brand is eco-driven with a strict anti-slavery policy. I reuse all my packaging or send out in corn starch, and I'm trying to move to recycled polyester.



Brushd Toothpaste Tablets

With their primary focus where it should be - ensuring the best, dentist-approved oral care for you - Brushd is taking it one step further, by helping you reduce your plastic pollution one brush at a time. With the vast majority of alternative oral products being made solely from single-use plastic, Brushd is here to make a difference.

With an estimated 1.5 billion tubes of toothpaste going to landfill or into the ocean each year, our oral care routines create a massive amount of plastic waste. To reduce your impact, opt for the Brushd Toothpaste Tablets (£4.99). Found in their distinguished, refillable glass jars, Brushd Toothpaste Tablets are the planet-friendly alternative to toothpaste. Specially formulated to make sure that no compromise is made on your oral health, simply place one tablet in your mouth, chew and brush! Created with organic peppermint powder, these leave your mouth feeling not only clean, but minty fresh.

Eco-Refill Pouch

C is a unique, historic, Norwich-distilled gin that is leading the drinks' business in sustainability with the innovative Eco-Refill Pouch. Bullards Spirits encourages the purchase of their Bottle For Life as part of the brand eco-agenda and commitment to reducing their carbon footprint. The Bottle For Life is elegantly hand-crafted and inspired by the original Bullard's Brewery chimney that towered over Norwich for 100 years.

Subsequent purchases of the gin can then be bought in a recyclable Eco-Refill Pouch, with Bullards Spirits partnering with Terracycle and Royal Mail, so empty pouches can be returned by Freepost back to the distillery, with ease. Gins in their collection include the Coastal Gin (w/botanicals foraged from the coast of Norfolk), Strawberry and Black Pepper Gin (which features a whole punnet of fresh strawberries!), Old Tom Gin (the natural sweetness comes from Norfolk honey) and London Dry Gin (winner of the World Gin Awards in 2017).



New vegan plant-based bars from Flower & White

You don't have to be a vegan to enjoy the latest plant-based addition to Flower & White's moreish range of low-calorie melting meringue, and Fairtrade chocolate-based bars and bites. The brand has introduced two new fabulously delicious vegan bars to its popular range of 'better-for-you' confectionery: VEGAN Melting Strawberry and Melting Chocolate meringue bars. Already award-winning, these ultimate 'kind to the planet' indulgences feature unbelievably scrumptious 100% dairy-free creamy M*LK chocolate, and a melt-in-the-mouth chickpea-based meringue middle that will amaze.

Not only do these yummy bars taste out of this world, at just 85 calories each, they also represent a great 'won't blow the diet' treat. Unlike so many other 'low-calorie' bars, they are completely free of any nasty additives or artificial sweeteners. As per the rest of the celebrated Flower & White collection, the vegan bars are free of palm oil and gluten.

Flower & White's decadent chocolate meringue bars are the perfect solution for when you crave a sweet hit, a sneaky snack or even an alternative super light dessert.

All products are available to order from www.flowerandwhite.co.uk.



'Chocolate with Soul'

Raw Chocolate Company's gorgeous new look showcases their 'Chocolate with Soul' as they continue to produce raw items that nourish the body and planet. A bold, playful testament to their standing as early creators of chocolate that is raw, vegan and kept as close to its natural state as possible, their products maintain an unforgettably glorious taste that keeps them leading the way. Made in carbon neutral kitchens, the whole range is also free from dairy, gluten, soya and refined sugars, with B-Corp certification pending.

As a deliciously creative addition to Christmas fare, their Spiced Chocolate Almonds are the ideal gift and snack; warming and festive, they are made with 100% organic ingredients, sweetened with coconut blossom sugar and cacao butter, and prepared with sumptuous mixed spices, including cinnamon, clove, allspice and nutmeg.



ST&G's Joyously Busy Great British Adventure Map

Britain is beautiful, perfectly proportioned and small enough that you can explore it properly without having to blag an enormous career break. With so much variety – superb coastline, idyllic islands, luscious landscapes and incredible views – crammed into such a small area, Britain really is the perfect adventure playground.

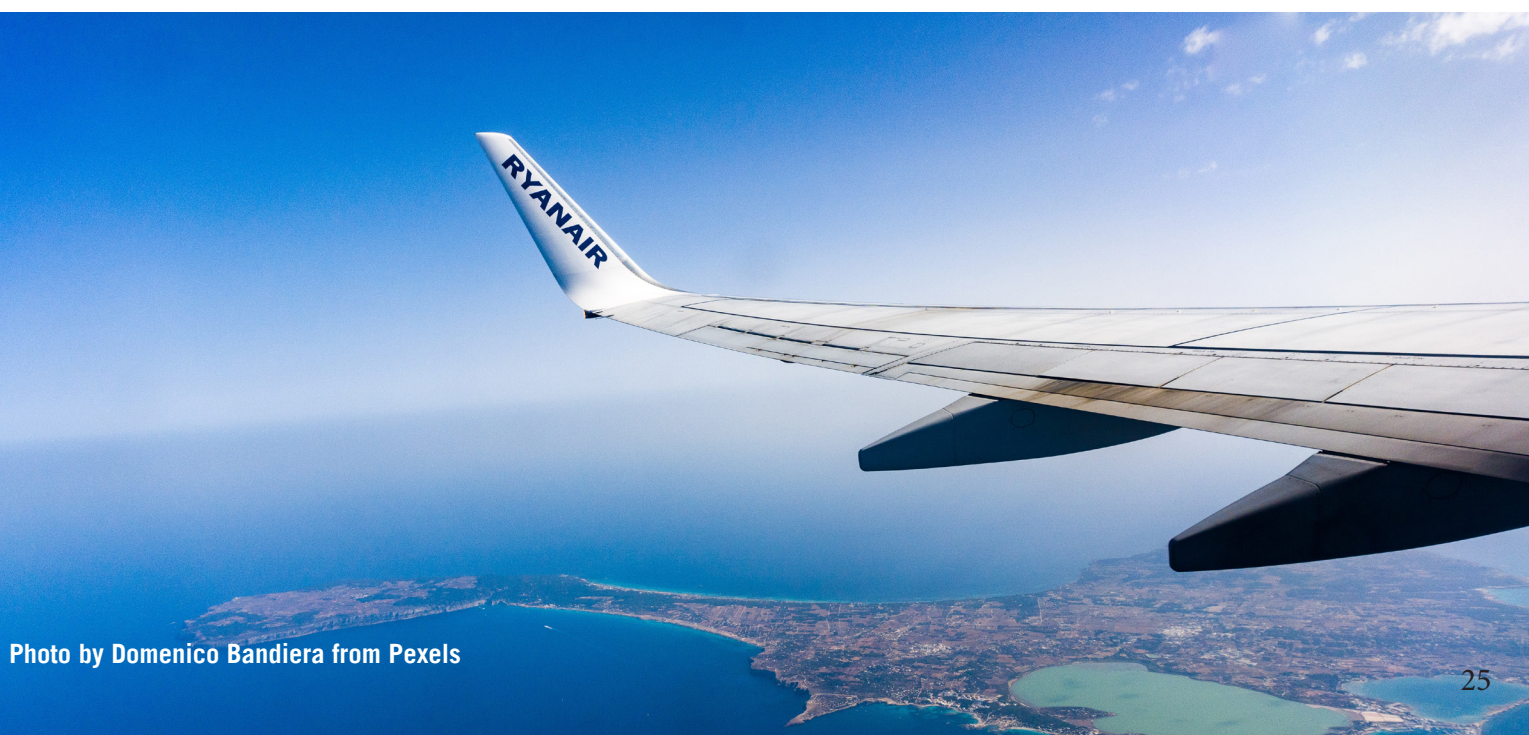
ST&G's Joyously Busy Great British Adventure Map features over 2,500 of Britain's great wild places, mountains, islands, beaches, waterways, views, eccentric events, points of interest and long-distance routes... peppered with some randomly inspiring trivia and amusingly quirky touches – for example: Britain's top 50 adventure locations; the world's best plane flight; the first and so far only time someone walked naked from Land's End to John O'Groats; the stunning British beach that featured in a Thai tourism ad; and the longest distance ever Morris dance!

Price £14.99 from www.marvellousmaps.com.



Sculptured vases from Ibiza

Inspired by the boho off-grid vibe of the remote landscapes and timeworn interior villages of northern Ibiza, these sculptured vases are honed from natural terracotta and hand painted in rich low-key colours. The curvy shapes and interesting form create island warmth and energy in your home. These would look great on a shelf, mantel or on a table dressed with natural grasses and dried flowers in a bedroom for a year round, sun-kissed glow.





CHESTERTONS

Chestertons calculates benefits of going all-electric

After becoming the first large estate agency to convert its entire fleet of company cars to electric BMW i3s, in 2019, Chestertons has calculated the positive impact that its change has made and is urging others in the industry to follow its lead.

With over 70 electric BMW i3s now on the road across London, Chestertons has calculated that it will have reduced its tailpipe CO2 emissions by 2,925kgs (183 tonnes) per year.

Guy Gittins, Chestertons' CEO, comments: "Business leaders can't simply sit back and watch the climate crisis destroy our Earth. We have a shared responsibility to do everything we can to protect our environment. We took the decision in 2019 to work towards becoming the greenest estate agent in the UK, and started on a journey to become carbon neutral.

We soon identified that the only way of realistically doing this was to completely overhaul our car fleet. Our first BMW i3s hit the road the same year and then last year, along with many other green initiatives across the business (such as using all renewable energy for each office), we achieved our goal and became the first UK agent to be certified as carbon neutral.

With over 70 electric cars now on the roads, we are not only doing our part to improve London's air quality, but we have also seen some cost savings as a result of our decision, which have been put towards supporting government-backed carbon offset programs so we could achieve our carbon neutral status. It is a project that our staff have all been incredibly excited about and proud to be a part of, and it has certainly helped raise awareness of environmental issues across the business and within the communities we serve."

Michelle Keller, Chestertons Fleet Manager, added: "It has been an exciting couple of years launching the new fleet on to the road but the feedback from staff and clients has been overwhelmingly positive. At first, we had concerns about the availability of charging points, especially for our busiest offices like Islington and South Kensington, but this has never caused any issues and, in fact, turned out to be a big advantage during the petrol shortage a few weeks ago."

Tony Greig from Lombard Vehicle Solutions, Chestertons' leasing agent, commented: "With their early adoption of Battery Electric Vehicles, Chestertons has led the way – showing that BEVs not only make a significant financial saving, in terms of running costs, but also delivers a substantial reduction of the carbon impact their business travel has on the environment."

Fully charged! Why developers are taking electric vehicles into account

The popularity of electric vehicles continues to rise. Jason Tema, director of Clearview Developments, tells us why UK property developers need to take this into consideration.

In November, Boris Johnson spoke at the Confederation of British Industry's annual conference and announced that electric vehicle charging points will be a legal requirement in new build homes from next year. The new initiative is set to be another part of the current government's strategy to reduce emissions and act as a world leader on green issues. As well as new build properties having to provide charging ports, buildings which have "major renovations" will also be required to make the upgrade.

According to the latest statistics from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), October saw a staggering 73% increase in pure-electric car sales in the UK, compared to the same month last year. In total, there were 106,265 new car registrations in the UK in October this year, of which 15% were pure-electric cars, 7.9% were plug-in hybrids and just over 8% were full hybrids.

It's projected that, by the end of 2021, one in ten new cars in the UK will be electric. This is particularly the case after the Chancellor allocated more than £1bn in the Budget, of which £830m will go towards the "electrification of UK vehicles and their supply chains, to support investment in zero emission vehicle manufacturing, battery giga-factories and the electric vehicle supply chain". An additional £620m was allocated for public charging in residential areas and plug-in vehicle grants.

The team at Clearview Developments noticed that the majority of their buyers already own electric vehicles and appreciate the fact that the company's development Broadwater House features suitable charging points. "Other buyers stated that they are likely to make their next car an electric one. To cater for the increasing demand, Broadwater House in Tunbridge Wells features EV charging points for all onsite parking spaces," company director Jason Tema says.

Broadwater House is a stunning 19th century mansion that was previously subdivided into five units and is currently being completely refurbished. As part of Clearview Developments' approved planning permission, an extension is being added to create 14 tastefully-designed one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom apartments. Prices start from £375,000.

With completion due for 2021/22, residents will be able to enjoy spacious interiors that celebrate the property's history, with reinstated ornamental ceilings, decorative stucco and floor-to-ceiling windows. The newly built apartments, which are spread across three floors, will mirror the style and design of the original building, whilst offering all the modern conveniences of 21st century living. In addition, buyers can choose from two furniture packages that offer comfort with a balanced colour palette.

Located within a conservation area, Broadwater House will spoil its residents with unrivalled tranquillity and direct access to the nearby flora and fauna, as Broadwater Down features the only official public entrance to the adjacent Hargate Forest. Here, nature lovers can admire a diversity of plants and wildlife, as well as stunning views over the surrounding countryside. Similar can be said for Broadwater House itself, which will feature beautifully landscaped gardens.

www.broadwaterhouse.com





The UK's first experimental model village with electric-powered cars

Direct Line has recently launched the UK's first model village with only electric-powered cars, as an eco-blueprint to demonstrate how electric vehicles will benefit the environment. The experiment is on a smaller scale at the Bondville Model Village in Bridlington.

During the makeover of the popular model village that was created during lockdown, it demonstrated how just a small change in a small village can make a huge difference to the planet, once it is upscaled.

Moving our automobile industry into solely electric vehicles seems inevitability, with seven out of ten Brits strongly believing that all cars will turn electric in the near future.

If the model electric village created by Direct Line was to scale, the total CO2 change would be a whopping 3,600g every kilometre. That means that, if Bondville was an average British village, it would produce 192.8 tonnes LESS of CO2. Across the whole of the UK, this would result in over one million tonne reduction in carbon emissions. Across the world this would mean a sizeable achievement towards reaching the 1.5C climate change targets.

Consumers will come from far and wide to view the village, to receive free guidance from Direct Line and Zoom EV consultants, whose mission is to make EV ownership easy and reduce CO2 emissions, demonstrate how easy it is to go electric and reveal how much of a difference going electric makes to the environment.

Following COP26, Direct Line found that two fifths (46.5 per cent) of Brits are concerned about the harm of petrol on the environment, showcasing that all things electric could be in

our future sooner than imagined, with over half of Brits (54.4 per cent) admitting that their next purchase of a car will be electric.

Sixty-one per cent of Brits say they also worry that there aren't enough charge points around the UK. Direct Line is here to help, partnering with Zoom EV to develop more EV bundles and showcasing this first within the village.

By 2030, 6.5 million households in the UK plan to buy an electric car and Direct Line has announced its campaign 'Making Electric Easy', offering a new package of EV-focused benefits available to new Direct Line customers – including discounts at public charging points and on home charging devices – making the future more accessible.

Interestingly, although they show the biggest resistance to buying an electric car, 80 per cent of those surveyed over the age of 65 said that they think we will all need to drive them soon, anyway. This is in comparison to 63 per cent of those aged 16-24 – the age group most likely to buy one.

Ian Exworth, Director of Emerging Markets at Direct Line, comments: "Electric vehicles have clearly made a big impact on consumers, and it is our job to monitor that, offer support and ensure that they feel like it is easy to make the switch. The important thing is to educate people and, what we've heard from them, this could be the future."

Greg Fairbotham, CEO at Zoom EV, states: "Working with Direct Line to create the UK's first completely electric village, especially following this research, is a perfect representation of how easy-going electric can be. The need to switch to electric is getting more important by the second, and it is essential we continue to remove the barriers to EV ownership."





Photo by Tom Podmore on Unsplash

The cost of driving around the British coastline in an electric van

If you've seen the news recently, you may have seen that a man called Nick Butter has successfully completed a challenge like no other: running the length of Britain's coastline.

That's right, Nick completed this epic, extraordinary journey after 128 days on Sunday 22nd August 2021. In doing so, the ultra-marathon man clocked a whopping 5,255 miles, covered more than 12,000,000 steps, spent more than 1,400 hours running, and burnt out 14 pairs of trainers – a rather impressive feat, to say the least!

The transport industry is up against it when it comes to emissions and, with Boris Johnson having announced his decision to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, everyone is having to start looking at more environmentally friendly alternatives – for example, the humble electric vehicle.

So, inspired by this challenge, van leasing company Van Ninja has delved into how long Nick Butter's amazing record would take if you were to do it in an electric van, rather than on foot.

The route

If you were to follow the exact same route as Nick, you'd begin your rather exquisite adventure on the coast of Cornwall at the world-renowned Eden Project, before navigating your way up the coast towards Hampshire and on towards Kent.

Now starts the extensive journey north, as you travel up the East coast, passing through the likes of Norfolk, Yorkshire, and Northumberland, before crossing the border into Scotland and weaving your way up towards the capital. Then, you get on to the now-famous North Coast 500 (the UK's best road trip).

Then begins the long descent south, back down towards Dunbarton, Dumfries, Cumbria, Cheshire, and through into Wales. After you navigate your way through the stunning Welsh countryside, you prepare to complete the penultimate stage of your journey, departing Monmouthshire and ticking off Gloucester, Somerset, Devon and then, of course, you're back in Cornwall.

The time

According to Volkswagen, the e-Transporter's battery can be charged from empty to full in five hours 30 minutes, offering a range of 82 miles.

With this in mind, during the course of the 5,255-mile expedition, you'll need to stop on 65 occasions. This is based on access to a 7kWh vehicle charging point, which is the standard device in homes around the country and often available at the likes of hotels, pubs, and other hospitality venues.

So, the number you've all been waiting for – in order to do a full swoop of Britain's coastline in an electric van, it would take you 357.5 hours in charging times and 51 hours of driving (if we were able to travel at an average speed of 50mph). If you incorporate the government and RAC suggestions of taking a break for 15 minutes following on from two hours of driving, this will add an additional six and a half hours on to your total journey time.

There you have it – to drive the entirety of the British coastline in an electric van, you'd need to set aside 17 and a half days! What about the cost? Well, you'll be pleased to know that, despite taking the same amount of time as a cruise around the Mediterranean, it'll only set you back 2p-3p per mile – meaning that you could do this trip for between £50 and £75, in comparison to £745 in a diesel alternative.

Now we've crunched the numbers, all that's left is for you to do is plan your journey and hit the road – and identify where the charging points are in the Highlands!



Darwin launches trial autonomous passenger shuttle service

A fully autonomous passenger shuttle service has begun trials on UK roads.

The new service is being trialled by Darwin Innovation Group, with support from ESA and the UK Space Agency. An autonomous shuttle will transport passengers around Harwell Science and Innovation Campus in Oxfordshire, which is home to some of the UK's most innovative companies and research organisations.

The shuttle, created by Naveya, uses LiDAR sensors, cameras and ultrasound sensors to navigate safely around any obstacles. It also features a satellite (GNSS) antenna for positioning. There is no steering wheel, but it does have safety controls, which will be managed by an on-board operator throughout the trial. Darwin will maintain and monitor the service, tracking the shuttle's location and gathering information about its operation as it travels. Telematics data will be transmitted from the shuttle in real time, using Hispasat's satellite communication channels and O2's 4G and 5G networks.

The use of satellite communications in this trial is significant. In previous trials, autonomous vehicles have relied on terrestrial wi-fi to stay connected. By making use of satellites in addition to 4G and 5G, autonomous vehicles can operate even in rural or remote areas that may not yet have complete terrestrial coverage.

This shuttle service will help demonstrate the potential of self-driving vehicles to operate in a real-world setting, serving as a step towards the wider use of this technology in the UK. Similar Naveya shuttles have been used in an urban setting in Switzerland and have safely transported tens of thousands of passengers. The shuttle, which is battery powered, shows that the future of public transportation can be green as well as autonomous. The potential to transport passengers while emitting zero carbon, if put in place more widely, could help the UK towards its emission targets.

Science Minister George Freeman said: "Until now, autonomous vehicles have relied on terrestrial Wi-Fi, which means they can struggle to operate in remote and rural areas. By unlocking the power of space and satellite technology, these shuttles can stay connected all the time. Our National Space Strategy promises to put space technology at the heart of our efforts to make the UK a science and innovation superpower. Autonomous vehicle technology has huge applications in key industries, and the UK is committed to lead in adoption as well as technological innovation."

The shuttle service has already created new jobs at the campus: shuttle safety operators and shuttle mechanics. The people working with the shuttle will be able to share their experience with technology colleges and help improve the available courses.



In addition to Darwin, Nava, ESA and UK Space Agency, a range of organisations have supported the new shuttle service. Mobile operator O2 and satellite operator Hispasat have aided Darwin in its research into connectivity, and the shuttle will make use of their networks as it travels around the campus. O2 also provides added investment to Darwin, as well as supporting with patent development. Harwell Science Campus and STFC are hosting the service, and AWS is providing storage for the data produced by the shuttle.

The shuttle is insured by Aviva. That company will use the trial and resulting data to better understand the evolving mobility market. With this information, Aviva will be able to create innovative insurance products to cater for this fast-changing market, including autonomous vehicles and associated technologies.

The autonomous shuttle service operates at Harwell Science Campus during weekdays, morning to evening. It travels two routes, one along Fermi Avenue and one along Eighth Avenue, with the ESA building being the central stop for both routes. There is no cost to ride the shuttle, which is currently available to campus pass-holders and registered guests of pass-holders.

Daniela Petrovic, Delivery Director at Darwin, said: "We're thrilled to play a part in demonstrating the real-world potential of autonomous vehicles. Self-driving cars are no longer theoretical, and we believe that CAV trials can help move the UK towards greener, more efficient and more accessible modes of transport."

Sergio Budkin, Director of Market Development at Virgin Media O2, said: "This is another exciting milestone in making connected autonomous vehicles a reality, from concept to deployment on our roads. We're proud to not only be utilising our award-winning network, but also creating the app for real-time tracking, providing another innovative 4G and 5G use case that's making a difference to society and the way we live."

José Luis Serrano, Head of Innovation at Hispasat, said: "We believe this trial will be a major step forward in combining satellite technology with 4G and 5G environments, to ensure that autonomous driving can be performed reliably and resiliently, regardless of geographic location."

Elodie Viau, Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications at ESA, said: "5G is set to transform society. For this to happen, communications networks in space have to be integrated with terrestrial ones. ESA is excited to champion the Harwell shuttle service, a project that will both showcase the reliable, instant connectivity delivered by converged space and ground tele-communications networks, and bring low-emissions, autonomous vehicles to the roads."

Stuart Grant, Chief Executive at Harwell Science Campus, said: "At Harwell, we've created a scale-up ecosystem that promotes collaboration, multidisciplinary innovation and the creation of smart technology. We're delighted to be able to support campus-based Darwin with the launch and operation of this next-generation autonomous shuttle. The Harwell shuttle will transport over 6,000 employees around the campus, showcasing the future of travel and urban mobility."

Nick Amin, Chief Operating Officer at Aviva, said, "This real-world trial is an important development that will help advance the potential and use of autonomous vehicles on UK roads. Aviva was one of the first insurers of motor vehicles more than 100 years ago, and we are proud to continue our role as an enabler of innovation by insuring one of the first purpose-built autonomous passenger shuttles operating on UK roads. The data from this trial will help us understand and shape the mobility insurance policies of the future."

Pierre Lahutte, CEO of Nava, said: "We are very pleased to be part of this trial at the renowned Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. This new deployment allows Nava to strengthen its technology with an additional use case in a complex environment and to contribute to the development of insurance practices for autonomous vehicles."

How to cut your closet's carbon footprint

The UK has reiterated its commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Investments and grants for electric vehicles, heat pump boilers, and the regeneration of green land and forests are targeting ways to lower the country's environmental impact and our personal carbon footprint.

What else can we do to help ease the impact of climate change? The answer is closer to home than you may think; in fact, it's inside your wardrobe.

Did you know that the fashion industry contributes ten per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, and nearly 20 per cent of wastewater comes from fabric dyeing and treatment? Waste material is also a massive issue. The UK sends an estimated £140 million worth of clothing to landfill every year.

Clothing is a necessity. However, our fast-fashion fascination is destroying the environment at an alarming rate. So, how can you help combat this great problem? Here, we explore the ways to cut your closet's carbon footprint and live a sustainable lifestyle.

The best investment

The best way to tackle fashion waste is to not throw your fashion away. We don't mean hoarding it but, rather, making sure that you get the most amount of wear out of a product as possible.

The UK's fast-fashion culture has created a high turnover of clothing in our wardrobes. Seven per cent of UK shoppers admit to buying clothing online several times per week, while an additional ten per cent buy clothes online at least once per week.

Shockingly, we may be refreshing our wardrobes quicker than we should. New research from GAP reveals how often we buy our clothes in comparison to the average wardrobe collection size.

While 38.9 per cent of people get away with buying only up to ten new garments per year, meaning their wardrobe is refreshed every 15.2 years, there is still 7.3 per cent of UK people buying up to 40 or more garments every year. Based on an average wardrobe size of 152 garments, this means that wardrobes are refreshed every 3.8 years or even more frequently.

When we throw our clothes away, 30 per cent of it goes to landfill, where materials such as polyester take years to break down and other natural fibres release gases during their decomposition.

How can we avoid this? Simply by buying better. Think about quality, not quantity, and aim to keep your garments for as long as possible.





Photo by Leticia Ribeiro from Pexels

Achieving this has led to the rise of the capsule wardrobe — statement pieces, such as skinny jeans, paired with essential items that could last a lifetime. Make every purchase a big decision and consider how many times you'll wear it. Is hot pink velour really going to be fashionable next season?

Nude colours, simple patterns, and essential styles are timeless. Favour the basics in your wardrobe. Once you've had a good amount of wear out of them, consider donating them, or thrift them into accessories or other products.

Sustainable clothing

When we do need to buy new clothes, consider buying more sustainable alternatives and materials that are environmentally conscious.

While material waste is a huge problem for the fashion industry, so is its water consumption. Cotton production uses 10,000 litres of water to create just one kilogram of the material.

Furthermore, to keep up with the demand for fast fashion, pesticides and chemical fertilisers are used to improve their yield. However, this only increases water consumption.

Tackling water consumption is a focus for many retailers, including GAP, aiming to cut water and waste across their products. Currently, 91 per cent of their jeans are made through a Washwell programme, reducing waste and water consumption by 20 per cent. Washwell is projected to be used across all their denim products by next year. It's simple changes like this that are making it easier for shoppers to find better alternatives.

Sustainable farming is also helping to tackle this issue. Organic cotton uses only nine per cent of the water that the alternatives use. Furthermore, it reduces water pollution by 98 per cent, while 95 per cent of the water used in production is from stored rainwater or from the soil.

Natural fibres are also more sustainable than synthetic fibres. Organic cotton takes only about five months to decompose, whereas synthetic fibres such as polyester and nylon can take anywhere between 20 to 200 years to break down.

Ultimately, buying t-shirts or joggers made from sustainable and organic cotton is the best way to reduce your closet carbon footprint.

There's always more that we can do to live a sustainable life, whether that's how we commute, power our homes, or what we wear. Sustainable alternatives are out there; it just takes a little good practice to make sure that we actively seek them out.

83% of cheapest school uniform contains crude-oil derived plastics

Personalised clothing company Banana Moon analysed the cheapest school uniform items from UK high street retailers and supermarkets online, and found that the most affordable uniform was not the most eco-friendly.

Collating data on material composition, the analysis found that:

- 83% of the most affordable uniform products analysed contained non-renewable crude-oil derived plastics like polyester or polyamide (Nylon);
- only 20% of these contained some recycled polyester;
- 37% of the products analysed claimed to be treated with a chemical coating that enhanced durability or repelled stains (e.g. Teflon, Teflon EcoElite, BionicFinish Eco);
- only three out of 34 products (9%) containing viscose claimed to be sustainable viscose or from sustainably managed forests;
- out of 44 products that contained cotton, 12 (27%) contained sustainably sourced cotton, two (0.05%) contained some recycled cotton, and three (0.07%) contained organic cotton.

Under the Education Bill, the Government was due to set statutory guidance this autumn, requiring schools to keep uniform prices down and consider high street alternatives. In anticipation of this, Banana Moon revealed where the cheapest and most sustainable uniform garments can be found:

· Jumper

- o Aldi – 80% sustainably sourced cotton from Africa and polyester made with seven recycled bottles - £1

· Polo shirt

- o H&M – 100% organic and sustainably sourced cotton - £3.99

· Shirt

- o ASDA – Contains better Cotton Initiative sustainably sourced cotton and recycled polyester - £2.25

· Dress

- o M&S – 65% recycled polyester and 35% sustainable viscose - £9.60

· Skirt

- o Aldi – 65% recycled polyester - £1.75

· Trousers

- o M&S – 85% sustainably sourced cotton - £6.40

· Shorts

- o GAP – 92% sustainably sourced cotton, 5% recycled cotton, and made using water-saving Washwell program - £9.98

· Socks

- o ASDA – 77% Better Cotton Initiative cotton – £0.30/pair

· Blazer

- o M&S – 65% recycled polyester and 35% sustainable viscose - £18.40

The full table of product analysis can be found here: <https://www.banana-moon-clothing.co.uk/eco-friendly-school-uniforms>

A survey of 1000 parents found that 69% would purchase sustainable uniform if it was more affordable. In addition, 48% of parents from low-income households said that cost was most important consideration when purchasing uniform. However, the research found that parents would have to spend £8.40 more to purchase the cheapest sustainable blazer, and £6.61 more to buy the cheapest sustainable dress.

Alex Grace, Managing Director at Banana Moon, said: “It’s clear that sustainable school uniform is not attainable for all low-income families; even the cheapest eco-friendly garments cost significantly more than the cheapest on the high street. Whilst we welcome efforts by the government to make uniform more affordable to everyday families, we don’t want them to be forced to choose options that are not sustainable or the best quality for their children.”

The school uniform grant provides up to £150 to low-income families. However, 38% of the parents from low-income households said that this was not enough. Additionally, out of the 51 councils, which are spread across each local region in England, only 12 currently offer a school uniform grant.



Photo by Magda Ehlers from Pexels

The Beauty Shortlists are back for 2022

Honouring the highest-scoring earth-safe and ocean-safe beauty and wellness products, and judged by experts, the 2022 Beauty Shortlist Awards will feature over 40 new categories, embracing both blue and green beauty, more age-specific skincare and self-care categories, eco-packaging, holistic health, eco-innovation, nutrition, aromatherapy, CBD and more.

The brand new categories will highlight the following:

- The new Blue Beauty wave: Beauty Brand/Product of The Year 2022, Best Ocean Protection Awareness Campaign, Best Give-back Blue Beauty Brand or Product
- Best Waterless Beauty Brand and Product
- Beauty and Ocean Protection organisation collaborations, reef-safe SPF's
- 'Plantable' and Home Compostable Beauty, alongside additional plastic-free categories
- More makeup and age-specific skincare categories for ages 50+ and 60+
- Best Desert Island Beauty Product (for eco-multitaskers)
- Best Subscription Box (Indie Brands)
- Best Planet-Friendly Self-care Product

In addition, The Beauty Shortlist's new Eco Lifestyle Awards (year 2) will open for entries on 1 April for awards day on 21 June 2022.

The Eco Awards' planet-positive categories include Plant-A-Tree / Forest Regeneration, B Corp, Ocean Protection, Recyclable and Circular Brands and more, and these awards span sectors such as food, fashion and design – alongside beauty and wellness.

About the new eco lifestyle awards

Founder Fiona Klonarides said:

"Created to specifically spotlight and celebrate the solution-orientated, planet-positive brands making a real, tangible difference, these new awards span diverse sectors such as green home, fashion, eco-garden, design, food, packaging and health – and beauty, of course."

The new Eco Lifestyle Awards' main change-maker brand categories will recognise:

- brands that are giving back – for example, B Corp or brands that are 1% for the Planet members;
- brands that put plastic reduction/elimination, and forest, water, soil and ocean conservation first and foremost;
- brands actively introducing eco-packaging solutions and alternatives to 'public enemy No.1' – plastic (most urgently, the excessive use and manufacturing of single-use plastic);
- brands across all sectors that use sustainable natural materials like bamboo or hemp (textiles, beauty, natural health, food, paper, biofuel, eco-packaging, etc).

“These new eco awards were launched to encourage consumers to walk away once and for all from a ‘single use / throw-away lifestyle’ and embrace a simpler, kinder way of life,” Fiona Klonarides added.

“These awards are a reminder that we can all increase our ‘R-activity’ in our daily lifestyle – more ‘reusing, recycling, repurposing and regenerating’ so that future generations can thrive in a healthier, safer, cleaner environment without the serious and deeply concerning threats we are facing, head-on, right now.”

thebeautyshortlist.com

Twitter & Instagram @BeautyShortlist

Celebrate the brands that celebrate nature with us at the Beauty Shortlist Awards on 2nd March 2022.

“I love the integrity that shines through; these awards should be used as everyone’s beauty shopping list” – Alexia Inge, co-founder, Cult Beauty London.

“No other awards champion brands like The Beauty Shortlist – The British Beauty Council.

Who’s Who Top 10 Personalities of the Year in the Natural Beauty Industry – Natural Beauty News.



‘WE ARE WASTD’ knitwear

UK made, ethically run, zero waste women’s guilt-free fashion brand has launched. Tired of bland, repetitive fast fashion that all looks the same? We Are Wastd think that women deserve knitwear that is as unique as they are! Using exclusively true deadstock yarn from the local UK textile industry that would otherwise be destined for landfill, no two We Are Wastd jumpers look exactly the same.

New for AW21, We Are Wastd is the first women’s guilt-free fashion brand of its kind that combines design, ethics, technology and production all under one physical roof, to create season-less knitwear that is not only beautifully designed, ethically and sustainably made, but also truly zero waste. Featuring an initial drop of the ‘Billy’ beanie hat and ‘Danna’ drop shoulder jumper in delicious Blueberry Pie, Matcha Macaroon and Rhubarb and Custard colourways, each piece is:

- knitted from 100% deadstock acrylic yarn, rescued from landfill;
- created with a zero-waste, sustainable production process ;
- seam-free for added longevity and comfort;
- totally unique in pattern - no two pieces are the same;
- made in England.

We Are Wastd was established in 2021 by designer Rosa Hutchesson and UK factory owner Snahal Patel, to create

sustainable, seasonless, UK-made knitted clothing for women who love to be unique. We Are Wastd is committed to making high quality, affordable knitwear that does not impact negatively on the planet or the people who make it.

Rosa Hutchesson, We Are Wastd’s co-founder comments: “One day I noticed cones of miscellaneous yarn sitting on our factory shelves. The quantity was not enough for a full run of garments so I wondered if there was something that it could be used for, instead of it just going to waste. I thought it could be a fun, effective way of using up this waste yarn and creating beautiful, unique products in the process”

At a time when We Are Wastd’s hometown has had negative press surrounding some of its garment factories, Rosa and Snahal hope to shift the focus to a majority of factories in Leicester, where workers are treated and paid well and take pride in the products that they create. Leading the way for UK based sustainability and ethical knitwear production, We Are Wastd also shows that it is possible to run a profitable business that values its staff and focuses on sustainability.

Snahal Patel, We Are Wastd’s co-founder and factory owner said : “We are extremely excited to launch the We Are Wastd brand and hope that this paves the way for ethical and sustainable clothing production to become the norm in the UK and rest of the world”.

Two thirds of Brits admit to throwing away edible food

Research has been carried out by surplus food app Too Good To Go, in recognition of the UN's International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW), established in 2019 and observed on 29th September.

A new global survey has found that, while over half (59%) of Brits claim to know that reducing food waste is one of the most efficient ways to tackle climate change, two thirds admit to throwing away food that could have been eaten.

British consumers were surveyed alongside consumers in 14 other countries. Overall, consumers in Portugal were the most aware that fighting food waste is one of the most effective tools for combating climate change (75%), while those surveyed in the US were the least (35%). When it came to food waste fighting behaviour, Italy came out on top with 50% claiming to never throw away food at home. The countries lagging further behind were the United States (80% admitted to throwing away food), followed by Denmark (73%) and then the UK (70%).

The study sought to find out why we are seeing a stark disconnect between awareness and action when it comes to fighting food waste.

Globally, the research found that food is most commonly wasted at home because people believe there is too little left to keep (23%). Whereas, in Britain specifically, the number one reason why we waste food at home is that - despite it being completely edible - food has gone past its Best Before date (28%).

The age group 18- to 34-year-olds were found to be the most likely to throw away food past its Best Before date, with 75% of Brits in that age group admitting to doing so, compared to just 22% of those aged 55 and above.

Other reasons for throwing away food in the UK, despite knowing it's damaging to our planet, includes there being too much food that ends up being forgotten about and wasted (12%).

These results follow WRAP's recent study, which found that household food waste levels have rebounded back to pre-pandemic levels as many return to their busier pre-covid lifestyles and are cooking from scratch less.

"These results are important for revealing some reasons behind that gap between what we know and what we do," says Paschalis Loucaides, UK Managing Director of Too Good To Go.

"It's great to see how people have become more aware of the impact of food waste on our planet, but now we must turn that awareness into action. This study has shown that most household food waste is not something that happens intentionally - it's the result of small, seemingly insignificant behaviours that many probably don't even notice. But even the smallest bit of food going in the bin is contributing towards the 10% of greenhouse gas emissions that our food system is responsible for each year."

"We need to see support from companies and the government to help people make informed choices, and easily take action. That's why we're working with global food producers to make date labelling clearer with our 'Look, Smell, Taste, Don't Waste' campaign, and calling on the government to include food waste reduction targets in their carbon reduction plans. We need society to not only recognise the problem at large, but to receive the tools and guidance to translate this into action, before it's too late."







Debunking the myths regarding the 2025 boiler ban

In 2019, the UK government announced that it would be bringing in a ban on gas boilers. This was originally scheduled for 2025 but has since been brought forward to 2023.

The ban will help the UK towards its target of net-zero emissions by 2050; it's estimated that 14% of all CO2 emissions are produced by our homes, with gas boilers making up the majority of these emissions.

There is some confusion around the ban, what it means for UK households and the consequences of not installing a greener boiler by the deadline. Many consumers have also expressed concerns around how achievable the deadline is, with 51% saying it's necessary but unrealistic.

In this article, we'll detail everything you need to know about the gas boiler ban and bust some of the most common myths.

Do I have to get rid of my existing gas boiler by the 2023 deadline?

One of the most prevalent misunderstandings around the ban is that people who already have gas boilers must change them before the 2023 deadline. However, this specific ban only applies to boilers in newly built homes from 2023 onwards. It means new homes must be built with a non-gas heating system.

Some of this confusion is coming from the recent International Energy Agency (IEA) announcement that "fossil fuel boilers" should not be sold from 2025 onwards and that existing gas boilers should be replaced. The IEA guidance hasn't yet been put into place, but the government is considering implementing it with a later deadline of 2040. This could have impacts on the ban on gas boilers in new-build homes, but nothing has been confirmed.

While the government has not announced a requirement for gas boilers to be replaced, it is currently providing incentives for homeowners who install heating systems that run on renewable energy. The Renewable Heat Incentive pays these homeowners quarterly.



Photo by Heiko Ruth from Pexels

Will I be fined if I don't replace my boiler by 2025?

The IEA announcement has also led to a misconception that people who still have gas boilers by 2025 will be fined, with some headlines stating that the fines could be as much as £10,000. However, the government has not currently committed to the IEA's recommendations, and there are no fines in place for people who don't replace their gas boiler by a certain point.

This doesn't guarantee that fines won't be introduced in the future but, currently, the government is focusing on offering incentives to homeowners who switch to greener heating solutions rather than punishments for those who don't.

Will replacing my boiler be too expensive?

While replacing or renovating your boiler will involve an initial cash outlay, switching to a greener source of heating will save you money in the long run. A simple like-for-like replacement can cost under £2,000, but switching to an eco-friendly boiler will be a more intensive installation and will therefore cost more money. The costs also vary based on whether you need a combi boiler or a conventional boiler.

Electrification is a key part of the IEA's recommendations – switching fossil fuel-powered systems with electric ones is a key goal. An electric combi boiler can cost between £1,500 and £4,500 for the system itself, with installation costs sitting at around £3,000. While electricity currently costs more than gas to run, electric boilers are far more energy-efficient and offer more controls than gas boilers, allowing you to cut down on your bills.

Is there any point in switching if the ban doesn't apply to my boiler?

Aside from the fact that a ban on existing gas boilers may eventually come into law, there are so many benefits to switching to a non-gas boiler. If we take the example of electric boilers, there are a lot of cost-savings in the running and maintenance of these systems.

Unlike gas radiators and heating systems, electric radiators don't need to be replaced unless they're heavily damaged. Equally, electric boilers don't require pipes or a flue to be installed and, because they're sealed and pressurised, you should never encounter a leaking boiler – a common issue with gas systems. A lot of the maintenance costs associated with gas boilers will no longer be a problem for you. The average cost of a boiler repair sits between £150 and £400, so that's a lot of money you could save by switching to an electric boiler.

Electric boilers are also much safer than gas boilers. Carbon monoxide leaks can occur with a gas boiler because it produces waste gases when it's operating, but electric boilers don't produce any sort of emissions.

Are electric boilers my only option for switching?

While an electric boiler offers many benefits, it isn't the only option when it comes to making your heating more eco-friendly. Installing a central heating pump is an option, but it does also come with an upfront cost of around £6,000 to £8,000.

Biomass boilers, which burn renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels, are also becoming more popular. These boilers can cost upwards of £5,000 with additional installation costs, so it might not be the most cost-effective solution in terms of the upfront expense.

The forthcoming gas boiler ban on new-build properties has caused a lot of concern and confusion for people with gas boilers in their homes. However, at the moment, there is no legislation requiring people who have existing fossil fuel boilers to replace them. Many experts expect this to come into place eventually, however, so it's a good idea to start exploring the market. If your gas boiler is reaching the end of its lifecycle, this is a great opportunity to explore with which greener option you could replace it.

UK cities with the most sustainable parents

With topics like global warming, climate change and plastic pollution gaining worldwide attention over the past 12 months, a new study reveals that sustainable parenting in the UK is on the rise.

Following a staggering 600% increase in interest for the search term “sustainable baby products”¹, a new study from eco-friendly nappy providers The Nappy Gurus delves into the increase of sustainable parenting in the UK and reveals the cities with the most sustainable parents.

The new ranking is based on insight from The Great Cloth Nappy Census 2020, website traffic and sales, and search data for terms including ‘reusable cloth nappies’. According to the study, the top ten cities that make the sustainable parent capitals list are:

1. Bristol
2. London
3. Birmingham
4. Norwich
5. Reading
6. Manchester
7. Glasgow
8. Nottingham
9. Coventry
10. Liverpool

The new research indicates that Bristol has the highest number of eco-conscious parents, with 50% of people surveyed in the south-west region stating that they use reusable cloth nappies over disposable nappies, and 91% use washable baby wipes. The city also searches for ‘reusable cloth nappies’ on average 382 times each month, highlighting the city’s enthusiasm for sustainability.

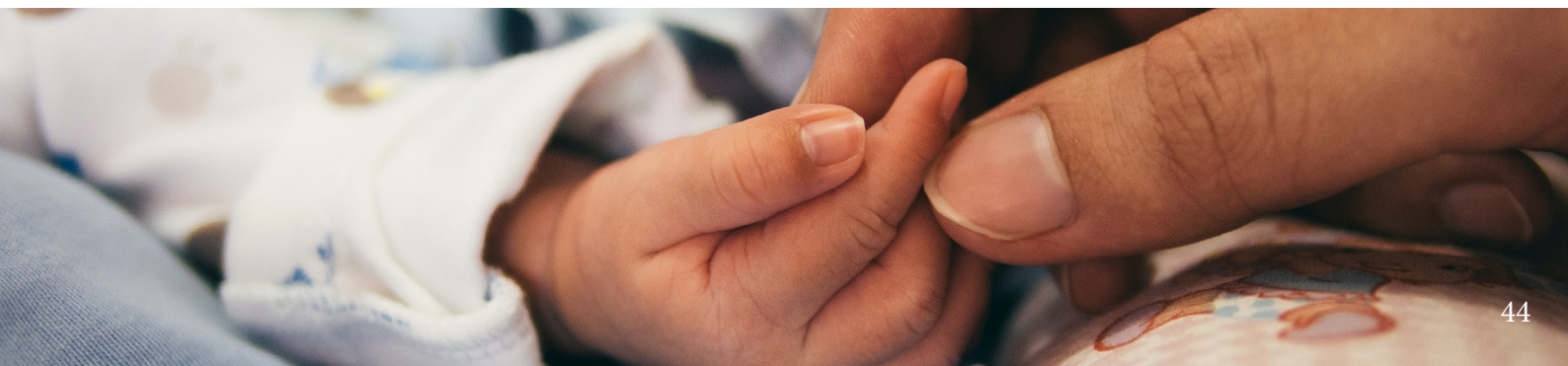


Taking second place is London, with 48% of parents surveyed in the capital using reusable cloth nappies and a staggering 92% of parents using washable baby wipes. The UK’s capital searches for ‘reusable cloth nappies’ on average 2,092 times a month, indicating that there is a high volume of sustainably-minded parents living in the city. With London ranking 11th globally for environmental sustainability, it’s no surprise that the city made it on to the list.

A major city in the Midlands, Birmingham makes third place on the top ten list, with 45% of parents surveyed in the city declaring that they use reusable cloth nappies, and 86% say that they use washable baby wipes. On average, there are 347 searches for ‘reusable cloth nappies’ every month, showcasing that Birmingham is helping the UK lead the way in sustainability.

Founder of The Nappy Gurus, Laura Davies, commented on the study: “With things like fast fashion and an increase in plastic waste posing an extensive threat to our planet, it’s great to see so many major cities in the UK make it on to our list of top sustainable parenting cities. From reusable nappies to reusable wipes, there are so many small ways we can all make a difference to the UK’s environment.”

Laura added: “Every day in the UK, eight million disposable nappies are thrown away; this equates to a staggering three billion a year. With this in mind, it takes 500 years for a disposable nappy to decompose in a landfill, which is a huge contributing factor to global warming and climate change. I would really encourage all parents to consider switching from disposable nappies to reusable ones. Not only will this change positively impact the environment, but parents could save a substantial amount of money that they spend on disposable nappies by making the swap.”





The time materials take to decompose

The worst packaging to be using is in your plastic coffee pods. They take up to 500 years to decompose and 29,000 coffee pods end up in landfill every month. The best packaging to use is either cardboard or paper, both of which can decompose quickly and are also fully recyclable. Packaging Online has done a deep dive into how long different materials take to decompose and the findings might surprise you!



Photo by Nick Fewings on Unsplash

Material	Time to decompose
Glass	1,000,000 years
Plastic coffee pods	500 years
Plastic water bottles and cups	450 years
Plastic straws	200 years
Aluminium cans	80-100 years
Foam plastic cups	50 years
Takeaway coffee cup	30 years
Plastic bags and bin bags	15-20 years
Compostable/reusable straws	2 weeks - 1 year
Biodegradable binbags	3-6 months
Cardboard	2 months
Compostable coffee pods	<2 months
Paper	2-6 weeks

The worst packaging

1. PLASTIC COFFEE PODS

Your morning coffee could be setting the planet back hundreds of years in terms of plastic waste. Plastic coffee pods take as much as 500 years to decompose. Twenty-nine thousand coffee pods end up in landfill every minute. Sustainable solutions like reusable stainless-steel pods or compostable pods take under two months to break down.

2. WATER BOTTLES AND PLASTIC CUPS

Plastic water bottles and cups are perhaps one of the most common and problematic plastics. The 16 million plastic bottles that aren't recycled in the UK every year each take around 450 years to decompose. If Shakespeare had used a plastic water bottle, it would still exist today! Switching to reusable options can prevent the worldwide production, use and potential waste of 500 billion plastic bottles per year.

3. PLASTIC STRAWS

Each plastic straw takes 200 years to perish. Switch to reusable straws made of bamboo or steel to avoid plastic straw use and waste. There are also plenty of compostable and biodegradable options on the market, which take between two weeks to one year to decompose, depending on the material and the way it is disposed.



Photo by Muhammad Numan on Unsplash

The best packaging

1. ALUMINIUM CANS

Aluminium cans take around 80 to 100 years to fully decay. Fortunately, aluminium can be recycled endlessly, making it one of the most eco-friendly options, provided you dispose of it properly via recycling.

2. CARDBOARD

Cardboard is widely recycled and can decompose over a short two months.

3. PAPER

Paper takes even less time to decompose than cardboard, at just two to six weeks. Like cardboard, paper is 100% recyclable.

Tom Wood, General Manager at Packaging Online, said:

"Comparing the longevity of plastics against more sustainable counterparts, like compostable materials, cardboard and paper, shows clearly the impact being more mindful about material usage and waste can have. This is something we're 100% committed to at Packaging Online, in order to hit our goal of total sustainability by 2025. Already, over 90% of our products are made of materials that are recyclable or biodegradable. This includes boxes, paper bubble wrap, voidfill, paper tapes and more."

PLASTIC
TAKES
500
YEARS
TO
DECOMPOSE

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World's smallest frog found living in Papua New Guinea rainforest

The rarely seen diminutive frog species *Paedophryne Amauensis* was identified on a biodiversity field trip, by climate charity Cool Earth, in the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea.

At around 7mm in length, this tiny forest-dwelling frog – no bigger than a housefly – has been confirmed to be living in the rainforests of Wabumari, Milne Bay by Dr. Chris Dahl, working with consultant Kenneth Pomoh and Cool Earth's biodiversity officer Clifford P. Yae, alongside the local community.

Cool Earth confirmed the tiny frog species living in this location last month, when conducting a field study in the Wabumari rainforest to assess forest monitoring plots, to explore the ecological role trees play as carbon sinks in fighting the impact of climate change.

Dr. Dahl describes how the discovery happened, as these incredibly small frogs are near impossible to locate by eye, due to their size and colouring – enabling them to blend into the forest floor:

"We were walking into the forest and I heard a high pitch 'tsk-tsk' insect-like call uttered within the forest floor. I stopped to try to locate where that call was coming from. I then took out my mobile to record the call; this helps to identify the exact location. Often by recording, you can tell from the strong frequency the direction of the calling frog. I zeroed in on the call location by literally placing my ear just above the leaf litter. It took me more than 30 minutes and I was positive enough I had located the frog's position. With careful removal of single dry leaves, one after another, a tiny frog hopped out. I was just an inch away. It was the smallest frog I [had] ever identified."



Among large-bodied vertebrates, frogs make up nearly 5% of the world's species diversity, having lived on the planet since the Jurassic Period, with fossil records dating back as far as 55 million years ago. Papua New Guinea is rich in frog diversity, with about 400 described species, and each varies extremely in body colour, shape, and size. The rainforests of Papua New Guinea have been identified as one of the world's five richest biodiversity wilderness areas.

Cool Earth raises funds to support indigenous people and local communities living in rainforests to develop the best ways to address threats to the forest, while making communities, forests, and wildlife stronger and more resilient to climate change. As part of its work, the Cool Earth Papua New Guinea team works directly with local communities to engage adults and children alike to deliver learning experiences, with a focus on village elders sharing traditional knowledge with younger generations.

<https://www.coolearth.org/>



Historic Houses announces first ever sustainability award winner

Browsholme Hall in Lancashire has become the first winner of a brand new award, sponsored by Savills, to recognise and celebrate the work done by privately and independently owned historic houses in the field of sustainability.

Robert and Amanda Parker impressed the judges with the range and innovation of their projects at Browsholme, which Robert inherited from a distant relative when aged just 19.

An award-winning restored tithe barn uses a ground source heat pump to keep visitors warm. By contrast, a different approach was needed at the hall, where the larger space and poorer thermal properties of the listed building, whose structure is tightly protected by law, meant that underfloor heating wasn't an option. Instead, a woodchip boiler has now made the rooms habitable, fuelled on a truly sustainable basis by cropping the managed woodland behind the house on a perpetual sixty-year cycle.

Visitors to the café near the entrance to the popular attraction enjoy a 'Five Mile Menu', on which most of the major ingredients are from local farms and suppliers within walking distance – and some from the vegetable patch visible from the kitchen window. The café space doubles as an education space for visiting parties of school children – including from nearby built-up areas such as Greater Manchester – who learn about the diversity of species that can be found in their surroundings. Adults, too, enjoy the outdoors through 'forest' bathing sessions offered in the green glades of the more mature woodland.

A recent grant, from the government's Culture Recovery Fund, funded the repair of half the ancient stone roof, complete with modifications to protect the bat residents. The works also allowed for the insulation of the building for the first time.

The success of the hall's commercial activities – including a selection of self-contained 'pods' hidden in broadleaved woodland, providing accommodation for guests with very little footprint – is crucial to funding the Parker's sustainability efforts, but it's also a form of sustainability itself. From just four staff in the 1970s, the house, estate and commercial operations now employ almost forty people (plus a large number of volunteers), most of whom are local. Robert and Amanda's daughter Eleanor, who lives and works on the estate, sees providing livelihoods to people growing up in rural areas, giving them alternatives to moving to distant cities, as an important part of the contribution historic places can make to sustainability in its widest sense.

Ben Cowell, Director General of Historic Houses said: "When your family has passed on their house and contents intact for centuries, the idea of planning for future generations is 'baked in' to the management of most of Britain's great independently and privately owned houses, most of which are family homes as well as tourist attractions, hospitality businesses, wedding venues, film locations, and places for enjoyment and learning.

The urgency of the present climate crisis and a growing awareness of the impact of all our activities have seen the owners of Britain's historic houses taking new steps [to] ensure that the heritage they look after has a future, in a cleaner and more sustainable world.

That's why we've created this new award, with our sponsors, Savills, to celebrate and reward those who are at the cutting edge of the contribution heritage can make to our future."



Amanda and Robert Parker, owners of Browsholme Hall, said: “We’re thrilled to be the first winners of this award. Sustainability has been really important to us throughout our time here. It’s a part of our lifestyle and ethos – we want Browsholme to be somewhere where the community matters and where the environment matters. It’s not all about reducing emissions – it’s about replacing, and planting, and growing for the future.”

Historic houses have a key role to play in implementing sustainable policies. It’s about looking at your assets in a different way, to find a way that these places can carry on as family homes for the next generation. That’s about the planet as well as business.

Every time we look outside, we appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds us, and our children have grown up loving it and wanting to protect it. Our aim is to leave them with a healthy sustainable business that they’ll pass in their turn, with their own passions, to the people who follow them.”

CUP26 – football’s biggest-ever climate tournament

CUP26, football’s biggest-ever climate competition, engaged 25,000 schools to take action against climate change through football. In CUP26, fan action on climate determined the tournament winner. Fans signed up at CUP26.co.uk and scored goals for their club by completing one of 100 planet-protecting activities, including having a plant based meal, cycling and walking to work and school; the club whose supporters scored the most goals won each match.

After weeks of feverish competition across the UK, between 49 football clubs, Cambridge United earned a hard fought victory over eight other finalists, to become the inaugural CUP26 champions. Cambridge United proved too strong for the other finalists, including Arsenal, Fulham, Spurs and Aston Villa. The final marked the culmination of eight weeks of close competition that has seen incredible support from thousands of fans, families and schools who have been completing a series of goal scoring climate actions to help their team rise up the league table and protect the planet. The tournament trophy was awarded to Cambridge United during the first week of COP26. On hand to present the trophy was ex England player and Tottenham Hotspur legend Ledley King, alongside Allegra Stratton, the Prime Ministers’ Spokesperson to COP26.

Cambridge United’s fans also won the Planet Super League Impact Award for having the greatest impact during CUP26. An area of rainforest the size of 1,000 football pitches in the Democratic Republic of Congo will now be protected on their behalf, through a CUP26 donation to the Rainforest Trust UK.

The competition was powered by Planet Super League, which engages families to take action against climate change through football, and Count Us In, a global movement of people taking practical steps to protect what they love from climate change. In addition, it was supported by the UK Government’s campaign Together for Our Planet, as well as media partner Sky Zero, National Grid and Nature’s Bounty. Since the tournament’s launch in early September, more than 27,500 goals have been registered and verified, accounting for over 14,300 climate actions. This has reduced carbon emissions by 113,000 kg and equates to planting 6,450 trees.

Allegra Stratton, Prime Minister’s spokesperson to COP26, said: “It has been wonderful to witness how many children, schools and communities have taken green action as part of the CUP26 tournament. They’ve reduced their own carbon footprint and shown they want to see climate action at COP26, which we are working hard to achieve. Football has an incredibly important role in helping to tackle climate change and it’s exciting to see so many clubs mobilising their fans.”

Ledley King, Tottenham Hotspur Ambassador, said: “Football is such an important force in the fight for a more sustainable world. It’s been amazing to see kids, parents and schools coming together to take part in CUP26, supporting their clubs and helping combat climate change. Small, meaningful actions really can make a difference. Huge congratulations to everyone who took part. ”

Ian Mather, Cambridge United CEO, said: “We are delighted to win the CUP26 competition, but the real winner here was the planet. Through the power of football, we got schools, staff, fans and the local community involved and we raised awareness of what everyone can do to combat climate change. We held a Planet Super League day at our recent game against Wimbledon, where fans completed environmentally friendly activities at the stadium. Alongside football clubs across the UK, we engage with our communities in a range of ways, including disability sport and mental health activities, which make a real difference to the lives of so many people. It is this connectivity to the community that makes the UK football pyramid of clubs such a valuable asset and we are delighted to have used this power for such an important cause.”

Tom Gribbin, CEO Planet Super League, said: “This is the first time football has come together at this scale for climate change and we are delighted by the huge impact that CUP26 has had. There have been so many exciting moments during the tournament, and today is the time to recognise the energy, enthusiasm, and impact of football fans around the UK. And this is only the beginning; we’ll be doing a lot more next year to inspire everyday football fans to do their bit.”







Building a greener future - tiny steps for systemic change

Worryingly, Greta has it right with her “blah blah blah” talk. The climate agenda seems to consist of strong narrative and little action. We probably all agree that if we spent half the time acting on it as we do talking about it, surely we’d be happily reviewing progress reports by now. This paralysis has three key ingredients: no one knows exactly what to do; no one knows whose responsibility it is to work that out; and our very lives depend on finding those answers.

The truth is that the responsibility seems to be no one’s, because it is everyone’s. In the face of that demotivating ambiguity, our actions must form two approaches: we must take full responsibility for our individual impact on this earth and, where possible, we must leverage the influence that we have towards the direction of progress.

We are getting somewhere with the first approach, but there’s only so much change one person’s religious recycling can have against a problem reverberating through every corner of the Earth. It’s that second approach that needs perfecting and flexing. We are all consumers and constituents; the vast majority are colleagues and employees - we have access to wide networks that we can influence to demand change on a larger scale, and it’s our responsibility to do so. Happily, there are ways that we can do both, at the same time.

Often mistakenly pushed as the silver bullet against climate change, the strategy to simply ‘plant more trees’ is correctly interrogated within environmentalist circles. This interrogation is necessary because, unfortunately, many projects prioritise scale and speed over longevity and integrity. That approach results in monoculture trees being planted en masse, without biodiversity balance, and without considering the social and educational support needed within a community to ensure long-term success. It’s no surprise that projects like this cause far more damage than good.

If done well, however – the right species, in the right place, with the right support for its owner and their land – planting trees achieves much more than environmental benefit. By planting crop-yielding trees, with a mix of species that will ecologically nourish each other and the land on which they grow, on smallholder farms owned by individuals who want to learn and have families to feed and communities to support, we can create multi-faceted social projects with positive impact reaching further than we can measure.

Provided this methodology is safeguarded, that incredible impact can be achieved on a huge scale. Planting one tree enables an individual to have personal impact, and planting 100,000 trees enables companies and governments to stride towards repairing our global ecosystem. It’s a natural solution, achievable on a huge scale.

So, although the climate agenda seems ambiguous, we cannot let the ambiguity paralyse us. We must continue to act ourselves, and to demand more from our peers, employers, and governments. By pursuing these actions consistently, it is hoped that we can safeguard the future humanity on our planet, because, in reality, our lives depend on it.



Top tips for having a zero-waste Christmas

It's easy to get swept up in excess during Christmas – buying extra gifts we don't need, wrapping paper we won't use, and food we won't eat.

If you would really like to keep it conscious at Christmas, sustainable fashion brand Lucy & Yak have shared their top tips to make your festive season zero-waste.

1) Think about your wrapping

Unbelievably, consumers in the UK will use 227,000 miles of wrapping paper each year – over 83km² of this will end up in our bins. Instead of using wrapping paper, think about using pretty, reusable fabric bags to wrap your presents. You can even hide presents rather than wrap them - a treasure hunt on Christmas morning is always going to go down well. Brown paper and string or ribbons can look really classy, as well as being better for the environment compared to using conventional wrapping paper.

2) Buy local and buy carefully

Think carefully about how you're going to source your food over the festive period. Plan each meal to make sure that you only buy what you need. Then leave at least one meal unplanned; that's the one to make using your leftovers.

If you can, buy from local farm shops or, if that's not possible, there are loads of good online organic food providers that are worth checking out. Sometimes a trip to the supermarket is unavoidable, but make sure that you take your reusable bags with you.

3) Buy pre-loved

We love sites like Vinted, Depop and eBay at this time of year – you can also buy online from Oxfam now! People will be looking for a bit of extra money, so will be selling things pre-owned, and you will

Charity shops are a great option if you receive a gift that you're not going to use. Don't wait until August when it's been shoved in the back of the cupboard and forgotten about - take it straight down to your local charity shop for someone else to love. You're saving on waste and giving a gift in perfect condition to someone else who can enjoy it.

4) Make the most of it

There's no getting away from it, you're almost certainly going to receive gifts in disposable wrapping paper and a pile of Christmas cards. So, what can we do with them to make them a bit less wasteful? Well, we believe everything can be reused and given a new life. You can use wrapping paper you love to line plain bookshelves, wrap notebooks, or make pretty envelopes to use throughout the year.

Whilst we'd rather not receive mountains of wrapping paper and cards, the zero-waste mind sees what comes through the door as a resource and an opportunity. Just don't throw it in the bin!

5) Make your own

We can always use what we already have, to make something new. Then you can give someone a fabulous and completely personal gift. If you're not feeling crafty, how about some delicious baked goods, or even some handmade soap, a lavender bag or something funky to hang on the wall?

There's something really special about a homemade gift, not only because you've made it yourself but also because you can make it zero-waste at the same time!

For more information on zero-waste, please see: <https://lucyandyak.com/blogs/news/have-a-very-zero-waste-christmas>.



Photo by Peter Fazekas from Pexels

Increase your household's boiler efficiency and offset your carbon emissions

The energy used by the UK's 29 million homes accounts for 14% of its total carbon emissions and the main culprit is one of our most essential household items – boilers, commonly fuelled by either gas or oil. Boiler inefficiency is the key issue when it comes to carbon emissions.

Learning how to make your boiler as efficient as possible will reduce CO2 emissions, save energy, and reduce your energy bills. Here, with some help from Mark Glasgow, Managing Director and Owner of The Edinburgh Boiler Company, we discuss your boiler's emissions, as well as what you can do to optimise its efficiency and offset your emissions to contribute to the fight against climate change.

Boiler efficiency explained

Boiler efficiency is measured by how efficiently your boiler turns its fuel into heat energy. Essentially, an efficient boiler uses the least amount of energy and money and produces fewer carbon emissions. It's a win-win situation for both you and the planet.

You can measure your boiler efficiency at home by looking at the percentage of energy your boiler uses to heat your home. A study conducted by The Edinburgh Boiler Company shows that if you buy a new boiler that is 94% efficient, which is the standard, your appliance will use 94% of the supplied energy to heat your home. The remaining 6% will be lost, which is about 1.44kW.

Money-wise, you will be losing about £0.05 per hour and, planet-wise, your boiler will exert about 0.26 kWh of excess gas (carbon emissions). Over a period of one year, that totals a wastage of 525.6kW, £19.97 per hour, and 96.7kWh of gas.

On what is boiler efficiency dependent?

The example above is based on a new boiler used for one hour a day. However, if you increase the use of that same boiler to five hours a day, you will be losing about 7.2kWh, £0.27, and 1.32kWh of gas a day.

If you have a household that demands more heat and hot water and you need to use the boiler for eight hours a day, you'll be looking at 11.52kW wasted energy, which is about £0.44 and 2.12kWh of excess gas emissions a day. Over one year, that equals to 4,204.8kW, £159.78, and 773.68kWh of gas.

The thing that impacts your boiler efficiency the most is its age. This study shows that if you have a ten-year-old boiler, it will be wasting more than double the energy, pennies, and carbon emissions. If you've had your boiler for more than 25 years and you're using it for eight hours each day, it'll waste 28,032kW, which equates to about £1,065.22 and 5,157.89kWh of excess gas.

What's the solution?

Of course, limiting your boiler use would save you energy and money, and reduce your household's carbon emissions. However, it's not a viable solution for everyone, because heat and hot water are household essentials.

Despite our tendency to hold on to things in order to save money, the study proves different. If you service your boiler regularly and replace it when it becomes inefficient, it is likely to be more cost-effective in the long run.

Photo by Fulvio Ciccolo on Unsplash

However, it's not all about money. Our planet is a direct victim of boiler inefficiency. When your appliance uses more energy than necessary to heat your home and water, it is producing more carbon emissions. When fossil fuels such as gas and oil are burnt with oxygen, they produce CO₂, which is a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.

According to several studies, fossil fuels create the highest level of carbon emissions, which makes them the leading contributors to climate change. In order to minimise this issue, we can all try to use our boilers as little as possible, replace our old boilers with new ones when they become inefficient, and invest in renewable heating solutions, such as electric boilers, when we replace them.

How many trees are needed to offset the CO₂ produced by your gas boiler?

Deforestation is also heavily contributing to increasing carbon emissions and climate change. When a tree is cut down, it not only stops absorbing carbon from the air but it also releases the carbon it has been storing. Since trees and forests are the lungs of our planet, soaking up tons of CO₂, deforestation results in more greenhouse gas emissions.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has estimated that about 178 million hectares of forest were destroyed between 1990 and 2020. That is almost the equivalent of Libya's total surface area. Due to deforestation, tropical forests now emit more carbon than they absorb, a 2017 study found.

To put things into perspective, you'll need to grow 12.8 trees over ten years to offset the use of a new boiler for eight hours every day per year. However, for a boiler that's over 25 years old, you'll need the equivalent of 85.1 new fully-grown trees to counteract your boiler's carbon footprint for a year.

Although our eco-consciousness is on the rise, the effects of our boilers on climate change might have not yet appeared on our sustainability agenda. Being aware of how we can increase our boiler efficiency is key to combating these pressing climate issues. With one small step at a time and one tree planted at a time, we are doing our bit for the environment.

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Melting glaciers may produce thousands of kilometres of new Pacific salmon habitat

Retreating glaciers in the Pacific mountains of western North America could produce around 6,150 kilometres of new Pacific salmon habitat by the year 2100, according to a new study.

Scientists have ‘peeled back the ice’ from 46,000 glaciers between southern British Columbia and south-central Alaska, to look at how much potential salmon habitat would be created when underlying bedrock is exposed and new streams flow over the landscape.

Modelling glacier retreat under different climate change scenarios, researchers discovered that, under a moderate temperature increase, the glaciers could reveal potential new Pacific salmon habitat nearly equal to the length of the Mississippi River (6,275 km).

Desirable for salmon, in this case, means low-gradient streams (less than 10% incline) connected to the ocean, with retreating glaciers at their headwaters. The team discovered that 315 of the glaciers examined met this criteria.

The international team, led by researchers at Simon Fraser University (Canada) and with University of Birmingham (UK) and other organisations, published their findings in ‘Nature Communications’.

Lead author Simon Fraser University spatial analyst Dr. Kara Pitman commented: “We predict that most of the emerging salmon habitat will occur in Alaska and the transboundary region, at the British Columbia Alaska border, where large coastal glaciers still exist. The Gulf of Alaska sub-region is predicted to see the most gains—a 27% increase in salmon-accessible habitat by 2100. Once conditions stabilise in the newly-formed streams, salmon can colonise these areas quite quickly. It’s a common misconception that all salmon return home to the streams in which they were born. Most do, but some individuals will stray— migrating into new streams to spawn and, if conditions are favourable, the population can increase rapidly.”

Co-author Professor Alexander Milner, from the University of Birmingham, has researched glacial retreat and salmon populations in south east Alaska for over three decades. His team has worked on Stonefly Creek in Glacier Bay where glacier retreat revealed a new stream in the late 1970s. He said: “Colonisation by salmon can occur relatively quickly after glacial retreat creates favourable spawning habitat in the new stream. For example, Stonefly Creek was colonised within ten years by pink salmon that grew rapidly to more than 5,000 spawners. Other species also colonised, including Coho and Sockeye salmon, especially where a lake is associated with the stream.”

The researchers caution that, while the newly created habitat is a positive for salmon in some locations, overall, climate change still poses grave challenges for some salmon populations.

“On [the] one hand, this amount of new salmon habitat will provide local opportunities for some salmon populations,” said Dr. Pitman. “On the other hand, climate change and other human impacts continue to threaten salmon survival—via warming rivers, changes in stream flows and poor ocean conditions. Climate change means we increasingly need to look to the future. We can’t just protect current-day habitat for species, but need to consider what habitats they might rely on in the future.”



Biogas: turning organic waste into renewable energy on-site

A HomeBiogas system, turning organic waste into renewable energy onsite, was integrated into a simulated space station during AMADEE-20, the most advanced manned Mars mission simulation to date. The HomeBiogas systems were used in order to turn the organic waste created during the mission into energy such as cooking fuel, heating fuel or bio fertiliser.

If it is good enough for Mars, it is good enough for Earth's backyards.

It comes as a welcome surprise to many that it is feasible to create biogas, a renewable energy source, locally at home. Biogas is a type of natural gas created by breaking down the bacteria in organic waste. HomeBiogas systems recycle the food waste fed into them, producing biogas which can then be used to cook your meals and fertilise your garden. The smallest version, the HomeBiogas 2, makes it possible to cut waste at home. The system fits in typical suburban backyards and was created to be used in personal households, so individuals and families can eliminate food waste, reduce energy bills and take steps to living more sustainably.

The HomeBiogas system is solving a few acute problems for our planet. Firstly, it treats emissions – HomeBiogas has avoided 86,000 tons of Greenhouse Gas emissions to date, while methane gas has more than 80 times more warming power in the near term than CO₂. Secondly, it makes food waste useful – HomeBiogas has kept 15,000 tons of food waste in circulation up to today. Lastly, HomeBiogas uses anaerobic digestion to convert these organic materials into fuel for cooking or hot water onsite.

HomeBiogas is easy to install, safe, hassle-free, non-pollutant, off-grid, environmentally friendly, and completes a full eco-cycle onsite with no need for outside resources. People in over 110 countries around the world are using HomeBiogas in order to get rid of their organic waste onsite and turn it into renewable energy.

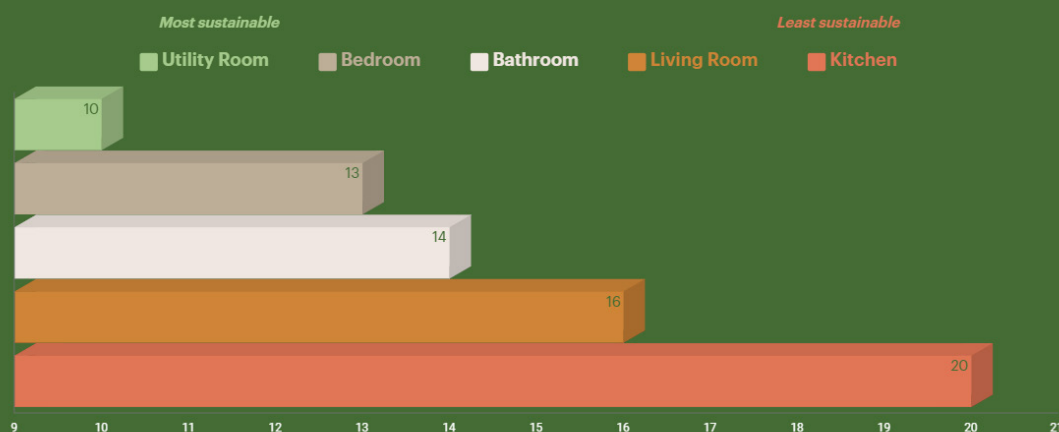
HomeBiogas products are created with the goal of making biogas production accessible to all, by offering a modern, easy to install, and even easier to use, system. They have succeeded in enabling individuals to create change for themselves and their communities. As previously mentioned, the smallest of the products, the HomeBiogas 2, is sized so that it can fit in the yard of an individual home, while the larger systems, the HomeBiogas 4 and HomeBiogas 7, are designed for larger spaces like farms and restaurants that produce more organic waste and have a need for larger amounts of bio-fertiliser.

Today, the world produces over two billion tons of solid waste, and that's expected to grow to 3.4 billion tons by 2050. By volume, global waste includes 44% food and organics, which is where the HomeBiogas solution comes in.

The world's waste problem must be addressed as one third of all food produced is wasted every year. Biogas is a byproduct of the anaerobic decomposition of organic waste. It must be treated or it becomes a dangerous pollutant in landfills – mainly methane. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that traps heat in the atmosphere more efficiently than carbon dioxide. Methane's Global Warming Potential (GWP) is more than 80 times greater than carbon dioxide, and it is a key contributor to global emissions.

HomeBiogas systems are enabling people all over the world to lead more sustainable and self-sufficient lives.

How sustainable is each room?



The kitchen is the least environmentally friendly room

Vegan period and skincare brand All Matters has compiled a Sustainable Homes Index, revealing which rooms of the house are the most (and least) environmentally friendly.

All Matters' range includes products that you can reuse again and again throughout the home. From menstrual cups to power-to-foam body wash, the brand has a variety of products that are sustainable, reducing single-use plastics.

The Sustainable Homes Index shows just how much of an impact each room in your house has on the environment. Using a scoring system for elements such as electricity, water, furniture, appliances and household items, the overall rank for the home was calculated and the research reveals the following:

- The kitchen is the least sustainable, coming in fifth. The average household uses 277 plastic water bottles every year, 906 snack wrappers and 215 crisp packets.
- The bathroom comes third. Hand washing, toilet flushing, showers and baths equate to a huge 257,441 litres of water a year!
- The utility room is considered the most sustainable: although 25% of our clothes' carbon footprint comes from the way we wash and care for it, the utility room scores the lowest out of all five rooms.
- An average of 1214 cotton pads are thrown away every year per household, along with 395 wet wipes and 104 disposable razors.
- Junk mail equates to 117kg of carbon emissions per household every year.

Using its expertise, All Matters has also come up with three key tips for living in a more eco-friendly home.

These are:

1. Ditch single-use plastic. Environmentally friendly, sustainable packaging is now much easier to find, and afford, from reusable water bottles to food storage containers – even refillable body wash! For those that menstruate, there's also the option of a menstrual cup over a tampon/pad.
2. Say goodbye to fast fashion. To make clothes as quickly and as cheap as possible, they often contain microplastics that end up in our water supply. Removing fast fashion from your wardrobe doesn't mean that you have to stop buying but, rather, being smarter about what you're buying.
3. Try going plant-based. By cutting out meat for one meal a week, the UK greenhouse gas emissions would be cut by up to 8.4% a year, which is the equivalent of taking 16 million cars off the road! It also brings a whole host of health benefits – a win-win.

Dr Kathryn Buchanan, expert in the promotion of pro-environmental behaviours, commented on the research: "More and more we're seeing people recognise their own personal responsibility to manage the effects of climate change. This Sustainable Homes Index will go a long way to show consumers how our every-day actions are having such an impact on the environment we live in and what they can do to mitigate this, whether reducing single use plastics or vanquishing those energy vampires. It's all well and good to say "reduce your carbon footprint", but we need tangible evidence of where we can do that and how – and AllMatters have created a dataset that should help a lot of consumers make that first step towards environmental action that works for them."

For more details of the Sustainable Home Index and the interactive room by room graphics, head over to the campaign page: <https://www.allmatters.com/sustainablehomeindex>.



Conservation from South Africa to the concrete jungle

From the wild jungle to the concrete jungle and then the silver screen, how moving to the UK allowed Peter Meyer to share his knowledge in conservation and showcase the beauty of South African nature ...

My childhood was one of adventure and fascination. I was born in Durban, South Africa, not far from where I grew up on an incredible Game Reserve amongst wild animals, created by my father: a hidden wilderness gem situated in the hilly countryside of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Growing up with elephants, rhinos and other amazing animals was very different to most kids around the world. I grew up with the beautiful creatures around me and was able to understand their way of life – how to retain that whilst living with them in harmony.

Later, during my journey, my parents made the decision for me to move to the UK for education and a stable 'security'. I was ten years old at the time I moved. The UK was made a simpler choice by the fact that my father was British and knew an education in the UK was, and still is, second to none. The only education superior in my mind is 'life experience', which we will continue to learn throughout our lives.

Before the age of eight, I had survived snake bites, rhino attacks, buffalo charges and much more. The adventures I experienced in South Africa were like no other, from learning to swim in rivers, to riding elephants, to walking among the wild and facing dangerous encounters. My beloved pets were baby elephants, warthogs, a loving ostrich, and other free spirits which children from the UK had only seen on TV.

I consider myself fortunate to have had such a unique upbringing, thanks to my father's willingness to chase a dream. That dream involved establishing a safari, which channelled wildlife away from captivity around the world and back into the wild, and gave my mum and brother the chance to wildly live in harmony with nature. I took these dreams with me to the UK, where I was able

to further my experience and share my passion for wildlife.

My father was my hero and best friend; sadly, in 2014, I lost him to cancer. Then I found myself presented with an opportunity in acting and modelling in the UK, which I knew was a new and potentially amazing opportunity. Taking the opportunity by the horns, I worked my way up. Within three years, I was acting in feature films, including Hollywood productions alongside A-list actors such as Brad Pitt and Marion Cotillard in *Allied*, Liam Neeson in *The Commuter*, and *The Transformers The Last Knight* – all as an extra and walk on role. I had my first lead-role playing Lee Reynolds in *Guide to Get Lucky* in 2015 – a short film.

It was the best decision I have ever made as it allowed me to follow very different opportunities and teach others about the importance of wildlife, nature and how we preserve them.

Since moving to the UK, I have become an active wildlife conservationist, using my platform to help inform others of how important respecting and supporting the natural world remains.

Also, the move to the UK allowed me to write and publish a #1 Bestseller, based on my extraordinary childhood, called 'The Boy From the Wild'. Written with International bestselling author Graham Spence, it's a true story of my life in the wilds of Africa and tribute to my late father who created the sanctuary. It has been named one of the most inspiring African true stories of recent times. This new journey also allowed me to become a filmmaker, and to produce and direct my first documentary around the book which is now on GooglePlay, Youtube Movies and soon to be on Apple TV.

Find Peter on Instagram here: <https://www.instagram.com/petermeyeractor/>

Find him on IMBD here: <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm7404150/>
Website: <https://petermeyer.com>

The Boy from the Wild book: <https://amzn.to/2WLthWK>



The Red Sea Development Company integrates architecture with nature: Desert Rock

The Red Sea Development Company (TRSDC), the developer behind the world's most ambitious regenerative tourism project, The Red Sea Project (TRSP), has revealed design plans for its new mountain resort named Desert Rock, in the beautiful wadi vistas in the west of the country. Created by the world-class architectural design firm Oppenheim Architecture, Desert Rock is designed to protect and preserve the environment and will allow guests to connect with the nature and local culture of the region.

"We wanted to create a destination that allows guests to experience Saudi Arabia's untouched beauty. Desert Rock will provide guests with uninterrupted spectacular views while preserving the natural landscape for future generations to enjoy," said John Pagano, CEO at TRSDC. He added: "We have drawn inspiration from the surrounding environment, while providing unparalleled luxury, allowing guests to connect with nature and create memorable experiences."

Integrating architecture with nature

Guests will enter the resort through a hidden valley nestled between the mountains. From there, they will find 48 villas and 12 hotel rooms within the mountain, a total of 60 keys, located amongst the vista, with architecture fully integrated into the rock to preserve its striking silhouette, a tribute to Oppenheim Architecture's philosophy to build with the land, not on the land.

A range of accommodation will be available, from ground level dwellings to crevice hotel suites midway up the mountain, and a select number of excavated rooms within the rock massif itself.

To provide undisrupted views across the landscape, most roads leading into the resort will be pushed to the edge of the main wadi and hidden behind landscape mounds. This will also minimize sound and light pollution, allowing guests to fully absorb the dramatic desert landscape.

Unique resort experience

The resort will feature state-of-the-art facilities, including a world-class spa and fitness centre, remote destination dining areas, as well as a feature lagoon oasis. Guests will be able to hike, use dune buggies and star gaze as part of the site-wide activities program. The project also aims to maintain the ancient history of the site, by hiring members of the local community to act as stewards of the land and provide educational tours, for visitors, about the local history of the area.

Sustainably constructed

As part of TRSDC's commitment to regenerative tourism, Desert Rock will be designed to achieve the highest Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification level. The architecture has been designed to reduce energy consumption and regenerate native flora. Water retention and distribution systems will be used throughout the site, with harvested rainwater used to create a more green, flourishing Wadi.



Alongside this, materials excavated from the site will be used to create the infrastructure. Stone will be used for interior and exterior walls and floors, while ground stone and existing sand will be used for concrete aggregate, which is the main building material for all the architecture.

Chad Oppenheim, Founder of Oppenheim Architecture, said: "Desert Rock is one of the most dramatic desert landscapes in the world, which is why we wanted to use the architecture as a way to honour and respect it. By utilising natural materials and integrating the resort into the rock, guests can connect physically with the destination and experience Saudi Arabia's stunning, natural beauty."

Breaking new ground

Site preparation works have commenced, and construction began in July 2021. The Red Sea Project has already passed significant milestones on the destination, and work is on track to welcome the first guests by the end of 2022, when the first hotels will open. Phase one, which includes 16 hotels in total, will complete by 2023.

Upon completion in 2030, the destination will comprise 50 resorts, offering up to 8,000 hotel rooms and more than 1,000 residential properties across 22 islands and six inland sites. The destination will also include luxury marinas, golf courses, entertainment, leisure facilities and an international airport.



Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit resort: a great example of sustainable hospitality at its finest

The AAA Five Diamond Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit resort in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico harmoniously coexists with its surroundings, thanks to a seemingly endless number of environmentally and socially responsible initiatives. Set in a privileged natural setting with flowering, landscaped gardens beside a long stretch of pristine beach and a dramatic backdrop of the Sierra Madre mountains, the resort is a great example of sustainable hospitality at its finest. It has eco actions like biodegradable cleaning products, solar water heating, recycling, and even a new Guardians of Wildlife program for the local bees that features workshops for families to learn about bees, their importance, and tips to help conservation.

Green programs at Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit range from regular beach clean-ups, waste separation, supporting local recycling programs, donating food waste to local farms, composting, reducing plastic use and using measures to protect sea turtles that lay their eggs on the beaches. The resort also supports the community by generating jobs, adopting stretches of landscape that support the city's maintenance, and periodic training of staff on environmental initiatives to be applied at the hotel and home. Lastly, Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit creates awareness for resort guests by offering educational activities such as ingenious crafts made with recyclable materials, ecological tours and in-suite turndown cards. The resort also creates a sense of place by offering exclusive experiences for guests off property that give back to the community.

The new Guardians of Wildlife Bee Program at the resort aim to protect the very important bees found on the Pacific Coast of Mexico that choose the resort to rest and feed during their pollination journey. Named 'The World's Most Important Animals' by the Royal Geographical Society and Earthwatch Institute, bees play a vital role in the pollination cycle involved in the production of over 75% of the food that we consume globally. Pollination supports crop production, wild plant diversity, ecosystem balance, healthy soils, and clean air. On top of that, in Mexico alone, beekeeping generates around 100,000 direct jobs.

In partnership with AZPER Guardián de la Vida (AZPER Guardian of life), onsite apiaries are conditioned with honey and pheromones to attract these insects. The artificial hives can be easily moved and relocated if needed. Flowers on the property offer ample food for the bees. Their honey is used throughout the resort's restaurants as well the renowned SE Spa, while supporting sustainable commerce locally. In addition to newly built suites for passing bees to rest and feed during their pollination journey, the Guardians of Wildlife program features workshops for families to learn about bees, their importance, and tips to contribute to conservation.

Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit features 267 ocean-view suites and six restaurants, four of which have received AAA Four Diamond awards for distinguished cuisine and presentation. With treatments inspired by the native traditions of Mexico and a signature Water Journey, SE Spa has been included on Forbes Travel Guide's list of The World's Most Luxurious Spas. Other features of the resort include an oversized pool, fitness centre, 24/7 in-suite service, water sports, tennis, Baby Concierge, Kids' Club, and state-of-the-art Teens' Club. For more information about Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit, please visit <https://vallarta.grandvelas.com>.







Up Norway: the only Norwegian travel company to be Travelife and B Corporation™ certified

New Ski and Sail Package from Mountains to Fjords

Up Norway's newest journey takes ski enthusiasts to the Sunnmøre Alps, famous for their alpine skiing and amazing fjord views. Custom to skill level, the Ski and Sail Journey couples guided summit-to-fjord runs with a private boat trip around Hjørundfjord. An extended option includes an overnight stay aboard an expedition ship to different runs throughout the fjord.

The four-day Ski and Sail Journey starts in the city of Ålesund, where travellers can view the colourful art nouveau architecture and enjoy a multi-course dinner of seasonal local ingredients, while watching fishing boats passing by the windows. Then it's out into the wilderness. Travellers will meet their private ski instructor and set sail through the majestic Hjørundfjord on a private 40 ft boat to Storfjord. For the next two nights, accommodation is in a five-star boutique hotel featuring handcrafted log walls, designer furniture and a gorgeous panoramic view, where Norwegian tradition meets modern design. By day, travellers will ski from the mountain tops down to the fjords, warm up in an outdoor sauna and enjoy local meals prepared by the fireside. For an extended journey, Up Norway can arrange for onboard accommodations and daily cruising through the majestic Hjørundfjord, to pinpoint the perfect spot for skiing adventures.

Another option Up Norway recommends this time of year is combining the Ski and Sail Journey in the Sunnmøre Alps, with Svalbard. In Northern Norway, travellers can search for the Northern Lights, go dog sledding, and scout winter wildlife from whales and seals to reindeer and polar bears. Another highlight in the destination from Jan to March is PopUp Svalbard, a seven-to-ten-course dinner, served in one of Longyearbyen's closed mines.

Available January to April, pricing for the three-night Ski and Sail package starts at \$2,016 USD per person, based on six guests travelling together. For more information or reservations, please visit <https://upnorway.com>.

About Up Norway

Established in 2016, Up Norway's vision is to introduce quality conscious international travellers to truly unique Norwegian experiences. Its local expertise, sustainable approach, digital itineraries and passion for Norway open up new perspectives. Named one of Conde Nast Traveller's 2021 Top Travel Specialists and the first and only Norwegian travel company to be Travelife and B Corporation™ certified, Up Norway commits to operate in a way that has a significant positive impact on its community and environment, and has sourced partners who share these core values.

Native Norwegians take pride in serving local cuisine, showing off their vibrant culture and breathtaking nature. Up Norway's trips focus not on standard city tours but on getting people out into the country's stunning landscapes and in contact with the local people. Curated accommodations include not only boutique hotels but also stilted log cabins, lakeside yurts, tent igloos, and a renovated lighthouse – cosy places where you're hosted by the owners and introduced to the local culture and traditions. The company takes pride in offering experiences off the tourist trail and offers access to sites and stories that would be a challenge to discover otherwise. With a Digital Travel Guide provided to their guests, Up Norway uses technology to enhance its personalised service, not to replace it.

The Joubert's Great Plains conservation tourism company

Dereck and Beverly Joubert are passionate co-founders of Great Plains, a unique conservation tourism company built around bespoke, caring, meaningful and considerate values. Together, the Jouberts create, design and operate sixteen stunning owned and partnered safari properties in Kenya, Botswana and Zimbabwe – along with the company's charity, The Great Plains Foundation, which strives to preserve and protect landscapes, wildlife, and the communities which rely on them in Africa.

With conservation at the forefront of their business, the Great Plains camps are solar-powered and are created with the utmost respect for nature, so guests can feel comfortable about their environmental footprint in their sustainable camps. After falling in love with a particular site for a new camp, Dereck and Beverly familiarise themselves with the area, often sleeping out on the ground to get that feel of energy before building a camp.

Entirely self-taught, Beverly Joubert has been recognised with her husband internationally for the raw authenticity of their work with accolades including: The World Ecology Award, a Peabody Award, 22 Emmy nominations and eight Emmy Awards, as well as the Presidential Order of Merit in Botswana.

With more than 40 produced films, 12 published books and many scientific papers, Dereck and Beverly are also the founders of the Big Cats Initiative, Project Ranger and their charity Great Plains Foundation.

The Great Plains Foundation's work includes a project close to Dereck and Beverly's hearts: The Solar Mamas. This programme looks for ways to help local communities establish solar plants and businesses as a source of power, income generation and empowerment. The Great Plains Foundation recently took nine women from selected Botswana rural communities to India for six months to undertake solar engineering training and has since electrified 450 households, changing countless lives. Beverly is currently working on expanding The Solar Mamas further.

The massive impact on the tourism and travel industry due to the Covid-19 pandemic has left Africa's wildlife more vulnerable than ever before. African rangers have been furloughed, their communities have suffered, wildlife crime has increased, and the most endangered species face unprecedented challenges. Project Ranger is a heart-warming and inspiring initiative set up in March 2020 by Beverly and Dereck's charity Great Plains Foundation, in response. Filling a critical gap in wildlife monitoring, surveying, and anti-poaching operations, this innovative programme has inspired and has recently reached \$1 million in funding support. So far, Project Ranger has funded over 200 rangers, in seven countries, who are on the frontline of conservation and preventing poaching.

Whilst the Jouberts have won international recognition for their films and conservation work, their greatest rewards have come not in the form of trophies but rather in their conservation successes, saving the wildlife that they are so passionate about and the wilderness which has become their home.

<https://greatplainsfoundation.com/> & <https://greatplainsconservation.com>





Interview: Mantis Collection CEO and eco-venturer Paul Gardiner

Eco Living caught up with Paul Gardiner, the CEO of conservation-focused hotel group Mantis, to talk about the company's eco credentials, community initiatives, guest experiences and future openings ...

Eco Living (EL): How did Mantis come to be on the sustainable tourism path?

Paul Gardiner (PG): The business was born out of a passion for conservation rather than being a business that decided to go down the sustainable tourism route. The founder of Mantis, Adrian Gardiner (my father), has been passionate about wildlife since he was a child and, in the 1980s, he had a vision to restore and rewild a large area of degraded farmland in the Eastern Cape.

The first big game arrived in 1990 and, over the next decade, elephant, rhino, antelope, giraffe and more arrived. Today, the land is a thriving 25,000 hectares private game reserve and home to the big five; it was the first private game reserve and the beginning of eco-tourism in the Eastern Cape.

In 2000, Adrian founded Mantis (Man And Nature Together Is Sustainable). There are now over 20 Mantis properties across the globe, including eco-lodges, houseboats and boutique city hotels.

EL: What have been your biggest challenges as a sustainable business?

PG: Not compromising on the values of sustainability, whilst at the same time delivering luxury properties and services. Overcoming this challenge comes down to partnering with the right people who understand our values and vision, and have the expertise to help us accomplish our goals.

EL: How would you define your approach to hospitality and what value does this bring to your guests?

PG: We are all about curated destinations, inspired by sustainable adventures, and identified a desire in our guests to recalibrate their place in the world through authentic connections with both nature and people. So, we created Mantis Impact Experiences. These are a series of fully immersive nature activities, designed to educate and inspire eco-conscious guests to tackle conservation issues through hands-on encounters, which are all curated by a small group of passionate conservationists with a collective experience of over 20 years.

EL: What experiences have you created for guests?

PG: There are so many different experiences available across the properties that I can't possibly mention them all. The latest is the Mantis Rhino Conservation Experience at Mantis Founders Lodge (in South Africa) where guests can learn about conservation from expert guest speakers and get up close to a rhino as part of a veterinary health check. The rhinos receive regular scheduled health check-ups to ensure that they are in optimal health for possible future breeding of their species, and the selected dates of the experience coincide with this.

In April [2022] Origins Luxury Lodge by Mantis, in Costa Rica, will host the Nature Reflection Retreat, a wellness experience led by instructor Andrew Sealy, who is a yoga and acroyoga master. At Feline Fields by Mantis, in the secluded Kalahari region of Botswana, there's an opportunity for guests to take nature guided bushwalks and meet with the Ju-Hansi and Kung bushmen communities. This is incredible, as the bushmen are the original occupants of this particular corner of Africa, with lineage tracing back thousands of years.

EL: Mantis has a charitable foundation, Community Conservation Fund Africa (CCFA). Tell us how this came about and some of the good work you've done.

PG: Mantis, together with Accor, created the CCFA to address social imbalances to the growing conservation crisis through grant-giving, education and working in partnership with local communities. CCFA has innovated many initiatives that combine social, environmental and economical sustainability. These include Greening the Community, a long-term project which revolves around education, and planting of indigenous trees to provide food, medicine and shade. Young people also have the chance to complete a paid horticultural internship.

Another initiative is the Beekeeping Project which started in the Eastern Cape, with the rehoming of 120 beehives onto three Mantis properties, creating a habitat for around nine million bees. All hives are installed and maintained by members of the local community who are trained in beekeeping by CCFA. This project was extended to the Western Cape, and CCFA partnered with Honeybee Heroes to launch the Adopt-a-Hive campaign [on World Bee Day 2021], which gives people around the world the chance to purchase their very own beehives without the need for the upkeep, and, crucially, support local communities. Mantis and CCFA buy honey from the apiarists, creating an enterprise.

Borehole construction is a new initiative to provide much needed safe and convenient access to water. So far, one community borehole has been completed in the Maliyazwa Village in Namibia and CCFA aims to assist with another three boreholes in the Kasika Conservancy, Zambezi region, Namibia by 2022.

EL: Mantis has properties in Southern Africa, Botswana, Rwanda, Tanzania, Costa Rica and London. What do all the properties have in common or are they all distinct from one another?

PG: Each property is an exceptional place for guests to find themselves and, while uniquely different in style and the experiences they offer, all are linked through a collective ambition to combine responsible tourism, conservation and community upliftment.

We have Origins Luxury Lodge by Mantis, an eco-lodge in the heart of northern Costa Rica's mountainous rainforests, built with minimal intervention to trees during construction and increased local vegetation by 75%, through planting designed to harmoniously merge with the environment.

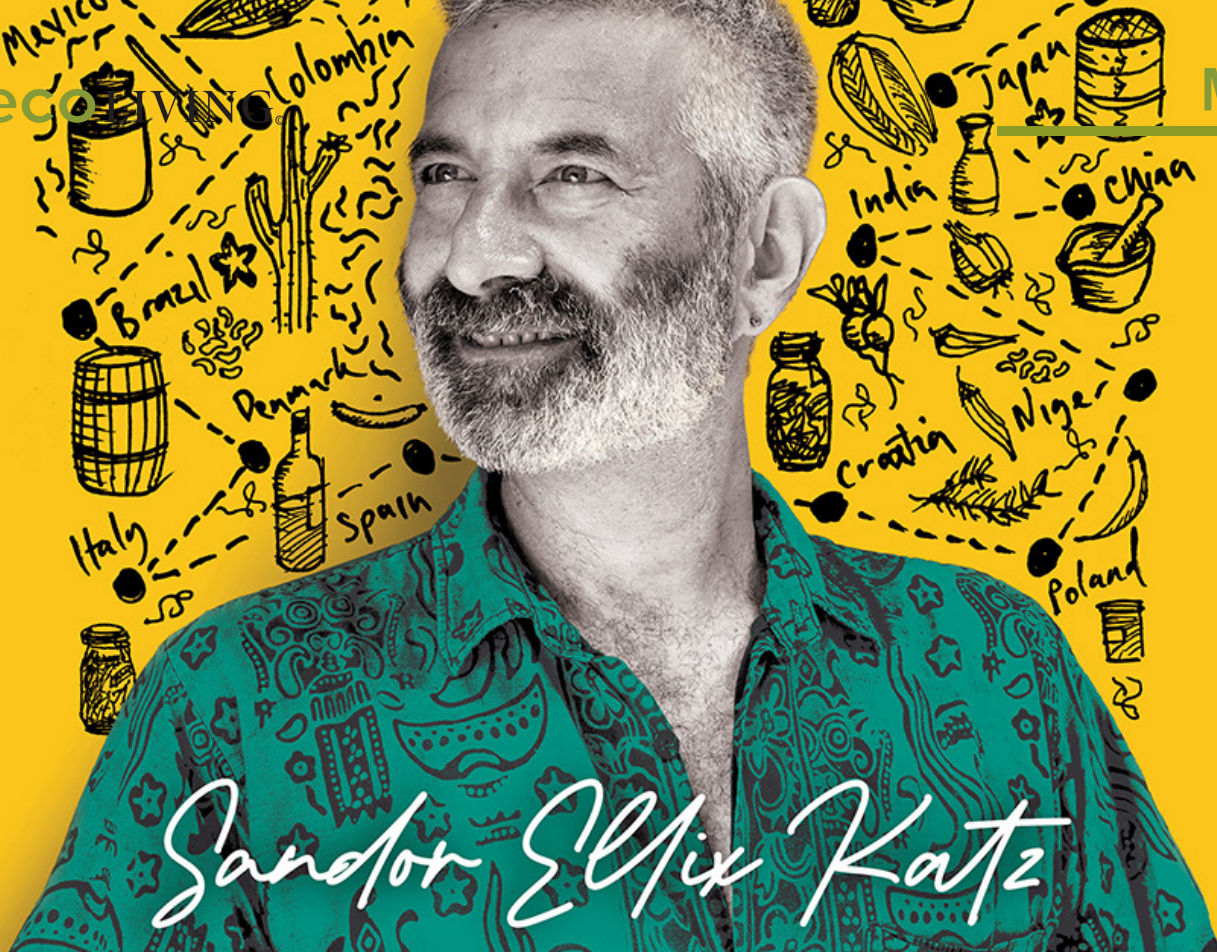
The tents for the Siringit Migration Camp by Mantis, a Bedouin style camp which moves every few months from northern to southern Serengeti to follow the migration path of wildlife, are made from recycled materials, and solar power is utilised for electricity and heating.

A city hotel located in South Africa, Mantis No5 Boutique Art Hotel, is a beautifully restored Art Deco building with a superb collection of 200 pieces of art – all a tribute to South African history and culture. Mantis Founders Lodge champions rhino conservation and is a celebration of sustainable tourism, located near Gqeberha where my father pioneered the rewilding of the first private game reserve in the region. This is just a snippet of the wonders in our collection.

EL: What is in store for Mantis over the next 12 months or so?

PG: We are excited about our 2022 planned openings, which includes the Vivari Hotel & Spa by Mantis in Johannesburg, Mantis Mansa Marina – a boutique hotel nestled on the bay of Mindelo on one of the Cape Verde Islands – and the luxury floating hotel, Mantis Kivu Queen uBuranga, that will cruise one of the most biodiverse ecozones of the world, Rwanda's Lake Kivu.





Sandor Katz's Fermentation Journeys

The following excerpt is from Sandor Katz's *Fermentation Journeys* by Sandor Ellix Katz (Chelsea Green Publishing, October 2021) and is reprinted with permission from the publisher ...

I have always loved to travel. When I think back to some of the travels of my youth, I can see that long before my interest in fermentation began in earnest, traveling primed me to think about fermentation in ways that I likely would not have otherwise. As a 23-year-old, fresh out of college and seeking adventure, I traveled in Africa for several months with my friend Todd Weir. We didn't drink, or even encounter, any alcohol as we crossed the Sahara Desert overland through Algeria for a month, taking buses as far as they went, then hitchhiking. But after we crossed into Niger and the increasingly tropical West African landscape, we began to see beer and locally produced palm wine—the fermented sap of palm trees.

The palm wine we encountered and tried was wonderful, and we greatly appreciated the renewed availability of alcohol. I was struck by the fact that the palm wine was always served from open vessels rather than bottles, and seemed to be a product of cottage industry. The beer that was available was made by national breweries, but the palm wine was all made by people at home, or in very small-scale enterprises. Sometimes we bought it, and other times it was served to us as an expression of hospitality. We were also served homebrewed millet beer and other types of homemade alcohol.

I thought of this often eight or nine years later, after I became interested in fermentation. The literature for hobbyists about home beer brewing and winemaking was so technical. I found it somewhat off-putting in all its emphasis on chemicals to purify the fermentation substrate; sanitization at every step of the process; and special equipment, commercial yeast

cultures, and yeast nutrients. All of this made me wonder about the people we had encountered making palm wine and millet beer in remote villages with limited technology and resources. Where were they getting their carboys and airlocks? Where were they getting their tablets of potassium metabisulfite and yeast nutrients? Or, how had they been able to ferment these delicious beverages without all of that? What were the simpler, more traditional ways? Without this experience traveling in Africa, I wouldn't have known to ask such questions. There, as everywhere, fermentation is an essential aspect of how people make effective use of food resources—not only palm sap, but everything from milk, meat, and fish to grains, beans, vegetables, and fruits.

Fermentation is truly a global phenomenon, practiced and of practical importance everywhere, and people in every part of the world make use of fermentation in similar ways. The benefits are numerous. Fermentation is a strategy for safety, producing acids, alcohol, and a range of other by-products that prevent pathogens from growing. It makes many foods more flavorful, and it underlies the beloved flavors of delicacies including chocolate, vanilla, coffee, bread, cheese, cured meats, olives, pickles, condiments, and so much more. Fermentation extends the lifespan of many foods, among them cabbage and other vegetables (sauerkraut and pickles), milk (cheese and yogurt), meat (salami), and grapes (wine). The most widespread form of fermentation is the production of alcohol, from every carbohydrate source imaginable. Fermentation also enhances nutrients and makes them more accessible, and it breaks down many plant toxins and antinutrient compounds. Certain ferments, eaten or drunk raw after fermentation, provide potentially beneficial bacteria, in great density and biodiversity. The process of fermentation confers all these benefits, and more.


SANDOR KATZ'S

Recipes, techniques & traditions

FERMENTATION

from around the world

JOURNEYS



We now understand that all the plant and animal products that comprise our food are populated by elaborate microbial communities. There is therefore a certain inevitability to microbial transformation. Cultures around the world have made use of this inevitability, developing techniques that effectively guide microbial transformation, not only in the context of food, but also in agriculture, fiber arts, building, and other realms.

Yet far from a unified set of techniques, fermentation encompasses a wide array of distinct processes, and it manifests in different ways in different places, depending upon what foods are abundant, what the climate is like, and other factors. The ferments of the tropics are altogether different from the ferments of the Arctic, starting with the starkly different available food resources, and then the varying climate conditions and practical needs compound the differences even more. This book takes you to both extremes. Even when environmental differences are not so stark, the ways that people work out to make use of microbial activity vary from place to place. Witness the diversity of cheeses, all made from milk, for an easy example. Then, because human migration and the resulting cultural cross-pollination have always been such constants, others' practices and techniques inevitably influence people everywhere. Like seeds, domesticated animals, culinary techniques, or virtually any aspect of cultural practice, fermentation spreads.

Fermentation may be universal, but cultural continuity is not. Around the world, colonization has wiped out entire demographic groups, and displaced others onto unknown

landscapes. Indigenous children have been systematically removed from their families, punished for speaking their native languages, and otherwise forced to assimilate into the dominant culture. In our present neocolonial period, the means of oppression have shifted to poverty, social and economic marginalization, and mass incarceration. I have spoken with people who have been unable to find evidence or information about any of their ancestors' traditional fermentation processes because the cultural traditions from which they are descended were destroyed, disrupted, or displaced. Even for those whose cultures have not been subject to such destruction, cultural continuity is frequently disrupted by the allure of certain facets of modern life, such as urbanization, specialization, and mass-produced, mass-marketed food. Cultural practices, knowledge and wisdom, languages and beliefs, are disappearing every year. Like any other manifestation of culture, fermentation practices must be used in order to maintain relevance and stay alive. We must cherish and celebrate the diversity of fermentation practices around the world, and document and share them.

Sandor Ellix Katz, is a fermentation revivalist. A self-taught experimentalist who lives in rural Tennessee, his explorations in fermentation developed out of his overlapping interests in cooking, nutrition, and gardening. He is the author of four previous books: *Wild Fermentation*, *The Revolution Will Not Be Microwaved*, *The Art of Fermentation* (a New York Times bestseller and winner of a James Beard Foundation Award in 2013), and *Fermentation as Metaphor*. The hundreds of fermentation workshops he has taught around the world



WeAre8: **Get paid and help save the planet by watching ads!**

WeAre8 is a revolutionary advertising platform that enables users to simultaneously earn money and help to protect the planet in two minutes a day. For every ad watched, viewers will be financially rewarded for their time while diverting money to causes that are important to them. Once the money is earned, it can either be withdrawn directly into a PayPal account, put towards their EE phone bill or can be paid forward to a charity of choice.

For every £1 spent by brands – such as Nestlé, BT and Audible – 65p is diverted to users and ethical causes. By putting people and purpose first, instead of profiteering, the certified B-Corp is also combatting the existing wasteful and inefficient online advertising delivery process. WeAre8 believes that we, the people, are the world's largest underpaid workforce, and it is on a mission to flip the advertising system so that consumers get paid for their time.

The digital ad platform supports various social causes – from the Cybersmile Foundation to the Trussell Trust – and many environmentally focused charities that are tackling the climate crisis head-on, such as Plastic Oceans, The Climate Reality Project and Greenpeace.

In addition, WeAre8 users can join the 8 Stage community, a curated social feed of joyful and positive content that unites users and celebrates their friends' impact. The antidote to your average social media spaces, the 8 Stage will feature a roster of top influencers and celebrities who will be providing exclusive content for app users to access.

How WeAre8 Works in five steps:

1. Sign up to receive paid brand videos.
2. Download the WeAre8 app to access a wallet and 8 Stage, where users can get inspired by the community committed to changing the world.
3. Watch brand videos via your preferred communication method (email, text, or push notification). Watch them, answer a few short questions and earn between 10p - 20p per video.
4. Get paid for your time directly into your WeAre8 app wallet. Choose to pay it forward to charity, pay off your mobile phone bill or top up your PayPal. Brands donate a percentage of their spend to charity, too.
5. Change the world. Every time you watch a brand video on WeAre8, a direct donation is made by the brands. You can also pay it forward to charities you love, and join the WeAre8 community to make real change.

Scientists agree that we have less than eight years to save the planet, but it's what we do in the next 18 months that will determine our commitment to the collective fight against climate change.

Learn more at www.weare8.com or install the WeAre8 app on the App Store or Google Play.

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/weare8

Twitter: @WeAre8Official

Instagram: @unitedforgoodofficial

Demystifying climate adaptation



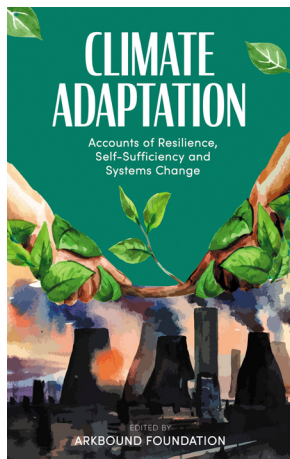
Two new books tackle the difficult issues head on
[#ClimateChange](#) [#GlobalCrisis](#) [#OurChildren'sFuture](#) [#LifeOnEarth](#)

After COP26, where is the world heading? What can we do, if anything, to protect ourselves as our planet heats up?

We hear a lot about 'climate adaptation' but what does it really mean (particularly for poorer communities) and how can we avoid catastrophic mistakes as we try to adapt? Two important new books explore our options ...

Adaptation takes many different forms, and the dangers of bad adaptation ('mal-adaptation') arising from lack of resources, lack of knowledge, and lack of care and insufficient scrutiny are very real – but time is short.

We need to get to grips with the concept of 'climate adaptation', understand the difference between good adaptation projects and 'mal-adaptation' schemes, before adaptation becomes something that is done to people, not by them.



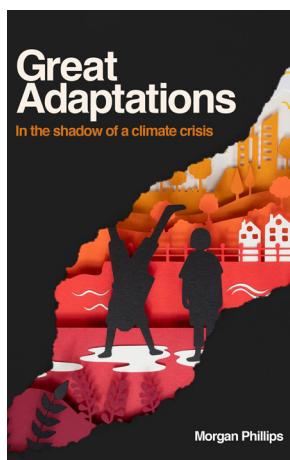
Climate Adaptation

Accounts of resilience, self-sufficiency and systems change, with contributions from renown experts from around the world.

Edited by the Arkbound Foundation.

This new book takes an unflinching look at climate change and the immense challenges facing communities and governments around the world. Drawing on the latest data to analyse what the next few decades hold in store for us all, acknowledged experts and activists from around the globe present true-life examples and predictions (based on the scientific data) to demonstrate ways that we can build adaptation and resilience, as well as what 'zero emissions' will really mean for our lives.

The many international authors of Climate Adaptation (who come from a wide range of backgrounds) share with us their unique experiences and knowledge – including some authors whose communities are already feeling the dire impacts of climate change and some who are community leaders (in the UK and overseas) fighting to create real alternatives. Between them, they offer us essential new perspectives on the enormous task ahead.



Great Adaptations - In the shadow of a climate crisis by Morgan Phillips (Co-Director of The Glacier Trust)

Dr Phillips (FRSA) gives us a humane, positive, plain-speaking approach to climate change measures and advocates the need for good adaptation projects, whilst we still continue to do what we can to limit the climate emergency that we all face.

Great Adaptations is an easy-to-read yet provocative call to action. It is engaging and visually arresting – a tactile, pocket-sized and very shareable object. Campaigner Dr Morgan Phillips argues that, while the concept of 'adaptation' may have some fierce critics, it is important to distinguish between bad adaptations (mal-adaptations), which can exacerbate social injustice, cause deep ecological harm, and even hasten the onset of dangerous climate change, and those Great Adaptations which transform peoples' lives and contribute to the achievement of broader, more compassionate goals for society.

Across 12 beautifully illustrated chapters, Morgan Phillips recounts stories of adaptation from the air-conditioned pavements of Doha and the feral camels of Australia, to the 'cool rooms' of Paris and the 'fog catchers' of Morocco. These are the lesser-told stories of adaption to climate change – the great adaptation case histories will be inspirations for the positive adaptations of the future, while the stories of mal-adaptations will, hopefully, be heeded as warnings to us all.

Climate Adaptation and Great Adaptations are both published by Arkbound (paperback, £9.99 each) and available through Arkbound Foundation ([Arkbound.com/featured-books](https://arkbound.com/featured-books)), internet booksellers and bookshops. (Also available as an ebook.)

Obki: focusing on actions children can take to help slow down climate change

Obki is a new, fun and engaging kids' brand targeting 5- to 9-year-olds with a unique focus on the positive actions children can take to help slow down climate change. The first season of 16 TV episodes launched successfully on Sky Kids in the UK and ROI in August 2021. The animated series features the original character Obki, a loveable alien, on his journey to be a positive force for good on Earth. Obki will educate and empower kids to make positive choices that help to protect the future of our planet.

Its creator, former professional sportswoman Amanda Evans, is passionate about the outdoors, especially the ocean. As an open water swimmer, Amanda has explored seas all over the world, from the English Channel and the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and the Bosphorus Strait. Obki the alien is a true passion project which has brought to life Amanda's creative ambition to take children on an animated adventure under the sea, while educating them about the very real challenges faced by our planet. Her visionary ideas and business knowledge have brought together a talented team to launch Obki on to our screens.

In 2022, Obki will become one of the first character brands to promote sustainability on a global platform, through a series of worldwide licensing deals for a range of brand lifestyle products, including apparel, plush, toys, food and publishing for children.

Obki is the voice of positivity and proactivity in the face of climate change doom and gloom, and shows children that small changes make a big difference.

Obki creator Amanda Evans says: "There are simple steps we can all take every day to make life more sustainable and they all add up. It's great that the loveable and fun persona of Obki has resonated with children and the British public, and we are so happy to encourage and inspire more children around the world to take small steps for the environment. We are looking forward to taking Obki's message across the world."

Small changes can make a big difference. Obki's climate change tips for kids include the following:

1. Switch off electronic devices when they are not being used.
2. Buy and wear clothes made of natural fibres like cotton or linen, not polyester, to avoid introducing micro fibres into the sea.
3. Create insect gardens to promote biodiversity.
4. Do fun things to fundraise for environmental charities.
5. Plant trees wherever you can.
6. Buy food that is grown locally.
7. Cycle instead of travelling by car, where possible.
8. Pick up litter, even if it isn't you who dropped it.
9. Look for products that are free of palm oil, or made using sustainable palm oil, to stop the rainforest destruction and save the orangutans.
10. Wash used tin foil and then recycle it.





Black Chapel Collective receives international acclaim

The Black Chapel Collective, an Essex-based collaboration of talented creatives, has taken its place among global climate change activists, receiving international praise at some of the world's most prestigious film festivals. The latest award-winning offering from the group of musicians, video artists, film makers, DJs, rappers, dancers, and poets is 'Connect' – a powerful, multi-media response to climate change. 'Connect' has been welcomed by the creative industry, taking home titles including 'Best Environmentalist Film' from the New York Tri State International Film Awards, as well as winning at Buddha International Film Festival, Cult Critic Movie Awards, Rome Music Video Awards and Royal Society of Television and Motion Pictures Awards.

Originally created as part of the Essex 2020 celebration of science and creativity, Connect began as an immersive, live-art performance by local musicians. The Black Chapel Collective's now award-winning project uses music, visuals, speech samples, poetry and dance to create an inspiring, multi-media response to the planet's most pressing problem, climate change. As creative individuals all reacting to climate change on a personal level, the multi-sensory aspect of Connect interweaves these personal reflections to form a unified response, highlighting the common bond between all life on earth.

The project rapidly evolved from its local, community-focused beginnings to the global stage when live performances were put on pause, during 2020. In response to another pressing issue facing the planet, coronavirus, the group recorded the live performance and created a film. Since then, Connect has become an international success, receiving unprecedented acclaim from over 50 awards at film festivals around the world.

Steve Mortimer, a member of the Black Chapel Collective and director of Connect, commented: "On our current path, we are at a huge crossroads and the decisions we make now will determine the future of the planet and everything living on it. We have ten years and counting before we do irreparable damage, and we need to do something now.

Connect is our response to the climate emergency and our way of trying to inspire other people into action. As a collective of artists, we truly believe that creativity, imagination and education are the key areas that will help us to reset. We need to reconnect with ourselves, our community and the planet, to have a truly sustainable future, and that's what Connect is all about.

We certainly didn't anticipate the international success the film has had, but we were sure of the importance of sharing our message with as many people as possible. We're really excited about all the attention we've received, and hopefully this means people are waking up to climate change and are ready to do something about it."

As well as being selected for over 50 international awards within one year of launching, Connect has received critical acclaim from many respected figures in the industry. Mercury Prize winner Talvin Singh OBE, commented: "Great work The Black Chapel Collective are doing at this challenging time in the world."

Art for Your World: How WWF and the art world have joined forces for the planet

Building momentum in all sections of society calling for the protection and restoration of nature has never been more important, and now is the time for change – politically, economically and socially. The Glasgow Climate Pact agreed at the UN climate summit COP26, just last month, is the start line not the finish, and every climate promise must be kept.

As part of this momentum, WWF joined curatorial practice Artwise in launching Art for Your World, a movement to engage the art world in raising awareness and funds to fight the climate and nature crises. Art for Your World brings together artists, collectors, galleries, institutions and art lovers to make a meaningful connection between art and the environment.

Arts organisations all over the world have united and spoken up for change. In addition, contemporary artists including Tracey Emin, Jádé Fadojutimi, Anish Kapoor, Vera Lutter, Jessica Rankin, Bob and Roberta Smith, Gavin Turk and Rose Wylie all generously offered works for sale at Sotheby's in aid of WWF's environmental activities.

Vital projects, including supporting indigenous communities in the Amazon and replanting seagrass meadows around the UK, and projects protecting habitats and species, will all benefit. The pace of deforestation in the Amazon this year reveals that it is at its highest level in 15 years and up 22% on last year, impacting people and climate. Seagrass can absorb carbon at 35 times the rate of tropical rainforests. However, the UK has lost 90% of its seagrass, and WWF aims to plant 16 hectares as part of a pilot to roll out seagrass restoration in coastal areas across the UK, over the coming decade.

Now an exclusive sale, featuring 100 of each limited edition works by Heather Phillipson, Chila Kumari Singh Burman and Bob and Roberta Smith, means art lovers can buy beautiful prints – and contribute towards protecting and restoring nature at the same time.

Heather Phillipson's print, what the seagrass says, is a drawing of seahorses made with a marker pen on discarded cardboard. Seagrass meadows provide shelter and feeding ground for wildlife, including seahorses, as well as their crucial role in regulating the climate. Heather Phillipson's reuse of waste packaging, with its casual drawn marks, its fragile graphic and its directive to 'handle with care' inverts the neglected and abandoned, and invites us to consider what's valuable.

Fierceness in Scarcity by Chila Kumari Singh Burman incorporates inkjet and screen printing with hand-collaged elements. Tigers often feature in Burman's work as a personal symbol from childhood and also a connection to her Indian roots. Tigers are one of the species that WWF is working to protect and conserve, after 95% of the wild tiger population was lost. In 2010, WWF joined with others in an ambitious goal to double the number of wild tigers by 2022 – the next Lunar Year of the Tiger.

Bob and Roberta Smith are known for their colourful, text-based slogans painted on to placards and banners. The movement's title Art for Your World was deemed significant enough to be the chosen slogan for this piece of artistic activism.

To find out more and to buy prints, visit www.artforyourworld.com.





Five eco-cleaning tips for a sparkling home this winter

How to keep your home clean and cosy this season

As autumn draws to a close and the winter months take over, we spend more time in the comfort of our own homes, tucked away from the cold. With the weather finally taking a turn for the chillier, it is the perfect time to prepare for the cold months ahead by deep cleaning your home, to create the ultimate clean and cosy haven.

Here, **Helen Bee, founder of the multi-award-winning eco-cleaning brand Clean Living**, shares her top eco-friendly tips for preparing your home for the winter ...

Dig out the winter duvet

With shorter days and darker mornings bringing a drop in temperature, it's time to swap out your lighter tog duvets with thicker quilts and layers of throws and blankets. After spending all summer stored in the back of the wardrobe though, your winter warmers may have developed a fusty smell, so it's likely they'll need refreshing. Squeezing thick duvets into the washing machine can be damaging and does more harm than good. The drum in domestic washing machines is often too small for duvets to circulate, so you don't get a thorough clean. If you don't dry them thoroughly, you also run the risk of mould developing in them.

Instead, we recommend using an odour eliminator to freshen up duvets. Our Biological Odour Eliminator uses unique encapsulation technology that binds and traps odours on contact, whilst its live probiotic formulation breaks them down to remove odour right from the source – keeping your duvet beautifully fragrant. Don't forget to give your summer duvet a spray, too, before putting it away for the winter – it'll come out smelling good as new next spring, or take it to your local dry cleaner for a good wash.

Leave windows smear-free in winter sunlight

We all know that sunlight is precious during the darker months and, without regular cleaning, dirt, grime and pollution can slowly build up on your windows and significantly limit the little amount of daylight that will shine into your space. Particularly in the winter, smears and streaks can be easily seen when the bright winter sunlight does shine on windows, so regular cleaning will keep them looking sparkling clean. It's best to clean them during dull, cloudy days to avoid the sun leaving dry water marks on your windows; microfibre cloths are the best options for getting rid of stubborn smears. Even better, they don't leave behind any streaks or any traces of fluff or lint. For ease, our Glass Cleaner is able to dissolve grease and lift dirt, leaving windows streak-free and shiny.

Fill your home with warming winter scents

Winter is the perfect time to light a scented candle to create a cosy space, filled with warming winter scents. Although they may smell pleasant, the vast majority contain toxins, particularly paraffins, which are damaging to us, especially if you suffer from respiratory issues. There are a lot of natural alternatives to these harmful chemicals that will leave your house with a wonderful scent, so make the switch to natural essential oils or dried flowers for a toxic-free, natural scent. Our Biological Multi-purpose Cleaner also has a beautiful fragrance of Seductive Wood & Amber, which is lovely and warming for the winter months.

To freshen up smelly pet bedding or pongy bins, eco-cleaning products like our Biological Odour and Spot Remover and Biological Bin Odour Eliminator use clever natural formulations that completely overcome bad odours by binding and trapping bacteria at source. Instead, they use healthy bacteria to replace bad smells with beautiful, natural scents of Crisp Apple and Freshly Cut Lawn.

Deep clean carpets and rugs

With winter rain and muddy puddles an everyday occurrence at this time of year, there's no doubt that there'll be a trail of dirty footprints (and pawprints) into the house. Now is the perfect time to give carpets and rugs a deep clean to remove any dirt and stubborn stains. A top tip is to use a firm accessory that won't damage carpet fibres, like our Wooden Carpet Cleaner Brush that reaches deep into carpets to work, cleaning product and loosen dirt and grime. Pair it with our Dry Carpet Cleaner for the ultimate clean. It's made from 100% biodegradable, natural and soft sponge-like fibres that have been moistened with natural eco-friendly cleaning ingredients.

Blitz the bathroom ready for warm winter soaks

As the weather gets colder, it's only natural to keep bathroom windows closed and turn up the heat in our shower or bath to warm up cold bones. Throughout the winter, this creates more condensation and can cause a build-up of dirt and grime, plus lead to mould, if ventilation is poor. So, it's best to prepare for those warm winter soaks with a deep clean before the temperature dips. Pay special attention to tiles and corners where grime could easily build and use our Biological Bathroom Cleaner for a natural, yet powerful formula that cuts through soap residue, body fats and other bathroom grime with ease, leaving you with sparkling surfaces. Another must is maintaining your drains with our Biological Drain Maintainer. It keeps drains clear by stopping the build-up of hair, grease and product residue that often clog up drains. It's a miracle worker and a game changer for bathrooms!

For more eco-cleaning advice and to shop the Clean Living range, visit www.cleanlivingint.com.



How to incorporate wool into your winter interiors

As winter approaches and the days become darker and colder, we're all looking for warming interior trends to bring into our homes. Wool is an eco-friendly, cosy choice, and Alison Hughes, Interiors Director at Coast Road Furniture is here to give you tips on how to use it in your home.

Winter weather always makes us feel like making our interiors more cosy, warming and inviting. It's the time for blankets, soft furnishings and warm wood tones and colours. One of the easiest and most eco-friendly ways to bring some winter style into your home is to use wool. This natural material is biodegradable, provides excellent insulation, and is frequently produced in the UK, meaning that you can support local wool farmers and fabrics manufacturers.

Here, we'll be looking at all the ways in which you can utilise wool throughout your home. It's not just for blankets and throws; there are plenty of ways to experiment with this brilliant material.

Add rugs to empty floor space

Rugs are a great way to increase the insulation of your property, and create a warmer environment during colder months. They can also be a particularly good addition if your floors are wooden, stone or tiled, as this will give you something warmer to walk on when you get up on those chilly mornings.

There are a few ways to incorporate woollen rugs into your rooms. Many people choose to have a big rug as a centrepiece in the middle of the furniture, but you can also experiment by choosing a few smaller rugs and placing them around the room. This creates a less formal effect and can be good for bedrooms, spare rooms and nurseries where the look needs to be cosy.

Throws and blankets

The classic use for wool in interior design, blankets and throws are a great choice for making a living room, bedroom or office space more comfortable. They also offer opportunities to colour coordinate fabrics and furnishings, which can be a great finishing touch to a room's colour palette.

Look for patterns and shades that go with your current décor, and then think about adding in some autumn tones, too. Ochre, deep reds and brown tones are all favourites during this season and, combined with the softness of the wool, they'll really make your living room extra comfy.

Woollen furniture upholstery

While many people focus on the design of the furniture they buy, or the wood quality, the fabrics used in the upholstery are also very important for determining how cosy and comfortable each piece is. Placing furniture with woollen upholstery throughout your bedroom and living spaces can add a whole new level of warmth, and this material is the ideal choice to take you into the winter months. A well-placed accent chair or sofa can really elevate a room, and this is a great way to incorporate wool into your house.





Plastic-free ways to decorate your home for the festive season

From eco tinsel to sustainable scented candles, there are plenty of environmentally-friendly and plastic-free ways to decorate your home this festive season, and do your bit for the planet.

The team at WeThrift has created a list of seven greener ways that you can 'deck the halls' and where to find these eco-friendly buys.

1. Eco-friendly Christmas crackers

A great way to reduce plastic with your Christmas crackers is to buy paper alternatives. Not only are they better for the environment, but they are also more natural looking, giving your table setting a desirable Nordic style. Want to know where to find some? Eco Vibe is selling a set of ten crackers, for £12.00, that are 100% plastic-free and recyclable.

2. Dried fruit wreaths

Buying a dried fruit wreath, or creating your own, is a great and sustainable way to enjoy a Christmas wreath that will last for many years to come - and it looks and smells great. All you will need is a pack of mixed dried fruit, from Amazon for £9.69, and some string, and you are ready to get creative.

3. Glass baubles

If you are looking to buy some baubles for your tree, try choosing more environmentally-friendly decorations made from fully recyclable materials like glass, instead of plastic. Paperchase is selling a box of 20 Candy Land Baubles for £15.00 - varying in size, shape and colour - to add a pop of colour to your tree.

4. Wooden tree decorations

Wood is also a more eco-friendly material to choose for your Christmas decorations, instead of plastic, especially if the type of wood used is sustainable. Nkuku has a set of traditional wooden star decorations for £18.50 that are hand-carved from sustainable mango wood. The company makes use of the tree once it no longer bears fruit, cutting it down and using it, allowing for new ones to be planted.

5. Eco-tinsel

Tinsel on your tree can be the trimming that really adds that festive finishing touch, but often it is made from single-use plastic. However, there are more eco-friendly options out there from which to choose, like paper tinsel from Econtinsel.co.uk for £9.90; it comes in the traditional Christmas colours of red and green.

6. Paper garlands/bunting

Whether you want to get creative and put your origami skills to the test or buy some ready-made, festive paper garlands are a great environmentally-friendly way to decorate your home this Christmas. Etsy has Nordic-style Christmas tree bunting, made from sustainable paper, available to buy for just £14.99.

7. Sustainable Christmas candles

Christmas candles are a great way to bring your favourite festive scents into the home, from sweet scents like gingerbread and mulled wine to more earthy scents like fresh pine cones and woodland. However, if you are wanting to look after the environment whilst enjoying those familiar merry scents, it is important to buy from places that make them sustainably. You can purchase Harpers Candles that are organic, plastic-free and free of palm oil from Greener Beauty for £8.00 - and they even plant a tree for every order received.

