

Issue 12 2013

# junkmail

Devon Community Recycling & Community Composting Network News



The moneyless manifesto • Recycle Devon Awards • Can Totnes feed itself?  
Growing Devon Schools partnership • Ellen McArthur encircles the globe •

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# Editorial



Waste is something that profoundly affects us all locally and globally and an issue that a lot of people in Devon care about. We report on the first Recycle Devon Awards which recognised the huge range of action going on in Devon to tackle waste, and a Waste Prevention Conference at County Hall which looked beyond recycling. Okehampton College won £100,000 in the international Zayed Future Energy Prize for its impressive range of green initiatives and the prize will go towards a wind turbine for the college. We report on round the world sailor Ellen Macarthur's circular economy initiative and our ubiquitous use of plastics impacting the marine environment. We also include local success stories, such as Uffculme Compost Magic who collect the widest range of plastics including plastic film and wrap for recycling, and Exeter Turntable furniture reuse projects 'rug doctor' initiative.

# The 'moneyless manifesto', the 'gift economy' and 'the really really free market'.



Several local events have highlighted emerging issues that many people are concerned about, such as how people are coping in Greece, Spain and other EU countries under austerity. What will be the outcome of the current crises,

such as the economic, financial, and Eurozone? What can we do to make our local communities more resilient to external shocks and crises beyond our control? Writers such as Charles Eisenstein and Mark Boyle are exploring some of the changes, challenges, and opportunities.

Mark Boyle spoke in Totnes about his year living without money, and his new book *The Moneyless Manifesto* challenges us to think about the effect money has on our lives, social interactions, and the environment. Everything we buy and use has an environmental and waste impact. If we didn't buy and consume so much, waste wouldn't be such a big problem! People haven't always been so dependent on what they buy in shops.

Charles Eisenstein is an original thinker and promotes the concept of the 'gift economy' in transition and how it could transform communities - 'the more you give, the richer you become'. See [www.charleseisenstein.net](http://www.charleseisenstein.net), for more information.

Occupy Exeter held a 'Really Really Free Market' in Exeter High Street on New Year's Eve. The stall had books, toys, clothes, household goods, sports equipment and other items donated by the people of Exeter all available to take away free.

Alison Williams of Occupy Exeter said: 'Most people have far more possessions than they actually need and passing them on to people who

are perhaps struggling to manage in times of austerity and recession is an important part of what Occupy Exeter is about. Such acts of goodwill can build a feeling of community and joy and are an important part of the gift economy, the idea that things or services are provided for free with no expectation of reward.

'People had turned out their cupboards and wardrobes and given us items for the stall, the only criteria being that the things be something that you would be happy to receive from a friend. Virtually all the stuff on the stall was taken by surprised and pleased members of the public. The few things that were left over were taken to Hospicecare and Sue Ryder charity shops in Exeter.

The feedback was very positive, people were pleased and touched at the idea of passing on things without asking for anything in return. The stall was busy from 12 noon until 4pm. Shoppers were encouraged to stop shopping and realise that not everything is about money and consumption.

If you wish to donate anything for the next stall and live in the Exeter area please contact Alison by email: [alisonwilliams@fsmail.net](mailto:alisonwilliams@fsmail.net)

# From the horse's mouth

**The Horsemeat scandal will have calmed down somewhat by the time you read this but it has raised some very interesting concerns about, not only the food we eat, but all supply chains.**

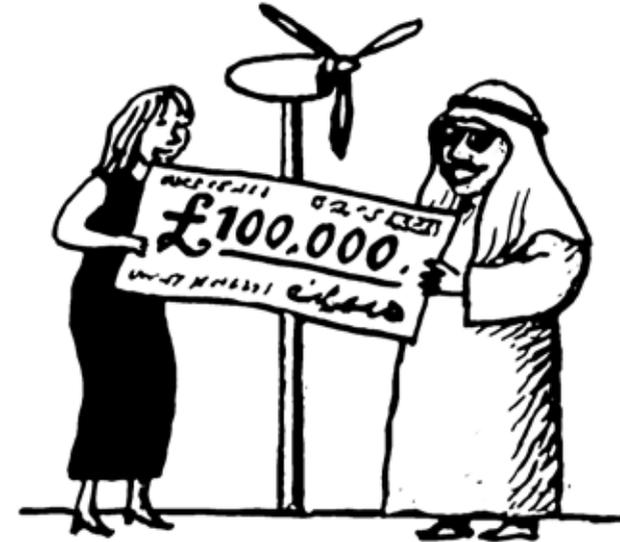
How much do we really know about all the products we buy? I learnt only this morning that the testing of products on animals which was banned in the EU many years ago does not cover the sale of such products. We now live in a Global market place and we can buy products from all over the world at the click of a mouse. We generally have no idea about how that product is produced, what are the working conditions/rights of the workers that made the product?

Clothing provides some of the most shocking statistics, from the growing of the fibre, processing of the fibre, creating the textile to making the clothing and that's just the start of the story. Then you have the whole global fashion industry that thrives on clothes quickly going out of fashion and the need to buy new clothes, plus all the accessories of course. Then we have the reuse and recycling of textiles which are often dumped on markets, for instance in Africa, where they undermine local textile production. Every step and stage in this journey can have disastrous environmental and human consequences. Pristine rainforest is cleared in Madagascar to grow sisal which, ironically, is used to make, amongst other things, 'bags for life'. Workers have to spray increasing amounts of chemical pesticides on cot-

ton because the pest predators are the first to succumb to the pesticides. The pest species, having faster reproductive cycles, becoming resistant, also in the meantime new 'secondary' pests move in which were not a problem before but with predators removed have a clear field. Soils are mined of their fertility and so increasing amounts of fertilisers are needed and still crop yields go down as soils are eroded, denuded of organic matter; all this at the expense of the farmer producer's income and health. Textile factories use yet more chemical processes and their effluent is often vented and piped straight into the air and watercourses. Then the clothing manufacture has been shown time and again to use very badly exploited labour, even slavery in many well documented cases. We had a tragic case recently of workers being burnt to death in a clothing factory in Bangladesh and both GAP and Primark have had clothing made in slavery like conditions in the past.

We all need to be much more aware of our everyday purchases and the horsemeat scandal has opened the lid of a veritable can of worms of which the vast majority have been blissfully ignorant. The solution is to buy from local reputable producers wherever possible, to look for the symbols that guarantee fair trade, organic standards, forestry stewardship etc and to avoid dubious products. At least with the internet it is easier for us to make informed choices and also to put pressure on companies that have dubious credentials.

# Okehampton College wins energy prize £100,000



Okehampton College has won £100,000 first prize in an international Sustainable Schools competition for its work in greening the school with renewable energy, energy efficiency, recycling, composting, food growing, and other improvements. The Head Darryl Chapman, Bryony Franco, a sixth form pupil, and her father, flew out to Abu Dhabi to receive The Zayed Future Energy Prize set up in memory of the late Sheikh. They attended events linked to The World Energy and Water Summit and visited local schools to share their experiences.

The prize money will be used to develop a wind turbine for Okehampton College, which will save the school even more money and energy usage.

Okehampton won this prize through an extraordinary amount of hard work and dedication spearheaded by Keith Webber. The Okehampton college website gives more information and some short films see [www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk](http://www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk) click on 'college' and open the eco schools link – it's tucked away!

The school has undertaken a comprehensive look at all aspects of energy consumption and as Keith Webber told me, it's not until you measure what you are using that you realise the enormous amount that is being needlessly wasted. Eco warriors now patrol the school at break times and put happy smiling green faces in classrooms where the lights have

been switched off and angry red faces where lights and appliances are left on. Heating is turned off in corridors and walk ways, cavity wall insulation and double glazing has been retro fitted, better heating controls, thermostatic radiator valves and a large solar pv system installed, This has led to a 50% reduction in consumption of gas and electricity. The school is now ready to install wind power and biomass heating. You can see much more on the website. Keith also told me that a tap left running costs £5 an hour roughly and just one faulty tap in one cloakroom over the weekend cost the college over £250.

So many schools I go into have the kind of taps that you push on but cannot turn off and I wonder just how much water is needlessly wasted like this. I would be bold enough to say that every single school I have visited is throwing money away needlessly by leaving lights on and inefficient taps and that's just the start of it. Okehampton also has a Big Hanna in vessel composter, which takes all the food waste from the college and it is used in the Growing our Future project's onsite garden. The college was also throwing about 30 tonnes a year to landfill; their target is to reduce this by 90%.

# Recycle Devon Awards !

**O**ver 100 community waste champions including schools, individuals, community groups, and council workers gathered at County Hall for the first Recycle Devon Awards, which aim to recognise the fantastic achievements of people in promoting and enabling reuse, recycling and composting in Devon to reach 55%.

**There were seven categories which people were nominated for:**

\* **Your Recycling Hero** (Friend, Family Member, Neighbour or Local Recycling Champion) Karen Berger, Honiton - Karen is the driving force and inspiration behind the Waste Not Want Not days in Honiton. She has given her time and energy endlessly to create a real ethos of reuse in the town. With help from her volunteers, hundreds if not thousands of items have been saved from landfill and provide a welcome resource for people who may be struggling with the current financial times. In addition to this Karen has kindly shared her experience with others so that other towns and villages in Devon can benefit from the knowledge gained and lessons learnt.

\* **School Recycling Hero** (Child) joint winners Kieran Fellows, Clawton Primary School - Kieran has been described as an 8 year old with a real passion for recycling. He implemented a composting system at his School in Clawton, facilitates all kinds of recycling from paper to printer cartridges and even helped to build a recycling centre at the School. Eloise Warren, Holsworthy Primary School - From a young age, Eloise has taken a full and active role in all the school's recycling policies. This year she has taken on the role of Chief Composter, which involves taking responsibility for collections from the bins around school and imparting knowledge and understanding to the smaller children

\* **School Recycling Hero** (Adult) Fran Rickwood, Teaching Assistant Okehampton Primary School - Frances works tirelessly for Okehampton Primary

School often in her own time, obtaining grants or working on recycling projects. She encourages both pupils and staff to recycle everything

\* **Community Group Recycling Hero** John Parker and the Hele Composting Group - John heads up the composting centre in Hele and has done for the last 9 years. He gets his hands dirty by filling and turning bins and sieving green waste to produce compost. On average John generates 40 tonnes of compost and shredded waste a year. The compost is then sold locally and the money generated by this (over £20,000) is used to support local community groups. John also offers a free delivery service to the elderly and educates people about recycling and composting at the annual Composting Centre Open Day. When he is not composting, John can be found putting the compost to good use in the local area by tree planting and maintaining the flower tubs.

\* **Collection Crew/Operative** (Recycling, Garden, Food or Refuse Collector(s) Alan Keen, Organic Garden and Kitchen Waste collector in Torridge - Alan has been collecting mainly organic waste for Torridge District Council for 16 years. He is well known in the community for his enthusiasm to assist and help everyone

\* **Street Cleansers** Eboney Forward, Umberleigh. She is always out cleaning the lanes and streets of litter. This is particularly appreciated by local equestrians because it can scare the horses if they see rubbish on the floor. She has been described as brilliant



\* Recycling Centre Operative/Site staff Groundwork Trust, Weston Mill Recycling Centre, Plymouth - The Groundwork staff at Weston Mill are always really helpful when assisting members of the public either with unloading their items for recycling or by giving advice to help with future visits to the site  
Overall Recycling Hero for Devon Winner: Karen Berger

Shortlisted candidates from each category and winners all received a recycled glass trophy with a special trophy for the overall winner.

In 1990/91 Devon's recycling rate was just 2%. The partnership aims to increase Devon's recycling and composting rate to 60% by 2015 and 65% by 2025.

## Ellen MacArthur encircles the globe

**E**llen MacArthur is famous for sailing single handed around the world, but less well known is her passion to help protect the environment and stop waste. She has set up The Ellen MacArthur Foundation which aims to help re-think the future and work with education and business to accelerate the transition to a circular economy and stop waste through careful design.

The circular economy refers to an industrial economy that is restorative by intention; it aims to eradicate waste through careful design, rely on renewable energy; and minimise, track and eliminate the use of toxic chemicals. Material flows are of two types, biological nutrients, designed to re-enter the biosphere safely, and technical materials, which are designed to recirculate at high quality without entering the biosphere.

The Foundation's recent report 'Towards the Circular Economy' researched the potential value to business of mov-

ing to this new model and it could be worth up to 630 billion US dollars for Europe alone. The Foundation aims to document the best case studies in this area, to inform, inspire and stimulate research.

See the website [www.ellenmacarthur-foundation.org](http://www.ellenmacarthur-foundation.org). See also [www.mcdonough.com/cradle\\_to\\_cradle.htm](http://www.mcdonough.com/cradle_to_cradle.htm). The book 'Cradle to Cradle' was written in 2002 by scientists McDonough and Braungart. It was one of the first detailed studies of a new design paradigm - with our growing knowledge of the living earth, design can reflect a new spirit. When designers employ the intelligence of natural systems—the effectiveness of nutrient cycling, the abundance of the sun's energy—they can create products, industrial systems, buildings, even regional plans that allow nature and commerce to fruitfully co-exist. The authors argue that the re-invention of human industry is not only within our grasp, it is our best hope for a future of sustaining prosperity.

## Real nappies



**I was seriously chuffed to receive my Recycle Devon 'Thank-you' award at the recent ceremony at County Hall, Exeter.**

I've been a volunteer for the Devon Real Nappy Project for almost 5 years and to receive recognition was truly wonderful.

Anyone who knows me knows how passionate I am about reducing waste and saving families money – the two go together, but sadly most families have not looked into how they can achieve these savings for their families. Support from the Devon Real Nappy Project has empowered me to meet this challenge head on.

When I found out I was pregnant I started to look into cloth nappies on the internet and quickly realised that looking at pictures is not enough, I needed to ask questions, touch the nappies and explore how they work for myself. At the time other councils were offering discounts to new families, running events and giving support and Exeter were not... 'that's not fair'

I complained to Devon County Council who basically told me 'help us promote it and we'll see what we can do'. Four years on and the Devon Real Nappy Project - a Devon Authorities partnership funded project - is going from strength to strength, with an estimated 560 tonnes of disposable nappies avoided and thus saved from landfill so far. We offer free information, advice, trial kits and 20% discounts to parents across Devon - all delivered by volunteer advisors like me.

I also run drop in 'Nappuccinos' events in Exeter and have seen numbers swell from a few committed mums to over 30 mums and dads regularly coming for support and advice.

We have 65 cloth nappy trial kits across Devon which parents can borrow to trial the nappies at home, this really helps parents to decide. Parents really appreciate the time I take as a volunteer to answer their questions and explain how cloth nappies use modern fabrics to keep baby comfortable and dry. It's not just restricted to nappies either, washable wipes, nappy sacks and breastpads all in super soft bamboos, cottons and fleeces are a simple way of saving money and avoiding more waste to landfill.

For more information about the Devon Real Nappy Project or to find your nearest advisor, please phone 0800 328 8175, email [nappies@recycledevon.org](mailto:nappies@recycledevon.org) or visit [www.recycledevon.org/nappies](http://www.recycledevon.org/nappies).

**Jen Harris, volunteer DRNP advisor for Exeter**



## Waste plastic could be re-classified as hazardous

**Last issue Junk Mail highlighted the high carbon impacts of plastics. Now, a Plymouth University professor has joined calls for plastic waste to be classed as hazardous.**

Prof Richard Thompson, of the Marine Biology and Ecology centre, is among a team of international academics who say waste plastics threaten the environment and wildlife.

Their report in Nature magazine says more than 370 marine species ingest or become entangled in plastic debris. The Pacific gyre plastic debris build up is thought to be 500 miles across. They add that the benefits of plastic outweigh its "negative impacts".

Prof Thompson, the only UK scientist involved in the report, has been studying the effects of waste plastic in the oceans since 2004. He said: "The Nature report builds directly on our previous research, together with that of other leading world experts, and asks

that we acknowledge these problems by reclassification of plastic waste as hazardous."

This would presumably lead to the controlled use and proper collection of waste plastic in order to prevent it getting into the marine environment.

The report said: "Many people think that replacing materials such as wood and glass with plastic to make goods lighter can help to address climate change. However, the benefits must be balanced against the negative impacts of plastics so that they are used only when they have smaller carbon and ecological footprints than alternatives."

It said there was a precedent with the legislation taken to ban CFCs, which led to a global halt in some dangerous chemical emissions.

In a separate investigation of the effects of waste plastic in the North Pacific Ocean off California, published in Marine Ecology Progress Series, it was found that there has been a huge increase in the amount of small plastic fragments in the ocean, and 9% of the fish collected in the survey had plastic waste in their stomachs. It was estimated the fish at intermediate ocean depths could be ingesting plastic at a rate of roughly 12,000 to 24,000 tonnes per year. **Source: BBC news**



## Ecover unveils new plastic bottles made from 'sea recovered' plastic



**From 2014 the cleaning product firm's plastic bottles will incorporate recycled waste plastic collected from the North Sea.**

The plastic will incorporate post-consumer recyclables (PCR), waste plastic fished from the sea and its own existing 'Plantastic' product made from 100% sugarcane. Ecover has been using its Plantastic packaging since 2011, but claims its new form of plastic incorporating this alongside PCR and sea-collected waste plastic is a 'world-first in plastic packaging'.

Ecover will work with Waste Free

Oceans (WFO) and UK plastic recycling plant Closed Loop as well as fishing communities to collect waste plastic from the sea and reintroduce it into the recycling chain via Ecover product bottles.

According to research by the Marine Conservation Society, plastic debris accounts for almost 60% of all litter found on UK beaches and a large amount of this waste ends up in the sea. It said boats outfitted with a special trawl will be able to collect between 2-8 tonnes of waste per trawl for cleaning and recycling, with the collected waste then sent to Closed Loop Recycling's



Ecover plastic bottles cont...

plant in Dagenham for processing into plastic for Ecover bottles. WFO would incentivise fishermen to collect waste product from the sea to be sorted and recycled. Ecover said it would for the moment just be focusing on collecting plastic from the North Sea, where 600,000 tonnes of plastic is currently estimated to be sitting.

Around 10% of the world's waste plastic ends up in the sea and most of it in the Pacific Ocean, where waste plastic currently covers a patch twice the size of France, according to Ecover. Chief executive of Ecover, Philip Malmberg, commented: "As manufacturers we've got to take responsibility for sustainability very seriously – to take real action on climate change and the damage done by our over-reliance on fossil fuels, creating green products that deliver more than a nod to sustainability."

It is not currently known what percentage of Ecover's new form of plastic will be made up of sea-collected product, and the firm did not reveal how much it would cost to collect.

However, there is a growing recognition among people that recycling is no longer enough -there was no mention of refill schemes which would enable the reuse of packaging, which producers, retailers, and consumers must embrace if they are to close the loop. (People can refill used bottles with Ecover products in some small wholefood shops like The Courtyard in Chagford, but I have not seen this yet in larger stores.)

Ecover's 'Message in our Bottle' campaign includes a social media campaign and the commissioning of an 18-foot art installation for this year's Glastonbury Festival to raise awareness about the importance of recycling. The installation will also go on show at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. Mr Malmberg said: "Glastonbury is a hugely influential event so where better to spread the word about recycling? Through the power of social media we'll also be engaging consumers in debates and discussions, opening their eyes to issues and challenges and hopefully inspiring them about the future of plastic packaging".

## The plight of the albatross



- **Beaches of the future..... will all be contaminated with granulated plastic.**
- **40% of all Albatross chicks birthed on Midway Atoll in the Pacific Ocean die each year due to ingestion of plastics.**

On one of the remotest islands on our planet, tens of thousands of baby albatrosses lie dead on the ground, their bodies filled with plastic from the Pacific Garbage Patch. Midway Atoll is more than 2400 miles from a large landmass (Alaska) and more than 1000 miles from a city (Honolulu)...yet plastic debris is ubiquitous. Each tide on the island brings another tide mark of plastic debris large and small. That's because so much plastic ends up at sea and finds itself forever looping in the waters of the Pacific. The Pacific gyre plastic debris area is thought to be over 500 miles across. Caught up in the currents of the Pacific Gyre our plastic waste might be eternal, for the coolness and darkness of the waters prevent plastic from disintegrating. The thinner pieces do eventually break

down into ever smaller pieces and become deadly to plankton eating fish. Unfortunately the thicker, harder, colourful plastics seem to be a favourite of Albatross parents to feed their young. Albatross spend much time at sea in search of food, one of their staples being flying fish eggs. Flying fish attach their long strings of eggs to objects floating at sea, which are subsequently consumed by the albatross parents and then regurgitated to their chicks.

Plastic doesn't bio-degrade, at sea it breaks down into small pieces, creating a plastic soup, which is ingested by fish and plankton, and in turn sea birds like the albatross.

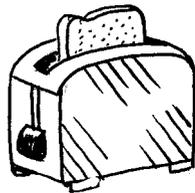
98% of Albatross on Midway have plastic in them, and forty percent of all Albatross chicks birthed on Midway Atoll die each year due to ingestion of plastics. The actual causes are usually choking, dehydration or starvation as the plastic leaves little room for water or food. You can see the moving film by Chris Jordan on You Tube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbqJ6FLfaJc> and find out more at <http://www.midwayjourney.com/>



# Defra's Waste Prevention Planning.....

**.DEFRA has issued a call for evidence to enable it to develop a waste prevention plan for England. The call has identified a number of priority materials including food waste, textiles, electronic equipment and furniture.**

REalliance the national network organisation for community based



reuse, recycling and composting groups, will be compiling a response to Defra, including emphasising the role of communities in waste prevention activities and how they can ensure the environmental, social and economic value of our resources are maximised. REalliance welcome any contributions to our submission – please email evidence, case studies and thoughts to [emma@realliance.org.uk](mailto:emma@realliance.org.uk)

The call for evidence can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2013/03/11/waste-prevention/> Responses are requested by April 29.

Craig Anderson, chief executive of the Furniture Reuse Network (FRN) said 'Defra needs to 'think outside the recycling box' and work with other departments if there is to be ambition in its Waste Prevention Plan.'

"FRN is calling for a dramatic improvement in the connectivity of government policy agendas such as

waste prevention and social policy to address cross-disciplinary impacts that can save money and benefit people, while supporting their communities and their environment."

And, he said that the government needs to embrace the social and economic value that reuse can offer and work with the FRN - the umbrella body for furniture reuse organisations in the UK - to help ensure the benefits are delivered.

Under the revised Waste Framework Directive, EU member states are required to develop a national waste prevention programme by December 2013.

# Waste Prevention Conference at County Hall

**Eighty delegates including students, councillors, waste officers, industry and the community sector, recently attended a successful Waste Prevention Conference at County Hall in Exeter.**

Action Groups (CAGS) whereby groups are supported to implement the 3Rs locally. Resource Futures has been working in Oxfordshire and helped facilitate a big rise in CAG activity. Oxfordshire are currently the



Dr. Andy Rees, Head of Strategy at the Welsh Government highlighted the challenging statutory targets contained in the Waste Prevention Plan for Wales. Wales is committed to a 70% recycling rate and to reduce waste by 1-2% per annum. He stated that recycling was no longer enough and waste must be reduced with a closed loop approach. Rachel Gray from WRAP enlightened the audience on the latest research findings on Reuse and Food Waste Packaging including some benefits of packaging to extend product life thereby reducing waste in the long run.

Jane Stevenson from Resource Futures focussed on the benefits of Community

highest performing LA in recycling and Paul Mocroft and Wayne Lewis from Oxfordshire Waste Partnership highlighted how to reach 60% recycling and keep waste arisings down.

Jacqi Hodgson from Transition Town Totnes gave a community perspective and challenged the 'big waste' approaches of the mainstream. The eclectic mix of delegates ensured lively debate and a good platform for networking opportunities and exchanging ideas. The Local Authorities will use the knowledge and ideas gained to develop a Waste Prevention and Reuse Strategy for Devon.

# Transition Town Totnes

## Local food study, 'Can Totnes Feed itself'?

**Transition Town Totnes has undertaken a wide ranging study of the local food economy, to find out its value, potential for change, and how it might grow. The 'Can Totnes Feed itself'? study was in partnership with CPRE (Campaign for Protection of Rural England).**

Findings include:

People in Totnes spend at least £30m p/a on retail food.

Around £20m of that goes to just 2 supermarkets in the town, with £10m going to over 60 independent food/drink retailers.

Approx. £8m is spent on products from the local area (up to 30 miles), meaning £22m is spent on products imported from elsewhere in the region, the country or the world. So currently around 63% of the food consumed in Totnes is imported from outside the area.

Every £1 spent on local food in a local shop can have a multiplier effect of between £2.50 and £4 (that is, it re-circulates in the local economy so its value and economic impact

is much greater than if it is spent on food sourced from elsewhere in a supermarket, which then leaves the local economy).

In Plymouth, £384,000 or around half the school meals budget was spent locally 'on seasonal, local produce,' generating around £1.2 million of local value per year, a local multiplier of £3.04 per £1 spent.

There are around 380 food businesses in Totnes and District (T&D) today, employing over 1,500 people, and contributing about £114m to the economy overall.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) Family Spending report tells us that in the South West, each home spends on average £54.70 per week on food and non-alcoholic drinks, around £3,200 per year. The ONS data also reveals that the average spend by South West households on restaurants/cafe meals or other take-aways/catering is £29 (incl. £6.50 for alcohol) per week. So this is worth another £13.8m to the local economy.

Local food outlets support on average

one job for every £46,000 of annual turnover, whereas supermarket chains support one job for each £140,000 of annual turnover. So in comparison, pound for pound, smaller independent local food outlets support three times the number of jobs. Using the above CPRE data, if just 30% (£6m) of the spend that currently goes to our supermarkets (£20m), was instead spent in our local independents, this could translate to an additional 87 jobs. Using the local multiplier of 2.5, it also means an additional £15m could then be re-spent in the local economy.

'Can Totnes Feed Itself?' report also presents a compelling vision for *"a new food culture, one that becomes more rooted in healthy, fresh food, with a wide variety of local livelihoods offering meaningful and productive work, with rich soils, abundant wildlife, a resurgence of skills and craft, and a renewed interest in healthy eating. It would result in a more populated countryside being home to a range of businesses and a greater range of land use types, and an urban land-*

*scape fully integrating food production and intensive market gardening. It is not about "going back" to some dimly imagined rural idyll, rather it is about going forward into the future in such a way as to be able to thrive and flourish in uncertain and volatile times, and to live within realistic energy constraints."*

One may ask what does this have to do with waste? Buying local food means much less packaging, upstream processing waste, and transportation. In independent shops, people tend to buy just what they need, rather than supermarket BOGOF deals (buy 1 get 1 free), multipacks or unplanned purchases which leads to more wasted food. If we take the average for wasted food per household, at around 10%, that could amount to £3m worth of wasted food per year for Totnes. How much would that be Devon wide? Over £100m perhaps? Then add the cost of collecting and composting all that unnecessary food waste, and the high capital costs of in vessel treatment facilities for food waste. Mind boggling.



# Growing Devon Schools Partnership



Wouldn't it be great if every school in Devon was growing its own food, involving children in cooking, healthy eating and composting as an every day part of their curriculum? Teaching about the complete growing cycle provides children with a fantastic opportunity to learn essential life skills and is a good opportunity to get their hands dirty. The Growing Devon Schools Partnership (GDSP) is an ambitious project aiming to do just that!

There is a huge array of organisations offering campaigns, activity packs and promotions aimed at schools on the subjects of gardening, cooking, healthy

eating and composting to schools in Devon and it can be overwhelming for schools that are just starting out. GDSP's challenge is to bring these organisations together and find a way of providing schools with a clear and joined up approach and most crucially providing access to good practical advice and long term support.

Organisations involved in the development of the GDSP include:-

- Ashburton School of Husbandry**
- Devon Community Composting Network**
- Devon County Council (Waste Education)**
- Devon Gardens Trust**
- Diggin It/Plymouth School Gardens**
- Embercombe**
- Food for Life**
- Garden Organic**
- Growing our Future**
- Koru Education**
- Landscore Primary School**
- National Trust (Knightshayes House)**
- Okehampton Primary**
- Paignton Zoo**
- Resource Futures (RF)**
- Ridan Composting Ltd**
- Rosemoor (RHS Garden)**
- Send a Cow**
- Topsham Primary**
- Trill Farm**

The project is in its early stages, but has held a number of meetings over the past year to establish an alliance with the following aims and objectives:-



## Aims

- To enable every school in Devon to engage with growing, healthy eating and composting on a level appropriate to their needs
- To establish what Devon schools are doing now and what they want to do in the future
- To work together in partnership to offer shared information, leadership and inspiration
- To work with schools to understand and provide them with the tools to embed growing, healthy eating and composting in to the schools ethos & curriculum.
- To encourage schools to practice sustainable gardening
- To support the development and integration of a long term national campaign

## Our Initial Objectives are:-

- To establish a network/alliance of providers
- To set up a Steering Group to deliver an agreed action plan
- To set up appropriate working groups to further elements of the action plan
- To pool our resources and clearly signpost schools to them.
- To provide training and practical support for schools
- To provide ongoing support via an agreed network of gardening mentors

The GDSP has already been successful in bidding for funding to provide training and practical support for schools. Out of 62 applicants only 3 were chosen to become 'hubs', Devon being one of them. So the way forward is now set and hopefully great things to come – watch this space!



# Top tips for creating a sustainable school



I attended a se-ed (Sustainability and Environmental Education) webinar ([www.se-ed.co.uk](http://www.se-ed.co.uk)) presented by the chief executive Ann Finlayson, where she outlined her top ten tips for creating and maintaining a sustainable school.

**1** Start anywhere! - this was refreshing as I was thinking composting is a good way in, largely owing to the amount of support we can give in Devon, but for many schools it

is the garden which is the main focus, and obviously the compost is key here too. The most obvious start is probably saving energy, in fact the next webinar is being given by Keith Webber from Okehampton college who has done the most amazing amount of work in this area. Christow school are currently saving up for solar pv panels to generate their own power.

**2** Audit and map what is already going on. Identify your champions and hidden heroes, they may be working on the school grounds or buildings, part of the school council or through purchasing and of course teachers and assistants, it could be in the form of special trips or extra curriculum activities. Flag it up, celebrate



it all. This is a very key, powerful point; schools do not always really celebrate and acknowledge how much they are already doing. Ann reiterated at the end of her talk that this was really important and I think for us to flag up what is happening all over Devon would be really good.

**3** Develop a whole school approach – create the ethos / mission statement / core values, embed it in the school, make a development plan, make it the focus for the school curriculum. You do not want to leave it to the sustainability teacher; it has to be a whole school approach. Again this is so vital, so many schools I go into I see that the work has either been taken on by one member of staff or, worse, assigned to them. This is just not sustainable in the long term.

**4** Develop a plan for every child's learning for sustainability as they progress through the school, develop their life skills. What do you remember from school? Did you learn any skills that you now can use? Chances are they came in extra curriculum activities, school trips or after school clubs and not in 'school time'. Why not put this stuff right in the core of the curriculum.

**5** Measure the treasure. What is the school doing? If you have waste saving, water saving, energy saving; for instance, in place then find out how much money you are saving. If food is being grown then again try and measure the benefits, of course it is not just about money, in fact that is usually the last consideration, look at the environmental savings the harder to measure well being, the inclusion of previously excluded children and so much more.

**6** Look for connections – ask lots of what if questions – 'how can we reduce energy consumption?' what if we did things a different way? Asking



what if? Questions can be a very potent tool too. Creating a vision of how the school could be. A beautiful green, fruitful site rather than an expanse of tarmac for instance.

**7** Getting students fully participating. It's not going to work unless the whole community fully 'owns' all of it and have been instrumental in the planning and implementation stages. Even in years to come, long after the students involved in this stage have left the school, their legacy will be passed on and it will be known that they were involved.

**8** Make it visual share it ethos plans successes monitoring it will start to develop a life of its own. Take the message out of the school into the wider community; get the press in to share the success stories. Celebrate it within the school too.

**9** Understand change in society, in your school and in the environment

**10** Support your teachers learning more about sustainability

## Unique plastics recycling scheme in Uffculme



**Uffculme Compost Magic are believed to be the first project in Devon to offer collection of all household plastics, including film + polystyrene in one location.**

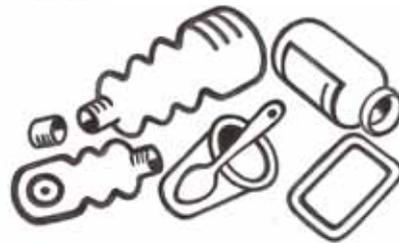
UCM have provided mixed plastic collection facilities to the local community at their site in Uffculme for several years, and have now bought a plastics compactor and baler to develop the scheme and enable easier handling, with support from Mid Devon DC and Devon County Council.

John Wilkins of UCM said: 'We do not know of any other scheme in Devon where you can drop off all household plastics, including film + polystyrene in one location. According to the 'Devon Household Waste Analysis, March 2012', in Mid Devon, plastics was the most prevalent item in the dustbin, accounting for 24% (by weight). Hopefully the figure is not this high for Uffculme dustbins. Many thanks for your continued support in making this project probably the best plastic recycling scheme in the

west country.... and to Uffculme Parish Council for their support.'

Mixed plastics are source separated by members into separate collection bags for different types of plastic before going to PWS (Peninsular Waste Services) in North Tawton for onward processing. 'Baling will significantly reduce the volume of material, meaning that our recycler can get more on their lorry. In due course we hope that some of the transport cost savings will be passed onto us, any monies received will be re-invested in the project.'

Membership of UCM is free and enables people to use the site, please contact by email [compostmagic@hotmail.com](mailto:compostmagic@hotmail.com)



## Recycleopedia

Recycleopedia.com is a new online search engine aiming to help people sort and separate their waste easily while at home, at work, or just out and about, by using a search tool to identify your product and showing you where best to recycle it. Users simply type what they are looking for into the search box along with their location and results will reveal the nearest recycling bank or will advise which bin to use at home.

The unique idea with Recycleopedia.com is that users can search and edit all the items and locations listed, and if they have discovered new products or locations to recycle they can upload them to the site, and after moderation the new information will be shared with other users immediately. It is free to use and a great way of promoting your services to the local community and beyond.

[www.recycleopedia.com](http://www.recycleopedia.com).

## Free networking services via DCRN/DCCN

Are you interested in reuse, recycling, composting, energy, local food, climate change or preventing or reducing waste in your community? Are you considering or do you organise any event, activity, or community action related to these issues?

If so you could utilise the free e-mail networking service offered by DCRN and DCCN. Join the email list and any info will be emailed out to a list of like-minded people and organisations, and you will receive regular e-mails of relevant community events and information happening in Devon. You will only receive single e-mails from the one source, the address list is private and not visible, and it's easy to unsubscribe.

**Please e-mail Jan Freeman at:**  
[dcrn-ccn@hotmail.com](mailto:dcrn-ccn@hotmail.com)

## JL recycles plastic

Retail group the **John Lewis Partnership** has committed to recycling all of its plastic waste in the UK, after signing an agreement with Centriforce Products to reprocess around 3,000 tonnes of plastic per year.

The deal includes mixed plastic waste from every John Lewis and Waitrose store across the country, which will be made up primarily of warehouse packaging and pallet films, as well as used 'Bags for Life'.

The plastic will be sorted and reprocessed at Centriforce's £1 million recycling facility in Liverpool which opened last February. The firm uses the recycled material to manufacture products including walkways, hoardings and furniture, some of which will be used outside Waitrose stores.

## Choose to reuse

There is an increasing range of shops trading in reusable items, furniture, clothing, retro and vintage, and online as well. People can really make a difference in reducing and preventing waste by choosing to reuse and repair.

Exeter HospiceCare now has a large furniture reuse warehouse shop open to the public, located on Trusham Rd, Marsh-barton, Exeter, near to Steptoe's reuse warehouse shop.

British Heart Foundation has its large furniture reuse stores in Exeter, Newton Abbot, and Plymouth.

Totnes Recycling Centre lost its reuse facilities when the site was re-organised to expand recycling. Residents can take all reusable household items to Refurnish further on Wills Rd Trading Estate.

The Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has launched a series of free communications materials in order to help local authorities and organisations promote re-use in their areas following successful trials.

The posters, leaflets, web banners and other materials are aimed at promoting the financial and social benefits of increased reuse levels in order to divert more waste from landfill. It focuses on bulky waste – such as electricals and furniture.

Frances Jones, director of Revive Leeds, partner in one of the trials, said: "The footfall and sales at our reuse shop on the council's Household Waste site have increased over 100% in comparison with the same months last year. This, of course, means that we are diverting a much larger tonnage and making a real contribution to the council's reuse and recycling targets."

Linda Crichton of WRAP, said: WRAP estimates that almost a quarter of electrical items taken by householders to recycling centres across the UK have a reuse value of over £200m. This is on top of the benefit of avoided landfill tax charges."



## Rug Doctor helps turn tables on carpet waste

'Turntable' furniture reuse charity in Exeter can now supply carpets and make rugs from offcuts with the help of a new Rug Doctor and carpet binding machine. The Rug Doctor will deep clean carpets and upholstery effectively, leaving them fresh for reuse. Pam Rice, Turntable manager, said 'this equipment will make a real difference in helping families move into their homes with the things they need, and reduce carpet waste.'

Turntable provides furniture and household items to people on low incomes who are referred by social and other support agencies. Their address is now at **Swan Yard, Okehampton Street, Exeter, phone 01392 202032 or email: pam@turntable.org.uk**. Donations of unwanted furniture, carpet and electrical appliances can be collected free of charge. All Turntable asks is that the items are in good, clean condition and that any upholstered items have current fire safety labels attached.

## Make a Morsbag!

How to make a difference locally - plastic bag solutions

**www.morsbag.com** is the website of the reusable bag campaign that aims to raise awareness of the harm caused by plastic bags that get into the environment, and promote local solutions by getting groups of people together to make their own cloth reusable bags, and if they make enough, to hand them out to shoppers to replace plastic bag use and drive forward local bag reuse campaigns.

The idea is to get people to join together to create a 'pod', the pod then can get together socially and make reusable bags from old textiles, sheets, duvet covers, curtains, jeans and suchlike. When enough bags have been made a hand-out session can be organised to engage local shoppers to use cloth bags instead of plastic ones, and to target supermarkets that could do more to reduce plastic bag use.

There are various resources such as leaflet downloads available free on the website, and you can browse the list of pods and see if there is one local to you to join – there are pods in Ashburton, Ipplepen, Dawlish and 'Hands together' in Plymouth. Unfortunately the 'pod map' is currently off line which would enable a much quicker search facility. We would love to hear from any people or pods making bags in Devon.

**Notice to DCRN members (all people on the mailing list)**

# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of DEVON COMMUNITY RECYCLING NETWORK**

**TUESDAY 16th APRIL 2013 AT 10 am**

**At REFURNISH DEVON, Redlake Trading Estate,  
Bittaford, Ivybridge, Devon PL19 0BZ**

**All members welcome. AGM includes election of directors  
and presentation of accounts.**

**Please register if you intend to come via  
email at [dcrn-ccn@hotmail.com](mailto:dcrn-ccn@hotmail.com)**

## **ISSUES RELATING DIRECTLY TO THIS PUBLICATION**

**We hope you enjoy this edition of Junk Mail. Did you know you can receive Junk Mail as a paper copy or via email? If you would like to change the way you receive Junk Mail, please let us know. Any changes you wish to make, including change of address and/or name can be made either via email to [yourjrnnewsletter@hotmail.com](mailto:yourjrnnewsletter@hotmail.com) or write to DCRN/DCCN, c/o Proper Job, Crannafords Industrial Park, Chagford, Devon. TQ13 8DR. Please ensure you give us as much information as possible to enable us to locate you on our extensive mailing list.**

**If you have an article you would like to be considered for inclusion in a future edition, please contact Richard Gomme either at the postal address above or email: [info@dcrn.org.uk](mailto:info@dcrn.org.uk)**