



Reduce, reuse, recycle your way through the festive season

Christmas can be a time with a lot of waste. Here are eight ways you can reduce your waste or make sure that more gets recycled:

- 1) Only buy wrapping paper and cards that can be recycled (no glitter or plastic parts).
- 2) Try making your own wrapping paper – brown paper is good.
- 3) Make your own crackers (cardboard tube, a paper hat, a chocolate/sweet or small gift, all wrapped in pretty paper).
- 4) Reboot your festive jumper!
- 5) Reuse bows and ribbon. Upcycle old Christmas cards into gift tags.
- 6) Choose energy-saving LED fairy lights.
- 7) Buy from local zero-waste shops.



10 things to do with your used Christmas tree

Environmentally friendly things you can turn your unwanted Christmas tree into:

- 1) Stand your tree up outdoors to use as cover, or a resting spot for birds and you could also hang bird food from the branches.
- 2) Attach some branches to an existing feeder for good photo opportunities.
- 3) Use the needles to make potpourri. You can place the needles into a sock to smell nice.
- 4) Make your own fire starters which can be used for campfires or a fireplace at home. Simply place the needles into empty cardboard egg boxes and pour over melted wax.
- 5) Create a shelter for small animals.
- 6) Use the trunk to make a suet feeder. You can drill holes into the trunk and fill with suet or peanut butter.
- 7) Make a bug house with your branches. You may have moths, butterflies, bees or ladybirds move in, which are all beneficial to your garden, plants and flowers.
- 8) Make your own mulch/wood chip.
- 9) Enjoy an autumn or winter fire.
- 10) Replant it for next Christmas (if you bought a live one).



The Problem

We use lots of single-use plastic. ☹️

- When we are finished with it, we throw it away. It goes to the dump and it takes years to break down.
- Some people throw it away on beaches where the water can wash it away and it can strangle animals or they can swallow it and suffocate.

The Solution

We try to use less single-use plastic. 😊

- We try to buy food from the shops with no packaging, for example loose fruit and veg. Instead of using plastic bags, which may get thrown away, we can use fabric or net bags.
- We can recycle large bottle tops in the blue bin. Smaller ones can be made into children's play equipment, for example climbing frames and slides. 😊
- We can also take crisp packets to the East Grinstead Museum where they will recycle them and be made into flower pots. 😊
- We have stopped buying plastic straws.
- We have stopped buying Happy Meals from McDonald's because of the plastic toys.
- Instead of wrapping lunch in clingfilm, we put it in lunchboxes with lots of sections, or in lots of small tubs.
- We reuse bread bags for storing ham and cheese.
- Packaging in the post is reused for other items or in the bathroom bin.
- Leftover food is put in a pot with a lid (instead of a container plus clingfilm). Sometimes we use beeswax wraps.

We're doing better than one year ago and in the future we will have a better world.

Samuel, Year 4

Stop buying clothes you don't need!

The fashion business is one of the biggest polluting industries in the world. Making and distributing the material used to make clothes all contribute to different forms of environmental pollution, including water, air and soil pollution. The fashion industry is the second greatest polluter of local freshwater in the world.



When clothing ends up in landfill, the chemicals on the clothes, such as the dye, can cause damage to the environment by leaking the chemicals into the ground.

One of the solutions to this problem is to buy from second-hand shops and from shops that respect the environment and sell ethical brands. Owning less and using what you already have will help us all!

For example, using a t-shirt for only three more months is estimated to reduce its carbon footprint by 10%. Doubling the useful life of any clothing from one year to two years reduces emissions over the year by 24%.

Other extra tips to what you could do to help our planet:

- 1) Walk to school if you can.
- 2) Pick up litter if you see some on your way.
- 3) Re-use plastic bags or any plastics at home.
- 4) Plant a tree to reduce carbon dioxide.
- 5) Don't buy too many clothes.
- 6) Turn off your lights.
- 7) Borrow books from the library or your friends instead of buying them.
- 8) Don't waste water.
- 9) Ask your family to use the car less.
- 10) Remember: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE.



April, Year 5

Rainforest destruction

Imagine if your home was suddenly destroyed and your family killed – how lost you would feel. This is a common event for the wildlife of tropical rainforests. Lots of damage is being done to the Amazon, from cutting down trees and forest fires, and in south-east Asia clearing of palm oil trees mean we lose 13 orangutans a day.

The World Wildlife Fund estimates that an area about the size of 300 football fields is cleared each hour in tropical rainforests for palm oil production. If the current rates of damage continue, then all of the world's rainforests will be destroyed in less than 100 years.

Palm oil is in nearly everything – it's in close to 50% of the packaged products we find in supermarkets, everything from pizza, doughnuts and chocolate, to deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste and lipstick. It's also used in animal feed and as a biofuel in many parts of the world (not in the UK though!).

In 2012 the UK Government recognised that we were part of the palm oil problem and could also be part of the solution. They set a commitment for 100% of the palm oil used in the UK to be from sustainable sources that don't harm nature or people. In 2016 75% of the total palm oil imports to the UK were sustainable. This is great progress but there is more to be done to get to 100%.

The World Wildlife Fund UK encourages companies to be honest about their use and sourcing of palm oil, ensuring they know who they are buying from and where it's been produced, and to invest in and support small farmers and sustainable projects.

You can find out more at: www.wwf.org.uk

Matilda, Year 6

Five Eco Achievements in 2020

In January St Peter's Primary School was awarded its fifth **Green Flag Award** after a visit from an Eco Schools Assessor who said:

"I would like to congratulate you all for the time and effort that has been invested in environmental education at your school. Your Award is well-deserved and reflects the hard work you have put into the programme so far. A very engaged, motivated and positive Eco Team."



The Eco Team then participated in the **Big School Birdwatch** event after school on Wednesday 22nd January. This event helps the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) to maintain a record against which changes to bird life can be measured. We are fortunate to have many trees and hedgerows in our school grounds.

The Birdwatch was followed by a **Cake Sale** in aid of the Whale & Dolphin Conservation organised by two of last year's Year 6 Eco Team members. Their wonderful cakes were quickly snapped up by parents and pupils and they raised an amazing £116.54.

On Tuesday 26th February, St Peter's celebrated Fairtrade Fortnight with a **Fairtrade Breakfast** for 55 children, an assembly and an after-school Fairtrade stall. In total our Fairtrade day raised £315.50 which was sent to the Fairtrade Foundation to help producers and farmers in the developing world.

On 7th July, St Peter's was given its fourth **Fair Achiever School Award** by the Fairtrade Foundation to recognise our work in promoting Fairtrade goods and encouraging awareness in the school community and beyond.



Diary Dates

The Friends of St. Peter's have arranged for the **Bag2School Fundraiser** to take place on 17th December. Bag2School is a company that specialises in the reusing and recycling of good quality second-hand clothing that is collected from School. The bags are weighed and the School is then paid for the total weight. You need to bring your bag/bags to School at drop-off time in the morning.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) **Big Garden Birdwatch** will be held on the weekend on 29th-31st January 2021. As it is unlikely to be possible to hold the Big School Birdwatch, parents and children can feed and watch birds in their gardens. It would be wonderful if you could take part. Perhaps take a photo and write something to be included in the next newsletter. Further information can be found at www.rspb.org.uk

If you would like to write an article for the next Eco News please email it to Miss Coster at infants@stpeterseg.co.uk.