

Issue 14

junkmail

Devon Community Recycling & Community Composting Network News



The recycle Devon thank you awards • Top chefs launch food waste for pigs campaign • Break the bag habit • Prevent food waste • Plastic Recycling in Mid Devon • Humanure into high quality fertiliser

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Contents

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Editorial

Food banks multiply in Devon: an uncomfortable truth

13 million people now live below the poverty line in the UK, and every day people go hungry. As a result food banks have spread nationwide, and there are now food banks in Exeter, Plymouth, Bideford, Buckfastleigh, Paignton, Torbay, Okehampton, Barnstaple, South Molton, Seaton, Honiton, Axminster, Poltimore, Ashburton, Crediton, Tiverton, and Tavistock. The Devon and Cornwall Food Association (DCFA) now works in Plymouth and Exeter, trying to cope with unprecedented demand for help. Local foodbanks are often run by local church or independent groups, as well as national charities like the Trussel Trust and FareShare.

FareShare and the Trussel Trust highlight two of the most urgent issues facing the UK: food poverty and food waste. Trussell Trust foodbanks provide a minimum of three days emergency food and support to people experiencing



crisis in the UK. The Trust co-ordinates 400 foodbanks which fed 346,992 people nationwide in 2012-13, including 126,889 children. However, figures are certainly higher, as no-one is collecting information from small independent groups organising food banks in their own communities. Most food is donated by the public and sorted by volunteers. Frontline care professionals such as doctors and social workers help identify people in crisis and issue a food voucher. Clients receive three days of nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food in exchange for their food voucher. What happens to people beyond 3 days food supply is not clear.

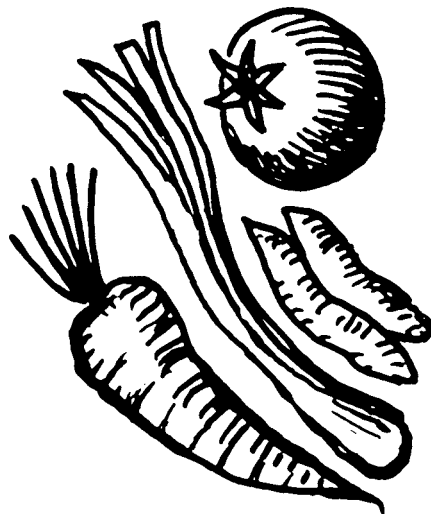
Fareshare works with retailers to divert unsold food, and re-distributed 4,200 tonnes of unsold food last year, which would otherwise have gone to waste, via over 1,000 charities around the UK. Local charities are now feeding an estimated 51,000 people daily, and provided around 10m meals last year.

The charities have called on PM David Cameron to launch an official inquiry into the causes of food poverty after it was revealed that use of food banks

has tripled year on year. Critics say welfare cuts and delays cause many people to depend on emergency food aid, combined with the rising costs of food and fuel and high unemployment in some communities.

Now Tesco is to donate 2,300 tonnes of surplus food equivalent to 7m meals a year to more than 1,000 charities across the UK as it scales up its existing partnership with Fareshare. Local charities include church groups, homeless shelters, breakfast clubs for children, and lunch clubs for the elderly, and groups helping ordinary families in need.

The Government's Crown Prosecution Service CPS recently hastily backtracked in its proposed prosecution of 3 men found taking food from a waste bin at the back of an Iceland store, claiming that a significant public interest was at stake. However after a public outcry, the CPS withdrew the prosecution.



Stop Food waste

National campaign aims to stop the rot by 2020

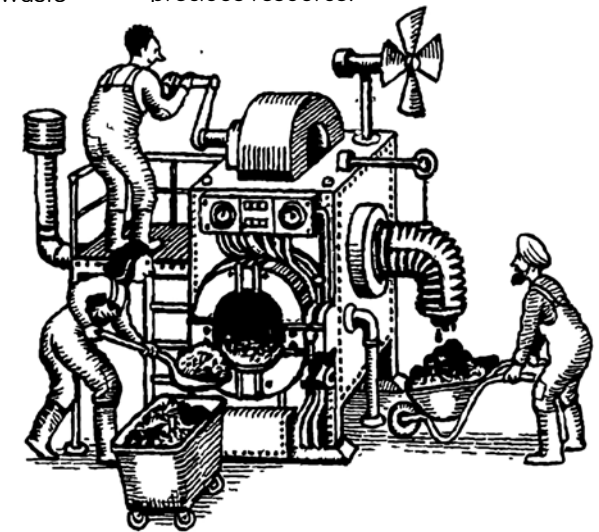
A new study, Vision 2020: UK Roadmap to Zero Food Waste to Landfill sets the framework for a food waste-free UK by 2020, and is backed by local authorities and industry experts. The ambition is to save the UK economy over £17bn a year through the reduction of food wasted by households, businesses and the public sector, and preventing 27m tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions a year. Composting food waste through processes such as anaerobic digestion could return over 1.3m tonnes a year of valuable nutrients to the soil, the report says, and generate enough power for over 600,000 homes.

The report highlights where and why food waste is happening at each stage of the UK supply chain; what actions are being taken to tackle food waste in each sector and what more can be done in the future to drive the positive environmental, economic and social outcomes.

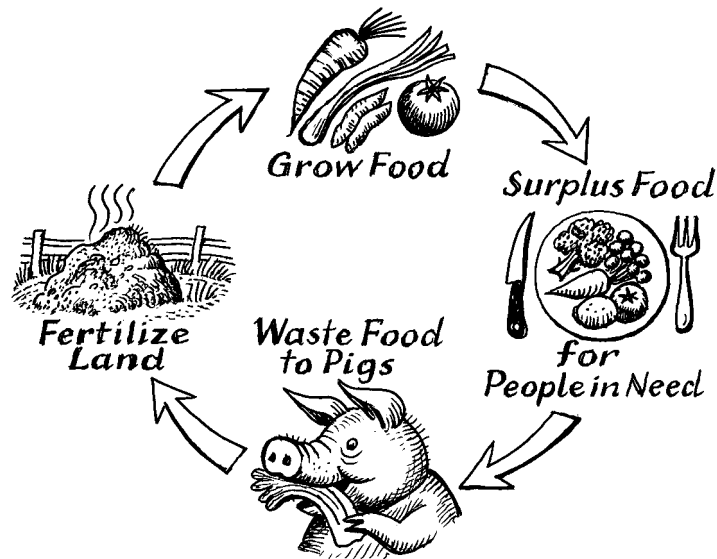
Compulsory food collections by local authorities are key to the new campaign – currently only 40% of councils have separate food waste collections. The Local Government Authority, which was involved in the report, says if "food contamination" of recycling

was halved by 2020, it would save £1bn. The devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are now consulting on banning food into landfill, but not England.

The campaign is led by food waste recycling company ReFood – in collaboration with BioRegional, a sustainable business charity – as part of the Vision 2020 campaign supported by national and local government as well as industry. Sue Riddlestone, chief executive of BioRegional said: "Achieving zero food waste to landfill within the next seven years is a big challenge and we will need the support and actions of individuals, businesses and the government if this vision is to be realised. However, the case for change is compelling. We will save billions of pounds. We will prevent millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases from entering our atmosphere. And crucially, we will ensure that food is treated as a precious resource."



Top chefs launch campaign for feeding pigs on food waste



A new campaign, the Pig Idea, has been launched by top chefs and ambassadors, calling for more food waste to be allowed to be fed to pigs. The launch saw food campaigner Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall cook and give away thousands of free lunches in London's Trafalgar square, using pork from pigs fed on food waste. Under current regulations, food waste from the human food chain is not allowed to be fed to pigs, and is mostly disposed of to landfill or trucked off to anaerobic digestion plants. Food is being needlessly wasted, and hundreds

of millions of pounds are being spent in its treatment and disposal, while pig farmers must pay high feed costs, often for imported food stuffs. Restaurateur and campaign co-founder Thomesina Myers wrote: 'The ban is also having a negative impact on the business of rearing pigs. Prevented from feeding swill to their pigs, farmers buy soy, maize and wheat on the global market. As food prices soar, so does the cost of their feed. Unfortunately for the planet, the majority of this feed is grown halfway across the world in places like the Amazon basin. Thus the pressure

to destroy ecosystems is exponentially increased while in the UK we throw out about 15m tonnes of food waste a year.' 'Meanwhile, we are worrying about how to grow enough food for the world's population and simultaneously using almost 40% of the grain we grow to feed animals instead of humans. If we diverted all the food waste that is being ditched to be treated and fed to animals, we would save enough grain to feed about 3 billion people.'

'This is the argument of The Pig Idea. Stop wasting food... convert it into nutritious animal feed. Not only would we be lowering the cost of feed for pig farmers, but we would also be saving the planet's precious resources.'

Countries including New Zealand, South Korea, China, Japan and a good chunk of the United States allow food waste to be fed to pigs. The ban in the UK came about after the foot and mouth disease outbreak in 2001, when untreated pigswill was seen as a contributory cause.

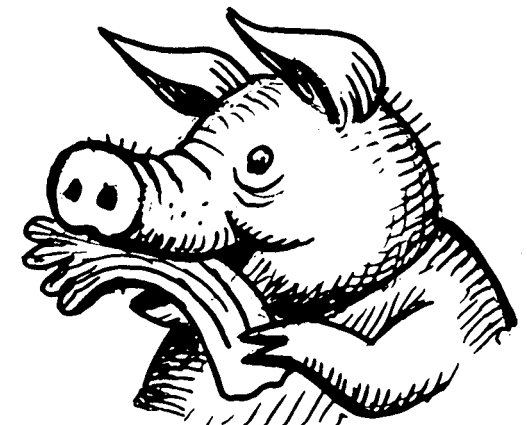
Currently food waste disposal costs to LA's and businesses via landfill, composting or anaerobic digestion (AD) are around £100 per tonne. The effects of food waste in landfill are harmful, creating methane gas, a potent greenhouse gas, and toxic leachate liquids when mixed with other wastes. The Pig Idea suggests food manufacturers could sell their food

waste such as bread as livestock feed for up to £20 per tonne.

According to WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) Britons are chucking out the equivalent of 24 meals a month, and among the most common types of food thrown away in British homes are bread, potatoes and milk. The equivalent of 24m slices of bread, 5.8m potatoes and 5.9m glasses of milk are being wasted daily, while even cakes and pastries make it into the top 10 most wasted items.

The Pig Idea wants to see the removal of the EU ban on feeding certain types of food waste – including catering waste – to pigs in the long-term, while calling for more legally permissible food waste to be fed to livestock now. Supermarkets, for example, are allowed to divert foodstuffs such as bakery, confectionery, dairy, fruit and vegetables to livestock feed, yet most do not currently do this.

www.thepigidea.org



Most wasted household foodstuff

“Cutting food waste in the home needs to be one of the UK’s biggest environmental priorities” - British Retail Consortium.

A recent report on food waste by WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) has identified that UK households are chucking out the equivalent of 24 meals a month, amounting to 4.2m tonnes of food and drink every year, including 86 million chickens. The top three discarded foods are bread, potatoes and milk. The equivalent of 24m slices of bread, 5.8m potatoes and 5.9m glasses of milk are being wasted daily, while even cakes and pastries make it into the top 10 most wasted items.



Supermarkets to provide data on tonnages of food waste

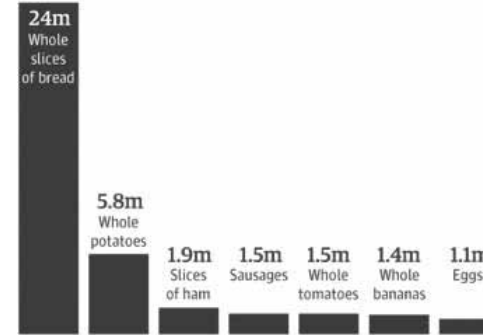
The big supermarkets, Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, Morrison’s, M&S, Waitrose and Co-op, under pressure from food waste campaigners, will regularly publish tonnages of food thrown out by stores from 2015, in an effort to cut down on the millions of tonnes wasted each year. The situation was highlighted recently when Tesco admitted it generated 28,500 tonnes of food waste at its stores and distribution centres in the first six months of last year alone. The chain said approx. two-thirds of bagged salad was thrown out, either in-store or by shoppers, and 40% of apples were likewise wasted.

Supermarkets have been moving to divert their food waste from landfill, mostly sending it to anaerobic digestion. Just 6% of food waste went to landfill in 2013 compared with 47% in 2005, and they are now committed to sending just 1% of food waste to landfill by 2020.

However, with the rise of food poverty and foodbanks in the UK, the spotlight is on retailers to work with food charities like FareShare, to enable unsold food to be re-distributed to people in need.

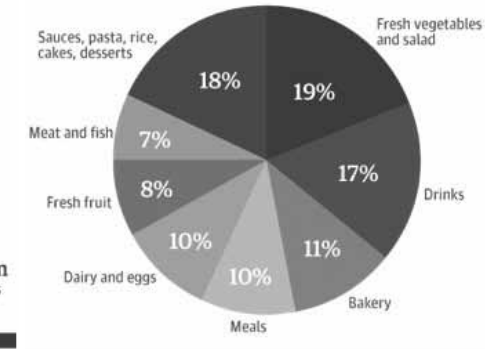
Household food waste

Every day in UK homes we throw away approximately ...



Household food waste

% of avoidable food and drink waste by food group



Andrew Opie, director of food sustainability at the BRC (British Retail Consortium), said he believed the new reporting regime would help drive change as part of a broader effort to make retailers more sustainable. He criticised the government’s focus on “marginal waste issues” such as plastic bags, where there are plans to introduce a tax in England in line with systems in place in Wales and Northern Ireland. Opie said “That has been a bit of a distraction from bigger issues on waste”. “Once the issue around carrier bags is over we can really concentrate on the areas which will make the most difference.”

Opie said it was important to look at the whole life-cycle of products, from production to selling, use and disposal, to help cut down on waste and create a “circular economy” in which resources could be re-used.

Friends of the Earth said: “Food waste has been growing over the last few decades because of the way supermarkets have driven consumption. (Supermarket food waste data)... will indicate how over-purchasing and other poor buying practices are occurring, but retailers need to really examine whether their marketing strategies are fit for purpose in today’s resource-confined world.

Supermarkets will also commit to cutting absolute carbon emissions by 25%, based on 2005 levels, by 2020. Between 2005 and 2013 retailers have cut total emissions from their stores by just 8% because more outlets have opened, offsetting an average 30% cut in the amount of carbon emitted per store.

Prevent food waste



The more I read about food waste the angrier I get really. Ideas like the 'Pig Idea' (see page 4 article on feeding food waste to pigs) and using food waste to generate energy, I feel we are all missing the point a bit! Are we not looking at the wrong end of the pipe line? Surely we need to really look at why so much food is being wasted in the first place and cut that down before we start thinking it is 'sustainable' to do creative things with wasted food. Huge investment will be needed in waste food treatment infrastructure and collection. And then to read about the Freegans, (people that liberate food thrown away by supermarkets) threatened with prosecution in the public interest!

Of course, the food waste hierarchy should be: prevent food waste first, divert surplus food to be eaten by people, compost food waste at home where possible, unavoidable food waste to be used as animal feed after appropriate treatment, then send remaining food waste to anaerobic digestion/composting to recover energy and nutrients, ensuring no food waste goes to landfill.

During farming processes not only is there a lot of wastage due to weather and crops damaged by pests and diseases but also because of the power of supermarkets to reject crops, which they do, in huge quantities. This could be because the crops are not, in their eyes, cosmetically up to scratch, or the supermarkets could just be using that as an excuse because they suddenly have an oversupply in that area. Crops are then graded, with top notch quality fruit and veg commanding higher prices, with 'grade outs,' often sold on street markets at a lower price. Add into this mix the fact that food (and fibre) crops now compete on a world market controlled by transnational corporations at every stage of the supply chain, with the pursuit of profit the bottom line. We also have become used to spending a lower percentage of our income on food, food has become cheaper and so we waste more, but we are learning that there is no such thing as a free (or cheap) lunch and actually there are many hidden costs in food production that we are paying the price for, such as cleaning agri chemicals from our water, health costs from spray

drift and much more. Professor Jules Pretty at East Anglia University has extensively researched and written on this subject (e.g. 'The Living Land' 1998 published by Earthscan). We also, through our water flushing sewage systems, waste valuable nutrients such as phosphorus, which is a finite mined resource from Morocco and China, but now phosphorus is being recovered from sewage – see article on pages 14-15.

On the other hand we have a huge rise in food poverty. So, whilst we are ploughing in cosmetically unacceptable crops, and grading out at the harvesting and packing stage, then throwing away perfectly edible food from the back of supermarkets. We are simultaneously

asking for food donations to give to those who are living below the poverty line through Food Banks and Fareshare. Of course, the waste doesn't end at the back of the supermarket. Of three bags of shopping, one is effectively thrown straight in the bin at home. We are confused by 'sell by', 'best by' and 'consume by' dates and throw away an astonishing amount of perfectly good food. We are bad at using up leftovers and cooking generally and the UK is the largest consumer of ready meals in Europe. A new initiative Growing Devon Schools Partnership (see www.growingdevonschools.org) is helping schools engage in the whole food cycle in schools to help redress this situation.

Nicky Scott



The Recycle Devon Thank You Awards



Devon's recycling heroes were recently celebrated at the Recycle Devon Thank You awards, which were created to recognise the unsung recycling heroes across the county. Cllr Mel Lucas said, "We wanted to say a special thank you for everything that they do to ensure that Devon does not go to waste. We have been truly amazed at the enthusiasm and unselfish efforts, that all our winners go to reduce, reuse and recycle. On behalf of the Recycling Committee and personally, I would like to say thank you to you all. You are all winners!"

This was the second year of the Recycle Devon Thank You awards, which marked the 11th anniversary of the Don't Let Devon go to waste campaign. Devon enjoys a recycling rate of 55% (2012/13) making it one of the highest recycling counties in the country.

Recycling Hero for Devon

Winner: Dean Mallon, Otter Rotters Composting

Dean has had a troubled background. This year he started volunteering with Otter Rotters on the garden waste

collections in East Devon. Dean is so committed that he purchased his own safety work wear and paid for physiotherapy so he can be more productive whilst doing this physical job. The improvement in Dean's well-being is visible and so is his pride at serving the community. His aim is to get paid employment and earn a reputation for being hard working and dependable. Dean's interaction and team work with his learning disabled co-workers also made him worthy of recognition.

School Recycling Hero (Child)

Runner up - Graham Spry, Broadclyst
Graham takes an active role in School recycling ensuring all recyclables are in the right place ready for collection. He also does the recycling at the Caddihoe Scout Campsite as an assistant warden, where since the age of 5 he has helped to minimise landfill waste and ensure recycling is sorted and put out each week for collection.

Category Winner:
Daniel Salter, Forches Cross Primary

School Barnstaple

Daniel asks the school eco co-ordinator every day if there are any jobs that need doing. He takes responsibility for the eco-notice board to show how well the school is doing with its Green Flag work and has enrolled younger children to help him. Daniel often has new ideas to make the School even more eco-friendly and he keeps everyone on their toes.

School Recycling Hero (Adult)

Runner up - Nigel Rowtcliffe, Great Torrington School

Nigel tirelessly organises the recycling of cardboard, plastic, paper, tins and glass at school. He is always passing on his recycling advice. Because of this the School only produces three small wheelie bins of non-recyclable waste per week.

Runner up - Emma Goodwin, Okehampton Primary School

Emma organises litter picking events at School and in the community with parents and children, she recycles most of the collected litter. Emma has also involved children in a plastic bag campaign, posters were designed and put up in school and the local Waitrose.

Category Winner: George Tribe, Bratton Fleming Community Primary School

George has worked as a caretaker at the School for the last 21 years. He has lived in the village all his life and he cares very passionately about it. At 85 years old, he still comes into school every morning. He opens up the school and then spends an hour or so sorting out the school recycling and food bins

ensuring everything is put into its correct place. George's dedication sends out a fantastic message to the children about how vitally important it is to recycle!

Collection Crew/Operative (Recycling, Garden, Food or Refuse Collector(s))

Runner up – Andy Clements, SITA Woodbury Salterton

Andy is a hard working Recycling Collector for SITA in East Devon. He has taught his youngest child Korey what to recycle and which bin it should go into as well.

Runner up – The Recycling Collection Team, Mid Devon District Council

In Mid Devon, recycling boxes are hand sorted at the kerbside. This is hard physical work that most people do not appreciate. In the winter hands are usually freezing cold and wet. In summer, heat, wasps, smelly tins, and other hazards are routine. Despite this the Recycling Teams are dedicated to what they do, always happy and do a fantastic job.

Category Winner: Dean Mallon, Otter Rotters

Street Cleaners

Category Winner: Mike Hollyer, Cleansing Operative, Exeter City Council

Mike was the first operative to pilot the Exeter Looking Good regime in Heavitree, Exeter.

He takes pride in his work and is building a really good rapport with the community.

Recycle Devon Awards Cont.

Recycling Centre Operative Site staff

Runner up - Mark Marvelley, Seven Brethren Recycling Centre, Barnstaple

Mark has been described as a polite, helpful, hard working and happy young man.

Runner up - Proper Job Recycling Centre and Shop, Chagford

The staff at Proper Job have been described as always friendly, welcoming and helpful and the Recycling Centre and Shop as the best ever visited. It's a great place to find the things that other recycling centres often can't keep to resell like bits of wood, paint and soft furnishings.

Category Winner: Tom Clark, Seven Brethren Recycling Centre, Barnstaple

Tom has been described as hard working and extremely helpful, and makes weekly trips to the recycling centre a pleasure as opposed to a chore and he always has a smile on his face.

Your Recycling Hero (Friend, Family Member, Neighbour or Local Recycling Champion)

Runner up - David Wayne, Buckerell Recycling Scheme

David Wayne has been the driving force behind a village wide plastics and tetrapak recycling scheme in Buckerell for the last five years. Buckerell Parish Council quickly saw the benefits and adopted the scheme with a small

amount of financial support to cover the cost of fuel. The scheme has gone from strength to strength and over 200 dumpy bags of plastics and tetrapaks have been collected and taken to the Recycling Centre for recycling. This has potentially saved 1500 individual return journeys by villagers and has encouraged many in the village to recycle who otherwise may not have done so before.

Runner up - Jerry Nightingale, Bike Repair Workshop, Her Majesty's Prison Channings Wood

Jerry runs the bike refurbishment workshop in Channings Wood Prison. Bikes are sourced from Torbay's Recycling Centre, refurbished and put back on the streets. He teaches prisoners real life skills that they can take with them once they leave prison. He is a real ambassador for recycling and passes on the recycling message by attaching handwritten messages to each 'New to You' bike. The message tells the new owner the history of the bike and how it got to them.

Category Winner: Jeff Brown, Aliway Scrapstore, Paignton

Jeff used to be a service user at Hollacombe Community Resource Centre in Paignton. He was always involved with the Aliway Scrapstore based at the centre, so when he left, he decided that he would come in as a volunteer to run the store. He has done this for the last two years and has been a real asset to the store who would struggle to open some days without his presence.

Community Group Recycling Hero

Runner up - Steffi Rox, Nice Mums Devon

Steffi runs the Nice Mums Devon Recycling Collection. She collects packaging for recycling like baby wipe packets and biscuits wrappers and has set up recycling collection points across Torbay. Money raised from the recycling scheme is donated to worthy causes such as the Torbay special care baby unit and Send a Cow charity.

Runner up - Anne Tucker, Sustainable Crediton's Waste Action Group

Anne helps organise household waste plastic collection days in Crediton for the past two years. There is now a bi-monthly collection by the Leisure Centre. An average of 40 builders dumpy bags of plastics are collected for recycling at each event (11 collections in all and over 7 tonnes of plastic has been saved from landfill so far). Anne is devoted to plastics recycling and has recently given talks to other community groups about how to set up their own scheme and a video has been produced and uploaded to YouTube.

Category Winner: Dave Coles, Arena Park Green Group

Arena Park Estate in Exeter had problems with fly tipping of garden waste. Dave formed a Green Group from like-minded residents and collectively they now manage a community composting site for all residents to use. Fly tipping has stopped and the compost generated is given back free to residents.

Under Dave's leadership, the group are planning to encourage residents to compost their kitchen waste and are providing kitchen caddies. The group also hope to inspire local children to dispose of waste appropriately to help reduce waste going to landfill.

Small Business Champion

Category Winner: Steve Clarke, Used 2 Bee, Torquay

Steve and his wife Jo have been running Used 2 Bee since the 90s, well before recycling was popular! They sell recycled products, vintage and upcycled items from their premises in Torquay and by mail order. Steve and Jo are both very creative people and make some wonderful upcycled products themselves.

Special Award for Innovation

Category Winner: Geoff Read, Devon and Cornwall Food Association (DCFA) For the last three years the DCFA has been redistributing waste but in-date food to communities that can make use of it. The DCFA has now 'recycled' over 100 tonnes of food and saved communities over £185,000. DCFA now supports over 90 local charities and works with local suppliers. Geoff also supports the DCFA volunteers through skills training and in promoting the message that food is a valuable commodity that should be recycled and not landfilled. Working in Plymouth and Exeter, the DCFA is currently developing a hub in Bodmin and looking towards expanding its services if a current funding bid is successful.

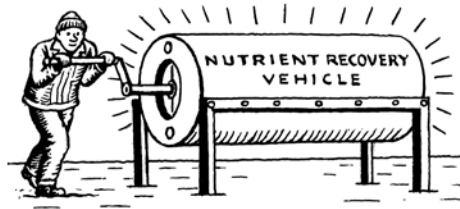
Slough sewage plant turns humanure into high quality fertiliser

Just a few yards from the choked M4 motorway, beyond the massive settling tanks and a steaming, 500-tonne mountain of black sewage sludge at Slough treatment works, a modern alchemy is taking place that could potentially help keep the world in food for a few more years.

The Berkshire town's water treatment works are taking the tiny quantities of phosphorus contained in the poo of the town's 140,000 people and turning it into high-quality fertiliser fit to grow organic garden vegetables.

At one end of the novel process in Europe's first "nutrient recovery reactor", the human waste is dark and "earthy" smelling. At the other end, bright white, odourless phosphorus-rich pellets drop into sacks, this fertiliser is suitable for farm and garden use. The sewage workers euphemistically say they are "harvesting pearls", and Thames Water, which owns the facility, says it is making "Viagra for plants", such is the growth boost to plants provided by phosphorus.

According to Thames Water, Slough's excreta has a "unique vintage", and contains more phosphorus than any other area in south-east England, possibly because of the quantity of meat eaten in the town or because it



boasts several large food processing and pharmaceutical works. The company expects to make £200,000 a year from the combination of selling 150 tonnes of its fertiliser to farmers and gardeners, and not having to spend as much money on chemicals to unblock pipes, caused by Stuvite build-up. Stuvite is a nutrient compound containing phosphorous and builds up like limescale inside pipes, and if left unchecked, can block pipes completely.

"We reckon using this technology Britain could save 20% of the 138,000 tonnes of phosphorus fertiliser that it imports a year," said Piers Clark of Thames Water. "Phosphorus is a fast-depleting, non-renewable resource which we will run out of. Without it, all life on the planet will take a nosedive."

Peter Melchett, of the Soil Association said "Without fertilisation from phosphorus, wheat yields will fall by more than half. This technology could offer a solution to securing global food supplies over the coming decades."

"Night soil", or raw human excrement, was traditionally valued highly and spread over fields but because it contains pathogens and contaminants

it is now banned. Instead, treated sewage sludge that still contains some heavy metals is given free to some farmers to use sparingly. The advantage of Slough's renewable phosphorus fertiliser, says Clark, is that it is clean of contamination and quantities can be tailored for different crops.

Mineable reserves of phosphorus in countries like Morocco, the US and China are set to be completely depleted in 100 years according to some experts while others say 'peak phosphorus' will occur by 2035, after which it is expected to become increasingly scarce and expensive. Its price has risen 500% since 2007.

Waste collections to be every three or four weeks?

In a move that may soon be repeated across the UK, collections of residual household waste in Falkirk, Scotland, are set to change to once every three weeks, alongside weekly recycling and food waste collections. The aim is to increase recycling and reduce the amount of recyclable material going to landfill via residual waste collections.

Falkirk council believes the move will save it up to £1.4 million a year in landfill tax costs, and could increase

the recycling rate to over 60%, as residents will simply have to recycle more to get rid of their waste. A kitchen food waste caddy is collected every week, alongside glass bottles and jars, small electrical items and batteries in a kerbside box, while mixed plastics, tetra pak cartons, cardboard and paper are collected in a wheeled bin. Textiles are collected in sacks. A wheeled bin for garden waste operates on a fortnightly basis.

The changes follow findings in a report showing that as much as 60% of the material in the household residual bins is actually recyclable – 17,993 tonnes a year – suggesting that current recycling collection services are 'not being fully utilised by residents'.

Under the current collection regime, the cost to the council of sending waste to landfill is set to rise from £2.3 million this year to £2.7 million in 2014/15, as landfill tax rises, and this cost increase will be common to all LA's in the UK. How long before other councils follow suit?

Falkirk is one of the top performing councils in Scotland with a recycling rate of more than 50%, but under Zero Waste Scotland regulations the council must recycle 60% of household waste by 2020 and 70% of all wastes by 2025. There is also a ban on biodegradable waste going to landfill by 2020.



'Break the Bag Habit' 19 million a day

Deputy prime minister Nick Clegg has announced plans to bring in a 5p charge on single-use carrier bags in England from October 1st 2015.

An unbelievable 19 million carrier bags are given out daily in England. During the Christmas sales, this figure rises but in the 600 days until the change, says the 'Break the Bag Habit' campaign, (www.keepbritaintidy.org) we will use more than 12 billion bags, and spend nearly £2bn on cleaning up litter.

The campaign urges people to make a small change in shopping behaviour by taking re-usable bags to the shops, and help reduce the huge amounts of waste, litter and danger to wildlife from 12 billion plastic bags.

This comes as Environment Agency figures show that carrier bag usage may have fallen by as much as 80% in Northern Ireland since a 5p levy on single use bags was introduced in April. The NI executive has also submitted plans to increase the minimum charge for single and multi-use carrier bags to 10p from April 2014.

Similar charges are due to come into effect in Scotland from October 2014, while the Welsh Government introduced a levy on thin gauge bags in September 2011 – with results showing that bag



usage in Wales may have fallen by up to 76%. During the same period, the number of carrier bags issued in England had risen by 4.4%.

There are plans to exempt small businesses from the charge, and incentivise businesses for using more biodegradable plastic bags. However, plastics recyclers have voiced concerns that biodegradable plastic bags undermine the recycling process by contaminating conventional plastic recycling, and criticised bio-degradable bags as being 'designed to be waste', whereas conventional plastic bags could be reused and recycled. A spokesman said: "Even a small amount of oxy-degradable polymer in a carrier bag is a barrier to its recyclability. If significant amounts of this material was to enter the waste stream it could undermine some of the plastics recycling targets going forward because you would not be able to reprocess this fraction of bags (or separate them from conventional plastic)."

Oxy-degradable plastics are made from petroleum-based polymers, usually polyethylene, with metal salts - such as cobalt, iron, nickel and manganese - accelerating degradation when exposed to heat or light.



Plastic recycling in Mid Devon – a story of everyday recycling heroes

Sustainable Crediton is run by a group of dedicated volunteers, and its waste action group now have 3 plastic recycling collections operating in Mid Devon. It started as a community response to the lack of plastic recycling, with a group of volunteers running one off plastic recycling events in Crediton.

'As well as the main collection at Crediton we now have secondary sites in the villages of Cheriton Fitzpaine and

Sandford. The site in Cheriton Fitzpaine has now been running for 10 months and has increased from an initial 3 dumpy bags collected last March to 13 dumpy bags this January. Sandford, which started up as a new collection this month at the Parish Hall car park achieved 6 dumpy bags in its first month - a great result.

January was in fact a bumper month overall, with 67 dumpy bags of waste plastic being collected over the three sites. This was the most ever achieved and represents more than a tonne of plastic waste saved from landfill. After each collection the plastic is taken to Peninsular Waste Services in North Tawton where it is sorted and sent on to recycling facilities to be remade into useful items such as plant pots, garden furniture and traffic cones.'

Charles Mossman, who runs the Cheriton Fitzpaine collection, said 'Facilities for recycling plastic are improving in the UK all the time. As of our March 2014 collection dates we can now accept bubble wrap as well as all our usual range of plastics.

If you live in one of the other villages around Crediton and would like to know how to start up a collection where you live, contact Sustainable Crediton's Waste Action Group.

www.sustainablecrediton.org.uk



Reuse/Recycling news

New strides

You can now get jeans made from recycled plastic bottles. Levi's have introduced the Waste Less collection, a new range of denim for men and women, incorporating post-consumer waste. On average, eight recycled PET plastics bottles are used per pair of jeans. Through Levi's partners, plastic drinks bottles and food trays are collected through recycling programmes. To create the denim, the recycled plastic items are sorted by colour, crushed into flakes and made into a polyester fibre which gets blended with cotton fibre and finally woven with traditional cotton yarn.

Marks and Spencer are incorporating reused 'shwopped' wool in new clothing. The reusable wool is sourced from items of clothing donated by customers as part of M&S' Shwopping campaign which has seen over 3m items of used or unwanted clothing donated by the public through M&S stores to be re-sold, re-used or recycled by Oxfam. Launched in October, the Shwop Ladies Coat is the first M&S product to be made from shwopped wool.

Brazil's football home kit for 2013 made by Nike incorporates an average 13 recycled plastic bottles. The fabric for the kit's shorts is made with 100% recycled polyester, while the shirt fabric is made with a minimum 96% recycled polyester.

Leave the aluminium screwcaps on your glass bottles for recycling

A campaign called "You Can Leave Your Cap On" is urging householders to leave the metal screw tops on their bottles for recycling, instead of throwing them out separately, in a bid to increase the recycling of aluminium. Aluminium recycling body Alupro says that 5,000 tonnes of aluminium, worth £2m, could be recovered from glass bottle metal screw tops during the glass recycling process. Metal screw caps are most commonly found on wine bottles and tend to be thrown away separately by householders, but the campaign, backed by Alupro and British Glass, the first of its kind in the UK, aims to highlight the behaviour change required. Local Authorities are beginning to sign up to the communications initiative, which aims to encourage residents not to throw metal screwtops away separately.

recyclingnews cont...



Refurnish opens upcycling store at Dartington

Refurnish, the furniture reuse project covering south and west Devon, Torbay and Plymouth, now have a range of quality upcycled, repaired and restored interesting furniture and an 'eclectic mix of collectables, vintage and some antique' items, for sale at their new shop in Dartington. It is called 'Restore' and is located by the Cider Press. David Banks of Refurnish said "there has been a flurry of creative collaboration between volunteers and our staff to repair, restore, and refresh some of the interesting but damaged items that Refurnish collects". Call **Refurnish 01752 897311** if you have unwanted items and furniture you would like collected.

New Life paint

Up to 20% of paint sold in the UK never makes contact with a wall and our lofts, garages and sheds are full of part used cans. B&Q have been working for three years with Newlife, a company in Sussex, founded by industrial chemist Keith Harrison. Keith's wife had asked him to clear out the shed and this led him to developing a process to sort, filter, clean and remix waste paint, creating high quality full cans that could then be resold. Newlife now collect thousands of cans of waste paint from council sites across the UK and the recycled paint is sold in B&Q stores.

New reuse shop in Bideford

South Molton Recycle have opened a new reuse shop in Mill St in Bideford, adding to their existing shops at Barnstaple and South Molton. SMR continue to divert huge amounts of unwanted reusable household items from the waste stream at their Recycling Centres at South Molton and Barnstaple. Larger items can also be collected direct from the householder. Call SMR Phoenix charity to donate unwanted items:

Bideford: 46 Mill St, 01237 422623
South Molton: 01769 573657
email: shop@smrphoenix.org
Barnstaple: 01271 324000 email: barnstaple@smrphoenix.org



Reuse/Recycling news

recyclingnews cont...

Rowcroft Hospice

'Donation stations' are an innovative idea from Rowcroft Hospice to boost the reuse of small items and raise funds for the South Devon charity, by providing convenient collection points in businesses, schools, and public spaces across the area. The donation stations accept small items including books, cd's, clothing and textiles, bric-a-brac etc. People can pick up a bag from the donation station and Gift Aid forms so that their items are eligible to reclaim tax, or simply deposit items. Posters are provided to publicise the facility.

Katy Winter from Rowcroft writes "From April - December 2013, 15 Donations Stations out in the area provided quality stock for our shops, raising over £5000 in vital funds for the hospice. This is such a fantastic amount which has enabled us to provide around 8 hours of care across all our extensive services in South Devon. It costs over £7.5 million a year to run the hospice, so we hope to roll out even more Donation Stations in the area in 2014."

Donation Stations

These measure approx. 30" deep, 28" wide and 36" high and are available to go into businesses, schools and public

spaces within South Devon. Our drivers will deliver and set up, and then collect donations as and when required. We keep a track of how much each box has raised and regularly inform our contacts of the value of goods from their box with certificates which are sent out after each collection.

Furniture Collection Service

We run a free collection of unwanted furniture, electricals and other household goods. There are some restrictions to what we can take, including upholstered items without a fire safety certificate. For further info or to arrange a collection, please call **01803 210832**. More information can be found by visiting www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/shops.

In the future we hope to offer a full House Clearance service with cleaning included.

Give a Car

Giveacar is a UK based fundraising organisation that organises car donation for good causes, including Rowcroft. They provide a FREE service and can arrange the collection of the vehicle at no cost to you and (depending on it's condition) either recycle it at a green facility, or send it to a salvage auction; Scrap donations raise an average of £100 for Rowcroft, with auction cars often raising

much more. To arrange a donation of a car to Rowcroft, visit www.giveacar.co.uk or call **020 0011 1664**, quoting Rowcroft as your preferred charity.

Buying Used Goods

We have 14 shops throughout South Devon including locations such as Newton Abbot, Ashburton, Bovey Tracey, Teignmouth and Dawlish. We also have a dedicated furniture and Electricals outlet at 157 Teignmouth Road, Torquay where we sell PAT tested appliances and furniture with fire safety certificates. We also have designer furniture such as Ercol and G-Plan, and sell Shabby Chic furniture which we have upcycled.

Further Recycling Opportunities

We also offer mobile phone and ink cartridge recycling boxes which can be sent to workplaces, and will help to raise vital funds for the hospice. For further info on this, you can call **01803 217641** or e-mail fundraising@rowcroft-hospice.org.uk.

Katy Winter

Retail Development & Donations Co-ordinator
Tel: 01803 210856
Rowcroft Hospice
Torbay & South Devon Hospice



YOUR PLASTICS RECYCLING GUIDE

PLASTICS ACCEPTED AT DCC RECYCLING CENTRES

RIGID MIXED PLASTICS - PLEASE MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS CLEAN

All plastic drink bottles (squash and put lid back on)

Plastic milk bottles (squash and put lid back on)

All plastic household cleaning bottles

Pre formed biscuit or chocolate box trays

Plastic sandwich containers

Yogurt pots, margarine tubs, Ready meal containers etc

Plastic fruit containers (unless made from expanded polystyrene)

CD's & cases

Plastic flower pots (must be clean)

Containers for hand and other skin creams (must be clean)

Shampoo bottles (must be rinsed clean)

Plastic bags are acceptable if several are bagged into one bag (except Deepmoor and Macklins Quarry)

Not acceptable: cling film type material, contaminated plastic, any other type of plastic

BULKY PLASTIC ITEMS NOW ACCEPTED AT RECYCLING CENTRES, such as

Plastic garden furniture eg tables and chairs

General plastic housewares such as buckets, boxes and bins, flower pots, and plastic children's toys (except Deep Moor and Macklins Quarry)

Plastic mushroom basket trays and vegetable trays (commonly in circulation)

Not acceptable: PVCU windows, guttering and pipes.

SOFT PLASTIC WRAP, FILM, BAGS etc SUITABLE FOR SUPERMARKET SHOP FRONT PLASTIC RECYCLING BINS

Plastic bags

Cereal packet plastic inners,

Frozen vegetable bags

MID DEVON, CREDITON AND UFFCULME AREAS

Uffculme Compost Magic - Contact email: compostmagic@hotmail.co.uk

For Crediton area information see: www.sustainablecrediton.org.uk