

Waterbeach Waste Education Centre

Community Newsletter

WINTER 2023

How to have a greener Christmas



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EDUCATING CAMBRIDGESHIRE ABOUT WASTE



Welcome to the Christmas edition of our newsletter!

Located at Waterbeach Waste Management Park, Cambridgeshire County Council work with Thalia, our service provider to raise the awareness of the importance of waste reduction, reuse, repair, and recycling across Cambridgeshire.

We have a fabulous Education Centre at Waterbeach where visitors receive tailored presentations combined with 'hands-on' activities, (including sorting out your recyclables) and can view the Material Recovery Facility. In 2022 we processed around 62,000 tonnes of recycling. We also offer recycling workshop visits across the county to schools, community groups, parish councils and organisations, and support a wide range of community events throughout the year.

For more information about our **FREE** recycling workshops, and to book a visit, scan the QR code or go to:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service



What we waste at Christmas

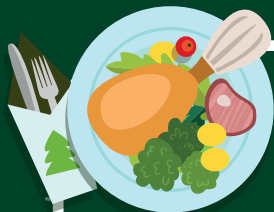
We throw away **263,000** turkeys.

We throw away **7.5 million** mince pies.

17.2 million sprouts also end up in **landfills**.

UK consumers use **227,000 miles** of Christmas wrapping paper. That's the same **distance** as the **Earth** is from the moon!

1 billion Christmas cards end up in bins, that's equivalent of **33 million** trees!





How to have a greener Christmas

Sustainable Christmas decorations

Traditional tinsel and baubles made of plastic or glass to decorate Christmas trees aren't eco-friendly, as most can't be recycled. They're sustainable if you store and reuse them every year.

If you're looking to buy some new zero waste Christmas tree decorations, then it's best to avoid traditional plastic tinsel and baubles. Ideas for sustainable Christmas tree decorations include:

Recycled baubles – you can find many baubles made from 100% recycled glass that look just as good – if not better – than standard baubles. These add a shimmer to any tree and last for years, if you secure them safely to your tree's branches, so they don't fall off and break.

Edible Christmas tree decorations – chocolate Santas, reindeers, elves, and other treats wrapped in foil are great zero waste Christmas tree decorations. The chocolate gets eaten and the foil is recyclable when cleaned – only the string might need binning.

Eco-friendly tinsel – traditional tinsel is made from a PVC film with a metallic coating that's almost impossible to separate and recycle. Some companies have created eco-friendly tinsel alternatives made from recycled paper and fabric that are plastic free, reducing their environmental impact.

Wooden Christmas tree decorations – wood is a sustainable material and often recyclable, so consider buying or making wooden rather than plastic decorations for your tree. These can be simple unfinished shapes for a natural effect or paint your own.

Handmade decorations – lots of talented individuals sell handmade tree decorations online made from fabric, wood, and other plastic-free materials. Or try making your own decorations from old cloth, wood, bits of metal, and anything else you can find around your home.



Sustainable Christmas table decorations

Festive plants – introduce a natural touch with sprigs of holly or other seasonal plants from your garden.

Paper chains – a fun, easy, and eco-friendly way to decorate the table is with colourful paper chains. Get children involved putting them together and you can recycle the paper in the blue recycling bin when you're finished.

Natural place settings – combine rosemary, sage leaves, dried berries and fruits, and cinnamon sticks for an aromatic and sustainable place setting. Cut out bits of old cardboard for a place name too.

Origami stars – fold any old paper or gift wrap into simple star shapes and dot around the table. These can be recycled in your blue bin after the meal too.

Decorations you can make

Consider these zero waste Christmas decorations and ornaments for a seasonal addition to walls, mantelpieces, window frames and elsewhere in your home or business:

Salt dough stars – combine some flour, salt, and water into a dough, then roll it out and use a Christmas tree, snowmen, or reindeer shaped cutter. Pop it in the oven for around two hours at 250°C, leave to cool, then paint or add some ribbon and hang on your tree or anywhere else.

Edible ornaments – a great way to get into the Christmas spirit is to make a gingerbread house. Plenty of shops sell kits or you can bake your own by following a gingerbread house recipe. It makes a fantastic festive showpiece and should ensure there's no waste as you get to eat it all afterwards.

Natural garlands – a Scandinavian staple at Christmas are dried fruit garlands. Dry out some orange slices and string together with cinnamon sticks and any other dried fruits you fancy. Hang these up to introduce a burst of colour and festive aromas around the office or home.

Twig stars – if your origami skills need some work, try these simple twig stars. Collect five small sticks per star of a similar length (or cut down a longer one into five equal length sizes). Tie them together at the point with string or a rubber band and stand on your mantel piece, desk, or anywhere else for a natural decoration.

Wreaths – making your own Christmas wreath is a lot cheaper and more environmentally friendly than buying one from a supermarket. Start with twine for the base, wrap some leaves and foliage around it, add pinecones, dried orange, and cinnamon sticks and anything else you fancy for a seasonal delight.

Sustainable outdoor Christmas decorations

Holly trees – head to a garden centre and pick up a pair of holly trees for a seasonal, colourful, and long-lasting Christmas decoration. Those with limited space can keep them in their pots until they grow too big and need planting.

Pinecone garland – string together pinecones fallen from nearby trees for a natural and seasonal garland. Add a bit of holly, dried fruit, or fake snow for a wonderful wintery effect.



How to dispose of and recycle Christmas decorations

Where possible you should keep any Christmas decorations for next year, donate to a charity shop, friends, and family, or sell online.

Baubles – plastic and glass baubles aren't recyclable, as they're often made from various materials that make them too tricky or expensive to separate and recycle so they could be donated to a friend or your local charity shop. Any broken ones should be disposed of in the general waste bin.

Tinsel – traditional tinsel is made from PVC film and a metallic coating and is not recyclable, again donate it or if damaged throw it away with your household waste.

Christmas lights – These like all electrical products must not be disposed of in your household waste collections. Instead they should be taken to your nearest Household Recycling centre where staff are on hand to help you dispose of these items safely.

Real Christmas trees & wreaths – If you can, why not compost these at home. If not any leaves, holly, twigs, pinecones, and tree clippings can be cut up and placed in your garden waste collection bin. Just remove ribbons, plastic flowers, and the twine, plastic, or metal base first. For those of you who don't have access to this service they can be taken to your nearest Household recycling Centre for composting.



Good to know

Any items that have a plug, use batteries, need charging or has a picture of a crossed-out wheelie bin on, are known as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

These items should not be sent to landfill and should be recycled at Household Recycling Centres, or via electrical retailers - visit recycleyourelectricals.org.uk to find out more.



For further details visit

Cambridge City Council

www.cambridge.gov.uk/what-goes-in-which-bin



**Batteries
SHOULD NOT
go in any bin
as damaged
batteries can
cause fires!**

South Cambridgeshire District Council

www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/what-are-my-bins-for

Use the postcode finder to find convenient battery recycling points near where you live:
<https://www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item/batteries#locator>



Halloween family event

Such was the success of the events in August, the waste team held a further family event over the October half term. The format was the same as the summer events but based on a Halloween theme. Our partners Cambridge Sustainable Foods invited visitors to try their tasty Halloween treats. Plastic Recycling charity, RECOUP, provided children the opportunity to make spooky decorations from milk bottles and the highly creative face painting artist Samirah showed with a little imagination & cosmetics found around the home that it is easy to create a scary face which is both a cheaper & greener alternative to a shop bought plastic mask.

Waste Education Officer, Jon Crisp took visitors to view the Material Recovery Facility giving them the opportunity to see for themselves their 'blue bin' recycling waste being sorted, bailed and dispatched. Complimenting this was host of recycling waste activities in the Education Centre aimed at helping residents learn about what can be recycled and how they can reduce their waste.



In May we asked young people, aged 7-11 who attend school in Cambridgeshire to design a Coronation themed waste free poster or produce a YouTube video to encourage others to recycle and reduce the waste they would otherwise throw out during the Coronation celebrations.

The lucky winner was Freddie (on the left), a year five student at Upwood Junior Primary school. Where his winning entry won him and 30 classmates a day trip to the Waste Education Centre Waterbeach. Part of the prize was free coach travel to the venue, (plus a buffet lunch). They then had the opportunity to learn about waste prevention and what things can be recycled and were able to view 'blue-bin' recycling being sorted. They then made Christmas decorations using plastic bottles and wallpaper.

Year 5 teacher Karen Wells commented...

"All of the children have had a thoroughly enjoyable day. The activities were excellent, and they were fascinated watching the recycling being sorted. The lunch was great and Waste Education team made us feel very welcome. The school will definitely be bringing another class to the centre next year!"



Appy Christmas for food waste

Want help managing your fridge, remembering to use up veggies, or with recipe inspiration? There's an app for that! The Kitche app can do all of this and more. You can upload your food shopping by scanning a supermarket receipt or choosing items from a list, and it will prompt you before things go off. You can also track anything you do throw away, so you can spot trends, change your behaviour and change course. It'll tell you how much wasted food is costing you, and the planet (in CO2). Kitche has its own chef, Dan, on hand to help with your cooking skills and loads of recipes for using things up, making using up all the food you buy much easier. Download Kitche for free wherever you get your apps!

Kitche
is a free app to help you save food and money at home!





Christmas at your local Household Recycling Centre

in Cambridgeshire

Recycle your fairy lights and other waste electricals, including batteries

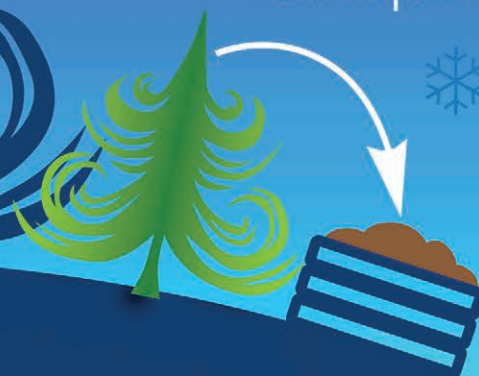


Flatten cardboard,
remove all
packaging and
recycle at your
HRC

*Please
SORT before
you come



We recycle your
Christmas trees into
soil improver



*We are **open every day** except for
Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Sites close at 1pm on Christmas Eve.

*Please check using the website listed below for opening times.



www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/recycling_centres



Cambridgeshire
County Council

FREE Waste and Recycling workshops!

Ever wondered what happens to waste from our homes?
Do you want to learn more about how you can reduce waste?
Then why not book a FREE reuse and recycling workshop!

Our fun FREE curriculum-based workshops can take place in schools, are an hour long, and we can deliver up to three lessons per day.

- ✔ Ideal for primary Key Stage 2 children and above
- ✔ Lessons are based on the national curriculum.
- ✔ Delivered by qualified teaching staff.

We also cater for community groups and are happy to attend at a time to suit you.

Sessions are designed to educate and demonstrate how we manage waste, what we can do to reduce, reuse, and recycle it, and how we can all reduce waste going to landfill. We also provide FREE support to local community events wishing to promote sustainable living.

To book or request more information email wmt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Workshops are FREE to all Cambridgeshire schools and community groups.



For more information about our FREE recycling workshops, and to book a visit, scan the QR code or go to:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service