

20/1/22

It's a simple one this week- 'Switch it off!'. It is so easy to walk out of a room and leave a light or appliance on, and a great deal of energy is wasted this way. If we, and our families, can get into the habit of ensuring that we are not leaving lights and appliances on, we can make a difference, which helps the planet and also saves money.

26/1/22

Most of us have several spray bottles of cleaning products under the sink and in the bathroom cupboard. These get through a lot of plastic, and their contents are not always environmentally friendly. There are some easy solutions. One is to take the empty bottle to a 'zero waste' shop like 'Just Footprints' and re-fill it. There are also small pouches of cleaner available which you just pop into the empty bottle, fill with water put the top on and give the bottle a shake. These are available online from suppliers like Ocean Saver or Smol. Tesco now produce a similar product of their own.

2/2/2022

It is easy to forget the tons of plastic waste which come from the simple and necessary act of cleaning our teeth. Yet there are alternatives to plastic. There are various suppliers of toothpaste tablets, such as 'Dentabs', which can be bought online or from 'Just Footprints' and other suppliers. These come in glass jars or small tins which can be taken back and re-filled. Non-plastic toothbrushes can also be bought from the same sources, and from Lakeland.

9/2/22

Sorry! This week's tip is rather personal- but have we thought about how long we spend in the shower? It is lovely to start the day with an invigorating shower, but a 10 minute shower can use a lot of energy and water. By trying to keep it to 5 minutes or less, we will be reducing energy and water consumption, as well as saving money.

16/2/22

We are now into Fairtrade Fortnight, so our tip this week is about Fairtrade. Organisations like Traidcraft focus on sustainability and the needs of the environment are central to their work. They are working with and supporting farmers and growers in developing countries – those whose lives and livelihoods are already drastically affected by climate change. Therefore, the more we can choose to buy Fairtrade products, either from supermarkets and other outlets or from the Fairtrade shop, the more we can help both the planet and the producers.

24/2/22

We are all being urged to eat less meat, both for the sake of our health and for the sake of the planet. We may not all be ready to go vegan or vegetarian, but there are steps we can take to reduce meat consumption. One is to increase the number of 'meat free' days in the week. Another is to try to increase the proportion of vegetables in dishes such as casseroles, or to include some beans. In this way, we are reducing meat consumption whilst still enjoying the flavour. A vegetarian version of Shepherd's Pie, which has proved very popular with young and old, including some who would never normally choose vegetarian meals, is Red Dragon Pie. There are many versions of this, but a link to a vegetarian recipe is here [Sarah Brown's Red Dragon Pie - Shoestring Cottage](#) Enjoy!

22/3/22

We probably all have at least one roll of Clingfilm (or similar plastic film) lurking in the kitchen drawer. This is by definition, a single use plastic, and there are plenty of ways of avoiding it, and the frustration it causes when it clings to everything except the thing you want it to! To cover bowls in the fridge, simply cover them with a plate; to cover plates of sandwiches or cakes ready for visitors, cover the plates with a tea towel. However hard we try to avoid plastic bags, a few will probably get into the house after a trip to the supermarket, unless we are very vigilant. If they arrive, wash them out once used, and re-use them in some of the situations where we may have previously used clingfilm. Sandwiches for lunch-boxes can be wrapped, as they always used to be, in greaseproof paper, and then in a re-used bag if necessary. There are also 'clinging' alternatives to plastic wrap, made from materials like beeswax, available from Lakeland and other outlets.

9/3/22

There are many ways in which we can reduce our use of paper. If we really need to print out documents, we can do so double-sided; but we should try to think before we print! Do we really need a hard copy? Do we need to jot down an address on a whole sheet of paper when a piece of scrap paper or the back of an envelope will do? Are we still receiving communications from businesses and banks on paper when we could opt to receive them electronically? And when we are offered a receipt in a shop, do we really need it? Obviously we do for larger purchases, but often we can opt for a digital receipt. And we probably do not really need a receipt at all for smaller purchases. If we think about these usages, we can save a lot of paper and therefore trees.

16/3/22

Whenever possible, use rechargeable batteries. This saves on the energy used in their manufacture. If batteries have to be disposed of, it is important that their materials can be recycled safely. If you live in CWaC, then they can be put out with the green recycling bin, in a clear bag. For instructions, see <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/recycle-first/recycling-batteries.aspx>

21/3/22

This week's tip comes from Traidcraft and concerns food waste. They write:

‘Food waste is a huge contributor to climate change. When we throw away good food, we are also wasting valuable resources such as land, nutrients, and water, which have gone into the product’s production. Not forgetting the energy wasted that has gone into producing it, and transporting it to us. Then there’s the money we’ve wasted buying it.’

There are many ways to avoid food waste, such as by buying only what we need, and avoiding ‘Buy one get one free’ offers, by looking for recipes that use up left-overs when we have them (there are plenty online), and by composting vegetable materials.

You can read more about buying more selectively, and composting as well as other practical tips on the Traidcraft website at https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/blogpost/six-actions-you-can-take-to-reduce-food-waste.html?utm_campaign=2131234_Monday%20-%2007%2F02%2F22%20-%20Weekly%20Home%20Shopper%20EDM&utm_medium=email&utm_source=EDM&dm_i=4EDA,19OGY,4BU6U8,5UKFH,1

28/3/22

Choices which we make about doing our laundry can have significant impact on the environment. By choosing washing powder rather than liquids, we are saving on plastics, and by choosing eco-friendly washing products we can make a big difference to what is discharged from our machines. If we have the outdoor space, then line-drying is also helpful (yes, of course, there is the British weather to contend with!). Drying outdoors saves on the energy from tumble dryers, or from turning on extra radiators to dry clothes. It also saves on the temptation to buy fabric conditioners, which create more plastic bottles. And all this saves us money.

4/4/22

It is easy to leave televisions and other devices on stand-by. This however, uses energy which all mounts up. By switching devices off at the on/off switch, we save energy and save ourselves money

11/4/22

Easter Eggs

We all love Easter eggs, but a lot of those sold are more packaging than egg! Not only are they in very large cardboard boxes, but these also contain plastic ‘nests’ around the egg. Look out for eggs without excessive packaging, - and of course the chocolate should be Fairtrade!

19/4/22

Spring has come, and perhaps we are thinking more about gardening. If at the garden centre, let’s not be tempted by peat-based compost. Peat bogs naturally sequester carbon, and it is important to preserve these and not exploit them for commercial purposes. It takes time, but a garden compost heap is a valuable source of nutrients.

25/4/22

This week's eco tip comes from Smol, who are manufacturers of eco friendly cleaning products. They wrote this as part of their promotion of the recent 'No Laundry Day'.

Oftentimes we wash items that don't really need washing, or maybe we run the machine when it's less than full. Each wash uses huge amounts of energy and water, costing us money and releasing plastic microfibres into our waterways.

If every UK household ran just one less wash a month we could save 15.6 billion litres of water and 120,000 tonnes of carbon emissions over the year. That's the same as heating 43,000 homes for a whole year... so just imagine the savings for our wallets too!

There's a lot to think about here- perhaps we could all try to decrease the frequency of washing sheets and towels just by a little. That would make a difference

2/5/22

When cooking vegetables on the hob, only use the amount of water required to cover the vegetables (unless otherwise indicated by the recipe). Then, use a lid on the saucepan. This will save both energy and money, and will remove the temptation to switch on a cooker hood extractor to get rid of steam and smells. Better still, if cooking two lots of vegetables, use a steamer if you have one. This means that you only use one hob, and steamed vegetables are also healthier for you

9/5/22

A new set of '3 R's'

These come from 'Refill' and are based on the principles of:

Reduce

Reuse

Refill

See: <https://www.refill.org.uk/>

This is an app which provides locations of 'refill stations' and plastic free shops and coffee shops wherever we may be, which sounds particularly useful when we are away from our home or usual place of work.

Next week we will focus particularly on zero waste shops (heap produces good nutrients for the soil).

16/5/22

Last week we thought about the theme of re-using and re-filling. 'Zero waste' shops play an important part in helping us to do this. These are shops where we take our own containers and fill them at the shops, thus reducing wasteful packaging, and the energy costs of transporting packaged goods. We

need to support such shops, and to make them known to our friends to encourage wider use. They may prove slightly more expensive on some items, but equally, they are cheaper on others, so it is certainly worth giving them a good try.

Below is a list of some of the zero waste shops within the circuit or its shopping area. We are sure there are others, and if you know of them, could you let us know their details via the circuit office.

Just footprints in Chester (the Forum) and Frodsham (near the station): <https://justfootprintsLtd.co.uk/>

Weigh of the World in Northwich: <https://www.weighoftheworld.co.uk/>

Powered by Plants in Stockton Heath: <https://pbpshop.co.uk/>

Mere & Meadow which delivers to various Cheshire postcodes: <https://www.mereandmeadow.co.uk/>

EarthKind Rewind - Zero Waste Stall in Neston market.

Hoylake Pantry <https://shop.hoylakezerowaste.co.uk/>

In addition to these, there are other shops which offer some 'refill' facilities. These include

Holland and Barrett, Eastgate St Chester.

Ex-squeeze-me (greengrocer), Handbridge, Chester. (They do a small range of unpackaged dried fruits, spices etc.)

Please let us know of others.

23/5/22

There is a lot of focus on gardening at this time of year. Perhaps you already grow your own fruit and vegetables- if so, could you try a few more crops? If you do not, could you try a few things- perhaps some potatoes, or a few canes of soft fruit, or some salad crops. If you do not have a garden, you may have a balcony or yard where you could try a few salad crops or herbs in containers. (The containers do not have to be special pots- all they need is some drainage holes) Packets of seeds can sometimes seem expensive, but they can be very productive, and unused seeds can be stored in an airtight tin, Or you could share them with a friend Home grown produce saves food miles and avoids plastic. It also usually tastes better!

30/5/22

We are thinking about the garden again this week. By leaving a part of the garden wild, and better still populated by wild flowers, we can help to preserve pollinating insects, which are vital to biodiversity.