

The Environmental Post

THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING GROUP NEWSLETTER

release potential



The coronavirus lockdown has forced us all to re-think and be inventive to get us through these unimaginable times. We hope this edition will help us to take forward what we have learned from the lockdown and continue to reduce, reuse and recycle.

We would like to give our thanks to the NHS, front-line staff and all key and essential workers that are continuing to work during these very difficult times to keep the country running and to take a moment to remember those who have tragically lost their lives due to the virus.

Stay Safe!

Grow Your Own Veg

Apart from the well-being aspect of being outdoors combined with the exercise involved in digging, growing your own vegetables has so many benefits:

- less reliance on vegetables which have usually travelled miles before being consumed meaning less carbon emissions from air freight and other transport methods
- less pesticides and synthetic fertilisers being used
- less waste from plastic food packaging

There is a no-dig option too where cardboard is recycled and put on the ground, on top of weeds, before creating raised beds and then using all sorts of garden waste as mulch and compost. Our keen veggie plot owner James Denton shows you how in the pictures opposite:

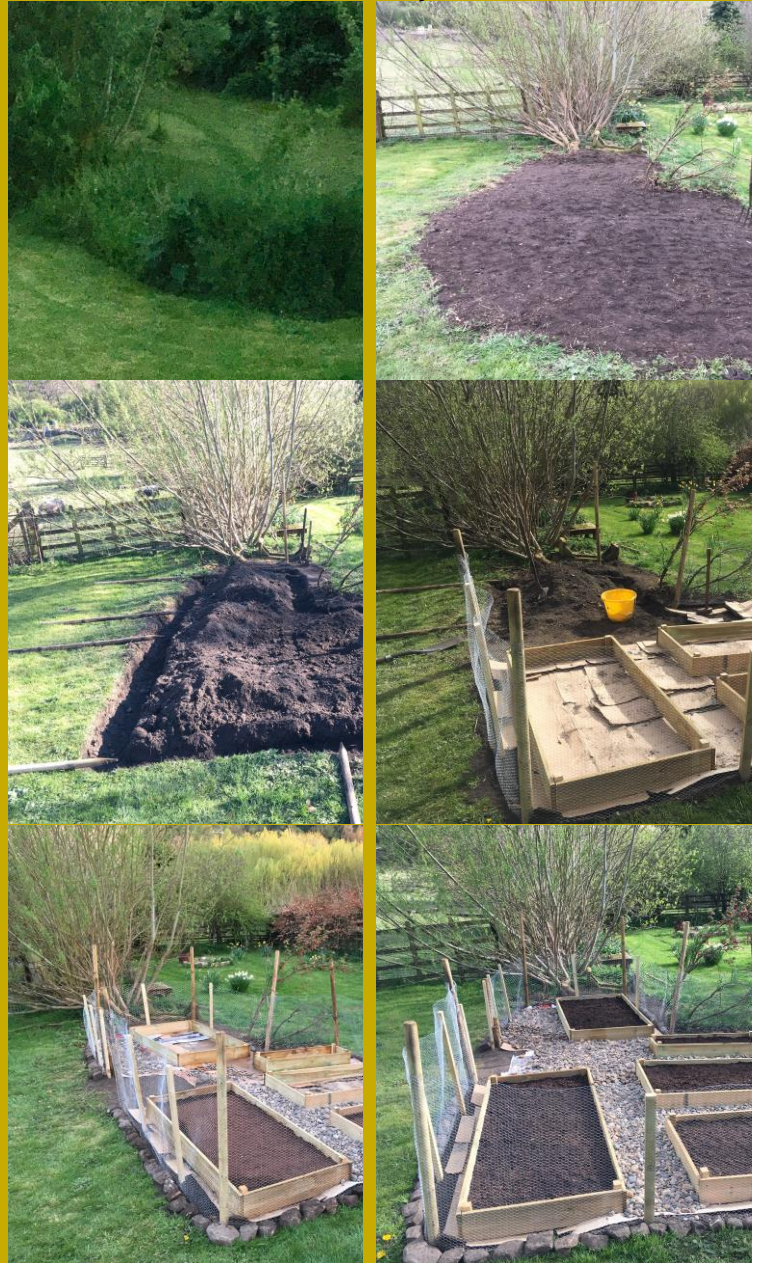
Bzzzzzzzz!

Bee populations could increase as a result of lockdown due to local authorities not cutting back grass verges and fields. More people getting out and gardening may have helped this as well.

For more ideas of gardening to help the environment click on the link below:

<https://www.bestspy.co.uk/7-ways-gardening-helps-environment/>

Look what James achieved in just two weeks!



Here is a recipe from Stuart for a natural weed killer.

- 4 litres of white vinegar
- 1 cup of table salt
- 1 tablespoon of washing up liquid

Mix salt and vinegar together then stir in the washing up liquid, funnel into spray bottles (no need to buy new spray bottles, re-use old ones, such as ones used for cleaning)

Spring greening your home in lockdown

Greenpeace staff and supporters have provided tips to inspire you to reduce, reuse and recycle. Find treasures in your recycling to reuse around the home. These small actions can make a massive difference for many years to come. www.greenpeace.org.uk

From the kitchen-reuse food Scraps

Re-grow vegetables by planting lettuce hearts, potatoes, sweet potatoes, ginger. Many things can be sprouted then potted. Even if you are short on space, a windowsill that could hold a container or two securely, allows you to grow food at home.

Don't throw out skins and offcuts from Berries, apples or cucumber-use them to flavour water or blend in a smoothie.

Repot supermarket herbs - tease the plants apart before repotting using recyclables for example, egg cartons, newspapers, yogurt containers, toilet paper tubes, pretty much anything that can hold compost.

Make plastic free cleaning products

Using some basic ingredients (white vinegar, lemons, essential oils, bicarbonate of soda, boiled water).

Before throwing away empties keep plastic spray bottles to refill as Stuart mentioned above, or just the spray heads. Often plastic-bottle spray heads can be fitted to screw-top glass bottles to create pleasing and (nearly) plastic-free refillables for your homemade cleaning solutions.

Glass bottles as light reflecting features

Glass bottles that once held anything –beer, wine, gin, oil – reflect the light beautifully and with the addition of fairy lights or a candle stick can make attractive light features. Get labels off with any vegetable oil after a good soak in warm water.

If you have a spare window ledge or similar, blue tack the bottles down and watch your makeshift stained-glass window come to life.

From the bathroom - Don't throw in the towel!

Old towels are immensely reusable – they can become reusable facial pads - click link for further information [washable, reusable facial pads](#), cleaning towels, bathmats, reusable nappy or pantyliner filler material. They will fray when cut, so use a sewing machine or hand sew the edges if you don't want too rugged an edge on your creation.

For green-minded ladies. Find a simple sewing pattern for washable pantyliners. These can be made with layers of jazzy fabric, more towel offcuts, old waterproofs or tent material, with a flat plastic popper button that could itself be recycled from an old duvet cover.

Waste Less Food

By planning your meals, you can end up throwing less away and only do one shop a week by making use of what is already available in the fridge or cupboard. The following article from The Guardian looked further in to this:

<https://www.theguardian.com/food/2020/apr/18/food-waste-lockdown-larders-coronavirus-food-banks>

Give a new purpose to old carpet



For anyone who has recently replaced their living room/bedroom carpet, rather than sending it to the tip, have you considered the many ways to reuse old carpet?

Click on the link below to find ideas as well as ideas for uses for broken mirrors and even wooden ladders!

<https://www.diyncrafts.com/28151/repurpose/20-brilliant-carpet-repurposing-ideas-will-astound>

THE TEAM

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter with news or tips, please contact any of the Environmental Steering Group.

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