

WINTER 2019 GREENVIEW

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN PARTY IN
HALESWORTH AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES



Green Party
for the common good



TERRACYCLE TAKES OFF

Halesworth community TerraCycle events have really taken off with hundreds of people bringing in their waste packaging to the monthly collections organised by local Green Party volunteers.

The waste is added to that collected by Edgar Sewter school, helping the school charity earn more TerraCycle points for its green projects. The cash raised will go towards revamping the school garden and making a Forest School area, plus gardening equipment for the children.

TerraCycle runs free recycling programs funded by major brands and manufacturers so individuals and communities can collect hard to recycle waste packaging that would otherwise go to landfill. This waste is then repurposed into useful products.

By highlighting the amount of packaging waste derived from the everyday shop we hope consumers will change their habits and avoid non-recyclable packaging.

Edgar Sewter school has signed up to a number of new TerraCycle waste streams

and here is the latest list of items to bring to the monthly collections:

- New - Carex soap (pumps and refill packaging, any brand)
- New - Danone (yoghurt pouches, any brand)
- KP snacks (crisps, popcorn, nuts etc, any brand)
- Pladis biscuits and cake bar (any brand)
- Colgate (tooth products, any brand)
- Ella's Kitchen pouches
- Burt's Bees cosmetic packaging (any brand)
- RB Hygiene (Finish and Vanish packaging, only these brands)
- Contact lens packaging

We are also collecting Tetra Pak cartons which are no longer allowed in the blue recycling bin. Please wash and squash your cartons to save space and smells!

Keep up to date with local recycling news on Facebook: [Terracycle Halesworth](#).

INTERESTED IN GREEN ACTION IN HALESWORTH?

Halesworth's Greens are hosting an Open evening on Thursday, March 26th at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall.

Now that East Suffolk has declared a Climate Emergency it is more important than ever that we pull together, make our voices heard and ensure that positive change happens quickly. It is time to take action!

The Green Party now has a firm foothold in Suffolk, following great successes in last year's local elections in Beccles: now Halesworth's Greens are looking to build on that success.

We have been active locally for six months and are delighted by the success of our first project - a collection point to support Edgar Sewter school's TerraCycle recycling initiative.

But we want to expand by launching further projects in Halesworth and in the surrounding area; projects that will benefit both our community and our environment.

- Come and hear about our plans
- Be inspired by Beccles District and County Councillors Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw and Graham Elliott, and hear what the Green Party can bring to your community
- Bring along your own Green ideas
- Discover how Halesworth can become a Plastic Free Town
- Find out how you can get involved

Enquiries to:

halesworthgreens@gmail.com

HALESWORTH TERRACYCLE COLLECTIONS TAKE PLACE EVERY 2ND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
AT ST MARY'S HALL BETWEEN 10.00AM AND 12.00PM. REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED BY THE GREEN CAFE



THE TROUBLE WITH TETRA PAKS

Halesworth Green's monthly Terracycle collection of recyclable waste material that can't be put in the blue wheelie bin is proving to be a big success. The most bulky waste product being dropped off by people is the Tetra Pak carton - we're collecting sack loads of them.

However, unlike the crisp packets, biscuit wrappers and other packaging that we contribute to Edgar Sewter school's Terracycle effort, we have to take Tetra Paks to either the Lowestoft or Leiston recycling centres.

We're often asked what happens to them next.

The cartons are taken to a dedicated recycling facility near Halifax, where they are pulped. The aluminium foil and polyethylene are separated from the fibre, which is recovered to make new paper products.

The remaining mix of polyethylene and aluminium "can be" used for a wide range of plastic products, according to Tetra Pak.

Tetra Pak says it wants to ensure that more and more people are able to recycle their cartons in the UK. The company claims that over 90% of Local Authorities are collecting cartons for recycling, with more than 65% of these from the home.

Still, what with the transportation and recycling process, it seems like an energy intensive solution.

We asked the drinks company Oatly if they had considered using another form of packaging. They said that the environmental impact of their Tetra Pak carton is 60-70% less than that of PET plastic bottles and glass bottles.

"At the moment, glass bottles are still made mostly from virgin material which is incredibly resource heavy to manufacture... It is also very heavy to transport" an Oatly spokesperson said.

An obvious answer would be for us all to stop buying products in cartons - but that's not always possible, says Halesworth Green Kim Hoare: *"So perhaps we could apply pressure to the supermarkets and manufacturers to offer re-fill possibilities? Otherwise to change the packaging to make it easier to recycle. We forget sometimes what power we have as consumers, and I think this is an issue for the makers of the products, the packaging and the supermarkets to be acting on."*

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON CLIMATE CHANGE

How should the UK meet its commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050? It's a vexed question for Parliament and time is running out!

To help them decide, a Climate Assembly has been commissioned by six parliamentary committees that brings together people from all walks of life and of all shades of opinion.

Climate Assembly UK has 110 members, drawn from 30,000 households randomly selected from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. They will meet to discuss balanced evidence and then make their recommendations.

The assembly members are meeting over four weekends this Spring and will report to Parliament in April 2020. They will hear from a series of expert speakers, setting the scene and informing them for their discussions.

In the first panel, members asked questions like, "Which is better for the environment – British beef or an avocado from Peru?" "What do you think should be the balance of business and government action on climate change?" "How committed are other countries to net zero?" and "Is there an argument for letting climate change happen?"

Chris Stark, Chief Executive, of the independent advisory Committee on Climate Change, explained to members: "What you are doing today is establishing what you regard as a fair outcome to meet that [net zero] target, and that's evidence that we don't have at the moment, evidence that each parliamentary select committee will use when they probe government about what the Government is doing to meet the target that it has set."

The net zero policy became law on 27 June 2019, making the UK the first major economy in the world to legislate for net zero.



TOWARDS A PLASTIC FREE HALESWORTH

There's growing concern around the world over the amount of plastic waste littering the land and filling up the seas. People are shocked by what they have seen in news reports and TV programmes like the Blue Planet series.

In Halesworth, the success of Halesworth Greens monthly TerraCycle event, which takes waste we can't put in blue bins for recycling, shows that people want to do their bit to protect the environment.

Tapping into this growing concern, Halesworth Greens have initiated the formation of Plastic Free Halesworth, an independent group that will campaign to reduce single use plastics in the town.

As a first step, Plastic Free Halesworth has registered with Surfers Against Sewage to join their Plastic Free Community scheme, which sets out five objectives, (see www.sas.org.uk/plastic-free-communities).

We have also registered the group as a Plastic Action Champion with Green Print Forum, East Suffolk Council's network of ambassadors for the movement to reduce dependency on single-use plastic (www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/east-suffolk-greenprint-forum).

At present, Plastic Free Halesworth has a small steering committee comprising three Green Party supporters and Town Councillor Annette Dunning, who has agreed to help us achieve Objective No1: the support of the Town Council.



The constitution we have adopted goes beyond politics, however, and is open to all. If you want to make a difference, raise awareness, join a creative group, have fun and bring about action in the town for this important issue, get in touch by contacting Chris Hart 07990 574346 or email chrishamiltonhart@gmail.com.

LESS IS MORE FOR FOOD COMPANY GIANTS

More food manufacturers and retailers are getting the message from consumers who want to see less plastic packaging in their stores.

In January, Nestlé announced investment of up to CHF2bn (£1.8bn) to shift from virgin plastics to food-grade recycled plastics and to accelerate development of innovative sustainable packaging.

Nestlé said it is building on its 2018 commitment to make 100% of its packaging recyclable or reusable by 2025, and will reduce its use of virgin plastics by one third in the same period whilst working with others "to advance the circular economy."

Planned packaging innovations include new materials, refill systems and recycling solutions.

Meanwhile, supermarket chain ASDA is to create a prototype "sustainability" store to trial ways of reducing packaging, especially plastic. From May, shoppers at its store in Middleton, Leeds, will be able to fill up their own containers with a range of products, from big brands to own-label coffee and pasta.

As part of its effort to cut down on waste, Tesco is removing plastic wrapping from its multipack tins. The UK's biggest supermarket said it is working with the likes of Heinz and Green Giant to replace plastic-wrapped multipacks with multi-buy deals.

At the end of last year, the Co-op committed to only using 100% own-brand recyclable packaging which it claims will lead to the largest-ever UK-wide scheme to recycle plastic film. The Co-Op promises that "everything from

ready meal trays, crisps packets, to sandwich cartons and film - all packaging used will be easy to recycle whether via kerbside collection or a closed loop inhouse scheme".

The food and drink sector has some notable laggards, however. Coca-Cola recently told the BBC that it will not ditch single-use plastic bottles because consumers still want them. The firm's head of sustainability, Bea Perez, said that "customers like them because they reseal and are lightweight".

Coca-Cola produces about three million tonnes of plastic packaging a year - equivalent to 200,000 bottles a minute.

THE AIR THAT WE BREATHE...

Air pollution could cause more than 7,000 deaths in Suffolk and Essex this decade, according to the British Heart Foundation.

Its research, reported in the Beccles & Bungay Journal earlier this year, says that 2,300 people in Suffolk and 4,900 people in Essex may die of diseases that are connected to fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in the next decade.

PM2.5 is very small debris invisible to the naked eye - 40 times smaller than the width of a human hair. The majority of the particles are produced by road vehicles and construction, and are connected to respiratory diseases, cardiovascular disease and lung cancer.

The report noted that nitrogen oxide levels (NO2) in Ipswich were higher than Government limits at 19 test sites in the town.

Current legal air quality limits for England and Wales do not protect our health, according to the BHF. *"Our Government currently follows EU limits which are far less stringent than World Health Organization's (WHO) guideline limits for PM, which is one of the most harmful pollutants"* the charity said.



The fumes from a cremation can produce as much harmful pollution as a car driving twice the length of the UK, according to startling research by the publisher Newsquest's Data Investigations Unit.

The problem stems from coffins made from chipboard or MDF that can produce the same amount of NOx gas as a car driving 2,280 miles.

Around 95 per cent of coffins used in cremations are made from these noxious materials.

The national pollution problem is compounded by very few of the UK's 307 cremators having NOx filter technology in place.

A spokesman for the Green Party told Newsquest that it is very concerned about NOx pollution.

"Bereaved families should be equipped with the information they need to make more environmentally-friendly choices when saying goodbye to a loved one."

"Ironically, people with stoves and log burners are advised against burning chipboard due to the toxic fumes it produces, yet this is precisely what is

happening with funerals as the majority of coffins cremated are made of chipboard."

Coffins made from a paper-based fibreboard emit up to 87 per cent less nitrogen oxides during cremation than commonly-used chipboard coffins.

The UK Government's statutory guidance document for crematoria advises that *"nitrogen oxides arising from coffins might be lessened by switching from coffins made using board made from wood and nitrogen containing resins"*.

In 2018, 78 per cent of UK deaths resulted in cremations (481,712 in total), compared with 51 per cent in 1968, when there were 327,901 cremations.

An FOI request confirmed at least 91 per cent of the 198 publicly-run crematoria do not have the deNOx technology installed - and there is no legislative requirement to do so.

The use of deNOx technology in crematoria is more common in European countries such as Italy and Belgium where tougher emission level regulations exist than in the UK.

GET INVOLVED... DO YOU WANT TO HELP DELIVER GREEN PARTY NEWSLETTERS?



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