



North Runcton 'Low Carbon' Newsletter

March 2021 – Sustainable waste management

WELCOME to the third of our North Runcton 'Low Carbon' newsletters.

As part of a Norfolk-wide initiative to 'Cut a Tonne in 21', NRPC are encouraging all residents to think about how they can reduce their personal and household 'carbon footprint'.

This issue follows on from the February newsletter by encouraging you to think about sustainable waste management.

As we know in King's Lynn, waste management is an emotive subject. Think of the opposition to the Saddlebow and now Wisbech incinerator projects!

But the problem of how to process our waste is not going away. And a fundamental problem is the amount we all produce. We need to REDUCE, REUSE, and RECYCLE to minimise our waste stream.

This is something every household can and should address. And we also need to lobby manufacturers and retailers to also play their part – to minimise packaging and make it easily recyclable.

DROWNING IN WASTE

In the UK we produce about 230M tonnes of waste a year – about 1.1kg per person per day (Govt Statistics).

'Officially' the UK is considered good at recycling compared to some countries. The government hold that nearly 50% of household waste is recycled.

However, recently it has come to light that much of our 'recycled' waste has been getting dumped or incinerated. Countries like China and Malaysia are now refusing to take UK waste – one reason being that it is often contaminated with mixed waste.

Many householders are less than diligent about what they put in their green 'recycling' bin. One bin of mixed waste in a truckload of recycled materials can result in the whole load being sent for incineration.



So three problems we need to address are:

- We all create too much rubbish.
- Much of our rubbish is not easily recyclable.
- Even when materials can be recycled, they are often rendered useless with contamination.

For more see: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/rubbish-and-recycling/types-of-waste-we-accept>



10 THINGS TO REDUCE YOUR WASTE OUTPUT:

1. Take reusable bags and containers when you go shopping.
2. Refuse plastic bags and unnecessary packaging at shops.
3. Choose brands/products with minimal packaging.
4. Cut down on pre-prepared foods, which often have a lot of packaging.
5. Take your own drinks / food in reusable containers when you go out.
6. Always use a reusable drinks bottle.
7. 'Re-purpose' materials whenever possible – paper, boxes, jars ...
8. Consider buying items like washing-up liquid and other washing liquids in bulk. Then refill your smaller bottles.
9. Take care with recycling. Follow the guidance.
10. Compost whatever you can!



DON'T FORGET CONSUMER POWER!

The other thing we can all do is ask manufacturers and retailers to be more responsible with their products. 10 & 8 year old Ella and Caitlin (above) recently got McDonald's to phase out give away plastic toys. We could all campaign like Ella and Caitlin!



AVOID BURNING !

Burning mixed waste at home is illegal whilst garden bonfires pour thousands of tonnes of pollutants into the atmosphere each year – as well as annoying your neighbours! See our 'Bonfire Etiquette' advice on the Parish website.

COMPOSTING

Most of us in North Runcton have good-sized gardens. It is possible and beneficial to compost most garden waste (especially if you have a garden shredder). Compost bins are cheap. The Borough Council have a working partnership with Straight PLC to supply compost bins at discounted rates. There is also on-line advice about how to compost.

See www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20140/what_goes_in_each_bin/398/compost_bin

We also have the Brown Bin and Food Bin Schemes. BCKLWN will collect your garden waste and food waste and send it to a commercial composting site. Brown bin collections currently cost £56/year and the food waste scheme is free.



How to balance and mix your compost bin.

Keep moist and regularly aerate with a fork. Compost worms generally find and colonise a compost bin by themselves.

5 SIMPLE RULES TO HASSLE-FREE COMPOST

1. Shred and chop before you add things e.g. prunings or unwanted veg.
2. Mix 'browns' (like fallen leaves) with 'greens' (like mown grass or your veg peelings). Compost microbes need a balanced diet like us!
3. Keep your compost moist but not wet. (Bins generally have a lid – but cover open boxes with a bit of old carpet or similar.)
4. Turn. Fork over the top of your compost at least once a week – or invest in a tumble composter.
5. Cooked food waste can attract vermin. (See last month's newsletter to cut food waste!)



BOKASHI BINS

If you don't have a very big garden or you particularly want to compost cooked food waste, you could try the Japanese practice of 'Bokashi' composting.

The process uses a 'fermenting bran' to create a compost and a leachate that you can use as a liquid plant fertiliser. You can add all types of food waste and because the process is odourless and space efficient, you can have the bin in your kitchen.

Find out more:

www.norfolkrecycles.com/reduce-my-rubbish/compost/home-compost/
OR - www.carryoncomposting.com.

Remember to CALCULATE YOUR OWN CARBON FOOTPRINT !

If you haven't already looked at it, check out the GIKI carbon footprint calculator – which will help you understand the sorts of activities that build your carbon footprint.

It is FREE and you can quickly learn what key aspects of your life you might be able to change in order to cut your CO² emissions. All you need is internet access. Go to <https://giki.earth/> and set up an account.

You can then go back any time and explore different ways in which you might reduce your carbon footprint.



Thought for the month...

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it for us"

Robert Swan – Explorer

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Our April newsletter will be about how we can cut our carbon footprint in the garden.

All these newsletters are also available on the Parish website:

<https://northrunctonpc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/>