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East & Old Green Team Eco Newsletter

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Your Planet Needs You!

- Handy hints of the month
- Events hosted by the Angus Archives
- News from Other Church Committees about their Eco events

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Your Planet Needs You



Over the coming months the Green Team will be posting a number of editions of the Green Team Eco Newsletter on the teams pages on the East & Old Church website at <http://www.thebigkirk.co.uk/>

These articles are aimed at helping to promote the use of Green Eco-Friendly measures that will help you save money as well as save &/or enhance your natural environment.

Today we ask the questions -

Did our ancestors recycle more than we do?

Have we created more problems for ourselves by creating new products which cause harm to our environment?

Planetary Special

A greater understanding of our planet and the toll we take upon it has led to a recycle and up cycle revolution by our current population. However, the notion of recycling is not new, our ancestors chose to recycle because they wanted to save money or to contribute to a war effort.

Our ancestors have used a great variety of ways in which to reuse the various materials from their daily life. Examples of this are:

- The 1800s often saw scrap wool used to stuff mattresses or to make blankets.
- Throughout the 1800s pedlars often picked up the unwanted articles from house holders in order to resell them to general stores or to up cycle them to other people who could not afford to buy something brand new.
- In the 1850s coal ash was collected from households in cities and sold to the brick industry and to the farmers as fertiliser.
- Cloth could be picked apart to make thread which was then used to make a 19th century variation of paper. The type that linen maps and charts are made of.
- Food was rarely wasted - any leftovers were often reused in next day meals (meat for your sandwich) or given to pets such as cats and dogs or to farm animals (no canned pet then then).

Examples of recycling can be seen in some of the material which is kept in the local archives such as the Brechin Breviary, a 15th century piece of music from Brechin Cathedral, which was turned into the inside cover of a trade incorporation minute book [Kept at Angus Archives]

You also have to look at the types of production being made before 1900. There were no plastics, nuclear energy waste or specialist batteries and other products which take decades to break down or cannot be recycled at all. Without these items would we be better off? - lets take a look.

Modern Planetary Concerns

Have we created products which cause more problems than they are worth?

There are several products on today's market which are contributing to the phenomenon called Global Warming. They are the products which are polluting our air, water and filling up our land masses at an alarming rate. Examples of this are:

Air Pollution:

- The use of palm oil in deodorants and other products, as well as the amount of carbons which are being released into the air coupled with deforestation contributes greatly to the quality of our air.
- The use of aerosols and exhaust fumes from cars



Land and Sea

Pollution:

- plastics - mankind's use of natural materials such as wood, bone, leather, stone, iron and glass has been replaced by plastics in many industries. In our pursuit of the easy life and a low cost of living we have created a wide range of plastics including bottles, plates, tubing, compact discs, floor tiles, car parts, glitter, cassette boxes, pipes and other plumbing products which are proving a large problem in the modern world. How do we recycle the various types of plastics—a labour intensive job—which costs companies money they may not want to spend. Plastics are now known to be mounting up in our landfill sites and choking our oceans.



- Batteries are another item which is being used and discarded at the speed of sound. Almost everything we use has battery back-ups or runs on batteries. Whether they are AA or AAA which can be put in the landfill sites or recyclable batteries which must be returned to their manufacturer for safe disposal, they are mounting up at an incredible speed.



- nuclear waste - this is made up of radioactive isotopes which eventually break down or decay. However there are some isotopes such as cesium-137 and strontium-90 which can take up to 30 years to become harmless materials. There are also some types of nuclear waste such as plutonium-239 which can take over 24,000 years to break down.

Perhaps it is now time to look at what we can do



to help our planet.

The Solution

you can contribute—help save the planet now

Although we cannot influence the policies of the countries around the world, we can contribute to a cleaner planet by contributing to the following:

Air Pollution can be combated by doing the following:

- Planting more trees in your gardens to help decrease carbon in the air.



- Planting oxygen giving plants such as Areca Palm, Aloe Vera, Christmas Cactus, Gerbera (orange)



- Perhaps the move to electric cars can help to alleviate the amount of car fumes which are now affecting the health of people in large cities and help prevent the end of crude oil on our planet.

- Don't use aerosols—use roll on deodorants or gel based air fresheners



Sea and land Pollution can be combated by cutting down on our use of plastics—you could do the following:

- Buy milk and juice in glass bottles



- Create a glitter substitute by creating paper confetti with coloured card or paper and a hole punch. You can also use coloured sugar if you want to put a shine to a card.
- Buy your food in cardboard packaging and use paper carrier bags or cloth bags to carry your shopping.
- Buy products made from wood, metal and glass as they are more easily up-cycled and recycled.
- Changing from nuclear produced electricity to



that made by the force of the sea and wind.



- So- lar Power panels on buildings.