

Press release: Minister urges households to recycle as much as possible over Christmas

Households across the country are being encouraged by the Minister for Local Government, Marcus Jones, to make it a record-breaking year for recycling over the Christmas period.

It's estimated that the UK recycled a staggering 289,000 tonnes of card packaging last Christmas. However, with the weight of paper and card not collected equating to nearly 2,000 blue whales, there's cause for everyone to double their recycling efforts this year.

From wrapping paper to Christmas cards, mince pie foil cases to Christmas trees, there's a host of items that can be easily recycled or disposed of in a responsible, eco-friendly way.

Local authorities across the UK are offering helpful tips, guidance and even some dedicated treecycling services to help residents recycle as much as they can over the Christmas period:

- Trafford Council has produced the ['naughty or nice'](#) list of items that can and can't be recycled.
- Cambridgeshire County Council has issued [12 top recycling tips](#) to help residents make it a great recycling Christmas!
- The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham offer residents a dedicated [Christmas tree collection service on certain days](#) and multiple drop-off points located across the borough for residents who want to 'treecycle.' The council estimate that it will recycle over 75 tonnes of festive firs over the holiday season.
- Swansea Council has released a downloadable [2018 recycling calendar](#) so that residents can start the year as they mean to go on – recycling as much as possible.
- Lancaster City Council has partnered with St. John's Hospice to boost treecycling and [raise money for charity](#); for a small donation, residents can pay to have their real Christmas trees collected from their doorsteps by hospice volunteers.

Minister for Local Government, Marcus Jones, said:

Local authorities across the country are offering great initiatives to help us recycle as much as we can over the Christmas period – including the Christmas tree!

I'm encouraging households to find out what schemes are running in their area so that they can maximise their recycling and treecycling this year!

Here are DCLG's top 5 recycling tips for the festive season this year:

Recycle that cardboard!

A lot of Christmas gifts will come in recyclable cardboard packing – especially large electronic items such as laptops, televisions and computer game consoles. It's estimated that we could make a cardboard motorway stretching from Leeds to Lapland and back – 111 times – with all the cardboard packaging we use at Christmas. Don't let it go to landfill!

Scrunch test your wrapping paper!

Did you know, paper or cards with glitter can't be recycled? The scrunch test is a helpful way to test whether your Christmas wrapping paper is recyclable.

If you literally scrunch the paper in your hand and it stays in a ball, it can be put into the recycling. Remember to remove ribbons, bows and other adornments before sticking it in the recycling.

Don't 'fidget' to treecycle!

Millions of trees brighten up homes and offices across the UK each Christmas. These can be recycled for composting and wood chipping. The chippings can then be used locally in parks or woodland areas.

Some councils will collect Christmas trees with normal garden waste, some will have designated collections and others will have special drop-off points. Visit your local authority's website for detailed guidance. Find out more about the [Forestry Commission's sustainable Christmas trees](#) too.

Don't bin the festive fairy lights!

Fairy lights and other electronic Christmas decorations may be classed as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). These items must not be sent to landfill but disposed of at designated sites such as household waste recycling centres. If in doubt, check with your local authority for guidance on disposing of those old fairy lights.

You can go 'Cold Turkey'!

Who doesn't love leftovers? Christmas dinner stays fresh for at least a few days after the big event and for months or more if you put it in the freezer.

You can freeze cooked turkey and use it to make a new meal; if you're sick of

turkey and cranberry sandwiches, why not be creative and try making a turkey curry? Additional tips and advice can be found on the [Food Standards Agency's website](#).

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[Notice: Volkswagen Amarok: vehicle seizure notice](#)

If this is your vehicle, read the vehicle seizure notice to find out how to claim it.

[Press release: Work underway to refurbish River Nene's Wadenhoe Lock](#)

Wadenhoe Lock is getting a complete overhaul, including repairs to the

structure, replacement of its mechanism, and a thorough paint job. This will help the lock stay in good, safe working order for decades to come.

The first phase of the work, which took place in November, required the lock to be drained of water, so that the parts usually beneath the surface could be fully inspected and repaired.

The lock is scheduled to close again between 3 January and 12 February for work to continue on the gates, mechanism and paintwork. These dates are subject to change.

Sign up for latest updates

Boaters can get the latest information by [signing up for email updates](#) or calling the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 and asking for Anglian Waterways.

Andy Bennison, Anglian Waterways assets senior specialist at the Environment Agency, said:

Our precious waterways are an important part of our nation's rich heritage and beauty. They are a national treasure, valued for their contribution to our environment, our health and wellbeing, and our economy. We're proud to play a part in caring for them, and we take that responsibility very seriously.

Maintaining them to a good, safe working standard is our number-one priority. We invest money very carefully to ensure the best value for every pound we spend. This means our waterways will continue to offer outstanding value to the many, many people who enjoy them every year.

Part of £1.4m waterways investment

The refurbishment to Wadenhoe Lock is part of the Environment Agency's [£1.4m investment into Anglian Waterways](#). The annual Capital Investment Programme sets out the repairs and upgrades being made across the 353-mile navigable network.

Wadenhoe Lock, which bypasses a Grade II-listed watermill with medieval origins, is located in one of the most picturesque areas of the River Nene. Its electrically-operated guillotine gates give access to around 7,000 boaters every year.

The Environment Agency looks after the lock, along with more than [353 miles of navigable waterways](#) in the Anglian region, as well as a vast network of associated facilities such as bridges, locks, moorings and toilets. The agency's work enables thousands of boaters and more than a million other visitors to enjoy these waterways every year.

Complete refurbishment

The work on Wadenhoe Lock includes an engineering inspection of its chamber, replacement of the mitre gate pintle pins, cups and paddle gates, replacement of the vertical shaft and top bevel gears, replacement of the bearings on the horizontal shaft, repairs to the ladders and guillotine gate wheel tracks, an overhaul of the guillotine gate drive gear, and re-painting.

[News story: Blue Belt representatives to visit Tristan da Cunha and St Helena](#)

The Blue Belt Programme is a 4 year initiative delivered in partnership with the UK Overseas Territories, the UK Government and stakeholders to provide long term protection for over four million square kilometres of marine environment across the UK Overseas Territories.

The purpose of the visit is to discuss how the local communities of Tristan and St Helena will benefit from the implementation of the Blue Belt Programme. The Programme aims to ensure that, as well as providing greater environmental protection to globally important ecosystems, these benefits are delivered in tandem with social and economic opportunities for the local communities.

For example, by reviewing options for a Traffic Separation Scheme around Tristan da Cunha, identifying areas to be avoided around the islands/seamounts and introducing a compulsory reporting system for certain hazardous cargo, we can look at how best to mitigate the very real risks to the environment and to local fisheries that were brought into sharp focus with the 2011 MS Oliva grounding on Nightingale Island.

The Blue Belt Programme has also recently undertaken a survey of bluenose fishing stocks to ensure the long-term sustainable management of the fisheries business.

We are working with the St Helena Government on a range of projects to fulfill the objectives of their Marine Management Plan, including projects to determine the movements and growth of the local tuna populations, to establish the sustainability of grouper and lobster. We are also looking at other human impacts on the marine environment and how we can manage them.

The Blue Belt Programme are working closely with the Tristan da Cunha and St Helena Governments on a number of separate projects, but are also keen to hear direct from local communities whilst they are on the island, to answer

their enquiries regarding the Programme.

Craig McGarvey, Programme Director will be joined by Dr Martin Collins, Lead Scientist for the Blue Belt Programme and Oliver Yates, Senior Marine Science Advisor.

Speaking today, Mr McGarvey said: "My colleagues and I are very much looking forward to meeting with the local communities of Tristan da Cunha and St Helena as well as meeting local officials and representatives of the Governments, to discuss how specific parts of the Blue Belt programme will be implemented in practice, to ensure that the social, environmental and economic benefits are realised."