



COPXX

The call for a new voice: 'our survival depends on feminine principles'

WOMEN IN SUSTAINABILITY

Why we need more women's voices in the sustainability movement

SEEDS OF CHANGE

Embrace flowers and creativity at this sanctuary for the soul

THE NEW 'NEW'

Wardrobe rentals could be the future of sustainable fashion

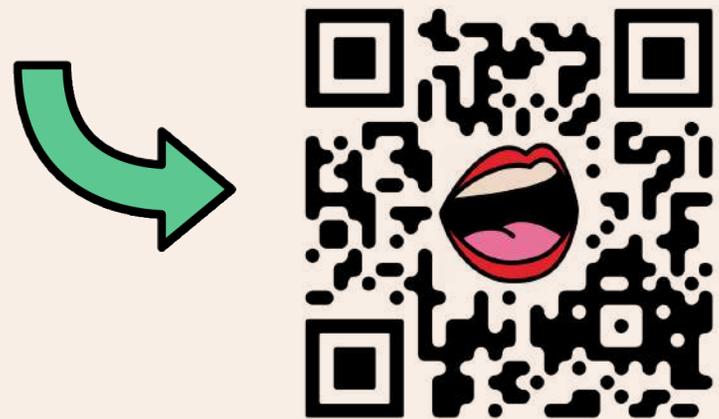
JULY 2021

WOMEN: TIME FOR ACTION

wherefrom

**save the
planet
by doing
nothing***

*well, you do have to scan this QR code
so it's not NOTHING but it's pretty easy.



Welcome to My Green Pod Magazine!



Katie Hill, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
katie@mygreenpod.com

All relationships require balance if they are to thrive, yet somehow, at some point, it became normal for women to clench their keys as a self-defence weapon when walking home at night, and to worry if a friend failed to message that they had got home safely.

We have sleepwalked into a similarly imbalanced relationship with our planet; if we stop and look at the way we extract without a thought for restoration, and the fact that by 29 July 2021 we will have used more of Earth's biological resources than she can regenerate in a year, we can see exactly how damaging our lifestyles have become.

By strengthening our sense of connection and embracing indigenous wisdom and feminine principles, we could create a different future for our children – through a love that fosters gratitude and balance. Let's move into an era of reciprocity and respect – with each other and with our planet.



ABOUT US

My Green Pod Ltd is an independent, family-run UK business, founded by Katie Hill and Jarvis Smith. We want to share the real stories behind the brands and people working tirelessly to offer ethical alternatives to mainstream products and services. You might not see these options on the high street and they may not be the first to appear in online searches. But they are on mygreenpod.com. Search our Marketplace for conscious lifestyle inspiration - and you could save some cash along the way!

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- 📘 facebook.com/mygreenpod



Some **80%** of people displaced by climate change are estimated to be women

50% of EU citizens could be producing their own renewable electricity by 2050 – enough to meet **45%** of energy demand



Women represent only **6%** of ministerial positions responsible for national energy policies



SAVING BORNEO'S ORANGUTAN CORRIDORS

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RAINFOREST AT BREAKING POINT

Together we can save land for
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and fragmentation. Donate at:

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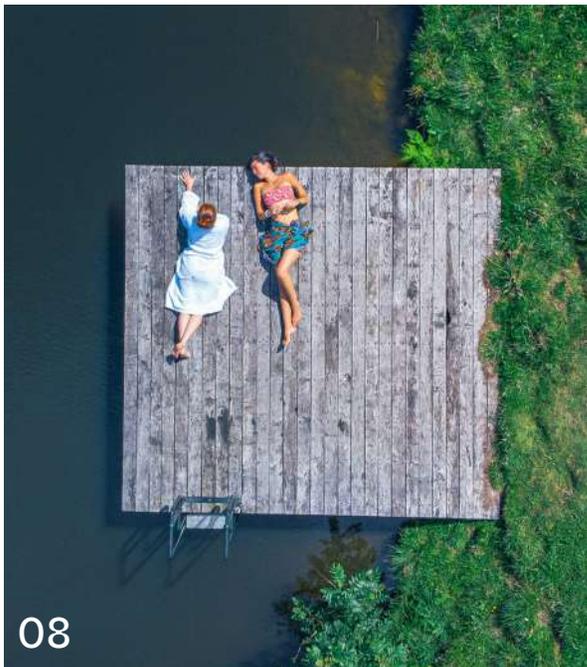


WORLD
LAND
TRUST

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CONTENTS



HERO PRODUCTS

07 My Green Pod Heroes for July, plus our Top 5 Switches

CONSCIOUSNESS

08 Nature tourism: the new way to take a break and rewild your spirit

09 COPXX will bring feminine principles and indigenous wisdom to climate talks

TECH

10 Why we need more women's voices in the sustainability movement

ENERGY

12 Community power is ushering in a new era of energy democracy

BUSINESS

14 Escape the routine and embrace your creativity at this sanctuary for the soul

15 Think branded merchandise is all about tacky pens and plastic bottles? Think again

16 The free app that helps users plant trees and save money

ARTS & FASHION

17 The South West's best-tasting music festival is back for 2021

18 Model twins on pre-loved fashion and renting your wardrobe

MARKETPLACE

20 Conscious shopping is now easier than ever!

HEALTH & BEAUTY

22 How to harness flower power in your summer skincare routine

23 The colourful shampoo bars that put the fun into plastic-free haircare

25 How to reduce the toxic load from your everyday products

FOOD & DRINK

26 The roaster protecting land and species to safeguard coffee for future generations

29 Now everyone can experience the benefits of organic food, flowers and farming

30 How foraging can help us reconnect to our true nature

HOME & GARDEN

31 Dan Caesar talks home energy and shares his top 10 tips for efficient heating

TRANSPORT

32 The affordable way to switch to an electric vehicle and slash your emissions

TRAVEL

33 Escaping the rat race has never felt more appealing – and this sustainable sanctuary was built to be shared

COMPETITIONS

34 Take a look at all the latest competition giveaways featured on mygreenpod.com!



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P.E.A. AWARDS 2021

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

citrix™

Nominations are open for 2021's P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Awards!

Now in their 11th year, the UK's leading sustainability awards are looking for the individuals and teams who are pioneering change in their fields - whether they work for large multi-nationals or small NGOs.

This year, nominations have opened for Climate Pioneers (see right) and Influencers - including bloggers and celebrities - who inspire their followers to live more consciously.

CATEGORIES

ARTS
CLIMATE PIONEER
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
ELECTRIC VEHICLE
ENERGY
FOOD & DRINK
GREENEST FAMILY
HEALTH & WELLBEING
INFLUENCER
MONEY
NATURE
PRODUCT
TRAVEL
VEGAN

NEW FOR 2021'S P.E.A. AWARDS:

CALLING ALL CLIMATE PIONEERS

This year we have a new Climate Pioneer category, sponsored by Deloitte. We're looking for someone who has pushed the envelope in climate to drive authentic and material positive change. The individual or team will have made a significant impact within their company and beyond, whether for the value chain, supply chain or wider society. A catalyst for change, the winner will have demonstrated that climate action is good for business.

Enter or nominate your sustainability heroes at peaawards.com

All entries are free. The closing date for entries is midnight, 31 August 2021

WITH THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



HERO PRODUCTS

Introducing our July Heroes!

Whether you plan to spend the summer at home or away – or are avoiding making any plans at all – these Heroes will help you to make the most of the sun, wherever you are!

View all our Heroes at mygreenpod.com/heroes

HOME & GARDEN



TENTSHARE

Get the camping trip of your dreams! This online tent-lending marketplace works just like Airbnb, but for tents!

[@Tentshare1](https://twitter.com/Tentshare1) tentshare.co.uk

FOOD & DRINK



VINTAGE ROOTS ORGANIC EVERYDAY

This selection of six light, everyday wines – three white and three red – is a treat for the tastebuds. Each is vegan and certified organic.

[@VintageRootsLtd](https://twitter.com/VintageRootsLtd) vintageroots.co.uk

HEALTH



HAPPIER BEAUTY TOOTHPASTE

Toothpaste with a natural mint flavour in an easy-to-recycle aluminium tube.

[@HappierBeauty](https://twitter.com/HappierBeauty) happierbeauty.com



ARCHANGELOI METATRON

Use this aura spray sparingly to top up your colour levels.

[@aurasoma_](https://twitter.com/aurasoma) aura-soma.com



SEEP SPONGE WITH LOOFAH SCOURER

This cellulose wood-pulp sponge with loofah is plastic free and compostable.

theseepcompany.com

TOP 5 JULY SWITCHES

1

If you're ready to switch your mobile provider, Honest Mobile is a B Corp and the UK's only carbon-neutral mobile network. Each month it will tell you whether you could save money by switching down a plan.

[@Honest_Mobile](https://twitter.com/Honest_Mobile) honestmobile.co.uk

2

WaxWrap products offer a natural, reusable, eco-friendly alternative to single-use cling film. The organic cotton cloth is coated with a mixture of beeswax, pine resin and jojoba oil to keep your food fresh.

waxwrap.com

3

Make your next getaway a holiday with a difference. Flooglebinder is a carbon-neutral travel company and the UK's first B Corp specialist tour operator. It offers bespoke trips so families, groups, schools and businesses can travel with purpose.

[@flooglebinderUK](https://twitter.com/flooglebinderUK) flooglebinder.co.uk

4

Think about switching to a renewable energy supply from Octopus Energy. As well as sleeping better at night, you'll almost certainly save money on your energy bills.

[@octopus_energy](https://twitter.com/octopus_energy) mygreenpod.octopus.energy

5

If you're about to buy a product you don't really need, you can satisfy your craving (and save some money) by putting it back and planting a tree instead!

[@treesisters](https://twitter.com/treesisters) treesisters.org

Nature tourism

There's a new way to take a break – and it promises to rewild your spirit



An unexpected side-effect of the pandemic has been our reconnection with nature. The healing, regenerative power and beauty of our natural environment is finally being recognised, and on-trend travellers are beginning to put nature at the centre of their holiday plans.

So why go on nature-based holidays? 'Just try it and you will always keep coming back to it – nature never lets you down', says Kelly Hollick of Broughton Sanctuary, a pioneer of nature-based getaways.

At this natural sanctuary there's a lot of talk about the benefits of responsible holidaying. The focus is on experiential but meaningful breaks that involve new ways of learning in stunning locations, with a view to inspiring kinder ways of living.

Guests can leave a positive impact on the environment and even support conservation or rewilding efforts during their stay.

'Clients are looking for ways to minimise their carbon footprint; they're travelling with climate in mind, planning wisely and choosing consciously', Kelly tells us. 'It is not about leaving no footprint, but about adding authentic and holistic value to the places we visit – all while taking a break that's beneficial to mind, body and soul.'

GET TO KNOW YOUR PRIMAL SELF

Nature tourism allows mental wellbeing to flourish; it can be the catalyst that reconnects you to your true and 'primal' self – the thing that makes you 'you' and that might have fallen silent over the years. By wiring into nature and pulling the plug on emails, social media and instant messages, you start to become aware of your own thoughts and feel your sense of beingness.

CLOCKWISE
Wild swimming, moon baths and woodland gatherings are just some of the activities available at Broughton Sanctuary



There are opportunities to rediscover simple, affordable and cross-generational pleasures – from picnics, birdwatching and stargazing to camping and hiking – and to experience the freedom and restorative benefits of being immersed in nature.

Guests return home feeling full of health, vitality and inspiration – and often with a new motivation to protect our natural world.

A NATURE-BASED BREAK

The Broughton Sanctuary offers all this and much more. The holiday homes, set on the border of a national park in the foothills of the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, are in the heart of England's largest tree-planting project and overlook the site of a leading nature recovery programme.

Find out more

■ View the full range of activities and accommodation at [broughtonsanctuary.com](https://www.broughtonsanctuary.com)

There is a framework of activities for nature-based wellbeing breaks, ranging from wild swimming, foraging and forest therapy to sweat lodges, a woodland sauna and moonbathing high on the heather moorland.

For the active there are countless hiking trails and over 26 miles of internal paths for cyclists, plus opportunities to get involved with tree planting and litter picking.

'That feeling that you can contribute to the countryside and that you are leaving somewhere better than you found it is incredibly satisfying for the soul, and creates a sense of purpose and self-worth', says Roger Tempest, Broughton's custodian.

230,000 trees were planted here last year and in 2021, more natural habitats are being encouraged and cared for. Visitors of all ages can derive the same pleasures from these havens for nature. There's an abundance of delicious wild food to enjoy – whether you're snacking on wild raspberries during a walk in the woods or collecting wild garlic for a homemade pesto.

'Nature's healing and restorative powers have been left off the agenda for too long from a holistic wellbeing point of view', says Paris Ackrill, co-founder of Avalon Wellbeing at the Sanctuary. 'Avalon has been set up to help human inner nature and, consequently, to help our outer nature.'



PLAN YOUR STAY

For those looking for a low-carbon summer staycation that's affordable and family friendly, Broughton should be high on the list.

The Sanctuary organises a range of retreats and the team can curate a bespoke break to ensure you get everything you want out of your stay.

With a bit of planning you can arrange to spend a night in a shepherd's hut or pass an evening sharing stories by firelight at the fire temple. By day you can rewild your spirit by birdwatching in wetlands or striding through the wild beauty of Brontë-esque moorlands.

As great holidaymaker Fred Pontin used to say: 'Book early to avoid disappointment.'



COPXX

Dianne Dain, co-founder of COPXX, explains why our survival depends on the feminine principles of connection, restoration, nurture and care

Like every human since the dawn of humanity, I was born seeking a connection to my mother. My connection was broken at birth when I was abandoned at a Salvation Army hospital.

I searched every moment of my life for the compassionate care of my mother – her smell, her touch, the safety of her arms and the love in her eyes – and though I had caregivers and was eventually adopted, my search for connection continued.

Several years ago, as an adult mother of four, I was asked to visit a Salvation Army hospital for Mother's Day and play the harp for the inner-city mothers there. When I arrived I realised that this was the hospital I was born in, and that these were the halls my mother had walked through.

What I felt was the fear of being in this dark, cold place of detachment, where giving birth was not celebrated and honoured, but a terrifying trial and lonely burden to get through. There was a palpable loneliness and a lack of connection.

PRIORITISING CONNECTION

As we think about the world we live in and that my children and grandchildren will experience, I can't help thinking about how we, as a collective, live. Often we treat our planet in a way that lacks connection, and we become filled with isolation and loneliness.

Our collective future has to be different. It has to be hopeful, with more compassion, connection and care, so we can nurture each other, the planet and all the life that it supports.

I think the most important thought that persists for me is that we must prioritise the feminine principle of connection. Humanity has ignored it, undervalued it and neglected it, and this shows in the present condition of Mother Earth.

This need for connection is something we all have in common. Without it we develop coping mechanisms that are based on the imperative to protect ourselves; if we are not careful this can cause distrust, anxiety and fear to become dominant traits.

A MORE FEMININE WORLD

COPXX is a call for a new voice and a new – yet ancient – connection point for the planet. The decision-making currently governed by manmade laws has neither included nor valued our connection with nature and the feminine.

In the words of Boris Johnson at the opening of the G7, we need to build back in a 'more feminine' way. Whether those words were spoken with a much deeper understanding of the fundamental shift that is required is unknown, but they represent the most important call for humanity as we restore ourselves and our planet.

We need to value as a source of power and wisdom the keepers of life, the feminine principles in us all and the indigenous people who revere future generations and protect over 80% of the world's biodiversity, which is a beautiful machine that works in perfect balance.

Their knowledge and power are some of the greatest untapped resources we have on this planet, and we must learn to listen to them with an open heart and an open mind.

FROM EXPLOITATION TO RESTORATION

Looking at the rise of violence against women and the extraction from and exploitation of the planet, it is hard not to see the parallels of abuse and

neglect between our planet and the feminine as key hindrances to climate change reversal.

We must recognise there is resilient power found in the feminine to regenerate and restore. It is time we let our leaders know that we care more about compassion, balance, harmony and love of nature than profit and consumption.

In building back better, we need a new agenda of equality that uses the multiplying power of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 – 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'. This agenda should prioritise Mother Earth and drive the way businesses are run, the way laws are made and the way we design our lives.

In short we must transform our relationship with our planet from exploitation to restoration and regeneration.

We have much of the science and technology we need; we have drive and ambition and creativity and energy, and these can be powerful tools of connection between humankind to show more love, respect and gratitude for each other and for our planet.

Reflecting on my need for my mother and my own children's need for me, I have come to realise that the relationship we have with our mother (or father) is often one of need. It is inherently unbalanced.

Our planet needs us now. Nature must be recognised as the unpaid resource we draw from when we buy, move, act, support or decide policy. As we take, we must give back – or we should give before we take, as indigenous cultures do.

Find out more

■ Read about COPXX and its launch at mygreenpod.com/articles/copxx



Women in sustainability

Citrix's Michelle Senecal de Fonseca on why we need more women's voices in the sustainability movement

Patriarchy, spotlighted by the pandemic, is bad for inclusive climate leadership' said Katharine Wilkinson, co-founder of the All We Can Save Project, in a recent interview with *Time* magazine.

Over the last year, the pandemic and the climate crisis have together highlighted the gender inequality that exists within our society. Without a significant upsurge in the representation of women's voices and efforts at the climate table, the sustainability movement will struggle to succeed.

Crucially, I am not calling for female bias; sustainability and the climate crisis are not gender specific, and the speed of our action is more important than who gets us there. However, by failing to include female voices we are missing the richness and diversity of thinking that the subject needs. As Chiara Corazza, managing director of the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society, said: 'to create a sustainable world, women and men must be equal partners in the fight.'

THE GENDER IMBALANCE

The World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report 2018* states the largest gender disparity is in political empowerment, which maintains a gap of 77.1%. Women represent only 6% of ministerial positions responsible for national energy policies and programmes and 15% of Green Climate Fund boards, according to the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society.

The gender imbalance is stark, and we need to be doing more to empower women in politics, leadership, organisations and communities to come forward and have their voices heard.

From a personal standpoint, I have used my position of leadership to push my organisation to become more sustainable internally, and to put structures in place to help us better support customers who want to be more sustainable, too.

Here are my thoughts on why we need women's voices to be heard, urgently, within the sustainability debate.

GIVING WOMEN A SEAT AT THE TABLE

The Women's Connected Leadership Declaration on Climate Justice states: 'Women and girls are already boldly leading on climate justice, addressing the climate crisis in ways that heal, rather than deepen, systemic injustices. Yet, these voices are often under-represented and efforts inadequately supported.'

According to the Women4ClimateAction Daring Circle 2019 report, some 80% of people displaced by climate change are estimated to be women, and women are 14 times more likely to die during environmental disasters.

70% of the world's poor are women. At a grassroots level, women who sit at the forefront of their communities have the knowledge needed to adapt to the climate crisis and are being active in developing practical solutions.

To tap into this valuable insight, women deserve to be given a seat at the table to play an important role in decision-making. Currently, there is no clear relationship between those making decisions and those taking action.

The Charter for Engagement on Women Leading Climate Action calls on governments, businesses and individuals to work together to drive inclusive climate action at scale and to push towards a sustainable and equal world. The primary goal of the charter is to achieve gender equality in climate decision-making

bodies by 2030. By failing to ensure gender equality in companies, in government, in NGOs and elsewhere, the climate movement itself is reinforcing a gender crisis.

However, there are some great examples of what's possible when women do have a seat at the table.

New Zealand's prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, declared a climate emergency when she was re-elected last year, paving the way for New Zealand's public sector to become carbon neutral by 2025. She also passed a Zero Carbon Bill during her first term, which mandates net-zero emissions by 2050.

In the UK, Celine Herweijer, innovation and sustainability leader for consulting firm PwC and group sustainability chief for HSBC, has advised some of the world's largest financial services organisations and asset management companies on climate risk strategy and sustainable finance initiatives. She has served on many committees for the World Economic Forum and the UN.

WHY EMPATHY IS CRITICAL

We know that women are disproportionately impacted by climate change, largely because of ongoing social and economic inequality, deprived political rights and family status. This can give women a much greater sense of empathy on the subject.

While empathy is not a specifically female trait, if women are feeling the impact of climate change more intensely, they will be more able to bring this quality to the table. Empathy is important because it drives genuine passion and can be the force behind difficult conversations, enabling individuals to make better decisions for generations to come.

TreeSisters.org is a UK-based global NGO, set up to encourage social change and reforestation. Empathy for nature sits at its core, with the mission to 'encourage feminine leadership by providing resources, experiences and communities that inspire personal and collective action on behalf of the trees.' The NGO draws a clear correlation between the treatment of the environment and the treatment of women, and also between the rise of feminine leadership and the awakening into global ecosystem restoration.

TreeSisters' global network currently funds over two million tropical trees a year in Madagascar, India, Kenya, Cameroon, Nepal and Brazil; its aim is to be funding a million trees a month by the end of 2021.

DIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Gender diversity and climate stability are inseparable. When we diversify, we open ourselves up to new ways of thinking, where ideas and innovation can come to the surface. By diversifying, we drive more action.

To see more rapid change, we need to be driving inclusion and equality at a leadership level – to include women, and also every group that may have been underrepresented or excluded thus far.

Sustainability is a movement for everyone because the environment impacts everyone. We therefore need to be hearing diverse voices within the movement, so every story and angle can be shared.

As the introduction to the persuasive *All We Can Save* essay and poetry collection shares: 'As the saying goes, to change everything, we need everyone ... We need feminine and feminist climate leadership, which is wide open to people of any gender.'

TECHNOLOGY AND THE SDGs

There is an important role that business technology can play within the sustainability movement. Citrix is a leader in the IT sector, and we have known for some time that our industry is a growing and significant contributor to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The UN has published a list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and of those, nine can be positively achieved with the support of IT innovation and infrastructure: good health and wellbeing; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land and partnerships for the goals.

This is one of the reasons why I take my responsibility towards sustainability so seriously. Creating the ability to work securely from anywhere, and therefore reducing commuting, is one of the four pillars of our sustainability strategy at Citrix.

Research shows that by allowing 1,000 European employees to work from home for just two days per week, annual commuting mileage could be reduced by just over 1 million miles, reducing CO2 emissions by 40%.

A recent CEBR study also found that by reducing commuting hours and consolidating real estate through sustainable IT practices, remote work could help reduce annual CO2 emissions by 214 million tonnes. That's a significant portion of global CO2, N2O and CH4 emissions.

MORE FEMALE VOICES

Sustainability action is urgently needed, and the greater the diversity of voices being heard, the more likely we will see progress and change.

Ultimately, we need more women in the fight at a leadership and decision-making level. To achieve this, we must prioritise gender and climate agendas simultaneously; the two are inextricably linked and must work hand in hand to advance the sustainability movement at the pace we need. As one of the loudest female voices in climate change, Greta Thunberg, has warned, we need to 'act as if our house is on fire. Because it is.'

Find out more

■ Discover how Citrix can help to power a better way to work at [citrix.com](https://www.citrix.com)



POWER FOR THE PEOPLE



Community power is ushering in a new era of energy democracy

Around the world, people are recognising the need to radically transform our energy systems if we are to halt the climate crisis.

Harnessing power from abundant natural sources is the obvious solution, but to create the revolutionary energy transition we need, communities must come together to take power into their own hands.

If the energy revolution is to succeed, we all need to get behind it.

SHARED OWNERSHIP

Neighbourhoods across the UK are coming together to form unique energy-generating collectives. Through community energy projects, people can unite to fund, build and operate their own renewable energy sources. The energy is used to power local homes and businesses, while profit is reinvested in local initiatives.

By creating a truly fair energy system based on shared ownership and cooperation, community energy could be the key to achieving energy democracy.

It is a revolutionary idea: local renewable power – by the community and for the community – when the sun shines, the wind blows and rivers run. People save on their bills and even profit from their investment, while sending green energy to the grid and reducing the UK's reliance on fossil fuels.

COMMUNITY ENERGY

Thousands of communities across the country have joined the movement so far, adding solar panels to their roofs, harnessing hydro energy from local rivers and installing wind turbines at nearby farms.

These communities are already putting profits towards local initiatives, from tackling energy poverty to boosting local conservation efforts and investing in community facilities. These investments close the loop on truly community-minded and cooperative projects.

In Brixton, locals have joined forces to install solar panels on a social housing estate to tackle fuel poverty in the area.

Some communities, like those in Halton, have chosen to donate the profits from their cutting-edge hydro-electric schemes to local projects including the Scouts, youth sports initiatives, a school allotment and a community play area.

A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

Community energy provides cheaper, greener power, but it's about so much more than that: it's about creating a blueprint for a better world – one that empowers locals to invest in their communities and build lasting bonds with their neighbours.

It's about a decentralised, democratised energy system – owned by the people, for the people.

INTRODUCING YOUNITY

In 2019, Octopus Energy and The Midcounties Co-operative joined forces to set up Yunity, a joint venture devoted to supporting these community power champions.

So far, Yunity supports over 100 community energy projects across the UK, stretching from the Isle of Skye to Devon.

One inspiring example is Swindon's Westmill wind and solar farms; an entire community came together to develop wind turbines on a local farm – creating enough energy to power 4,500 homes. As is fairly typical among these often like-minded groups, the community generously chose to donate a large portion of the profits to energy conservation programmes.

For those not yet ready to set up their own project, Octopus has partnered with Co-op to create a unique way for anyone to support the community energy mission: Co-op Community Power is an energy tariff 100% sourced from UK community energy projects.

The myth of the 'green premium' is over: renewables can empower everyone and save us all money.

GLOBAL COMMUNITY ENERGY

Community power isn't just gaining momentum in the UK – there are inspiring success stories all across Europe. From Austria to the Netherlands,

the sustainable, people-centric energy revolution is gathering pace as people take back power from the outdated fossil fuel industry.

Offshore wind projects, solar panel installations on local schools and schemes to tackle energy poverty are just some of the projects that have been developed as part of the ambitious plan to restructure our energy systems.

Remarkably, according to research conducted by the CE Delft institute, half of EU citizens could be producing their own renewable electricity by 2050 – enough to meet 45% of energy demand.

MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

We know the impact of climate change is more severe in the global south, where many marginalised communities are threatened by extreme weather and ecological crises.

In rural Africa, 590 million people – almost half the population – currently live without access to electricity, limiting access to education and employment opportunities.

Often, those without electricity have to rely on costly and environmentally unfriendly options such as kerosene lamps and diesel-powered generators, which can cause serious health issues.

The positive news is that much of the global south has access to abundant renewable energy sources; in Africa, for example, many countries are embracing the switch to green energy. Kenya is a continental and international leader, with a massive 85% of its power coming from renewables.

Clean, affordable community energy is already actively improving the quality of life for many in disadvantaged communities around the world. In Zimbabwe, for example, government and charity-run schemes to install solar panels in rural areas are a huge success story, helping communities stay connected and powering businesses to support families.

Schools have introduced IT lessons, families are able to read or work in the evenings and fridges can now be used to preserve food and medicine.

COMMUNITY ENERGY CHAMPIONS

One charity working to be part of this solution is Solpowered, an international project that is helping to end unequal energy distribution. The charity empowers low-income communities to take control of their energy generation and cut ties with financially and environmentally damaging diesel generators and unreliable grids.

The organisation was launched just a few years ago by Octopus Energy alumnus Melanie Rideout. It works alongside local Zimbabwe charity FACE, which is headed by Portipher Guta.

Solpowered and FACE are currently working on a programme in Zimbabwe, which is still severely impacted by energy poverty. Their first project installed a solar energy system at the critical maternity ward at Rusape General Hospital with the support of Engineers without Borders.

Prior to this project, unreliable power meant patients sometimes had to be operated on awake without anaesthesia. Project manager Shuwisai recounts surgeons operating on patients



**HERO
PRODUCT**

Find out why **Octopus Energy** is a **My Green Pod Hero** at mygreenpod.com/heroes



Green energy projects – like Swindon's Westmill wind and solar farms (above) and Solpowered (left) – are empowering communities and helping to democratise the energy system

using only candlelight or their phone torches. These dire conditions contributed to high local maternal and child mortality rates. Here, reliable renewable energy quite literally saved the lives of countless women and children.

BEYOND ENERGY

Once the need for reliable electricity was met, Solpowered and FACE were able to expand their project at Rusape General in lots of ways.

A healthy nutritional community garden was created to help tackle food poverty and provide a daily meal for hospital visitors. This will soon include a fishery project, which will provide water to fertilise the garden and provide a source of community income and protein to feed families.

Find out more

- Support Solpowered's great work at solpowered.org
- Discover how Octopus Energy supports community power at octopus.energy/blog/community-energy

An agroforestry project will provide trees for architecture, firewood and community revenue.

Solpowered's projects embody the same ideals as community energy ventures everywhere: they are local initiatives centred on community empowerment. They're run and set up by local organisations, and they train local young people to maintain the panels and contribute to the economic welfare of the community.

The charity is now looking at setting up micro-loans and classes on how to create sustainable energy projects, so people in the community can build healthy, sustainable lives and businesses for themselves. This holistic approach is a model for how we can create a more just world.

IMAGINING A BETTER WORLD

Across the world, communities are coming to terms with the effects of climate change. A sustainable, ethical, equitable world will require an energy system that puts power in the hands of the people.

Community generation enables us to reimagine energy in a way that works for the planet, as well as the most vulnerable in our society.

This green energy revolution is already well underway – and thanks to community energy, people at the hearts of their communities are destined to be its vanguards.



Seeds of change

Escape the routine and embrace your creativity at this sanctuary for the soul

'Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.' Jane Bradley, founder of Brook & Earl Mindful Floral Design, has lived by this mantra for the last few years; today she would say she is doing the impossible – and loving every minute of it.

Jane left her career in the corporate world so she could dedicate her life to looking after elderly family members. The decision was tough, but it was something she felt compelled to do.

Despite adapting well to her new carer role, Jane eventually noticed a big void; 'Being creative is in my DNA and it just felt like something was missing', she explains. 'I felt like I was losing myself and everything I stood for.'

FINDING A HAPPY PLACE

Jane found her 'happy place' at a wreath-making course just before Christmas in 2016. 'During that couple of hours, all the worries and problems I was facing just drifted away', she says. 'That's when I knew I needed to get back to my creative roots.'

Over the following years, Jane retrained and rekindled her love of nature and floristry. It was a natural choice: Jane is from a family of gardeners and has tended her own garden, growing and planting her own flowers, since the age of six.

SUPPORTING WOMEN

Jane's company, Brook & Earl Mindful Floral Design, creates natural floral designs for weddings, events and all life's other moments and celebrations.

It provides understated yet wildly elegant floral designs from the highest quality blooms – but the company isn't just about flowers. 'We're about nature and wellbeing', Jane explains, 'and we're about supporting and empowering women.'

Jane's experience left her with a clear sense that she could use her skills to help others. 'That's why I set Brook & Earl up as both a floristry and a creative, mindful space for workshops', she says.

Through creativity, mindfulness and floristry, Jane nurtures a safe and creative sanctuary on the beautiful Broughton Hall Estate, tucked away on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales in North Yorkshire.

'When I found my studio on the magical Broughton Hall Estate, it was like all the stars aligned', Jane explains. 'At last everything was falling into place. Brook & Earl is my floral sanctuary for the soul. It's exactly what I imagined when I set out on this floral journey.'

WORKSHOPS WITH A DIFFERENCE

Jane has created a space full of happiness, calm and creativity where time can stand still. It promises to bring you back to nature and back to now, with an invitation to share Jane's journey by slowing down to find your thoughts and find yourself.

Brook & Earl runs workshops with a difference; visitors can forage for their own foliage or flowers, take a mindful walk around the walled garden, weave wreaths in the woodlands or experience guided mindfulness at the fire temple.

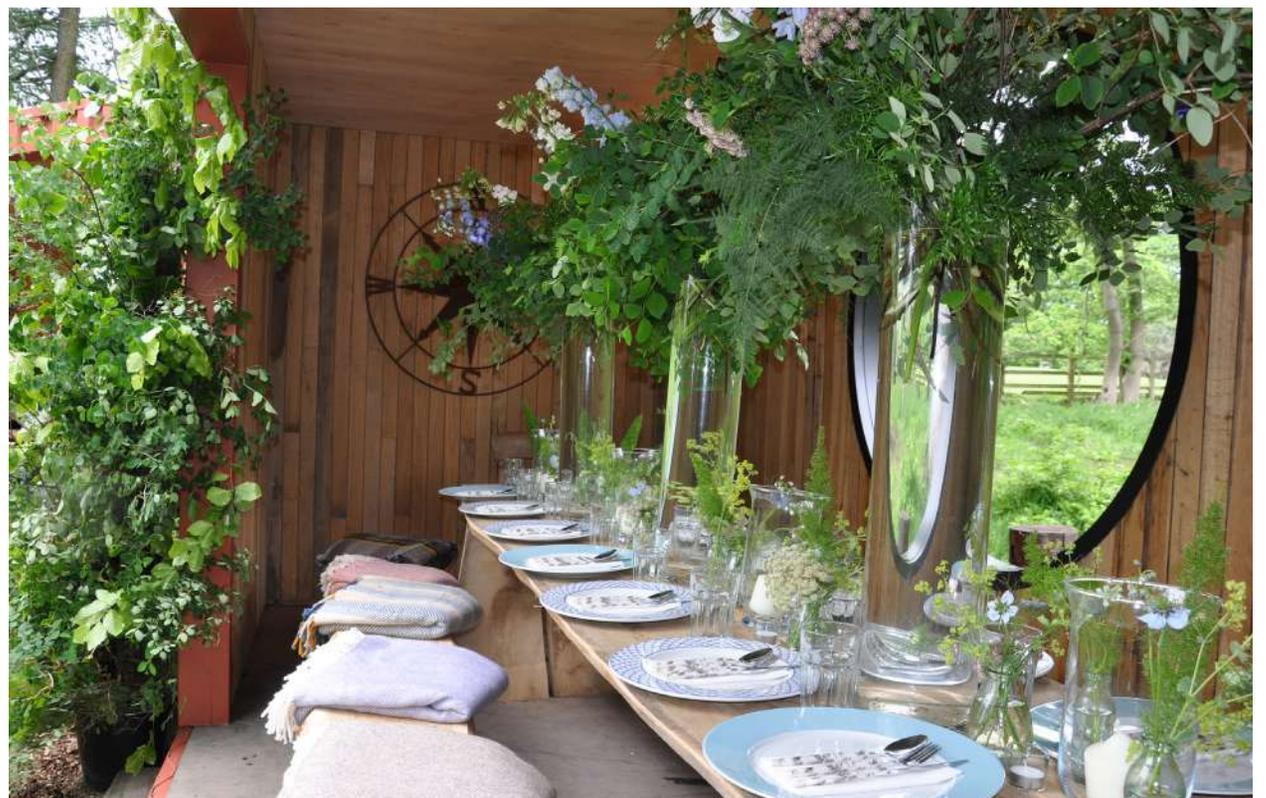
The events are an antidote to life's storms; 'The world swirls us around, never stopping, never slowing', Jane explains. 'The heady busyness of life keeps us moving and pushing forward, filling each year, month, week, day, hour and minute with a never-ending to-do list.'

The goal of the workshops is to help people explore new things and pursue creative pleasures – including writing, painting and hand-lettering, as well as creating beauty from fresh-cut stems of flowers and foliage – while surrounded by the beauty of nature.

We know flowers and plants can boost wellbeing, and after a few precious hours in this sanctuary – with everyday worries left far behind – you are guaranteed to feel relaxed and inspired.

Find out more

■ Discover Jane's mindful floral designs at brookandearl.co.uk



Think branded merchandise is all about tacky pens and plastic bottles? Think again

An industry-leading sustainability scheme has been launched to help brands source at least 50% of their marketing products sustainably by 2025, and support reforestation efforts as they go.

By cleaning up their branded merchandise – from clothes to tech devices – businesses can present a brand image that resonates more deeply with an increasingly eco-savvy customer base. Opting for sustainable products also helps businesses reduce their overall environmental footprint.

SUSTAINABLE MERCHANDISE

Until now, it has been challenging for businesses to source authentically sustainable merchandise without getting sucked in by greenwash. 'It's easy for companies to find branded merchandise that appears to be sustainable', explains Pinksheep's Phil Law. 'Plastic pens wrapped in cork are considered sustainable in our industry, but we don't agree.'

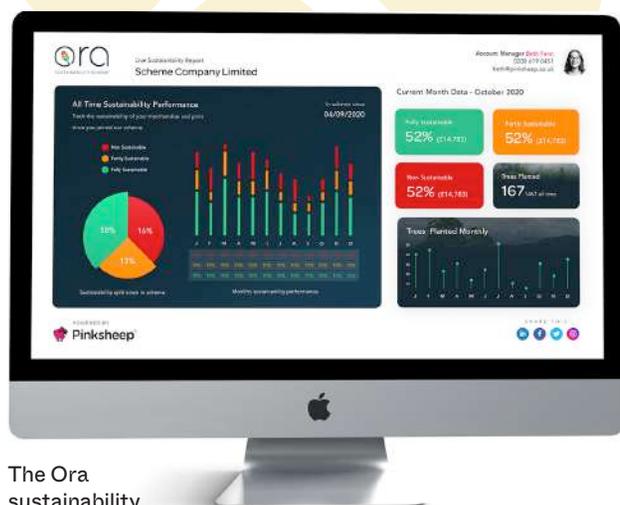
COLOUR-CODED SUSTAINABILITY

In March Pinksheep launched Ora, a sustainability scheme that grades tens of thousands of products – from pens and notebooks to drinkware, bags and tools – according to a traffic-light system.

To earn a green light a product must be more than just recyclable or made in the UK. Ora's sustainability metrics consider country of origin, whether the manufacturer gives back to the environment, whether the factory runs on renewables, whether the product is upcycled, recycled, biodegradable or made from more than 75% plant-based materials and many other factors.

Ora's algorithm processes all the information and produces a clear grade that's easy for the user to understand: red products are not sustainable, amber signifies partly sustainable and green merchandise is fully sustainable.

'Originally it was just going to be 'good' or 'bad', Phil tells us, 'but we soon realised we needed



The Ora sustainability dashboard

MARKETPLACE

Buy the Ocean Bottle at mygreenpod.com



LEFT TO RIGHT: Pinksheep's Phil Law, Douglas Grays and Billy Gubby

SUSTAINABLE BRANDING

something that sat between the two. Colour coding by traffic lights was logical: it allows informed buying decisions at a glance.'

One of Pinksheep's most popular items is the Ocean Bottle (main image), which funds the collection of 1,000 ocean-bound plastic bottles for every bottle sold. Pinksheep can brand Ocean Bottles with corporate logos for companies that are serious about sustainability and want their ethics to be reflected in their branding.

REWILDING INCENTIVES

Pinksheep's partnership with Ecologi sees trees planted and carbon offset with every transaction. Clients are supported irrespective of whether they choose a green or red product, but Eco Tokens help to incentivise more sustainable buying options.

'Very simply, we reward you more heavily for buying the most sustainable products', Phil explains. 'We issue three times the number of Eco Tokens for fully sustainable – or 'green' – items, which means we will plant three times the number of trees on your behalf.'

If 'red', or unsustainable, products weren't available through Ora, Phil believes clients would simply order them through another supplier that isn't planting trees with every purchase. 'To us it's about building a lasting relationship', Phil explains.

Find out more

- Information about how to join Ora is at pinksheep.co.uk/sustainability
- View a demo of Ora's sustainability tracking dashboard at pinksheep.co.uk/ora-dashboard

HERO PRODUCT Find out why Ocean Bottle is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes

'A client's first order might be for a red item, but as we educate them and gently push them to see greener alternatives, their buying habits will change and we will plant even more trees.'

LIVE REPORTING

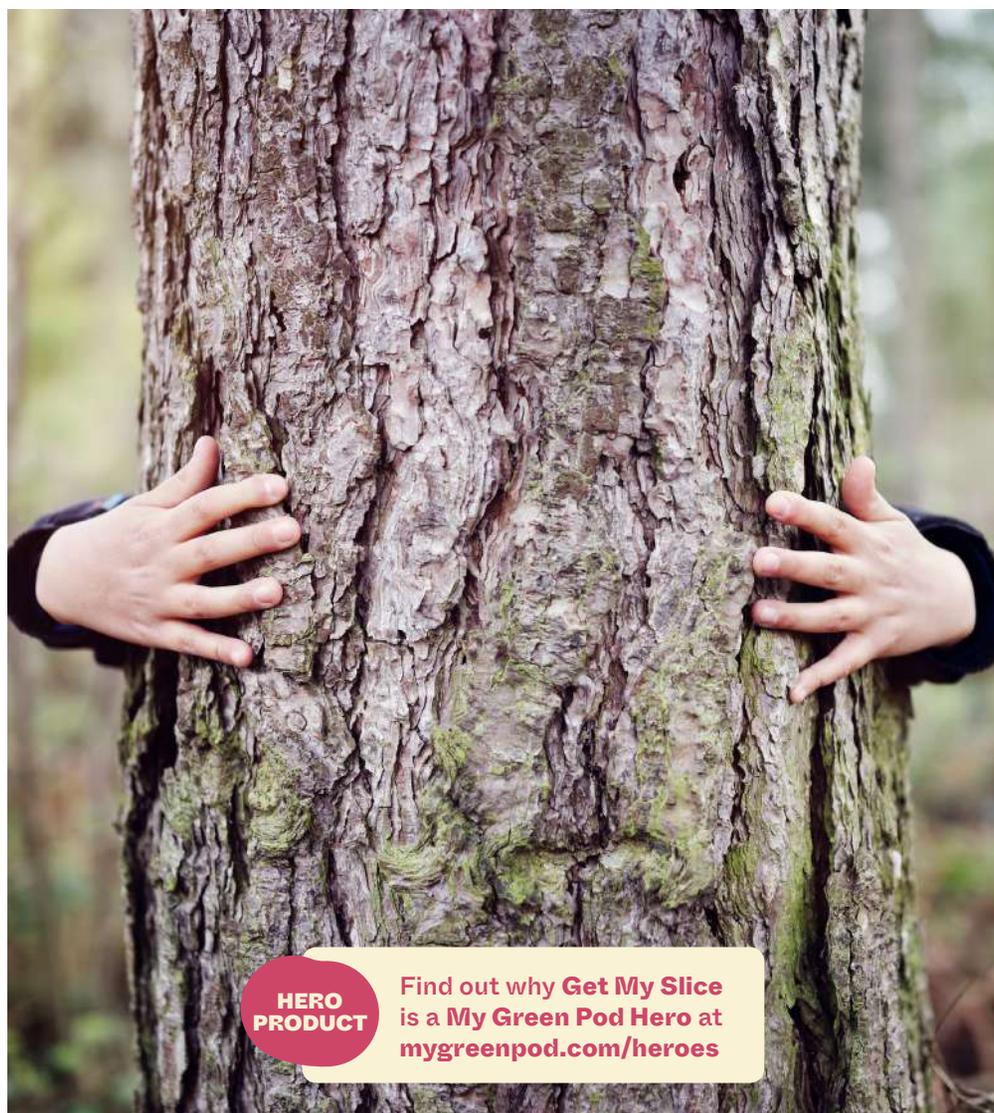
A key tool for Pinksheep's educational approach is Ora's live dashboard, which provides clients with detailed sustainability reporting. Each client's merchandise purchases are logged, tracked and available for them to view online.

The dashboard makes it really easy for a client to watch its company's environmental impact improve over time through their increasingly sustainable merchandise choices.

'Clients are signing up daily, so each month we're planting thousands of trees and offsetting tonnes of carbon', Phil reveals. 'We're also in talks with a leading plastic collection company; the goal is to give Ora members a choice so they can support the cause they care most about – whether it's planting trees, offsetting carbon, removing ocean plastics or a mixture of all three.'

Save cash - help the planet

This free app helps users plant trees and save money, making sustainability easier for everyone



PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK

Get My Slice can put you back in control of your data and help you to use it for good. The free, user-friendly app allows you to get more money back when you shop. Instead of the usual discounts you might see in stores or on cash-back sites, users receive personalised offers with an additional 80% of the money brands would normally spend on advertising to you.

Get My Slice has big plans for the planet, too, and has created a tree-planting partnership with My Green Pod and women-focused charity TreeSisters.

JOIN THE FOUNDERS CLUB

As a thank you to early users of the app, Get My Slice has decided to give away some of the value of its company in the form of a Founders Club.

This is the first loyalty system of its kind; users can either choose to hold on to their points, which will be converted to cash once the app reaches its target number of users, or redeem them to plant trees and get prizes like cash or gift vouchers.

My Green Pod readers get an added bonus: Get My Slice will plant a tree for everyone who downloads the free app and signs up through My Green Pod's unique link (see below). It will also plant a tree every time a user completes a My Green Pod offer.

When you sign up you'll immediately get access to the Founders Club, where you can redeem points to plant more trees. Each tree is just 2,000 points; you get an additional 1,000 points just for signing up, plus 2,000 when you complete your first offer - so that's nearly two trees already!

You can get even more points by spreading the word and sharing the app with your friends and family. Planting trees has never been easier.

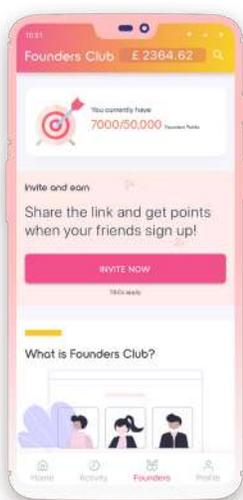
HELP PLANT OUR FOREST

Get My Slice has pledged to plant a minimum of 1,000 trees per month via its Founders Club, and as membership grows, more trees will be planted. The scheme will be a big support to My Green Pod's goal to get 50,000 trees in the ground this summer.

Download the free Get My Slice app to check out thousands of offers from brands including My Green Pod. Soon you'll be able to click on the Green category to find sustainable brands, and switch on Green Mode to plant even more trees when you shop!

Find out more

■ Start planting trees! Download the free Get My Slice app, for iOS or Android, at getmyslice.com/mygreenpod



'These days many companies are committed to helping people and the planet in some way, but at Get My Slice we wanted our members to be directly involved and see the benefits. Our members are at the heart of our company and the Founders Club is an expression of that. The Get My Slice app puts money back in your pocket through offers and makes it easy for you to help save the planet by planting trees.'

OLIVER SOUTHGATE, FOUNDER AND CEO, GET MY SLICE

With many families planning to stay in the UK this summer, Valley Fest – ‘the best-tasting music festival in the South West’ – is proving a popular choice.

Government permitting, the event will take place 30 July-01 August. Headliners of the family-friendly food and music festival, near Bristol, include Texas, Sophie Ellis-Bextor and Deacon Blue.

The weekend will also showcase the region’s finest produce: from charcuterie to cheddars and ciders to sausages, with plenty of Somerset sizzle.

Consistently, Valley Fest’s biggest crowd-pleaser is the view. Chew Valley Lake, framed by the rolling Mendip Hills, provides the sparkling backdrop.

MUSIC ON AN ORGANIC FARM

The festival is held on an organic farm so looking after the land is part of its DNA. There is a wealth of fascinating and progressive content, from talks on soil health and wildlife-friendly gardening to farm tours and discussions on regenerative farming.

Valley Fest is now in its sixth year, and its lineup has always featured big names alongside plenty of exciting rising stars. For 2021 My BABY, The Allergies, Beans on Toast, Oh My God! It’s the Church, The Blockheads, The Cuban Brothers, The Snuts and Toploader will take to the stage.

THE BEST-TASTING MUSIC FESTIVAL

There is much food for thought and much thoughtful food on offer at Valley Fest – expect plenty of BBQs, feasts, street food, chef demonstrations and panel discussions.

Over the weekend guests can see *Great British Bake Off* stars Chetna Makan and Briony May Williams; Rob Howell from Root Bristol and chef and author Olia Hercules, named *Observer Food Monthly’s* Rising Star of 2015.

Tom Hunt, author of *Eating for Pleasure, People & Planet*, is on the bill along with TV’s Andy Clarke, who will be highlighting some stunning ethical drinks producers. Jenny Chandler, ‘Queen of the Bean’ food writer and chef, will show how kids can make easy dishes at home.

A LIVE FIRE STAGE

A new addition for this year is a live fire stage that will showcase the best ingredients from Wales and the South West, with plenty of laughs and delicious tasters to boot. The lineup includes Sam Evans and Shauna Guinn from Hang Fire Southern Kitchen and chef Henry Eldon of The Cauldron Restaurant.

Eco chef and UN World Food Programme ambassador Arthur Potts Dawson will demonstrate how to make the most of summer vegetables.

FEASTS AND BBQS

The region’s culinary heroes and heroines will be cooking up a storm day and night in the spectacular dining marquee. Josh Eggleton, owner



Valley Fest is proving a popular option for families looking for a perfect UK break

Hedge-to-hedge sparkle

of the Michelin-starred Pony and Trap, will join Rob Howell, head chef of Root, a Bib Gourmand award winner. A very special Sunday Lunch Feast, with every ingredient on the plate sourced from within the Chew Valley, is not to be missed!

Back by popular demand, chefs from Bristol and the Chew Valley will be whipping up a big Sunday Lunch BBQ. Guests will be able to taste some of the highest quality meat in the South West – as well as plenty of alternatives for vegetarians – all cooked over fire bowls and combine-harvester barbecues.

There will be more street food than you can shake a stick at, with something to tickle everyone’s taste buds and to suit every budget.

LAZY LAKESIDE LUSHNESS

Valley Fest takes place in one large meadow, making it perfect for first-time festivalgoers and families of all ages.

People often remark how easy it is to get around – no long hikes across fields or hours trying to find your friends. In fact, part of Valley Fest’s appeal is the lazy lakeside vibe.

Expect treats, beats and plenty to eat with hedge-to-hedge Somerset sparkle and a spectacular soundtrack.

Adult weekend tickets are £175 (plus booking fee). Should the event not go ahead, ticket holders will be offered a rollover to 2022 or refunded.

Find out more

■ See full lineup details and ticket information at valleyfest.co.uk



HERO PRODUCT

Find out why Valley Fest is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes



Model twins Brett and Scott Staniland reveal their top picks for vintage and pre-loved fashion, and explain why renting your wardrobe could be the future

It's no secret we are buying more and more clothes: since the late '80s we've gone from buying 10-12 new items per year to almost 70!

The flip side of this is that in the UK alone, every second the equivalent of a rubbish truck load of clothes is burned or buried in landfill.

Fashion's strain on the planet has been revealed in documentaries and articles that expose the sheer volume of garments produced. Fashion brands have a lot of work to do, but consumers also have a role to play; by adopting more conscious buying habits we could all make a positive difference.

CIRCULAR FASHION

The circularity of fashion is a complicated piece of the puzzle: what should we do with our clothes when we no longer want them?

Most of us have taken a bag of clothes to the charity shop or received hand-me-downs, and many will have taken bags to a 'clothes bin' within a high-street store in return for a discount on, you guessed it, more clothes.

These are all ways to extend a garment's life, but where do these clothes actually end up?

True circularity would involve taking our used items back to the place we bought them to be made into something new, designing out waste and negating further pollution. Unfortunately this is still extremely rare.

THE SECONDHAND FASHION BOOM

There has been a change in the way we buy clothes; online secondhand is set to grow 69% between

2019 and 2021 to become a \$12bn industry. America is ahead on this trend; companies like The RealReal and Rent The Runway, now in their 10th and 12th years, are household names.

The bigger players are taking note, too; Vestiaire Collective has recently sold a stake to Kering and even Gucci has an official partnership with resale site The RealReal.

For the UK, thrifting and shopping secondhand has historically been about buying cheap items from eBay or rummaging through piles of clothes to find that one gem. This narrative has recently started to change, and shopping 'vintage' and 'pre-loved' luxury items is acquiring a cooler image.

Depop is perhaps the most popular secondhand online marketplace. It saw a tremendous surge during lockdown; demand doubled and there was a reported 300% year-on-year increase in items sold.



LEFT Selfridges launched its Project Earth initiative with a 'Let's Change the Way We Shop' sign above its flagship shop on Oxford Street

Buying secondhand items is a great way to extend the life of clothes; the end of our ownership doesn't have to mean the end of life for the garment. Being able to pass our loved pieces on will help reduce fashion's impact on the planet.

RENTING YOUR WARDROBE

With influencers constantly churning out new content and the viral nature of outfits and 'hauls', many consumers deem something worn once or twice as 'old' – particularly after they have posted a picture of themselves wearing the outfit.

We currently use rental schemes for occasions like parties, weddings and even graduation – but until now we haven't thought it could be a plausible solution for our wider wardrobes.

Fashion rental sites have been popularised by those deepest in fashion; people in the magazine industry and even influencers have jumped at the chance to rent out their own wardrobes while still looking on trend with the latest bags or dresses, which they can rent for a couple days.

Many of the sites to the right now have celebrity edits or influencer spotlights, so users can rent items from the people who started the trend!

A couple of different business models are at play here; some companies choose to buy stock upfront and rent it out for themselves, while others offer peer-to-peer rentals.

Victoria Prew, founder of Hurr Collective, recently remarked in a Clubhouse room that lots of users actually use her site for work outfits, changing them out every week.

We think rental is also a great tool for holidays and staycations; by renting an outfit for a week or two in summer, you can avoid buying something that will sit in a drawer for the next 11 months. Rental is a great way to be kind to the pocket and to the planet.

There has been huge progress in new fashion businesses that make a strong case for us to move away from buying new items. The new 'new' is all about buying something pre-loved which is new to you, or exploring opportunities when it would make sense for us to rent or borrow something instead. Here are some of our favourite examples of both!

Find out more

■ Read more from Brett and Scott at [@twinbrett](#) and [@twinscott](#)

PRE-LOVED FASHION

Cudoni UK

A UK-based marketplace for buying and selling pre-owned luxury goods, with a strong focus on sustainability and recycling. The high-quality items celebrate workmanship and are made to last a lifetime, which means the items can change hands multiple times. [cudoni.com](#)

Vinted

Making used clothes cool again is definitely on Vinted's radar: it empowers users to sell their brilliant secondhand items and shop for ones they won't find on the high street. Vinted is a strong supporter of the idea that clothes made well should last a long time. [vinted.co.uk](#)



Sellier

An expert in pre-loved luxury, with a wide range of vintage and new items often in next-to-new condition. Sellier claims to have one of the best collections of Hermes bags available for resale. It's a great one to follow on Instagram as Sellier regularly uploads stories of new stock as well as expert insight into spotting counterfeits. [sellierknightsbridge.com](#)

ThredUp

ThredUp believes the planet should come first and that resale moves us one step closer to a circular fashion future. 'Thrifting is about more than just finding amazing deals on your favourite brands', it says. 'It's about shopping with intention, rejecting throwaway fashion culture and standing for sustainability.' [thredup.com](#)



FASHION RENTAL



Loanhood

Jade, Jen and Lucy have spent the last two years working on Loanhood and are now ready to build a community of 'stylish side-hustlers and savvy renters' to disrupt fast fashion for the good of the planet. In their words: 'look good, do good, Loanhood'. [loanhood.com](#)

Second Outing

This is the first menswear peer-to-peer rental service. Looking good shouldn't cost the Earth and Midlands-based founders Gavin Samra and James Ashwell believe menswear has some catching up to do in the rental space. By offering quality

items at a fraction of their retail value, Second Outing is reducing our reliance on fast fashion. [secondouting.com](#)

Hurr Collective

Forbes 30 under 30 and Hurr Collective CEO Victoria Prew has had an impressive few years at Hurr. From visiting lenders'

homes with camera in hand to a desk at Google's Startups Campus – via a pop-up in Selfridges – Victoria took an idea and made it a movement. Hurr is now a tech-first platform with thousands of renters and lenders building a smart solution for fashion. [hurrcollective.com](#)



MyWardrobeHQ

The UK's first fashion rental marketplace positioned in the premium and luxury sector, My Wardrobe HQ is one of the leaders in this space and offers options to rent or buy clothes. Partnering with brands as well as impeccably dressed celebrities, the offering is a mix of new and pre-loved items from past seasons. The unique model allows users to 'try before they buy', with no catches. [mywardrobehq.com](#)

'Consumption habits are evolving. It is less about 'what you have' and more about 'who you are'. We at Loanhood see fashion rental as a statement. Instead of passive consumerism, peer-to-peer rental gives our community back control over their wardrobes, increasing the value and appreciation of clothing.'

JADE McSORLEY, MODEL AND FOUNDER OF LOANHOOD



MARKETPLACE

Our new-look Marketplace is full of alternatives to mainstream products, whether you want to clean up your diet or your skincare routine. Here are just some of the products currently available – use the search bar at mygreenpod.com to find what you need!

PLASTIC FREE

Many of the products on our Marketplace come in plastic-free packaging, or are designed to be refilled and reused again and again.

NATURAL PRODUCTS

All the products we list harness

the power of nature to get the job done – whether you're cleaning the house or taking care of your skin.

GO ORGANIC

Organic products aren't just better for you, they're better for the soil, the water and

the people who grew the ingredients. They are also more familiar to your body, making them tastier, comfier and more effective.

ETHICAL BUSINESS

Many of the companies we feature are doing great things

for nature and society behind the scenes; with your support they can do even more.

PLANT A TREE

For every transaction, we plant a tree in the tropics (with charity partner TreeSisters) as a way to say thank you.

HOME & GARDEN



@BAMBUU THE REUSABLE STAWS

Four straws (bamboo or stainless steel) with one wire cleaner

£4.95



BIO-D HOME & GARDEN SANITISER (5L)

Disinfects and neutralises odours to clean your home – inside and out!

£10.29



VESTA LIVING REUSABLE TEA BAGS

Two organic cotton muslin bags to use again and again with loose-leaf tea

£10



PANDA PACKAGING WATER BOTTLE

A stylish and sleek water bottle made from stainless steel and bamboo

£11.99



WAXWRAP WAXED COTTON FOOD ROLL

Organic cotton cloth coated with beeswax, pine resin and jojoba oil

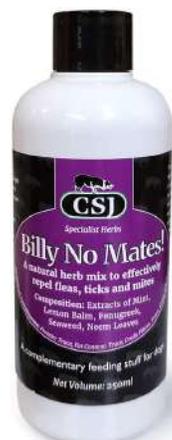
£12-20



LOOP LOOP PLANTABLE CARD

100% recycled cotton and 100% good for the bees! Contains centaurea seeds

£4



BILLY NO MATES PET TINCTURE (250ML)

A natural flea, mite and tick repellent that can also improve skin and coat

£16.69



WE ARE PROBIOTIC SUBSCRIPTION

A regular supply of probiotic cleaning product refills for a healthy home

From £13.50 every 3 months



AURA-SOMA CORAL COLOUR ESSENCE (30ML)

Helps to balance all the chakras so that energy flows more smoothly

£15.94



SLEEP ORGANIC HEMMED FLAT SHEET

Classic white percale hemmed flat sheets with generous dimensions

£50-95

ARTS & FASHION



**WAVES
FLIP FLOPS**

Plastic-free flip flops made from ethically sourced Sri Lankan rubber

£20



**ARTFUL SONDER
ORGANIC TOTE BAG**

This organic cotton tote bag would make a perfect gift for Attenborough fans!

£13



**GREEN PEOPLE ORGANIC
SUN LOTION (200ML)**

Protect your skin naturally with this SPF15 sun lotion and tan accelerator

£21.50

HEALTH & BEAUTY



**LOVEGROVE ESSENTIALS
ORGANIC CLEANSING
PADS**

Two reusable cleansing pads made from naturally anti-bacterial organic bamboo

£8.95



**TABITHA JAMES KRAAN
ORGANIC HAIR OIL
(30ML)**

Restore, protect and polish your hair with this nutrient-rich and aromatic oil

£38



**BIRD
KAKA SUNGLASSES**

Polarised lenses in a cat-eye frame made from bio-acetate and wood

£99



**NOAH
LETIZIA SANDALS**

Vegan and minimalist summer sandals in lightweight microsuède

£72



**ALTEYA ORGANICS
ROSE WATER (200ML)**

Bulgarian rose water with multiple uses and a mesmerising fragrance

£13.40



**THE KENTISH SOAP CO
BLISSFUL SOAP BAR**

A warm blend of natural essential oils, including sweet orange and geranium

£5



**WE LOVE THE PLANET
DEODORANT CREAM**

A beeswax, coconut oil and cornstarch base with baking soda to neutralise odour

£8.99

FOOD & DRINK



**CHICP HUMMUS
VIBRANT VARIETY PACK**

Hummus made from fresh wonky vegetables that would usually go to waste!

£7.47



**COOPER KING
HERB GIN**

The UK's first carbon-negative gin! With basil, lemongrass and clove

£39



**NUTCESSITY 'TRY ME'
ORGANIC NUT BUTTERS**

Five sumptuous organic 'treenut' butters - made with no added sugar or oil

£25.99



**EQUINOX KOMBUCHA
MULTI-PACK BOTTLES**

12 or 18 bottles of vegan and 100% organic kombucha in every flavour

£24-34.20



**WUNDER WORKSHOP
GOLDEN TURMERIC HONEY**

Organic, Ayurvedic-inspired turmeric honey, high in curcuminoids

£4.99

Janey LOVES

Natural beauty expert Janey Lee Grace on how to harness flower power this summer



As we head into summer, we can all harness the incredible power of flowers in our skincare and beauty routines.

We've all heard the expression 'wake up and smell the roses', but this special flower is way more than just a clump of fragrant petals.

The essential oil derived from the rose plant has many benefits, including easing anxiety and stress, easing menstrual discomfort, increasing 'feel-good hormones', aiding relaxation, boosting self-esteem and of course soothing irritated skin.

Lavender essential oil is also fabulous in skincare and beauty products; it has antiseptic properties, promotes relaxation and can help with anxiety, allergies and insomnia.

It's no surprise that lots of natural brands use the oils from these powerful flowers in their products; here are some of my current favourites!

PLASTIC-FREE BEAUTY

Have you tried a facial bar? The Kentish Soap Company is a family-run business that lovingly handmakes soaps in small batches. It uses the traditional cold-process method to combine skin-nourishing oils – including avocado oil, olive oil, shea butter and coconut oil – with natural essential oils for fragrance and botanicals and clays for colour.

The new Rose Clay Facial Bar is scented with essential oils of rose geranium (soothing and balancing) and frankincense – and

needless to say it smells divine. The bar also contains rosehip oil, which naturally regenerates and nourishes the skin, and rose clay, which is celebrated for its healing powers.

The bar gently exfoliates skin to help draw out impurities and keep it soft and supple.

CLEANSE AND MOISTURISE IN ONE

Handmade Naturals is a Cheshire-based artisan brand that creates 100% natural skincare and haircare products.

Its bestselling Face Cleansing Lotion – an organic rose, hemp and jojoba cleanser – is made with Bulgarian rose, organic hemp and golden jojoba oil. It comes in a bottle with a pump dispenser for ease of use, and it's suitable for normal and dry skin.

This lotion also doubles up as a light daytime moisturiser for oily skin.

ROSE FOR ANTI-AGEING

You can of course treat yourself to a bottle of rose essential oil and add a few drops to organic coconut oil, or try the TIANA® Organic & Fair Trade Rose Fresh Coconut TLC Anti Ageing Moisturiser. This is a very concentrated face balm with a unique formula of more than 300 nutrients, antioxidants and antibacterial properties that help to smooth and hydrate the skin and reduce fine lines and wrinkles.

It's scented with highest quality *Rosa damascena* essential oil, known for its moisturising, soothing and smoothing effect on wrinkles and fine lines.

THE MULTI-TASKER

Niche & Cult Ltd, previously known as The Konjac Sponge Company, is the original (and in my view best) supplier of the amazing konjac sponge – and the company now also sells a *Rosa damascena* floral water. Natural and alcohol free, this is a classic facial toner for soothing sensitive skin and works wonders on acne-prone skin.

It can be used as a facial toner, a light makeup cleanser, a moisturising body spray, a natural and gentle perfume, a makeup fixing spray, a mild deodorant, a hair and scalp treatment and to soothe skin after shaving.

PURE TRANQUILITY

Shui Me has a wonderful collection of aromatherapy products, including Lavender Epsom Salts. This bath soak helps you regain your sense of stillness, peace and total tranquility.

Harnessing the power of a single aromatherapy note – lavender essential oil – its purity amplifies its beautifully soothing and anti-inflammatory benefits.

MARKETPLACE

Discover other rose- and lavender-based beauty and wellbeing products using the search bar at mygreenpod.com



Sparkling clean



These colourful shampoo bars are putting the fun into plastic-free haircare

Recyclable bathroom waste accounts for 30-40% of the UK's total landfill waste. The good news is that the vast majority of plastic packaging is becoming unnecessary thanks to innovations in plastic-free products for the hair and body.

Emma Evans left a career in the NHS to launch Rush Organics, a range of solid shampoo bars, in 2018. 'My main motivation was the plastic pollution', Emma tells us. 'I wanted to find a way to help others reduce the amount of plastic they use. I'd heard of shampoo bars but after researching them, I didn't like some of the ingredients companies were using.'

Emma set out to create her own range of organic haircare bars, to provide the sustainable and vegan alternative she felt the market was missing.

PLASTIC-FREE PRODUCTS

Demand for plastic-free products shows no sign of slowing, but products without plastic aren't always free from other nasty and polluting ingredients, so always check the label.

'The ingredients that we avoid are sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS), parabens and palm oil', Emma tells us. 'SLS is used as the foaming agent in many shampoos and soaps, but it is a skin irritant. Instead we use sodium cocoyl isethionate, a natural ingredient derived from coconut which is much gentler on your skin.'

ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

Synthetic ingredients have been popular in mainstream products because they are cheap, and they deliver the results we have come to expect. Now there are more alternatives available, there's no reason why big names in haircare and skincare shouldn't make the switch.

HERO PRODUCT Find out why **Rush Organics** is a **My Green Pod Hero** at mygreenpod.com/heroes

Emma's favourite plant-based ingredient is coconut oil, because it is so versatile and has lots of great properties. It conditions, moisturises, reduces dandruff, strengthens hair and protects skin from UV damage.

At Rush Organics there's a focus on organic ingredients because, as Emma puts it, they're important for us and the planet. 'Organic ingredients can reduce the chances of hair loss, dandruff, allergies and irritation', Emma explains, 'and because no artificial pesticides or fertilisers are used in the growing process, they can support soil health and the local ecosystem as well.'

SPARKLE AND SHINE

The thing that really makes Rush Organics stand out is the fun factor: there are bars that look like they're made from gold and bold colours that would brighten up any bathroom.

The bars contain vibrant natural colourants from vegetable powders, and many also contain biodegradable glitter for some extra sparkle. The dazzling hues are a far cry from the muted shades many have grown to expect from natural products, and add some fun to bath (or shower) time.

Each solid shampoo bar (£6.50) is equivalent to three bottles of shampoo, so each bar you buy saves plastic and, in most cases, money.

'My advice to those who haven't switched to shampoo bars yet is to just try them', Emma tells us. 'We have a variety of bars suitable for all hair types. They are easy to use and your hair – and planet – will thank you!'

MARKETPLACE

Browse and buy **Rush Organics** products at mygreenpod.com

Rush Organics has a range of solid haircare bars in all the colours of the rainbow



MY GREEN PODCAST

My
Green
Pod
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JARVIS



KATIE



JO

podpeople

LAUNCHING 05 JULY 2021!

Want to live ethically? Or organically? How about just sustainably? And without drastically changing your lifestyle or blowing up your bank account?

My Green Podcast with Jarvis, Katie and Jo is the show about accessible, sustainable living, with tips on healthy living and the latest environmental news. They'll be joined by special guests who will share their own views on how to save the planet. Episode one welcomes Fearn Cotton to the show and in episode two the team chats with Dianne Dain.

Jarvis Smith, Katie Hill and Jo Wood have been doing the green thing for a long time, and they say being green is easier than most people think.

If you want to live a more sustainable lifestyle but don't know where to start, tune in for green nuggets, slippery sideshows and hardcore realism.

Produced by Pod People Productions. Subscribe now on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts.



DETOX YOUR LIFE

How to reduce the toxic load from your everyday products



Two businesswomen in the east of Devon want to help us reduce the number of synthetic and harmful products we use daily on our bodies and in our homes.

According to some reports, the average woman puts up to 168 chemicals on her body each day.

While many of the ingredients in our day-to-day products are harmless, mainstream skincare and household cleaning solutions can contain endocrine disruptors, carcinogens and neurotoxins.

As an example, some of the chemicals in aerosol deodorants could be endocrine disruptors, which interfere with the body's hormonal system. Other ingredients commonly found in aerosol deodorants may be carcinogenic or interfere with the microorganisms of the gut biome, which play a part in digestion.

Aluminium, which can be found in antiperspirants, is thought to cause gene instability in breast tissue. Research suggests it may lead to the development of tumours or cancer cells.

Studies reveal that over 50% of breast cancers start in the upper-outer quadrant of the breast local to the underarm region. While this isn't conclusive, doctors suggest that it may be worth avoiding the

MARKETPLACE

Browse or shop Pit-Tastic solid deodorant bars at mygreenpod.com/marketplace

HERO PRODUCT

Find out why Pit-Tastic is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes

use of antiperspirants that contain aluminium – particularly if you shave your armpits.

Alice Bardwell founded Pit-Tastic to offer a plastic-free and natural alternative to aerosol deodorants. 'It was important to me to make sure that our zero-waste deodorant bars were free from any of the chemicals that might cause health or environmental issues', she tells us. 'We've only used natural ingredients, to ensure the bars are not only eco-friendly but also that they are gentle on our bodies and effective with odours.'

NON-TOXIC CLEANING

The products we use to clean our homes can add to the toxic load, as they can contain chemicals that are similar – or even harsher – than those we put on our skin. 'The number of chemicals in products we use regularly around the house is phenomenal', says Kate Deacon, who runs Mix Clean Green. 'If I'm finding the fumes overwhelming', Kate adds, 'then it can't be good for my children and their little lungs.'

Kate has formulated an award-winning range of certified vegan and non-toxic cleaning products that is free from parabens, SLS, palm oil and

synthetic biocides and fragrances. 'Kate and I both wanted to create effective, efficient everyday products that we'd use in our own homes and on our bodies', Alice says. 'Products that are free from single-use plastics and nasties, and that are kind to the planet, too.'

Alice and Kate use the same eco toxicologist, which demonstrates how well Pit-Tastic and Mix Clean Green's ethics align. 'Sustainability and the environment are at the heart of both our businesses', Kate tells us.

EVERY CHANGE COUNTS

It's more important than ever to consider the impact of every product we buy – from its packaging and carbon footprint to the impact of its ingredients. 'We have considered every element of our respective companies and the products we've created', Kate tells us, 'not just to minimise the toxic load for our customers, but also to reduce the impact on the planet.'

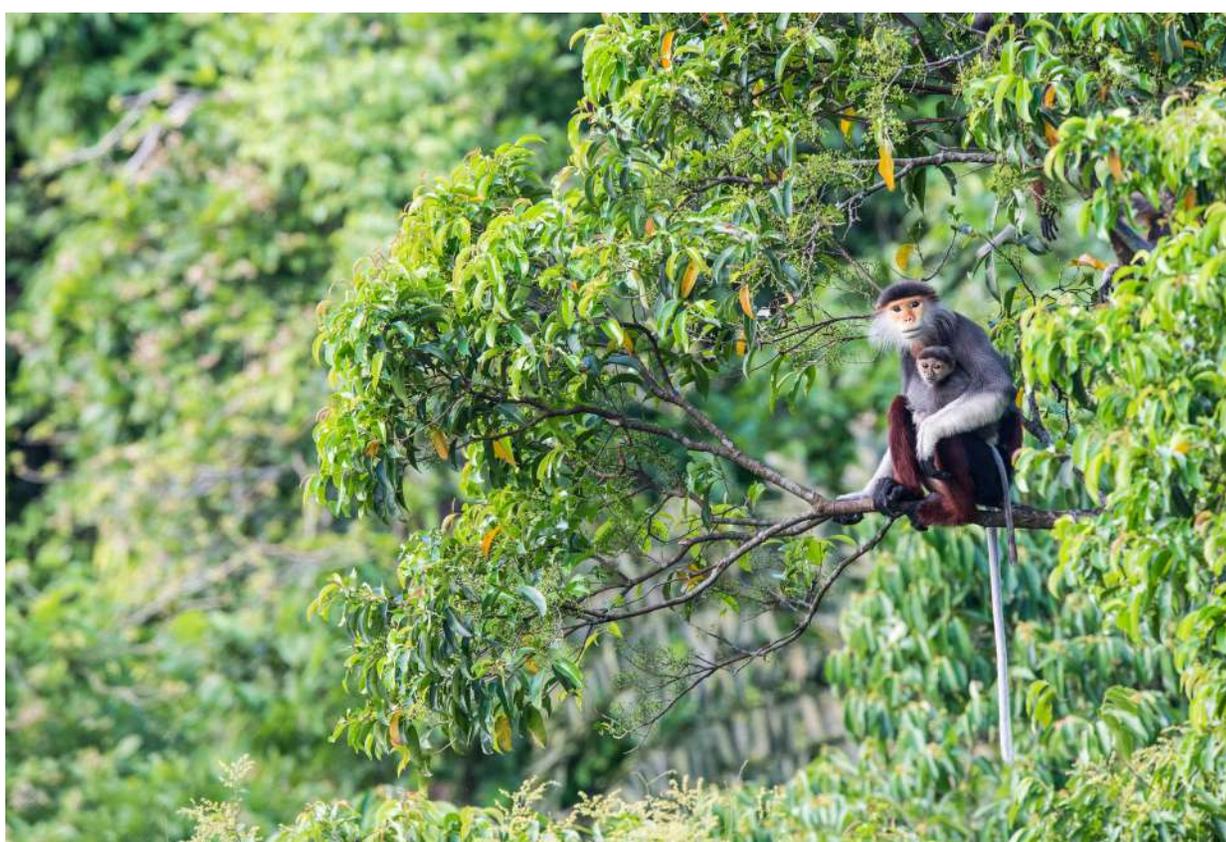
If Pit-Tastic and Mix Clean Green can help just one person, or save just one item of plastic from landfill, then Kate and Alice both believe that's a major win for everyone – and for future generations.

Find out more

- Discover Alice's story at tasticrange.co.uk
- View the Mix Clean Green range at mixcleangreen.co.uk

FUTURE-PROOFED COFFEE

≠≠



Coffee is the world's most popular drink; around 2 billion cups are consumed every day – 95 million in the UK alone.

It's a love affair that shows no sign of fizzling out any time soon: caffeine is so deeply engrained in our culture that we down takeout espressos on station platforms and linger over fishbowls of frothy latte with friends.

So what would we do if there were no farmers left to cultivate coffee, because they had been so drastically underpaid and undervalued that they felt forced to migrate to seek better opportunities? How would we manage if there were no soil left to farm because it had been scorched, eroded and chemically abused? How would we feed our caffeine addiction if the landscape had been destroyed by monoculture? Would we have to resort to roasting acorns, like we did in 1942?

TAKING WHAT WE NEED

Since 2005, Puro Coffee has worked hard to create nature reserves that promote biodiversity in the countries from which the family-owned roaster's coffee is sourced.

Puro uses green energy – alongside knowledge acquired over 220 years – to roast multi-award winning carbon-neutral fairtrade organic blends for businesses around the world. It's the house coffee at My Green Pod HQ and tastes delicious; each 1kg bought saves 20m² of rainforest – that's 1m² per six cups of coffee, which we easily drink each day.

'Indigenous wisdom, from some of these very lands, teaches us only to take what we need, to give something back in the place of what we have taken and to make decisions that will benefit the lives of those seven generations ahead of us', explains Puro Coffee's Andy Orchard.

Demand for coffee is set to grow substantially over the next 30 years, and the way we use land will determine whether it will be possible to quench our thirst for coffee in years to come.

RESPONSIBLE LAND USE

Puro's farm in Honduras is a fairtrade and organic cooperative member of the same coop from which Puro buys its coffee. The farm has demonstrated that coffee can actually be a tool for conservation.

CLOCKWISE Puro's friends and farmers in Peru; Guatemala's pristine Laguna Brava; Puro Coffee beans being depulped; coffee beans from the farm; Puro Coffee Farm; the endangered red-shanked douc is a species protected by Puro's conservation work



The land has been replanted with native trees and coffee, to help it to heal from less conscious agricultural practices that took place in the past. Coffee can grow happily in the shade, so tall native trees can be left alone to maintain a healthy balance.

The coop Puro belongs to follows in the footsteps of nature; after the bean has been removed from the coffee cherry, the fruit is composted and returned back to the soil around the coffee plants. This gives the plants all the nutrition they need, and also means that no manure needs to be trucked in (a point celebrated by vegan coffee drinkers).

Puro's real conservation magic lies in its exclusive partnership with World Land Trust, the UK-based charity of which Sir David Attenborough is a patron.

Puro Coffee sales create a cash stream that flows back into funding the purchase and protection of Puro rainforest reserves.

These reserves now span more than 430km² across 11 coffee-producing countries – that's an area larger than the UK's 100 largest natural parks combined. But it's what these reserves contain that sparks the real talking point for Puro.

PROTECTING SPECIES

Water sources in Honduras have quadrupled since being protected by Puro, meaning local coffee-

growing communities are now able to drink tap water.

More than 500 species at risk of extinction now call Puro reserves home, including the saola (Asian unicorn), black rhino, Malayan pangolin, golden poison arrow frog, rondo bushbaby, golden-rumped elephant shrew and black-headed spider monkey.

Many new species previously unknown to science have been discovered in Puro's reserves, three of which have been named in honour of Puro: a frog (*Pristimantis puruscafeum*), an orchid (*Teagueia puroana*) and a tree, which will be announced very soon.

Amphibians considered extinct for many years have now discovered it's safe to step out and be spotted in Puro's Ecuador and Guatemala reserves.

Scientists from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew recently outlined the 10 golden rules for tree planting; number one was to protect standing forests first. This was great news for Puro, as it has been estimated the company's reserves protect more than 27.5 million trees and store 41.5 million tonnes of carbon. One of Puro's reserves in Guatemala protects the sparkling Laguna Brava, the country's last remaining pristine lagoon.

WORKING WITH EQUALS

We can't look seven generations ahead without acknowledging ancestral wounds. After helping to plant trees and cleaning the lagoon on the land that is now the Finca de Puro Café (Puro Coffee Farm), the team at Puro returned home to find this moving message: 'You know we are raised to see blonde, blue-eyed people as superiors... and when you come here, work hard with us, eat with us and make us feel like equals, you guys leave a huge mark. And I'm really grateful for it, thank you.'

By trying to understand the complexity of the challenges faced by coffee farmers, Puro rooted itself in the same soil in a bid to empower change from within. The team is mindful of being equals: divided by oceans, connected by coffee.

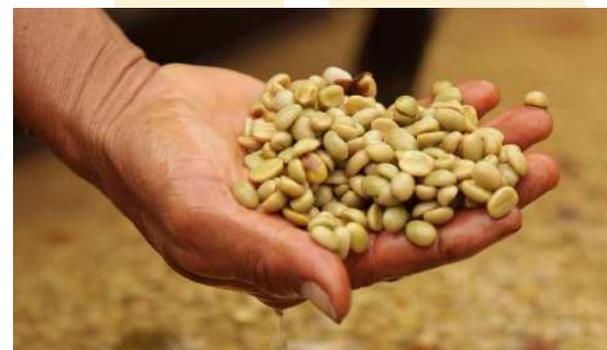
Puro Coffee, which is abundant in credibly conscious cafés, kitchens, restaurants, hotels and offices, is now seeking new tribe members to join in serving, selling and celebrating a type of success that's aligned with community and conservation.

Find out more

- Details of Puro's conservation work and social initiatives are at purocoffee.com
- Find out how to get Puro in your office at office-coffee.co.uk

MARKETPLACE

Buy Puro Coffee for your home or workplace at mygreenpod.com



LET'S TALK

DIRTY

Our greatest ally in the climate crisis is the soil beneath our feet.

It has the potential to store more carbon than all the world's plants and forests combined. It is home to a quarter of all Earth's species. It can hold 65% of the world's fresh water. And it provides 95% of the food we eat.

If we look after our soil we give ourselves, and our planet, the best chance of averting this crisis.

But we've been taking it for granted.

When we don't look after it, soil is easily eroded and washed away, or damaged by overuse of pesticides and contamination from pollution that can wipe out organisms living below the surface. What remains is less able to store carbon, withstand drought or flooding, or provide nutrients to help plants grow.

One third of the world's soil has already been destroyed, and we're losing it up to forty times faster than it can be created.

It doesn't need to be this way. **We can protect what's left of our soil, and repair some of the damage that's already been done**, by treating our most important resource with the care and respect it deserves.

We need to stand up for our soil.

We must stop the use of harmful pesticides, so that soil biodiversity can thrive again.

We must help farmers discover methods that enhance soil – giving back to the earth as much as we take from it.

And **we must make** government give soil the protection and recognition it needs in farming legislation.

At the Soil Association, we stand up for our soil every day - working with farmers on grass-roots research and innovation; presenting the facts to government; and championing farming systems that have healthy soil at their heart.

We can't do it alone – our ability to continue this work relies on support from people like you.

We all need to stand up for soil, because only by working together can we protect our greatest climate asset.



Stand up for soil today at
www.soilassociation.org/stand



According to Yeo Valley Organic, there's a secret to great-tasting dairy: it's all about putting nature first.

One of Britain's largest organic brands, Yeo Valley Organic is owned by the Mead family, which can trace its agricultural roots in Somerset back to the 15th century.

'We farm organically because that's how to get the best-tasting ingredients', explains Yeo Valley Organic owner Tim Mead. 'This inspires all the products and recipes we create. It's great taste the right way.'

SOIL AND SOLAR

The Meads put a strong focus on working in harmony with the environment, and Tim says that everyone at Yeo Valley is deeply invested in tackling climate change. 'We need to consider the environment above anything else and agriculture has the answer if it's done properly', he says.

'As farmers we're standing on something that can store carbon: the soil', Tim continues. 'Surely our first port of call is to do everything we possibly can to lock up carbon in the very thing that we are harnessing to provide food. As a livestock farmer, I feel really excited about being part of the solution.'

The desire to work with nature also applies to Yeo Valley Organic's energy use; the roof of the cow shed, which sprawls across an acre of land, is covered with solar panels.

An additional 3,000 solar panels have recently been installed on the Somerset distribution centre, generating 1,000MWh of green electricity per year.

AN OPEN-GATE POLICY

Tim is the son of Yeo Valley Organic co-founders Roger and Mary Mead; in 1961 they bought their first 30 cows at Holt Farm in the pretty village of Blagdon, Somerset.

The family still lives there today – but it's now responsible for over 2,000 acres of land, including 600 acres of woodland. It's easy to see how, prior to the pandemic, the Meads welcomed up to 50,000 people a year to their home.

The team likes nothing more than opening up the farm gates, and staff are gearing up to welcome visitors back to the valley for experience days ranging from farm tours to cookery and gardening demos.

The Yeo Valley Organic Garden, run by Tim's wife Sarah, is one of the only ornamental gardens in the



Happy Valley

Yeo Valley Organic is re-opening its doors, so everyone can experience the benefits of organic food, flowers and farming

UK to be certified completely organic. This is where a lot of the magic and education around organic takes place, and Sarah loves nothing more than sharing growing tips with visitors.

This year Sarah will also be at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show with renowned garden designer Tom Massey. They'll be bringing a slice of Somerset to SW3 with the dairy brand's first show garden, which features Mendip stone, biochar logs from the woodland and a rich tapestry of flowering plants that support pollinators and nurture soil health.



CLOCKWISE
Yeo Valley Organic chef Paul Collins at a food demo; the fabulous Sarah Mead in her organic ornamental garden; a walk in the stunning Mendip Hills

A stone's throw from Hyde Park, the Yeo Valley Café in London also re-opened in June, serving up delicious food and a fridge stocked with goodies.

A GROWING FAMILY

The last year has been a challenge, but it hasn't stopped everyone at Yeo Valley Organic from nurturing a sense of connection to the outside world and the food we eat.

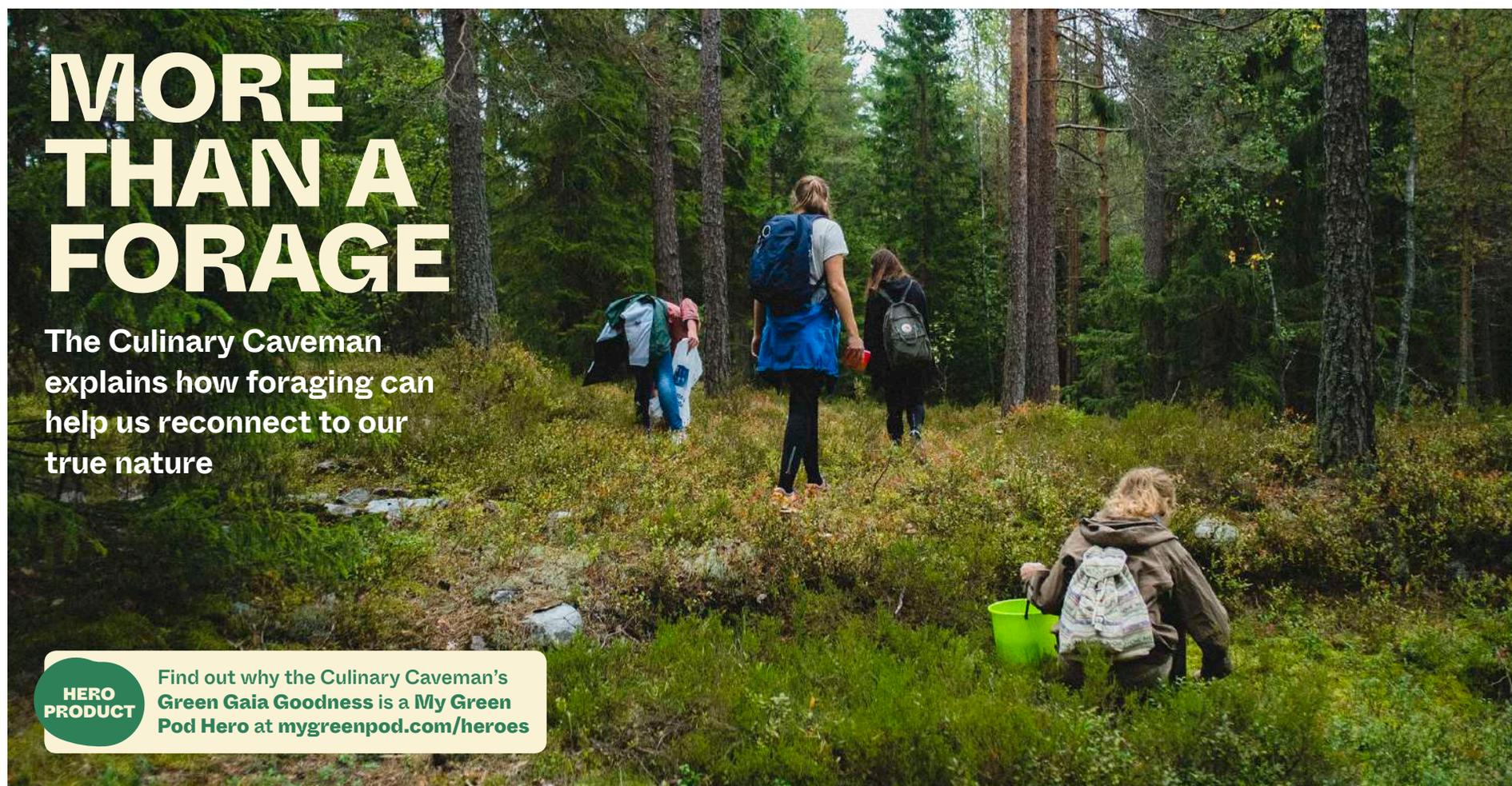
The team has added a new circular walk on the Mendip Hills to visiting experiences, plus a new luxury stay in an old converted stone barn with panoramic views of the valley. Yeo Valley Organic also sponsors Valley Fest, the South West's best-tasting music festival.

'What's so wonderful', says Tim, 'is that we started as a family farm and we still are – but over time our family has slowly grown to include so many more people, from everyone who works with us to those who supply us or shop with us. We love nothing more than welcoming people through our gate.'

HERO PRODUCT
Find out why Yeo Valley Organic is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes

Find out more

■ For details of upcoming events and how to visit the farm or gardens, visit yeovalley.co.uk/come-and-visit-us



PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES

MORE THAN A FORAGE

The Culinary Caveman explains how foraging can help us reconnect to our true nature

HERO PRODUCT Find out why the Culinary Caveman's Green Gaia Goodness is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes

Before the agricultural revolution a few millennia ago, every human's diet would have consisted largely of wild plants, with some entomophagy (eating insects) and a little hunting on the side – usually of the rodent size.

This is 'proper' foraging, though it's not what I'm proposing – not least because it would be impossible to feed the UK population (nearly 70 million) with our wild flora and fauna. At a stretch we'd be able to feed a million this way; the best land has sadly already been left barren by modern monoculture.

The proposition here is to obtain an edible reward for sure, and the potential rewards run much deeper than nutrition alone.

FOREST BATHING

Foraging is becoming more popular, and rightly so. The trend looks like it's here to stay, with interest bolstered by the rise in staycations brought on by the pandemic.

The lockdowns have gifted us a perfect opportunity to get outdoors and learn about a few plants – whether edible or not – at the same time.

The health benefits from being active outdoors in the fresh air are boosted with social time and a companion. Walking in the countryside or woodland has been shown to bestow benefits to the immune system and mental health, with a staggering 50% improvement of functionality (according to Dayawansa, 2003; Li, 2007 and Park, 2010, among others). A drug with this sort of efficacy would be hailed a 'wonder-drug'.

Japan leads the way in the understanding and appreciation of walking in woodland. *Shinrin-yoku*, or 'forest bathing', involves a walk through the woods that takes on the form of a sensual journey, with eye-candy from aesthetically pleasing shapes and colours and olfactory interest from various pungent plants.

By sitting in quiet contemplation, the sounds of nature are allowed to permeate our senses.

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

Possibly the biggest – yet least understood – benefit is the possibility of a reconnection with nature, because we don't just live on Earth, we are all made from Earth.

Now more than ever we need this coming together, this remembering of a common unity. With the rise in interest in local history, flora and fauna, an unexpected side-effect of the pandemic has been this opportunity to reconnect.

There is an essential element of our existence that can never be fulfilled when living an urban existence, and that is our connection with the natural world. Often we don't even know it's missing; it's not essential like water, but it is essential for a humanness which, when suppressed, leaves us incomplete. Fortunately it is quite easy to reignite.

FORAGING GUIDES

There is not enough space here to provide an adequate or safe guide to foraging; I can only advise getting out there and doing some as soon as possible.

Of the many worthy foraging books to take with you, consider *Food For Free* by Richard Mabey, or *Hedgerow Medicine* and *Wayside Medicine* by Julie and Matthew Seal.

Roger Philips's excellent identification books of ferns, wild foods, herbs and mushrooms provide hundreds of pages of information and more plants than you could probably ever see.

The plant to start with has to be the nettle: pinch out the top few leaves before the plant flowers or seeds (some fresh growth will be around up until October). Pop in a fruit tea and enjoy.

MARKETPLACE

Browse Culinary Caveman health and wellbeing supplements at mygreenpod.com/vendors/the-culinary-caveman

Find out more

■ The Culinary Caveman's winning nettle soup recipe is at mygreenpod.com/articles/nettle-neglect

We need to talk about heating

Dan Caesar, joint CEO of Fully Charged, shares his top 10 tips for efficient heating

There is a growing appreciation for the things we can do as individuals to reduce our impact on the planet.

Use low-energy lightbulbs; turn off the TV; reduce, reuse, recycle; walk more; eat less meat; fly less; drive less – and if you do drive, switch to an electric vehicle.

But with space heating and hot water representing more than 80% of home energy use, we really need to talk about heating. This is a complicated topic, so *Fully Charged* is creating a six-part Home Energy series that will be released this summer. If you can't wait, *Fully Charged's* Dan Caesar has shared his top tips to get you started.

TOP 10 EFFICIENT HEATING TIPS

1 ENERGY USAGE

As the saying goes, the cheapest energy is the energy you don't use. You do not need a smart meter to tell you that you are wasting energy. We could all turn the heating down a degree or two, but what about your appliances?

'Vampire' appliances suck energy, even in standby mode, and create something called 'phantom load'. It varies from house to house, but this could be 10-20% of your electricity consumption.

Buying 'smart wifi plugs' that switch your devices off overnight would be a good start.

2 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The UK has the 'leakiest' properties in Europe, making them some of the most expensive to heat. This means that, in many cases, improving the insulation of your home will make a difference.

Most of us don't have access to a thermal imaging camera, but if you could see the leaks you might be shocked by the amount (and cost) of energy that is escaping your property.

Some houses are better suited to insulation than others; the main types to consider include loft insulation, internal wall insulation and external wall insulation.

3 SMART THERMOSTAT

Thermostats – or thermostatic radiator valves – are the unsung heroes of energy management. After all, why heat a house if you're not in it – and why heat rooms when you're not using them?

The latest wifi-enabled smart thermostats are a real step up, and they are relatively straightforward to self-install. Features like multi-room sensors, open window detection and weather adaptation can all add up to make a significant difference.

4 AERATED SHOWER HEADS

When it comes to hot water, the bath is a real resource sink – but showers use lots of water, too. Water that you have to pay to heat.

There is a simple and cost-effective solution: install an aerated shower head and you'll use significantly less water without compromising the power of your shower.

5 THERMAL STORAGE

Hot water tanks are a great way to store energy, but in the UK we haven't just taken them for granted – in many cases we've ripped them out.

Smart hot water systems are making a comeback, alongside space-saving alternatives to water tanks. One example is thermal energy storage technology that uses long-lasting and reliable 'phase change' materials.

6 ENERGY TARIFF

On its own, switching your energy tariff might not save you money – but it can make a marked difference to your carbon footprint. Choosing a 'renewable energy' tariff can also send a strong signal to the market to deploy more wind and solar power, plus energy storage and other technological advancements.



Smart energy suppliers are available in the UK, including those that turn bills into windmills and others that are accelerating cheaper tariffs. Some do less to decarbonise the energy system than others, so don't be afraid to ask.

7 SOLAR ELECTRICITY & SOLAR HEAT

Around a million UK homes have solar photovoltaics (PV), but installations slowed when schemes like the feed-in tariff stopped. For those looking to generate their own power (and store it in a home battery), solar remains an excellent option.

Increasingly aesthetically pleasing solar roof products are becoming available, and solar thermal remains a less popular but equally interesting technology. It helps provide hot water in particular, and is still eligible for the UK's Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

8 HEAT PUMPS

Heat pumps are the logical successor to gas boilers; despite being the technology of choice in Scandinavia and much of Europe, their UK deployment is in its infancy.

It pays to have an MCS (Micro-generation Certification Scheme) installer size up your property, but as a rule of thumb, an air-source heat

pump is probably best for a smaller property, while a ground-source heat pump generally suits properties with more outside space.

9 NEW ZERO-EMISSIONS TECHNOLOGIES

Heat pumps are typically three to four times more efficient than any other heating technology, but they might not be a good fit for your property – or your budget.

Other options include electric heating or infrared heating, but we are particularly enthusiastic about a number of 'zero-emission boilers' that are currently being developed.

We will cover two of these ground-breaking technologies in our Home Energy series this summer.

10 ELECTRIC VEHICLE-TO-GRID

You might not have an electric car yet, but we would be surprised if, by the end of the decade, you haven't fallen in love with the transformation electrification brings. When that time comes, it should be possible to tap into the power of vehicle-to-grid.

Having a battery on your drive could enable you to store up on cheaper electricity and use it at a moment's notice.

Find out more

- Watch the Fully Charged show at youtube.com/FullyChargedShow
- For tickets to Fully Charged OUTSIDE in September, visit fullycharged.show/events/fully-charged-live-2021/



PHOTOGRAPHY SHUTTERSTOCK

EV rentals

The affordable way to switch to an electric vehicle and slash your emissions

June's G7 summit and the upcoming COP26 have placed a new focus on global warming; it's more important than ever for us to think about how we can support the shift away from fossil fuels, and electric vehicles (EVs) are an important part of the conversation.

The popularity of EVs has risen rapidly in the UK, and just over 235,000 pure electric cars are now on our roads. This is in part due to new emissions rules that mean manufacturers will face steep fines if their products' average carbon dioxide output does not fall.

The UK government also recently announced that it would move a ban on the sale of pure internal combustion engine cars from 2040 to 2030. But with the average cost of an EV currently at £45,000, what will this mean for UK drivers?

WE'RE GOING ELECTRIC

Many of those making the switch to EVs in a bid to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their green credentials have adopted more affordable solutions, such as hiring and leasing.

EVision Electric Vehicles is the UK's first and largest pure electric vehicle rental company, and it has seen exponential growth.

Skyrocketing demand for renting and leasing electric vehicles has led the company to increase

HERO PRODUCT Find out why EVision is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes

its fleet of fully electric cars and vans by 60% in the last year alone.

'As people's attitudes change, demand grows, which means a greater need for electric vehicles', said Drew Sherston, EVision's transport manager. 'Couple this with government support and the development of the UK charging point infrastructure, and we are now seeing an incredible increase in the number of EVs on the roads.'

TAX BREAKS FOR EV DRIVERS

The surge in EV adoption comes largely from initiatives put in place by the UK government. The introduction of zero and extremely low benefit-in-kind taxation rates has been well received by companies and their employees.

Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) wants people to go green wherever possible, and is rewarding anyone who drives a more environmentally friendly vehicle. This means cars with lower CO2 emissions are taxed at a significantly lower rate.

The benefit-in-kind tax on electric company cars is currently set at just 1%. As a result, employers and employees are able to make substantial savings on their tax and national insurance, meaning that drivers could have an electric company car this 2021/22 tax year at a very low cost. The benefit-in-kind tax for EV drivers will rise to only 2% from April 2022, which is still extremely low.

AFFORDABLE EVS

'At EVision, we make driving an electric vehicle more affordable', Drew explains. 'It was always going to happen – it's just happening at a much quicker rate than anticipated. Fortunately, EVision is ready for those looking to make the switch.'

Whether you fancy driving a sporty, fully electric Porsche Taycan, a top-of-the-range Tesla or perhaps more of a town or city car such as the BMW i3 or Renault ZOE, EVision Electric Vehicles have something for everyone.

You can choose from a wide range of different fully electric makes and models of electric cars and vans, and be part of an electric revolution that's already well underway.

Find out more

■ Browse the electric cars and vans available to hire or lease from EVision at evrent.co.uk



A DREAM GETAWAY

Escaping the rat race has never felt more appealing – and this sustainable sanctuary was built to be shared

When Bob and Ian decided to swap their London home for a dilapidated farmhouse in rural Italy, they were determined to build a holiday rental business with sustainability at its heart.

Bob had returned from visiting a friend in Rome with tales of Le Marche – ‘a region more beautiful, less touristy and more authentic than Tuscany’ – and Ian took no more persuading.

On their first visit to Le Marche in 2003, Ian and Bob found the perfect project: a farm that stood in a sunflower field with only a magnificent fig tree for company. Fig Farm – or Casal dei Fichi – was born.

‘The farm had been abandoned for 30 years and needed a lot of work’, Ian said, ‘but the views were stunning and everything else could be changed.’

Beyond the shell the entire building – from foundations to roof – had to be replaced, but this presented an opportunity to combine modern technologies with traditional efficiency features.

‘Stone walls, half a metre thick, protect the farmhouse from the summer sun’, Bob tells us. ‘This meant our decision not to install air conditioning is one we have never regretted; our 60% return rate suggests that our guests agree.’

WASTE-FREE LUXURY

At Casal dei Fichi sustainability goes beyond the structure. The spacious apartments make self-catering the luxury option, but thoughtful

HERO PRODUCT

Find out why Casal dei Fichi is a My Green Pod Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes

details help guests to minimise their waste. Filtered water, still or sparkling, is available in each apartment, along with a Jerry water bottle to take to the beach. The loos are stocked with Who Gives a Crap toilet paper – a company which, like Jerry, funds sanitation projects in developing countries.

Over 100 indigenous trees have been planted, and today Casal dei Fichi’s grounds are bursting with an abundance of organic produce. Guests are encouraged to gather eggs from the hens, fruit from the orchard, organic vegetables and salad from the garden – and to dress it all with oil made from the olive trees.

‘Sustainability is a journey and our guests are welcome to accompany us for a few steps while they enjoy their stay’, Bob tells us, ‘even if it’s just

filling one of our reusable bottles at an excellent local vineyard for a guilt-free tipple.’

PARTNERED FOR TREES

An indisputable highlight of any visit to Italy is food, whether that means a seafood lunch overlooking the stunning Conero bay, ‘slow food’ dinner in an ancient palazzo or pizza on a terrazza.

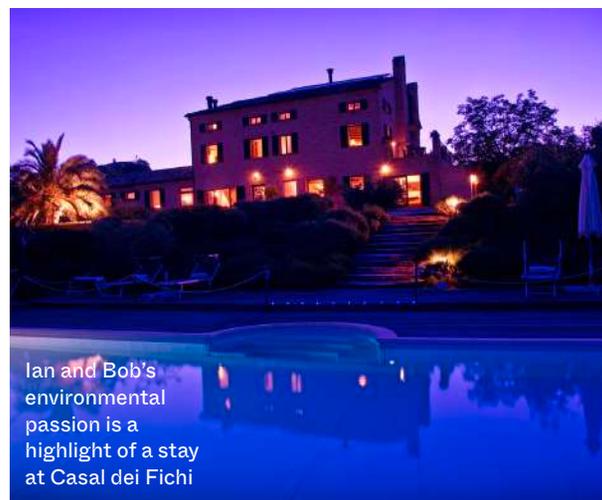
Ian and Bob have partnered with some of their favourite restaurants to secure a discount for their guests. ‘We add our contribution to organisations like Ecologi, which is spearheading the global reforestation challenge by planting indigenous trees in developing countries’, Ian explains.

Collaborating restaurants gain regular customers and a great sense of achievement. To date, this initiative has planted over 2,000 trees and eliminated 200,000kg of CO2, while providing employment and helping to combat deforestation.

‘Our guests can pride themselves that simply by eating delicious meals they have helped contribute to a fantastic cause’, Bob says. ‘This is the reason Vacation World Rental Summit rated us top for Excellent Guest Experience.’

As a member of Tourism Declares, Ian and Bob must state their targets for Casal dei Fichi and publish progress towards them. Their commitment to sustainability has brought accolades rolling in; in 2020 Casal dei Fichi won the inaugural Shortyz Eco Award and gained Green Tourism Gold.

‘Over 500 five-star reviews consistently quote our environmental passion as a highlight of the stay’, Ian says. ‘We couldn’t ask for a greater accolade.’



Ian and Bob’s environmental passion is a highlight of a stay at Casal dei Fichi

Find out more

More about Casal dei Fichi’s sustainability initiatives is at casaldeifichi.com

COMPETITIONS

We've got our hands on a bunch of prizes from fantastic companies that are doing things differently. We love them all and we want to give you a chance to get to know them, too – so we're running these competitions so you can have a go and see for yourself!

We've hand-picked this selection of green pearls – including a year's supply of organic coffee and £5k of sustainable branded merchandise for your business – to help set you up for a lighter lifestyle.

To enter, visit mygreenpod.com

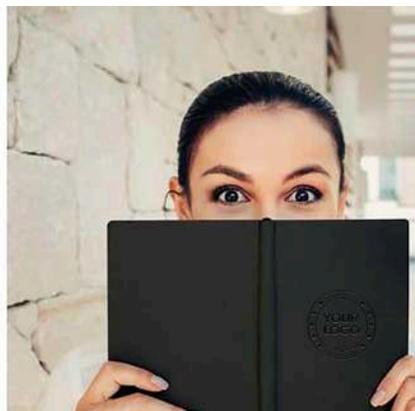


WIN

£5,000 TO SPEND ON SUSTAINABLE MERCHANDISE

Pinksheep will give one lucky reader a £5,000 grant to spend on its sustainable merchandise – including reusable cups and notebooks featuring your company's brand!

Deadline for entries: 30.09.21

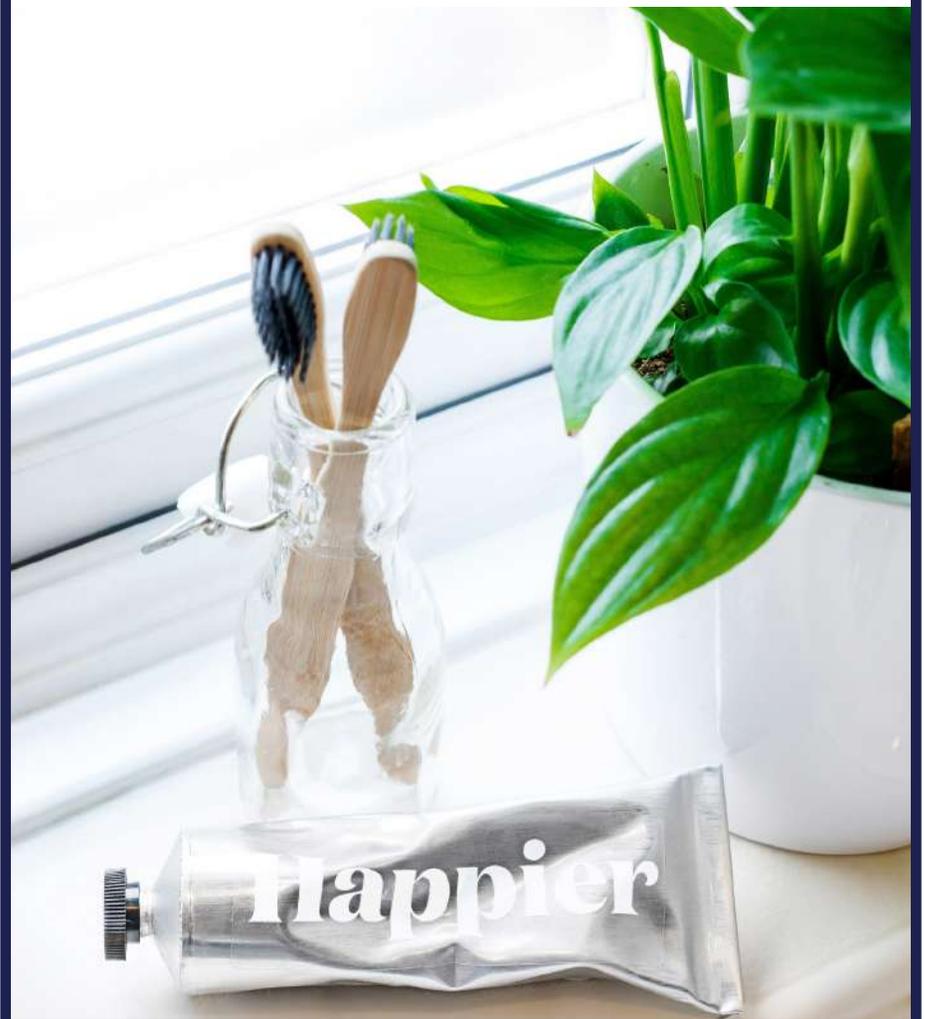


WIN

A 12-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO HAPPIER BEAUTY TOOTHPASTE

Three readers will receive two tubes of Happier Beauty Toothpaste in the post every two months for 12 months, along with a squeeze key to help empty the aluminium tubes before recycling. The toothpaste contains natural mint flavour plus papaya for natural whitening and vitamin E for gum health.

Deadline for entries: 30.09.21





WIN

**AURA-SOMA
ARCHANGELOI SET**

We're giving away a complete Aura-Soma Archangeloi set. Introducing them into the energy field can help to activate light seeds in the aura. They also help to focus your intention during times of change, and support the greater potential of an individual, group or community. One runner-up will receive an Aura-Soma Pomander Atomiser set to re-energise, strengthen and protect the aura.

Deadline for entries: 30.09.21

WIN

A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF PURO COFFEE

One lucky winner will receive a 12-month supply of organic, fairtrade and delicious Puro Coffee, in three boxes containing 16 250g bags of ground coffee or coffee beans. Two runners-up will receive four 250g bags of Puro Coffee. Every kg of Puro saves 20m² of rainforest.

Deadline for entries: 30.09.21




WIN

A RUSH ORGANICS PLASTIC-FREE STARTER BUNDLE

We're giving away a bundle of plastic-free products from Rush Organics, including shampoo, soap and conditioner bars (with tins), biodegradable hair ties, bamboo brush and konjac sponge.

Deadline for entries: 30.09.21



WIN

A 12-MONTH SUPPLY OF PIT-TASTIC SOLID DEODORANT

One winner will receive natural solid deodorant bars for a year, courtesy of Pit-Tastic! The winner will be able to choose the fragrance and type, or mix and match each quarter.

Deadline for entries: 30.09.21



octopus energy

