

THE POWER REVOLUTION ISSUE

#ACTFORNATURE

Tony Juniper: now's the time to demand action from MPs – and here's how to do it

OCTOPUS ENERGY

'The energy market in this country is broken', so this new breed of supplier is trying to fix it

PLANT-POWERED BEAUTY

Weleda's natural summer skincare tips will help you make the most of the sun and surf



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Welcome to MyGreenPod Magazine! This issue looks at power: why it's time to demand action from MPs and how to use communities to take control of what's important to us. It also explores the power of the natural world – from its plants to its energy sources.



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#ACTFOR NATURE

Now's the time to demand action from MPs, by Tony Juniper



adopted through rules negotiated with partner countries in the European Union; as the UK withdraws, the future of all those laws – including landmark achievements such as the Habitats and Birds Directives and Water Framework Directive – falls into question. In addition to legal frameworks like those are the European policies that shape agriculture, and which during recent years have become more responsive to conservation and environmental concerns.

Some bland reassurances have been issued about the future of environmental rules and policies, but they can't be taken seriously given the chorus of prominent Brexiteers who evidently look forward with glee to slashing their way through European 'red tape'. None other than the new environment secretary Michael Gove himself has said that the Habitats Directive which protects, among many other things, otters and dormice is getting in the way of house building, and that he'd like to do away with it!

All the while most of Britain's environment groups have been unable to do very much; they've fallen back in the face of a political onslaught and an anti-environmental establishment that's torn away at decades of progress. At the same time they've been under direct attack, too – not least through the rules of the Lobbying Act, passed by the coalition (and with enthusiastic Liberal Democrat support), that all but silenced many of them during recent election campaigns.

TIME FOR CHANGE

But there is a feeling that things are about to change. Nothing stays the same in politics for very long, and right now there is a sense of regrouping and the potential for a serious counterattack: many are ready to get out of the trenches, onto the front foot and to engage with politics in ways that might lead to progress. There are several reasons for this.

First is the post-Brexit mood. Few voted in the referendum for polluted beaches, sewage-laden rivers, toxic air or the final extinction of our most cherished wildlife. The fact that all of this is a plausible outcome has galvanised a lot of people to press for stronger standards. This includes many who wanted to leave but did not want to make their country a less pleasant place to live.

Another new context is how the environmental narrative has changed since 2008. Whereas the push back against environmental ambition is generally predicated on economic arguments and the need to sustain economic growth on the back of low standards, this is no longer a credible line of argument. It's increasingly clear that it is Nature that sustains the economy, and that the future for business is in environmental solutions. Growth sectors of the future are based on clean, efficient, renewable, circular and sustainable operations. This new narrative, about our dependence on Nature and the opportunities that will come in the wake of

renewed efforts to protect it, is recasting the discussion.

Then there is the new politics. A hung parliament, in part created from the roar of a massive youth vote for change, has laid out an opportunity for cross-party cooperation on a set of issues that should be beyond ideological politics. We all need clean air and water and good food, we all benefit from green spaces and spending time in wild Nature, our country will do better in high-tech sectors if driven by strong domestic environmental standards. We'll be more resilient as the climate changes if we have robust green infrastructure in the form of healthy soils, wetlands and forests.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO UNITE

The good news is that by investing in our collective health, wealth and security, we'd bring back disappearing wildlife and have a far nicer country. In a nation where politics has left people divided and bruised, the opportunity to unite behind these common interests should be attractive from all sides: leave, remain, left, right and centre. A new Environment Act could encapsulate these interests, and ensure the recovery of Nature in a generation through action for land, water, air and sea. It would embody evidence-based targets for things like native woodland cover, the health of peatlands and songbird and butterfly population trends.

All this is possible, and indeed elements have been adopted as 'soft policy' in the past. There's even a version of leaving Nature 'in better shape than we found it' in the Conservative Party's 2017 election manifesto. Given that few politicians would argue against such a goal, it seems an opportunity is at hand to go further and to translate such a sentiment into law.

THE TIME IS RIGHT

The UK has already taken such a step on the question of climate change through the 2008 Climate Change Act. That law sets out a long-term goal and uses a wide range of policy levers to go in the right direction. We could do the same thing



PHOTOGRAPHY: ELEANOR CHURCH, ISTOCK IMAGES

WRITE TO YOUR MP

■ Write to your MP and ask them to support a new Environment Act aimed at the recovery of Nature in a generation through action for land, air, water and sea. Tell us which MPs are in support using the hashtag #ActForNature. We have a copy of *What Nature does for Britain* for the first five

readers who tweet news their MP supports new laws for the recovery of Nature.

■ Dr Tony Juniper CBE is, among other things, president of the Wildlife Trusts, where he's campaigning for a new Environment Act.

now to tackle all the rest of the environmental issues that face us, not least the catastrophic decline in our wildlife. It wouldn't require a lot of 'red tape' – and, if done well, might even get rid of some – and could make far better use of the money we already spend. For example, the money (in excess of £3bn) paid out to farmers each year on the basis of how much land they have could instead be used to pay for cleaner water, carbon capture and boosting wildlife populations.

I set out the thinking behind that and related ideas in my 2015 book, *What Nature does for Britain*. I know very well from that and other projects that we have all the research and information needed to begin making progress; the thing that has been lacking is the political backbone to get on with it.

Now, though, the time is right. The vacuum created by Brexit, the new realisation that looking after Nature presents more economic opportunities than it does problems, the mood in the country, the composition of our new parliament and the need for totems of unity all point to possibility.

Anyone against doing more to make our country better, or against doing more to protect our health, wealth and security?

FIND OUT MORE

- Find and contact your MP by visiting parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-your-mp/
- More on Tony Juniper, including his campaigning work, is at tonyjuniper.com
- Order a copy of *What Nature does for Britain* at profilebooks.com/what-nature-does-for-britain.html



The habitats of otters and dormice are protected under the Habitats Directive, which Michael Gove has called a 'regulatory burden for housing development'

Nothing stays the same in politics for very long, and right now there is a sense of regrouping and the potential for a serious counterattack

OCTOPUS energy

The 'new breed of energy supplier' found new ways to connect on World Environment Day

World Environment Day (05 June) is the United Nations' main way of inspiring positive action that encourages people to connect with their environment.

This year's theme was about connecting to Nature and getting outdoors to appreciate and share the beauty of the planet. A social media campaign asked people to tweet a photo of their favourite place in Nature, and suggested picking up litter, planting a tree or checking out the local insect life during their visit.

For Greg Jackson, founder of renewable energy supplier Octopus Energy, World Environment Day provided an opportunity to talk to customers about something close to his heart: the impact on the environment of traditional versus sustainable energy.

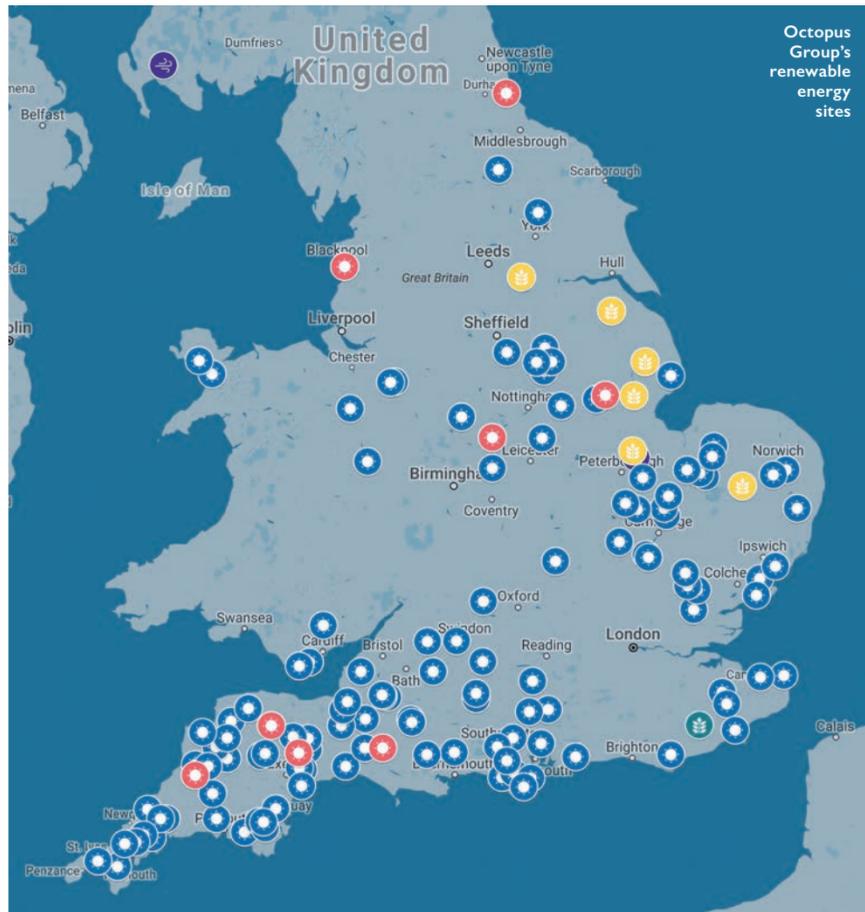
'The energy market in this country is broken', Greg said. 'Consumers need and deserve fair, transparent pricing, services designed around them and supply based on renewable sources that will keep us lit and warm long after fossil fuels have run out.'

A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Greg wrote his business plan over five years ago, but getting the right financial backing is fundamental to building a sustainable business – especially in energy. Having found that backing in Octopus Group, a UK-based investment firm which also happens to be the UK's largest investor in solar generation, he set about building a business with renewables at its core.

It was decided that Octopus Energy would offer two tariffs marketed as 'green' – one with 100% renewable electricity and one with 100% of the gas carbon offset as well – but it was critical for Greg that every Octopus Energy customer, irrespective of which tariff they were on, would form part of the global shift to renewables.

Greg made a pledge that every single Octopus customer would have at least 50% of their electricity matched in the grid by renewably generated power. It was a bold commitment for a new energy supplier – particularly considering



BACKED BY INVESTMENT

Solar

Wind

Anaerobic digestion

RENEWABLES PRODUCERS

Solar

Anaerobic digestion

standard 'green' energy tariffs are often based on the supplier buying Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin certificates (REGOs). These are sold on the open market by renewable energy generators and bought by suppliers (with no direct involvement in the energy production) to satisfy their 'green' tariff requirements. Octopus Group's investment in renewables sites has allowed Octopus Energy to fulfil its promise organically through a more direct relationship. 'We wanted total skin in the game', Greg says. 'Even though working directly with sites can often mean a less reliable supply and be more costly for us as a business than simply buying

REGOs on the open market, I was determined that we would put our money where our mouth was and be a truly renewable business.'

After getting eight contracts in place to formalise the complex process of working directly with solar sites, Octopus Energy found a new challenge: solar works better during the day and in summer. The supplier had to add six anaerobic digestion plants to the mix to ensure it could supply the grid with renewables all hours of the day, all months of the year.

ARSENAL FC, OCTOPUS AND THE UN

The push to re-connect with Nature for World Environment Day provided an opportunity for the Octopus Energy team to discuss a core belief: that renewable energy isn't a luxury for the rich, but a critical element of the shift to a more sustainable future. Greg is adamant that every energy supplier can find a successful commercial model that allows organic investment in green power, and that every consumer has the opportunity to make their own difference.

To drive the message home, on the eve of World Environment Day every single one of Octopus Energy's customers received a personal impact statement. Each email detailed exactly

'The energy market in this country is broken'

how much CO₂ the individual had saved by taking their energy from Octopus, which of the Octopus sites had contributed most to their personal renewable energy supply and, for customers on the Super Green tariff, exactly where the gas carbon offsetting had been done.

Octopus also promised that for everyone who signed up to Octopus Energy on World Environment Day, a native broadleaf tree would be planted in the UK in their name. To kick the initiative off, a tree was planted outside the Emirates Stadium, which is entirely powered by renewable sources, in an event supported by Arsenal FC, Octopus Energy and the UN – all underwritten by World Environment Day's connecting with Nature theme.

The response was incredible; thousands of consumers and customers contacted Octopus and Arsenal by phone, email, Twitter and Facebook. They shared positive feelings about how it felt to know they'd made a small but significant contribution to environmental causes simply by choosing a particular energy supplier.

Now Greg's looking forward to the next step; 'In July we'll hit 100,000 customers, an amazing number given we only launched just over a

year ago', he tells us. 'As a result, we're looking at doubling the number of solar and anaerobic sites we contract to meet the demand. I'm looking forward to rolling up my sleeves this autumn and planting a handful of the thousands of trees we're hoping to put into schools and communities across the UK.'

One tree and one customer at a time, Octopus Energy is showing consumers – and other energy companies – that renewables are here to stay.

FIND OUT MORE

- More on Octopus Energy's tariffs is at octopus.energy/tariffs
- Find out why Octopus Energy's Super Green tariff is a MyGreenPod.com Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes
- For a quote or to get help switching, email hello@octopus.energy

'We wanted total skin in the game'



The Octopus team planting a tree outside the Emirates Stadium for World Environment Day



Investing in Bath and Bristol's community energy just got a lot easier...

Mongoose Crowd, the UK's first dedicated community energy crowdfunding platform, has launched its first green energy bond offers – meaning UK investors can for the first time buy community energy bonds in a tax-free Individual Savings Account (ISA) wrapper.

The two initial bonds, which total over £2m, will help to refinance solar projects near Bath and Bristol, enabling the community to develop other local clean energy projects.

ISA-ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY ENERGY BOND

The first offer is from Bath & West Community Energy (BWCE), an established community business set up in 2010 that's now one of the country's leading community energy enterprises and a founding shareholder in Mongoose Energy.

BWCE's bond offer has been highly anticipated because of its eligibility for the new tax-free Innovative Finance ISA (IFISA). The solar projects BWCE is looking to re-finance were built in December 2011 with a loan from SSE; they're successful projects that have already exceeded expectations.

Interest on the SSE loan is set to rise this year, so re-financing will increase the surplus available for community benefit schemes and offer an opportunity to widen

participation by replacing commercial debt with people-powered investment. Raising funds now will also provide BWCE with a small fund to invest in new renewable energy projects as they are developed.

'We are very excited about being able to offer the UK's first ISA-eligible community energy bond on Mongoose Crowd', says Peter Capener, executive director of BWCE. 'The commitment and enthusiastic support from our members and bondholders has been the foundation for our success to date. We hope that even more people will want to get involved in helping us build a powerful community response to our energy needs that makes sound sense for people's pockets – and for the planet.'

TESLA BATTERY STORAGE PROJECT

The second bond offer launched on Mongoose Crowd is from Bristol Energy Cooperative (BEC). The bonds, also eligible for the IFISA, will be used to fund the first ever community-owned battery storage project to incorporate the latest Tesla battery technology. Additional funds will be used to reduce current borrowing costs and to repay short-term loans.

'As well as repaying previous loans, our new crowdfund will deliver our ambitions for increased generation of community-owned energy', says Andy O'Brien, director of BEC. 'We are also developing a number of innovative new energy schemes, including the installation of a 100kW Tesla battery at a new

sustainable housing site. Back in 2016, people were responsive to the opportunity to increase community-owned energy assets; our new bond offer provides another chance to join us as we continue our energy revolution for all.'

CONNECTING INVESTORS

Mongoose Crowd was launched in June 2017 to connect individual investors with community energy projects that target better financial returns, lower environmental impacts and positive social dividends.

Until recently, Mongoose Energy raised money for community projects on third-party platforms; its chief executive, Mark Kenber, believes that hosting a crowdfunding platform will enable the company to innovate and grow by offering more investors a wider portfolio of projects to invest in, and target returns that are expected to beat the interest a typical savings account will offer.

'Mongoose Crowd gives people more power over their own savings while they also do their bit for their local communities', Mark says. 'Our new crowdfunding platform is making investments in clean community energy easier, more profitable and more democratic. Investing cash in community energy projects also drives valuable local jobs and benefits. Bath and Bristol have pioneered innovations in community energy; Mongoose is proud to be supporting their continued growth, and that of the community energy sector overall.'

A NEW WAY TO SAVE

It's hoped Mongoose Crowd will attract small investors who are frustrated by low interest rates on savings, volatility in equity markets and current financial market uncertainty. It will fund a variety of community energy projects including solar, wind, hydro, battery installations and innovations in smart energy.

Community renewable energy projects are increasingly competitive without subsidies, although existing projects still benefit from inflation-linked, long-term government subsidies such as Feed-in Tariffs (FiTs) and Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROCs) that complement the sale of energy to the grid. Consequently, this type of asset investment offers long-term, inflation-linked returns. Mongoose Crowd Ltd is an appointed representative of Share In Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, which is why these investment opportunities are eligible for the Innovative Finance ISA.

A TRACK RECORD FOR CHANGE

Mongoose Energy was created to change the way energy is generated, bought and sold in the UK, and to create financial, social and environmental benefits for local communities and consumers. The company works with community groups, commercial project developers and investors to identify, develop, finance, build and manage profitable community-owned renewable energy installations (solar, wind and hydro) and is majority-owned by the community energy groups it works with.

As part of its mission to increase community ownership of renewable generation assets, Mongoose has financed the

MAIN
Lewis House, Bath – one of BWCE's solar PV projects

BELOW
BWCE's 8kW Solar PV project on Oldfield Infants School, Bath

BOTTOM
BEC mural in Bristol Bearpit

UK's largest portfolio of split-ownership solar farms, through which commercial developers have been able to partner with community energy groups to develop larger sites. These include Braydon Manor in Wiltshire, the UK's first split-ownership solar farm, and Orchard in Kent, the UK's largest community-owned solar site.

Since 2015, Mongoose Energy has raised more than £70m in capital to finance the construction and management of 60MW of community-owned solar PV projects, generating enough renewable electricity to power over 18,000 homes. Typically, investors have received a 4.5-7% return on their investment, depending on the performance of their project.

Over their 20-year lifetime, the projects in the portfolio are projected to deliver millions back to local community benefit societies, where they'll be used to create local jobs for local people, improve biodiversity, reduce energy costs in local community buildings like schools and help people out of energy poverty.



FIND OUT MORE

- Community energy investment opportunities are at mongoosecrowd.co.uk
- More on Mongoose Energy is at mongoose.energy
- Information on Community Energy Fortnight is at ukcec.org/events/community-fortnight-2017



BATTERY- *powered* HOMES



Smart batteries harness the sun's energy then store power until you need it

Soon every home will run on batteries. If that sounds like the stuff of science fiction, then you're missing out on an energy system that slashes bills, reduces carbon emissions and improves energy security using award-winning smart technology.

Battery-powered homes already exist so this isn't a blueprint for the future – though Simon Daniel, founder of energy storage business Moixa, has always been ahead of the curve. In 2003 and 2004 he and co-founder Chris Wright visited Silicon Valley to sell patent licenses for three inventions. 'We met Apple, Microsoft and Logitech, but realised our products – which included a rollable tablet, a modular smartwatch and a flexible mouse – were way ahead of their time', Simon remembers. It took another five years for Apple to launch a solid tablet and 10 years for its smartwatch to come to market; Microsoft didn't release its Arc Mouse, which flattens to fit neatly into your pocket, until 2010.

Though at the time the world wasn't ready for these products, Simon made an important observation while prototyping and 3D printing the flexible tablets and smartwatches. He realised that embedded batteries would be an ongoing problem for all future mobile and 'internet of things' devices that need power. In 2006 he decided to concentrate on smart energy and batteries, and within six months he'd invented, developed and launched a new AA battery that charged via a USB port. The USBCELL, which

'These systems make solar make sense'

has won a top iF Gold design award, has topped a million sales and helped to fund research into home batteries.

WHAT IS A HOME BATTERY?

The Moixa Smart Battery is a small (50x30x20cm) unit that sits under the stairs or in the garage; in the hands of an experienced, accredited installer it can be fitted in less than two hours. It's charged either directly from solar panels during the day or using cheap electricity via Economy 7 at night. 'Customers will not notice anything different', Simon tells us, 'other than the size of their electricity bill.'

A full solar and battery package, which includes a combined 2kWh Smart Battery and 2kWh PV system, will cost around £5,000 – though the price will be significantly lower if, like around half of Moixa's customers, you already have solar panels on your home.

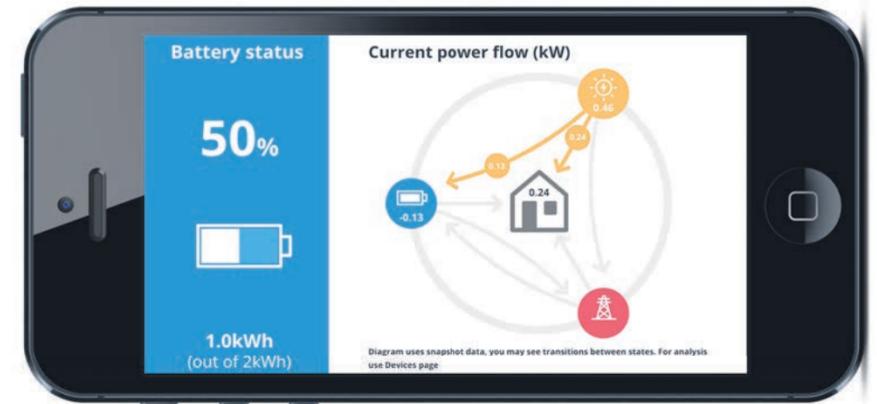
The payback time will depend on the house and the size of its roof, but as an example a customer with a large roof who uses electricity throughout the day can draw around 65% of their energy from solar and battery, representing a saving of around £350 on a typical bill. 'Some of our customers are saving 70% on their electricity bills', Simon tells us. 'They will also earn 20 years of Feed-in-Tariff payments, and Moixa will pay a minimum of £50 per year if they make their battery available for Gridshare.' This grid-sharing service enables all Moixa's batteries to be managed as a Virtual Power Plant (VPP), and customers with excess power stored in their batteries will get a share of the profit Moixa makes by selling it to the National Grid.

Moixa already has 1,000 UK customers, but the aim is to install smart batteries connected to solar panels into a million UK households, then aggregate them with other batteries to create a collective grid service to help lower customer bills and overall system costs.

A BATTERY FOR EVERYONE

While Moixa's competitors focus on a demographic Simon calls the 'niche early adopter' – those with plenty of money and off-grid homes – Simon made a conscious decision to concentrate initially on people with 'normal-sized' houses – particularly those in urban housing. 'Our product is different in that it focuses on the mass market, urban consumer', Simon explains. 'It's for everyone.'

There are 25 million homes in the UK that don't currently have solar, for reasons varying from architectural barriers to plain and simple cost. Simon is most interested in the 850,000 homes that have solar, plus the million homes that



'Some of our customers are saving 70% on their electricity bills'



Simon Daniel, co-founder of energy storage business Moixa, wants to lower global energy and carbon costs by managing the world's batteries

could have solar plus storage installed over the next few years. 'There's amazing potential for new modular housing and social housing', Simon tells us. 'These systems make solar make sense. They can help to lift people out of fuel poverty while maximising the carbon and monetary savings provided by solar.'

A COMPELLING OPTION

Price hikes from energy companies, combined with a growing awareness of climate change, make Moixa's home batteries a compelling solution for many homeowners. Customers are drawn to the prospect of self-sufficiency and attracted to the idea of becoming less reliant on the grid, as well as saving carbon and being able to observe their energy habits using Moixa's portal. Customers who use a lot of energy have also enjoyed seeing an immediate cost benefit that's reflected in lower energy bills.

But as well as helping to cut household expenditure and slash emissions, Simon is interested in the role a smart battery can play in a home. 'By being wired in and present over decades it becomes a permanent part of a house, and we can use our smart algorithms to learn and make recommendations to households over time.' Simon calls this 'slow data' – not big data – as over time the information can be used to provide a quantitative analysis of value that can in turn save customers money. 'We expect to outlast many faster moving, disposable technologies like phones, broadband routers, smart energy displays and thermostats because we're part of the household energy system, delivering energy or storing solar energy to save money', he adds.

SMART ISLANDS

The bigger goal at Moixa is to use the experience, patents and technologies acquired during the development of home batteries to manage all the world's batteries – whether they're powering electric vehicles or connected consumer products. 'We think we can lower global energy and carbon costs by managing when products are charged', Simon explains.

For now, the focus is on a Smart Energy Island project; Moixa has won a £1.5m chunk of a £10.8m fund to transform the energy system of the Isles of Scilly. 'There's a single connector to the mainland which occasionally breaks', says Chris Wright, Moixa's chief technology officer, 'so it's highly exposed to prices and connectivity, relying on diesel as back-up.' The Moixa project will manage batteries and electric vehicles in homes and demonstrate how a 'smart island' – or smart city – can manage local resources. 'This is essential given the UK is itself an island with small interconnections to the 'mainland', or EU, which are about to be disrupted', Simon tells us. 'So what we learn and prove on the Isles of Scilly could apply nationwide.'

FIND OUT MORE

- More on Moixa's Smart Battery is at moixa.com/products
- Installation information is at moixa.com/products/solar-panel-battery-storage
- Arrange a free home survey and quote by calling 0207 734 1511



GOWER'S REGENERATION

As the sun sets on the coal industry, Wales's first community-owned solar farm opens for investment



'It sounds a bit of a cliché to say people don't trust banks and want more from their money, but it's true'

Members of the public are being invited to become part-owners of Wales's first community-owned solar farm. The array is already up and running; from the edge of the Gower Peninsula, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty just west of Swansea, it generates enough clean electricity to power over 300 houses. Gower Regeneration expects its 1MW solar farm to pay investors a 5% annual return from January 2018, and create a community benefit fund of over £500k to help build education and skills in the local area.

The solar array is near the Gower Heritage Centre, a partner in the development, and the project is a lesson in local history itself; 'It sits bang on top of a coal seam and literally wraps around a mine shaft', says Ant Flanagan, director of Gower Power Co-op CIC and Gower Regeneration Ltd. 'It was a story waiting to be told.'

A LINK TO THE PAST

Gower Heritage Centre's main attraction is a 12th-century water mill that's still fully operational. It was used by locals to grind oats for animals and barley for bread. 'For the best part of a thousand years the mill and surrounding buildings have been a centre of rural enterprise based around a continually replenishing source of energy', Ant tells us. 'Hundreds of families came here to trade and process their produce.'

PHOTOGRAPHY PHILIP GRIFFITHS AT NBR DESIGN, ISTOCK



On 08 June this year, renewable energy produced over 50% of the UK's electricity – more than coal and gas combined. Looking back I think the fact our solar farm's located on a disused coal seam is a fascinating piece of living history that can help shape one of the most important stories of our age: that of our successful stewardship of the natural environment.'

Ant Flanagan, director of Gower Power Co-op CIC and Gower Regeneration Ltd



Today the water mill helps visitors understand how people worked the land in the past. 'What's really exciting is that we'll be using the profits from the solar farm to support new and existing land-based livelihoods to trade from the centre', Ant explains. 'We'll be asking important questions of the 65,000 annual visitors about where they think they should be sourcing their energy and food. Gower's renewable energy generation has shaped people's behaviour for hundreds of years, and now it's set to make a positive impact for hundreds of years to come!'

THE FIRST OF MANY?

Gower Solar Farm may be the only community-owned solar farm in Wales, but Ant believes there's 'definitely' an appetite for more – in the local community and beyond. Gower Power has already had success with the Swansea Community Energy & Enterprise Scheme (SCEES), through which solar panels were installed on nine schools and a care home in and around the wards of Townhill and Penderyn in Swansea. The public response was so positive that the £425k share offer had to close seven days early because it was over-subscribed.

'It sounds a bit of a cliché to say people don't trust banks and want more from their money', Ant says, 'but it's true. There's a massive trend towards more ethical investment and choices. I think people are really waking up to both the potential positive power of money and the fact that by doing things collectively we can achieve incredible things, even if everyone just chips in a little.'

LEFT TO RIGHT

The 12th-century water mill at Gower Heritage Centre is still going strong

Wheat harvested at Cae Tan CSA is processed at the mill for a field-to-plate 'grow your own pizza' project with local schools

Ant Flanagan, director of Gower Power Co-op CIC and Gower Regeneration Ltd

'by doing things collectively we can achieve incredible things, even if everyone just chips in a little'

The minimum investment for the Gower Solar Farm share offer, which has been launched on ethical investment platform Ethex, is £300, but Swansea residents can invest as little as £100. 'Clearly, people putting in smaller amounts of money aren't doing it for the financial returns – they're more motivated by the range of social and environmental benefits', Ant tells us. 'Some people want to invest larger amounts; they know they can get a decent and relatively low-risk return while creating a positive impact.'

The solar farm is right next to a school, which has allowed Gower Regeneration to start building a range of educational opportunities. 'After the share offer closes, investors will be invited to look closely at how to make the best use of future profits', Ant says. 'We want to ensure our project becomes the cornerstone of Gower's regeneration.'

FIND OUT MORE

- View the investment opportunity at ethex.org.uk/GowerRegeneration
- More on Gower Regeneration is at regengower.co.uk
- Information about Cae Tan CSA is at caetancsa.org
- More on the area and its heritage is at gowerheritagecentre.co.uk



P.E.A. AWARDS 2017

IN ASSOCIATION WITH **octopusenergy**

Now in its seventh year, the P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Awards is the UK's leading sustainability awards, honouring the individuals and teams behind the products, services and businesses that are changing the face of our planet. Across sectors ranging from money to the arts, the P.E.A. Awards identifies and celebrates the green heroes who are taking matters



into their own hands and providing inspiring alternatives to business as usual. These sustainability pioneers are recognised and rewarded at our glamorous green carpet event, with music, entertainment and plenty of great food and drink! This year's ceremony will be held in London on Friday 13 October, and the theme will be the Day of the Dead, so make sure you come dressed the part!

THEME:
DAY OF THE DEAD

PEOPLE. ENVIRONMENT. ACHIEVEMENT.

Awards will honour the extinction of People.

The Environment.

The Animals.

All who have suffered through man's greed.

VENUE
BANKING HALL, CENTRAL LONDON

NOMINATIONS CLOSE MIDNIGHT
08 SEPTEMBER 2017

IT'S FREE TO ENTER THE P.E.A. AWARDS AT
peaawards.com @peaawards

CATEGORIES

ARTS
SPONSORED BY



Are you using art to change the world? Whether you create music or mime, film or fashion, we want to know about what you make, why you make it and how it's going to make the world a better place for everyone.

The Arts award is sponsored by MyGreenPod.com, the one-stop-shop for ethical products, green news and giveaways.

GREENEST FAMILY
SPONSORED BY



Parents (and kids) are reducing their family's carbon footprint by changing the way they live. Have you had a green idea that's completely off the wall or easy for others to copy? The award for Britain's Greenest Family is sponsored by Yeo Valley, the family farm that goes the extra country mile to look after its land, animals and people.

ENERGY
SPONSORED BY



We're looking for the individuals or teams at the helm of innovations or technologies that are helping to save power, reduce demand or generate clean energy. The Energy award is sponsored by Octopus Energy – a 'new breed of energy supplier' that has committed to real, long-term investment in renewable generation and a low-carbon future.

FOOD
SPONSORED BY



Glorious food: how can it save a planet, a community or a business? Anyone tackling waste or improving production in this industry must enter. The Food award is sponsored by Wyke Farms, a 150-year-old family-owned cheesemaker and producer of renewable energy in the heart of Somerset's Brue Valley.

GREEN PIONEER
SPONSORED BY



The Green Pioneer Award will go to a person or group with an innovative green business idea that's pushing boundaries, challenging the status quo and serving as an inspiration to us all. New for 2017, this award is sponsored by green beauty pioneer Weleda, which has led the way in sustainable beauty since 1921 (see next page).

NATURE
SPONSORED BY



We're looking for Earth's superheroes! Whether you're saving the bees, birds or trees, the animals or the seas, now's the time to step forward and be recognised. The Nature award is sponsored by Love Nature, a new subscription video streaming app that hosts a treasure trove of Nature documentaries in stunning 4K.

MONEY
SPONSORED BY



Money makes the world go round – but which way do we want it to turn? Enter if you're shaking up finance in a bank, community or on your own. This category is sponsored by Mongoose Crowd, a new crowdfunding platform that offers bond and share investments in renewable energy projects across the UK.

TRAVEL
SPONSORED BY



Whatever you're doing in this sector – from helping us to travel more sustainably to running an eco-resort that's a perfect green getaway – we want to hear from you. We all want to enjoy the countless places of beauty on Earth, but we need to make sure we get there – and stay there – in the most respectful and sensitive way possible.

VEGAN
SPONSORED BY



Whether you're a vegan campaigner or wear cruelty-free trainers, we want to hear what you're doing to support the shift to plant-based lifestyles – in food, fashion and beyond! The Vegan award is sponsored by Tideford Organics, which broke the mould last year by launching the UK's first vegan range of organic soups, broths and sauces.

CALLING ALL GREEN PIONEERS!

A new category for 2017's P.E.A. Awards will honour those fearless enough to rip up the rulebook

Weleda has pioneered sustainable beauty since 1921, so it's the perfect partner for a new category that will recognise and celebrate the pioneering work of an individual or team as part of this year's P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Awards. The Green Pioneer award will honour an individual, community, business or organisation in the UK that's pioneering a sustainable initiative; the winner will be pushing boundaries and spearheading change in their sector, serving as an inspiration to us all.

They may have spent years in their shed inventing technology that could change the world or they might have fought to push a new idea past senior management in a multinational. Whatever their approach and wherever they're pursuing it, we want to hear about them and celebrate their work.

PIONEERS OF WELLBEING

Weleda, a pioneering member of the UEBT (Union for Ethical BioTrade), is recognised for leading the way in sustainable beauty in the cosmetics industry. It started in 1921, when three intellectual and spiritual pioneers – a Dutch doctor, an Austrian philosopher and a chemist and pharmacist from Munich – set to work on formalising new ideas from abroad that were jumbled up in disparate threads of anthroposophical teaching and research.

Rudolf Steiner had been working with medical doctors and chemists to create a new approach to medicine. In 1921, the doctor Ita Wegman, the chemist Oskar Schmiedel and physicians and pharmacists gathered under Steiner's guidance to determine just how they might use this philosophy to care for patients' needs.

They understood that a human body has a remarkable ability to heal itself but that it also sometimes needs a little help, so they developed a personal approach to healthcare that uses natural ingredients to support the body's own healing impulse. With this belief – and a profound depth of scientific and philosophical knowledge – they founded Weleda.

STILL PUSHING BOUNDARIES

Weleda continues to push boundaries in pursuit of natural human wellbeing; in 2006 Weleda

France opened Espace Weleda, an oasis of wellbeing with, amongst other things, exclusive treatment spas and shops.

In 2007 Weleda and other leading natural cosmetics manufacturers created NaTrue, a non-profit initiative that defines clear international guidelines for the use of the term 'natural cosmetics' and issues NaTrue certification to ensure transparency for consumers.

In 2011 Weleda celebrated 90 years of growth and sustainability; it's now one of the most well known providers of anthroposophical medicine and natural cosmetics.

NOMINATE YOUR HEROES

Founded as a pharmaceutical laboratory with its own medicinal plant garden, Weleda has evolved to become a world-leading manufacturer of holistic, natural, organic cosmetics and pharmaceuticals for anthroposophic therapy. Weleda's motto, 'in harmony with Nature and the human being', is much more than a catchphrase – it's a genuine system of understanding that has applied since the

company was founded.

If you've ripped up the rulebook because you believe things can be done better, or you know an individual or team that's implemented radical ideas to improve sustainability in their sector, the P.E.A. Awards wants to hear from you.

Make sure the hard work's noticed by nominating the individual or team for the Green Pioneer award. All entries and nominations are free, and the winners will be announced at a glamorous event on 13 October 2017.

FIND OUT MORE



- To enter or nominate someone for the Green Pioneer P.E.A. Award, visit peaawards.com/nominate
- More on the awards, plus a full list of categories, is at peaawards.com
- More on green beauty pioneer Weleda is at weleda.co.uk



Green beauty pioneer Weleda has worked in harmony with Nature and the human being since 1921

IT'S A wrap

‘compare it with a nest of termites: individually they don’t do that much damage, but collectively they can destroy a home.’ David Izzard is, of course, talking about wrapping paper – the unrecycled type, to be precise. ‘It takes 24 trees to make just one tonne of paper’, he tells us, ‘so in the UK we use a woodland the size of Wales every year. If Brits recycled just 10% more paper it would save approximately five million trees each year.’

The figures are staggering, but if you’ve ever tried to source recycled paper in the bright colours and jolly designs befitting a gift-giving occasion, you’ll know it’s not easy – especially on the high street. No matter what you wrap, those rolls of brown paper will make it look like a cheap bottle of plonk from the office.

NO DEAL

In 2011, Tracy Umney and Annie Cullen took matters into their own hands: convinced it was possible to create gift wrap that was both beautiful and eco-friendly, they created some fabulous designs, found a printer who shared their beliefs and, before they knew it, Re-wrapped was born. The business filled a gap in the market for attractive wrapping paper made using recycled, unbleached paper and environmentally friendly vegetable inks.

The impact of switching to recycled paper is huge: 70% less energy is required to recycle and reuse paper compared with making it from raw materials. To be more specific, each tonne of recycled paper saves 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic meters of landfill space, 4,000kW of energy and 7,000 gallons of water.

NEW BLOOD

In 2016 both Tracy and Annie decided they needed to concentrate on family and other personal commitments, and hoped new owners would be able to grow their ethical business.

‘I had watched Re-wrapped come into existence when Tracy first had the idea and loved what she was trying to do’, says David Izzard, Re-wrapped’s new owner and director. ‘Daniel Lazaro (my creative director) and I stepped in and suggested

Forget the miserable brown paper – recycled wrapping just got a facelift

buying the company from them. We set about putting a deal together and were able to buy the business in July last year.’

The last six months under new ownership have brought some exciting developments; David and Daniel have more than doubled the number of designs available, and you can now get fun and eco-friendly gift wrap featuring everything from tents to tomatoes and lapwings to London.

Re-wrapped now boasts 46 choices of 50x70cm gift wrap (£1.50-1.75), each with a matching gift tag. It’s also launched its first range of eight greetings cards (£1.75) and added a collection of 10 notebooks (£4.75) to its range.

THE MISSION

David wants all aspects of the business to be environmentally friendly; as well as only using recycled paper and card printed with vegetable-based inks, Re-wrapped’s operations are powered by a green energy supplier and 5% of all profits go to non-profits and charities.

But David feels a separate part of his role is to increase awareness of the damage that something as simple as wrapping paper does to our environment. Most wrapping paper contains plastic laminates, glitter, metal and other additives, meaning that 70% of it can’t be recycled. Considering we use enough wrapping paper to reach the moon between Christmas Day and Boxing Day, that’s a whole lot of waste. In fact, the amount of paper sent to landfill each year would fill 103,000 doubledecker buses.

‘Councils are waking up to the huge problem this presents’, David says, ‘because tonnes and tonnes of paper end up in landfill. Some are charging a levy to dispose of wrapping paper and others have banned wrapping paper from rubbish collections during the festive period.’

David wants Re-wrapped ‘to get people to stop for just a second and think about the impact their lifestyle is having on our planet’ – though he acknowledges ‘the only way to change the outcome is for individuals to make an effort.’ Just like the termites, mass collective action could have a huge impact on our environment – but it doesn’t need to be one of destruction.



FIND OUT MORE

- View the full range, find local stockists or buy online at re-wrapped.co.uk
- Help with where and how you can recycle is at recyclenow.com



Introducing some of the latest superstars to be crowned Heroes on MyGreenPod.com. These ethical products and services are from companies that are doing things differently (and brilliantly).

TITANIC SPA

Known as 'the UK's first eco spa', Titanic Spa offers state-of-the-art health and wellbeing facilities in the Linthwaite Valley near Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

Nestled deep in the Pennines, it's a celebrity favourite that won the Global Luxury Eco Spa Award at 2016's World Luxury Spa Awards. The spa has its very own water source that served the building when it was an Edwardian textile mill.

Today it provides fresh drinking and bathing water for the spa's plunge pool, salt regulated swimming pool, showers and ice experience.

@TitanicSpa
titanicspa.com



SEACOURT PRINTERS

Seacourt has offset its entire operational footprint – plus an extra 10% – and been verified by ClimateCare for going 'Beyond Carbon Neutral'. This certification comes hot on the heels of Seacourt's EMAS Award and three Queen's Awards for Sustainable Development. The Oxford-based printing company pioneered LightTouch printing, a revolutionary technique that combines waterless printing with LED drying. The process dries ink instantly and eliminates any need to waste – or pollute – water.

@SeacourtLtd
seacourt.net

YEO VALLEY VANILLA ICE CREAM

Vanilla from Madagascar is just about the best there is – just like Yeo Valley's organic British cream. The family farm, which is the UK's largest family-owned dairy business, has mixed them together in its Vanilla Ice Cream, which is '100% Yeorganic' – organic and then some. Perfect on its own or on a dessert.

@yeovalley
yeovalley.co.uk



REIKI MAYA COMBINED LEVEL 1 & 2 REIKI COURSE

Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and deep relaxation. It works on every level to treat the whole person: body, emotions, mind and spirit. Miguel Chavez, the lead teacher at Reiki Maya, was born in a spiritual temple in Mexico, where he spent his first 12 years surrounded by healers and shamans. Miguel has taught over 1,000 students, and most have reported life-changing experiences.

@reikimaya
reikimaya.com

INLIGHT INTENSIVE LINE SOFTENER

A luxurious anti-ageing elixir that boosts the skin's natural regeneration process. Ideal for scars, dark patches from sun damage and for preventing and treating lines, it combines 20 dynamic flower and plant extracts, which all work in perfect balance.

@InlightBeauty
inlightbeauty.co.uk



VALLEY FEST

We challenge you to find a festival with a better view! Enjoy tractor-loads of glittering entertainment – from DJs to circus performers to top chefs – at this family-friendly festival (04-06 August) overlooking a tranquil lake in Somerset's rolling Mendip Hills.

@LoveValleyFest
valleyfest.co.uk

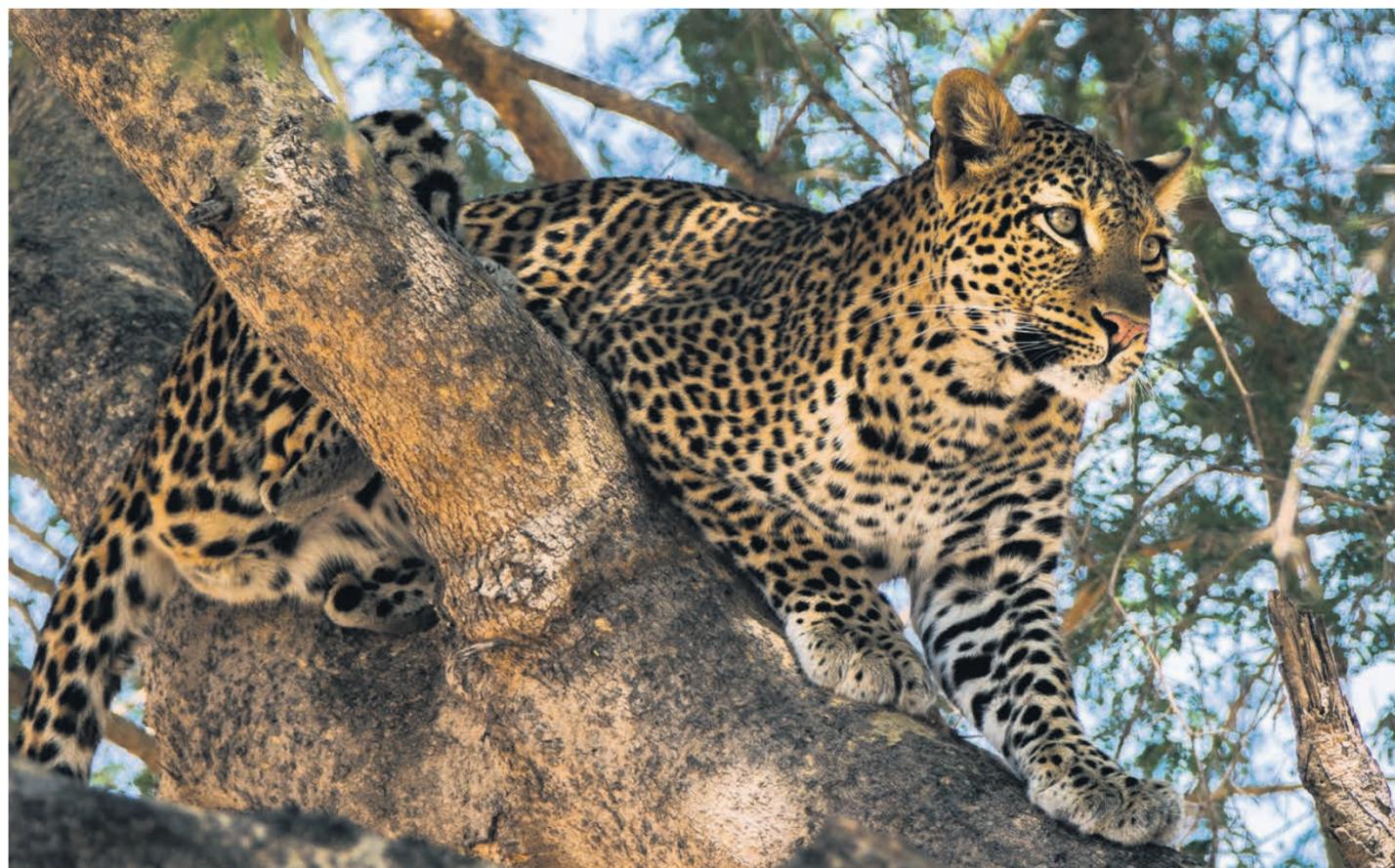


LUNETTE MENSTRUAL CUP

The Lunette menstrual cup is an easy-to-use, safe and hygienic alternative to pads and tampons. Using the cup protects the environment and saves you money – each one can last five to 10 years! Hypoallergenic and latex-free.

@Lunettecup
uk.lunette.com





'NETFLIX FOR NATURE LOVERS'

Introducing Love Nature, a new streaming service that's been described as a 'treasure trove of Nature documentaries'

A new subscription Nature streaming service has launched in the UK, immersing viewers in the beauty and wonder of the natural world by telling compelling and unexpected stories of animals and landscapes. The goal is to inspire change by bringing audiences closer to Nature.

With one of the world's largest libraries of 4K – or 'ultra-high definition' (UHD) – wildlife and Nature programmes, Love Nature has been described as a 'treasure trove of Nature documentaries'.

There are hundreds of hours of stunning natural history shows to enjoy, with weekly updates of series, one-off documentary films and 4K slow TV Nature scenes. It's all ad-free and family-friendly content – and there really is something for everyone.

ORIGINAL AND EXCLUSIVE

Programmes that feature on Love Nature are made by the world's leading wildlife and Nature documentary makers, including Plimsoll Productions and Off the Fence Productions. Love Nature itself is the global leader in 4K wildlife and Nature production.

Exclusive shows include original 4K Nature series and documentaries such as the UK premiere and Love Nature exclusive *Camp Zambia: The Big Dry* by Plimsoll Productions and the UK premiere of seven-part 4K series *Strange Creatures*.

Other shows proving popular with viewers include Academy Award-nominated IMAX 4K film *IMAX: Dolphins*, narrated by Pierce Brosnan, and the beautiful and touching documentary *Ocean Voyagers*, narrated by Meryl Streep.

SUPPORTING CHARITIES

To support worldwide conservation efforts and help to raise awareness about environmental issues, Love Nature and WWF International have established a video partnership that sees both organisations working together to promote the protection of wildlife and animal habitats all over the world.

To mark the start of the partnership, Love Nature gave WWF International \$20k to fund a training programme that supports the global effort to double the number of tigers in the wild by 2022. Thanks to the funding, 60 wildlife crime rangers in Cambodia's Serepok Wildlife Sanctuary and Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary have received extensive training in field craft, patrolling tactics, navigation, crime scene investigation, law, wildlife monitoring and enforcement.

In March, one of Love Nature's producers visited the training camp to film the wildlife crime rangers in action – patrolling the Serepok River for illegal fishing, removing deadly snares from the forest, raiding a cooking camp suspected of selling illegal 'wild meat' and arresting a Vietnamese logging gang.

Across the four episodes, you'll see Nature through the eyes of the brave individuals who fight to protect it, experiencing the Cambodian rangers' day-to-day lives. As the first line of defence for the country's animals, viewers will witness the rigorous training they go through and the methods they use to protect the Cambodian forests. They'll also get a sneak peak of the stunning wildlife captured on their trap cams.

The documentary will be available exclusively on Love Nature on World Ranger Day (31 July 2017).

FIND OUT MORE

- To browse the programmes available on Love Nature visit lovenature.vhx.tv/browse
- Sign up for your free trial at lovenature.com
- Download the app from the Apple App Store or Google Play



The passion that wildlife and Nature fans hold for animals and our natural world is something that audiences relate to across all countries, cultures and languages. We are thrilled to share Love Nature's original content with UK viewers, in crystal clear 4K providing an up-close experience that comes second only to being there in person.'

Jo Parkinson, Love Nature's managing director

Love
Nature

HOW TO SIGN UP

Use the promo code GREENPOD for a one-month free trial plus 12 months half price (£1.99/month). Love Nature's ad-free and family-friendly 4K Nature content is available as an iOS and Android app from the Apple App store and Google Play, plus on internet-connected devices including mobile and tablet, Sony Android TV, Samsung Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Amazon Prime, Apple TV, Roku Streaming Players, Nexus Player, EE TV and Xbox One.



Would Nature-inspired offices make workers more productive?

A floor of a 1980s office is about to get a facelift as part of a new project exploring the impacts of Nature-inspired design on workers' wellbeing.

The BRE Biophilic Office is an upcoming research and demonstration project led by BRE (Building Research Establishment) and Oliver Heath Design, with the support of Interface, a global modular flooring manufacturer and long-time champion of sustainable and biophilic design.

'The project will look to refurbish an entire floor of an existing office building', says Oliver Heath, architect, designer and biophilic design ambassador for Interface. 'We'll use a variety

of biophilic design methods to assess the value Nature-inspired design brings to the wellbeing and productivity of office workers.'

The project will span two and a half years: in year one current working conditions will be analysed and the office will be refurbished. The second year will focus on analysing the impact The Biophilic Office has on the workers.

WHAT IS BIOPHILIC DESIGN?

The aim of biophilic design is to enhance the human connection to Nature in the built environment; it uses our innate attraction to the natural world to create a calming and revitalising effect on health, wellbeing and happiness. 'By creating spaces that improve our physical and

mental wellbeing, individuals are able to perform better', Oliver tells us. 'Rather than having rows of identical desks and white walls, a biophilic office is welcoming and engaging. It's likely to feature good natural light, an abundance of plants, natural or synthetic materials that mimic natural surfaces and a variety of different zones.'

According to Oliver, biophilia – 'the urge to affiliate with other forms of life' – is the new frontier in sustainable design. He's fascinated by the emerging discipline and how we can develop further understanding of its impacts. 'There's a wide body of research on the benefits of biophilic design in laboratory conditions, but less in the actual working environment', he explains. 'We now have an opportunity to do this

and for Interface, a company that's committed to creating positive spaces and exploring the genuine positive effect design can have on our lives, it's an opportunity to be part of a ground-breaking project.'

BIOPHILIC BENEFITS

Interface commissioned research into the global impact of biophilic design in the workplace when it developed a range of flooring collections inspired by the natural world. 'The research found that employees who work in environments with natural elements report a 15% higher level of wellbeing, are 6% more productive and 15% more creative overall', Oliver says.

Of course, improving staff wellbeing and productivity also makes good financial sense; the World Green Building Council suggests 90% of typical business operating costs can be attributed to staff salaries and benefits.

While many are aware that biophilic design can have a big impact in the workplace, there's currently no comprehensive evidence that draws conclusions from a working study. 'We want to build compelling evidence that engages individuals to help them adopt learning and change their current practices', says Ed Suttie, research director at BRE. 'A key outcome of our project will be guidance that lets architects and designers pick up the findings and apply them.'

BRE has been involved in sustainability measurement, delivery and research for decades. Historically its focus has been on construction energy efficiency, build efficiency and lowering carbon associated with the sector. Sustainability measures such as energy efficiency and carbon emissions are now firmly embedded in the construction industry, but there's a gap when it comes to research looking at the impact a building interior can have on the people inside. 'Interface's research into biophilic design and its commitment to manufacturing products that help improve the wellbeing of occupants in a space made them perfect for this project', Ed explains. 'Health and wellbeing is an important element of sustainability and our research will show us how to implement sustainability practices within an office build.'

THE OFFICE

At the beginning of the project, staff will be asked how they feel about their office – an unmodernised building from the 1980s – before it's overhauled. The project will monitor how workers are affected by the space before and after the refurbishment.

'We'll then undergo a design process creating a three-tier biophilic redesign of the existing

office, and develop a detailed lab room to test materials and technologies in closer detail', Oliver tells us.

The first tier will consist of low-cost elements that staff can incorporate into the office space themselves, such as putting plants on desks, while the second tier will involve fitting new Nature-inspired Interface carpet tiles and timber panelling. 'The final top-tier section will include water features, green walls and colour-changing LEDs to mimic natural light', Oliver explains. Following the refurbishment, the same office team's reaction to the upgraded space and materials will be monitored.

ANALYSING RESULTS

'We will monitor several factors throughout the two and a half year project, capturing both quantitative and qualitative data', Ed tells us. 'The first year we will get good baseline data to compare with the data after the refurbishment.'

Environmental factors including air quality, thermal comfort, light and acoustic levels will be monitored to capture a suite of internal environment characteristics. The outdoor space will also be assessed to see how seasons affect the interior conditions.

To gather data from the employees, 'human-factor teams' will interview occupants. There will also be regular online tasks, cognitive tests and questionnaires that look at attentiveness and productivity. Some kind of wearable technology will also be used to help look into health factors, such as occupants' heart rates.

ENGAGING AND RESTORATIVE

'We believe the new design will reduce



L-R
Oliver Heath,
architectural
designer; Ed Suttie,
research director
at BRE

BELOW
The 1980s office
as it stands today



workplace-related stress and aid mental and physical recuperation', Oliver tells us. 'It's hoped this will lead to staff feeling more valued, and that they will have an increased desire to work in the office space – which in turn means increased staff retention levels. After the initial honeymoon period, we believe the true value of biophilic design will be clearly demonstrated with an increase in levels of wellbeing.'

Ed believes the new workspace will be engaging and restorative and, like Oliver, hopes to see staff reporting higher levels of wellness. 'This should have a knock-on effect, reducing absenteeism and improving productivity', he says. 'As we spend a lot of time in the office surrounded by people, we also hope to see a rise in social health, too – with workers communicating more and having more fun. A blurring of life inside and outside work should be apparent as social structures improve.'

SIMPLE SWITCHES

Not all architects and designers are working on large-scale Stirling Prize-candidate projects as office developments, but many are designing routine projects such as office refurbishments. The Biophilic Office research should help them discover that simple choices, such as maximising natural light or the addition of plants, can bring big benefits to the occupants. 'We hope that people will begin to adopt these principles as we find more solid evidence to guide them on how to incorporate biophilic design', Ed says. 'Some may already be trying to do this, but don't have the ability to communicate its efficacy to clients. This research will bring tangible evidence to help them achieve more sustainable design.'

Even if you're not one of the lucky ones having their office revamped by the A-team of biophilic design, there are simple steps you can take to incorporate the design principles into your work space. 'Educating staff to be aware of the benefits of being around Nature is a great place to start', Oliver says. 'Many of us work all week to save money so we can spend our holidays in Nature – at the beach, in the forests or mountains – it's known to relieve stress and makes us feel great. So finding simple, accessible ways to improve physical or mental wellbeing is key. If you take it a stage further and add plants to every desk, before you know it an office can look like a lush, flourishing savannah. Biometric materials can literally help inspire and connect us to Nature.'

FIND OUT MORE

- View the Human Spaces report at humanspaces.com
- More on The Biophilic Office project is at bregroup.com
- Find out more about Interface at interface.com



‘I had to resist the dark side and make a real alternative, that’s why I started Po-Zu: our footwear’s free of solvent-based glues, made from sustainable materials like organic cotton, natural rubber, cork and made with respect to the people who make the shoes.’

Sven Segal, founder of Po-Zu

THE RESISTANCE

Po-Zu’s Star Wars range is a perfect antidote to the dark side of fast fashion

Po-Zu has been making waves in sustainable fashion since Sven Segal launched the ethical footwear brand in 2006. Collaborations with big-hitters – including Maharishi, Amazon Life and Timberland – continue to attract new customers, and the latest project is set to launch the brand into hyperspace.

Following ‘a call from Lucasfilm’, Po-Zu has created a range of *Star Wars*-inspired footwear that will be on sale from August. The collection includes styles for women, men and kids, with boots and trainers inspired by the main characters in the *Star Wars* films.

This is the first major launch since Po-Zu appointed Safia Minney, the formidable founder of pioneering ethical clothing brand People Tree, as its new managing director. ‘I joined Po-Zu because I wanted to find ethical, well-designed shoes’, Safia tells us, ‘and Sven had a word in my ear about the up-and-coming *Star Wars* collaboration. I was intrigued!’

GOING DOWN A STORM

As with all Po-Zu footwear, the shoes in the *Star Wars* collection are handmade by craftsmen in

Portugal using high-quality sustainable materials and first-class production processes. ‘We use wool tweed, cork, coconut husk and natural latex for the Rey boot and organic cotton in the Resistance high-top sneaker’, Safia explains.

The shoes are going down a storm with the *Star Wars* community and general fashion media alike; ‘They’re surprised that the shoes are of such a high quality and so wearable’, Sven says. ‘They’re pretty gob-smacked that the collection is ethical, too.’

So does the warm reception from mainstream fashionistas suggest high street shoe brands could be convinced to start making more ethical footwear? ‘They really must do’, Sven says. ‘We set up the Better Shoes Foundation to help promote know-how and better manufacturing. What is being sold is a huge burden on the limits of our planet’s natural resources.’

THE DARK SIDE OF FASHION

If anyone knows about the dark side of the footwear industry, it’s Sven. He worked as a shoe designer for mainstream brands for over a decade, and says he became ‘increasingly fumed by the toxic glues in shoe factories and general lack of respect for the workers and the environment’. The experience inspired him to set up an ethical alternative.

Today there’s a wider understanding of the

impacts of fashion on farmers, factory workers and the Earth; films like *The True Cost*, which has been viewed by over 10 million people, have helped to raise awareness of what goes on behind the label. ‘There has been a fashion revolution and, with the Modern Slavery Act, people are starting to realise that the way we consume just doesn’t add up’, Safia tells us. ‘We have to design, produce and consume differently. What were seen as fringe ethics are now becoming mainstream’, she adds.

Collaborations like this will certainly help to make ethical footwear the new norm, and the possibility of having a flagship Po-Zu store – an idea currently being discussed with investors – would be another giant leap. ‘The collections we have up our sleeve are awesome!’, Safia reveals – we hear she’s even twisted Sven’s arm and got a style named after her. ‘Hope it’s a hit!’, he laughs – and we’re sure it will be.

FIND OUT MORE

PO ZU
shoes with a good idea

- Shop the full *Star Wars* collection at po-zu.com/pages/home-star-wars
- Watch the *Star Wars* Rey boot being made at po-zu.com/blogs/news/the-making-of-the-rey-boot
- More on the Better Shoes Foundation is at bettershoes.org

JANEY LOVES

Natural beauty expert Janey Lee Grace reveals the winners
of her Janey Loves Platinum Awards 2017

I'm thrilled to kick off my collaboration with MyGreenPod Magazine by sharing some of the highlights of the Janey Loves Platinum Awards 2017. I created these awards four years ago to recognise the best natural and organic products and services. We have categories for health and wellbeing, mother and baby, home and garden, food and drink and one for therapists, coaches and authors of wellbeing books.



By far the biggest category is skincare and beauty; since writing my first book, *Imperfectly Natural Woman*, 10 years ago – when you could count on one hand the organic makeup brands – the market has grown massively. Consumers are consistently choosing organic and eco products over their conventional rivals, not just to tick the ethical box or as an antidote to allergies, but because they look great, feel great and are effective! Here are a few of this year's winners.



WINNERS

AEOS CLEANSING OIL DÉ-MAQ

Our judges loved this smooth, hydrating, cleansing oil made with biodynamic ingredients. It's effective at removing impurities and every last trace of makeup.

aeos.net

GREEN PEOPLE ORANGE BLOSSOM EXFOLIATOR

A divine organic facial scrub with nourishing shea butter and ultra-fine particles of bamboo and apricot leaf. This special edition celebrates Green People's 20th birthday.

greenpeople.co.uk

WELEDA TINTED LIP BALM RANGE

A creamy sheen with a hint of colour – Nude, Rose or Berry Red. Organic shea butter and organic jojoba oil left judges talking of kissable lips!

weleda.co.uk

REJUVENATED COLLAGEN SHOTS

Beauty comes from within, and this collagen drink boosts levels of peptide-rich amino acids to improve the skin's tone and texture, reducing the signs of ageing.

rejuvenated.co.uk

NATORIGIN NAIL ENAMEL

We loved this long-lasting, natural nail enamel in neutral or bright colours – perfect for summer nails. There's a one-stroke, nickel-free brush for fast application.

natorigin.co.uk

INCOGNITO SUNCREAM INSECT REPELLENT

This 3-in-1 natural suncream, insect repellent and moisturiser is perfect for summer sun – and means there's no need to pack three bottles when jetting off on holiday!

lessmosquito.com

THE KONJAC SPONGE COMPANY RAINFOREST COLLECTION MINI PORE REFINERS

These limited edition mini sponges, featuring rainforest creatures, are great for refining, defining and nourishing sensitive skin. Celeb makeup artists love them!

konjac spongecompany.com

ORGANICALLY EPIC SÖSAR SKINCARE MISTY SEA MUD MASK

This Misty Sea Mud Mask improves blood circulation in your skin, eliminating toxins and allowing oxygen and nutrients to penetrate all layers of the skin.

organicallyepic.uk



AND FOR THE GUYS...

PURE & LIGHT ORGANIC SKINCARE ESSENTIAL FACE CREAM GENTLEMEN

This cream, rich in essential fatty acids, was created specifically for men. It promotes skin renewal, softens and nourishes the skin and is great for all skin types.

pureandlightorganic.eu

FIND OUT MORE

- View all the Janey Loves 2017 Platinum Award winners at janyleegrace.com/2017-platinum-awards/
- Janey's holistic living blog is at imperfectlynatural.com
- For the latest on natural beauty visit imperfectlynatural.com/category/beauty

Weleda experts share their summer skincare tips – whether you're prone to bites, love long days in festival fields or can't resist the surf

PLANT-POWERED BEAUTY

British summertime has as many highs and lows as a Wimbledon final, so enjoy it while you can! With a string of festivals ahead and an unbeatable coastline to explore, you won't need to go far to make the most of the UK sunshine – and, if you enjoy it in moderation, it will do wonders for your skin.

'Most of us are aware that we need the sun's assistance to produce Vitamin D, which is fundamental for bone health', says Evelyn Liddell, head of training at Weleda. 'Five to 15 minutes of sunlight on your arms, hands and face, two or three times a week, is enough to enjoy its vitamin D-boosting benefits.'

Sunlight plays a role in the balance of our mood-enhancing hormones, which explains why seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is prevalent in winter, when the sun's weaker and we're more inclined to cover up or stay indoors. Sun exposure can also benefit those who suffer from psoriasis, eczema, jaundice and acne – but too much can take its toll. 'Without a doubt, sunlight is hard on your skin', Evelyn warns. 'Together with the ageing process it can encourage the production of wrinkles and roughness.'

HYDRATING PLANT OILS

As temperatures rise, so should your intake of water and the depth of your moisturiser; it's crucial to keep your skin hydrated from both the outside in and the inside out. 'Keeping your skin hydrated and nourished with plant oils supports its regeneration process', Evelyn tells us. 'Choosing products that cool and offer hydration at a deeper level will help to bring balance back to sun-drenched skin.'

In Ayurvedic medicine, apples, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates and strawberries are just some of the foods believed to have a cooling effect on the body. Weleda Pomegranate Firming Face Serum (£35.95, 30ml), which contains aloe

and pomegranate juice, is rich in antioxidants and has a cooling, firming and moisture-replenishing effect.

But if you had to choose just one product to get you through the summer months, it would have to be the superhero Weleda Skin Food (£7.50, 30ml). This oil-rich multitasking balm for dry and rough skin not only smells divine but provides intense moisturisation on the first application. 'Skin Food is bursting with a bouquet of nourishing herbs', Evelyn says. 'It's a firm favourite because it works, and it works well.'

AN INDUSTRY SECRET

Praised by professional makeup artists and celebrities ranging from Adele to Julia Roberts and Victoria Beckham, Skin Food has been working its magic since 1926. It's one of the beauty industry's best-kept secrets, bringing the glow back to skin that's been ravaged by gruelling schedules and jetset lifestyles.

The surfing community has also embraced the all-natural balm; The Wave recently recommended Skin Food to 31.4k members of the surfing community on Instagram, calling it 'the best cream for after surfing to stop skin drying and after sun exposure.'

The iconic little green tube is crammed with

'Skin Food is bursting with a bouquet of medicinal herbs. It's a firm favourite because it works, and it works well'

ABOVE
Weleda Skin Food, the all-natural wonder balm, has been a beauty must-have since 1926

RIGHT
Weleda's plant tinctures go into a wide range of family first aid medicines



extracts of wild pansy, calendula and chamomile, all delivered in a rich, thick base of oils and beeswax. It's a summer saviour, helping to rehydrate skin that's been dried out by air conditioning, sun exposure, salty breezes and swimming pools.

PLANT POWER

Skin Food's huge success and popularity across the generations is testament to the incredible power of plants. The efficacy of Weleda's products – both medicines and cosmetics – is down to the extremely high quality of the fresh extracts that go into them. 'This is the reason why at Weleda we prefer to grow our own plant ingredients, or have long-term partnerships with growers we get to know and trust', explains Claire Hattersley, Weleda's head gardener.

Weleda chooses to grow its crops biodynamically, a style of growing that's similar to organic in that no artificial fertilisers, chemical pesticides or fungicides are used.

In addition to these organic principles, the biodynamic approach stresses the importance of growing crops in harmony with Nature's rhythms and cycles. 'By sowing our seeds the week before the full moon we guarantee good germination and strong early growth', Claire tells us. 'We use daily and planetary rhythms to plant, hoe and harvest, all of which helps the plant to grow healthily.'

The potency of the end product is a source of immense pride for everyone at Weleda, and can be put down to the care and respect with which the plants are handled by Weleda's expert gardeners. Each crop is harvested first thing in the morning to ensure optimum quality, then taken straight to Weleda's manufacturing unit a mile down the road. 'We chop it up, add organic ethanol and purified water then leave it to steep for 14 days', Claire tells us. After pressing and filtering, the resulting liquid is the 'Mother Tincture' that's used in Weleda's natural, organic cosmetics and medicinal products.

'It's a bit like gardening in a Nature reserve', Claire says. 'Biodiversity is key to having a healthy piece of land, so we have lots of different habitats in our 13-acre garden – from meadows, ponds, fields and woodland edges to beehives, insect hotels and bird boxes. This environmental diversity ensures that our crops grow within a harmonious and balanced piece of land where



Nature is encouraged to thrive. Coupled with our biodynamic approach, we can be sure that our crops become the most vibrant and life-filled ingredients for our products.'

NATURE'S MEDICINE CABINET

These carefully and respectfully grown ingredients are so potent and effective that they're also used to make medicines, providing a natural alternative to synthesised chemicals. 'Natural remedies can be effective and many people chose to treat minor self-limiting health conditions with them', says Zoe Smith, health and wellbeing expert at Weleda.

Plants contain all sorts of naturally occurring chemicals that can be used to beat pain and relieve some of the less welcome side-effects of spending time outside over the summer months. 'Arnica has anti-inflammatory compounds which reduce swelling and inflammation, and analgesic activity that provides pain relief', Zoe tells us. 'Urtica (nettle) also has anti-inflammatory action; homeopathically, urtica is also used for burning, itchy skin conditions in line with the homeopathic principle of like treating like.'

Arnica and urtica are combined in Weleda Insect Bite Spray (£6.25, 20ml) to help relieve the symptoms of insect bites; as with any other medicine you must always read the label. 'Strong perfumes can attract insects so they're best avoided', Zoe says. 'Covering up arms and legs after dusk is advisable, and burning citronella candles outside can help.'

For sunburn it's a question of degree; for mild sun-kissed skin Weleda Citrus Hydrating Body Lotion (£14.95, 200ml) cools and soothes, especially if kept in the fridge. 'Sunburn is basically the skin sending out a distress signal', Zoe explains. 'This is only the part we can see, and damage often goes deeper.' A three-pronged approach of seeking shade at peak times of the day, covering up (including hat and sunglasses) and using sunscreen all help to protect you – and will help you squeeze every last bit of enjoyment out of summer.

FIND OUT MORE

- View Weleda's full range of natural products at weleda.co.uk/icat/shop
- Find out why Weleda Skin Food is a MyGreenPod.com Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes
- More on the healing power of plants is at bit.ly/2stneRw

A TASTE OF THE *unexpected*

Meet Paul Collins: executive chef at what's probably the best staff canteen in the world

It's the stuff of dreams to have Yeo Valley's organic dairy on your doorstep – particularly if you're a chef with a passion for organic produce. Paul Collins certainly fits the bill: he racked up 20 years' experience in high-profile kitchens – including The Dorchester, Cliveden and Lucknam Park – before helping to launch Daylesford Organic, where he was executive head chef for seven years.

Paul's talents haven't gone unnoticed: he was a finalist on ITV's *Chef of the Year*, has been named Rural Scottish Chef of the Year and was nominated for a Catey – the Oscars of the hospitality industry. When Paul started hosting cookery demos in the tearoom at Yeo Valley's organic garden, his culinary prowess was also spotted by Yeo Valley's Sarah Mead. 'In 2013 I moved up the hill to Yeo Valley HQ, where I joined the existing chefs to help standardise recipes and procedures in the staff canteen.' By the time Paul had put his stamp on it, the canteen was producing delicious and imaginative seasonal dishes at incredibly reasonable prices: it was crying out for custom.

Sarah saw the potential; in 2015 the team decided to open the canteen to the public for weekday lunches. This isn't the first time the Mead family, which has been farming in Somerset since the 1400s, has opened the doors of its family farm; a philosophy of openness at Yeo Valley encourages everyone – from farmers to gardeners – to swing by, have a look round, enjoy a cup of tea (or an organic ice cream) and say hello. Inviting the public to its staff canteen is just another way this ethical business is leading by example. 'Who would've known that just two years later we'd be fully booked three months in advance?', Paul asks. We'd have put money on it.

A HIDDEN GEM

The restaurant – dubbed the best staff canteen in the world – has appeared on Channel 4's *Hidden Restaurants* with Michel Roux Jr and been nominated for the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA)'s People's Favourite Restaurant of the Year. It's fair to say Sarah's 'leap of faith', as Paul puts it, has paid off.

'Don't expect fine dining, stiffness and starched tablecloths!' Paul warns. 'First and foremost this



is a staff canteen.' So what can visitors expect? It'll come as no surprise that the kitchen uses Yeo Valley's own meat and dairy produce, but a lesser-known jewel in the Yeo Valley crown is the six-acre organic garden right next to Holt Farm, the family home. 'We collect our salad, herbs, tomatoes, spinach, chards and pea shoots from here and use them in our recipes up at HQ', Paul tells us. 'If there's a good batch of veg one week, it'll have pride of place on our menu!'

COOKING BY EXAMPLE

As a brand, Yeo Valley supports British farming, family business, high welfare standards and local, organic produce – and its values are reflected in the canteen. 'On the bottom of each menu we list the suppliers that we use and how far they are from where you are sitting', Paul tells us. More often than not you can walk out on the balcony of the canteen and, looking through the telescope, see their farms across the valley.

You'll often find Paul chatting to the public about seasonal, locally grown organic produce – 'the building blocks of good food' – and stressing the importance of simple, honest dishes that maximise the potential of every ingredient.

Minimising waste and eating less, better

quality food are two things Paul is extremely passionate about. 'The staff certainly know when it's asparagus season or when there's a glut of courgettes!', he laughs. Joking aside, Paul's principles have a serious impact: Yeo Valley Canteen sends zero waste to landfill. 'On Wednesdays we cook a roast and use every part of the animal, not just the prime cuts', he tells us. 'We boil down the carcass to make stock and use leftover meats the next day in a curry or a cold meat platter. I'm a big fan of offal and we're not afraid to champion cuts that aren't widely used.'

The approach has bagged Yeo Valley Canteen three gold stars from the SRA, which Paul acknowledges is 'fantastic'. 'We earned them because we believe cooking meals is an act of love', he says, 'and that by working with local, organic and seasonal ingredients we're giving that little bit extra and cooking by example.'

FIND OUT MORE

- Call 01761 461 425 to book a table at Yeo Valley Canteen
- For sample menus visit yeovalleyvenues.co.uk/yeo-valley-canteen/
- More on the family farm is at yeovalley.co.uk

A bottle of Sacred Gin stands on a wooden surface. In the foreground, two glasses filled with gin cocktails are served on a brass tray. The cocktails are garnished with fresh rosemary and grapefruit slices. The background features a blurred arrangement of citrus fruits and greenery. The brand name 'SACRED' is prominently displayed in a large, white, serif font at the top left, with a small bird and butterfly logo above it. Below the brand name is the tagline 'Time with friends is Sacred' in a cursive font. The bottle label features a gold crest and the text 'SACRED', 'HIGHGATE LONDON ENGLAND', 'GIN', 'CR OF FRU', 'PINK GRAPEFRUIT', and 'MICRODISTILLERY'.

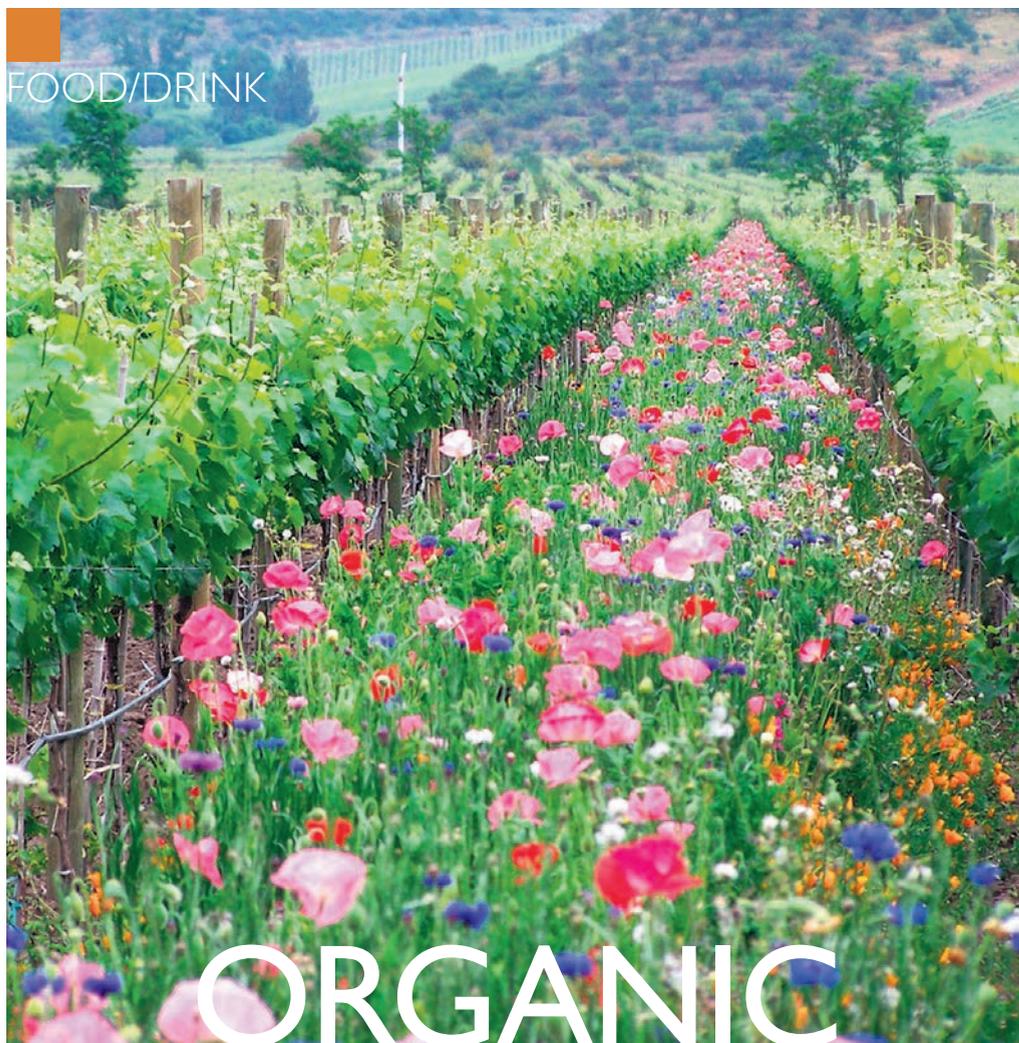
SACRED

Time with friends is Sacred

SACRED
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ORGANIC ROOTS

Organic drinks are more popular than ever –
but do they cost more, do they still give you a hangover –
and are they made from carrots?

It took a 'formative' three-month road trip through France for Neil Palmer and Lance Pigott, co-founders of Vintage Roots, to realise they might have a future in organic wine. The following year Neil packed a tent, a few neatly folded maps and a 'worryingly short' list of organic vineyard addresses for a return trip in his old Citroen 2CV. 'We set off to the Loire Valley and Bordeaux areas to meet some inspiring organic growers', Neil remembers – and the rest, as they say, is history.

FLYING THE FLAG

During the trip Neil and Lance saw the devastation that intensive chemical farming left behind. When they set up the now award-winning organic drinks supplier Vintage Roots, they did so with the clear intention they'd only ever sell organic products.

Today we're all aware of the benefits of organic, but back in the 1980s things were a bit different. 'Our commitment to organic was treated with a lot of scepticism', Neil recalls. 'People would ask 'is it made from carrots?' We travelled the country trying to explain the real benefits.'



Vintage Roots has over 400 organic wines to choose from

STRICTER STANDARDS

Various 'organic certification bodies' existed in the mid-'80s, many of which have since disappeared. The rules are stricter now: anyone selling organic wine requires certification, meaning consumers can buy with confidence.

Following a surge in demand there are currently thousands of certified organic wine growers all round the world. Many of the bigger drinks companies also carry a range of organic wines to satisfy the booming demand, so competition is really ramping up. 'We have brilliant relationships with some of the world's best organic producers and only stock the best quality and great value', Neil says. 'After all, we want to promote organic in the best possible light.'

A MAMMOTH MENU

The range at Vintage Roots often follows what's popular in the wider drinks market, with prosecco and malbec from Argentina currently selling well. Vintage Roots' own-brand wines are also popular – particularly the sauvignon blanc, merlot, rosé and prosecco in its Wild Thing range. These wines were developed, selected and designed in association with the Born Free Foundation in 2010. Since then, tens of thousands of pounds have been raised through sales to benefit conservation and animal welfare.

The range has expanded every year and is currently well over 400. You can browse wines by colour, region or category, and explore vegan, vegetarian, biodynamic, no or low sulphur, Fairtrade, low alcohol and award-winning options. 'Back in the early '90s we took on the first organic beer, which was soon followed by ciders and then spirits, too', Neil adds.

LET'S TALK HANGOVERS...

The growing demand for organic drinks is being supported by a wider shift towards more conscious consumerism. 'There's never just one reason to switch to organic', Neil tells us. 'It's more a mixture of health, quality, environmental benefit and provenance.' Non-organic drinks can be produced using a list of nasty-sounding treatments and scary names; Neil assures us that some of these are completely harmless – though others are less so, or the jury's out. Of more importance, in Neil's opinion, are the pesticide residues that could lurk in your glass: 'even in tiny quantities, would you want to ingest them?', Neil asks. 'Some wines are fined or cleared using animal products, too, which many vegans and vegetarians don't realise', he adds.

Though organic wine is just as alcoholic as its conventional counterpart, anecdotal evidence suggests you'll be left with less of a fuzzy head the morning after – particularly if you're sensitive to sulphur or some of the other chemicals in wine.

Besides the hope of being left with a kinder hangover, organic quality is superior, and you know that by purchasing organic you're helping a grower somewhere protect our planet from damaging toxic chemicals. And with prices as low as £7.65 for an organic tinto and £8.50 for a delicious-looking organic prosecco, the prices are just as tempting as the drinks themselves.

FIND OUT MORE

- View Vintage Roots' full range of organic wines at vintageroots.co.uk
- See which organic wines are MyGreenPod.com Heroes at mygreenpod.com/heroes
- Call free on 0800 980 4992 for a brochure or wine advice from Vintage Roots

Summer FORAGING

John Wright, River Cottage's 'captain forager', shares his tips for a wild summer

The verdant wild foods of spring give way to those of red and brown in the autumn. Eventually. In late June, July and early August, the hungry months, we wait. This is accepted wisdom and there is truth in it, but even the most pessimistic forager knows that summer, too, provides.

Wild food is not just for us country mice. Perhaps a third of all edible wild plants are generally considered to be weeds. The summer vegetable garden, annoyingly for gardeners, provides one of the best sources. Here you'll find fat hen and spear-leaved orache, both first-class substitutes for spinach, and also chickweed, a straggling plant that can carpet a prepared vegetable plot in a month if allowed to do so.

Chickweed tastes faintly like grass, or maybe peas, and is good in a salad (if a bit stringy). The best way to prepare it is in a pakora, with lots of crispy bits sticking out all over the place. All three plants are unrelentingly dig-out-and-come-again plants, so you will enjoy repeated opportunities to pick young, fresh greens – all while you are 'weeding'.

SUMMER DELIGHTS

There are two denizens of summer which I look forward to with some impatience every year. The first is elderflower. The tree is of both town and country and something of a weed in both locations. Although the dry spring brought it into flower ridiculously early this year, it usually appears from late May and hangs around for six weeks or so. I suggest picking as much as you can as soon as you see a tree in full bloom. The two classic uses are a cordial and the much-loved (and occasionally explosive) elderflower sparkly. However, most of my crop goes to make Elderflower and Lemon Turkish Delight. This is my own, proud invention; I've made 10 kilos of the stuff this June already. It won't be enough.

The second is also a flower – that of the supremely fragrant Japanese rose, *Rosa rugosa*. A popular and vigorous hedging rose, it has escaped its urban confines and now makes a thorough nuisance of itself in the wild, notably in hedgerows and sand dunes. Its boorish behaviour aside, it is a delight to the forager. I have a general principle that if you like



FORAGING AT RIVER COTTAGE

You can join John Wright on one of his River Cottage foraging adventures from only £195. Choose from a day exploring the hedgerows, a seashore foraging adventure along the Jurassic

coast or fungi foraging in autumn fields and woods. You'll be treated to a host of River Cottage treats along the way and your day will finish with a Forager's Feast back at Park Farm.

something, you either deep-fry it in batter or make a vodka infusion. Rose petal vodka is a wonderful cocktail ingredient, especially when matched with raspberries. I make about a gallon a year using petals 'gathered' from municipal flower beds and neighbours' gardens. This is never enough, either.

GETTING LUCKY

For those not confined to the city there is more. Streams frequently sport watercress in high summer; its drawback (if not cooked) is the liver fluke it can carry. Watermint is often found with it, and also in wet areas generally. A common plant, it is shamefully neglected in the kitchen; the flavour is that of peppermint without the 'pepper'. Watermint and lemon sorbet is a glory.

While it's a common plant, wild marjoram is fussy about where it grows, insisting on an alkaline soil. In West Dorset it can be found in large, dense patches on the chalk-banked roadsides – and once I saw some growing on lime-rich rubble in Basingstoke, so you can be lucky anywhere.

There is a brief period in the summer when elderflower is contemporaneous with its unparalleled culinary companion, the gooseberry. Sadly, gooseberries are hard to find even in the shops, and you'll need to make preparations long before summer to find their bushes in the wild. Being unhelpfully green, they're almost impossible to spot in the hedgerow and the bushes and leaves are superficially similar to the ubiquitous hawthorn. Look out for gooseberry bushes in April, as they leaf-up a few weeks before everything else!

FIND OUT MORE

- Win a spot on John Wright's Foraging course, plus accommodation, at mygreenpod.com/competitions
- Find out what's on at River Cottage at rivercottage.net/calendar
- More on TV's most famous farmhouse is at rivercottage.net

AGROFORESTRY IN ACTION



Georgia Farnworth, policy officer at the Soil Association, explains how we can use trees to fight climate change

When we think of British farmland, we usually think of lush green pastures with grazing cows and sheep, or we think of fields of cereals or vegetables. Mature trees may be dotted through hedgerows, but rarely do we see many trees in fields, as much a part of the farm as the crops or animals.

Agroforestry is the cultivation of trees alongside crops or livestock. They can be planted in neat rows, with alleys of crops in between, or planted closer together to provide shelter, shade and food for grazing animals. If we were to look back thousands of years, to our earliest agricultural history, we'd see agroforestry was a common way of managing land for a variety of purposes. Sadly, as our farming has become more uniform

and intensive, we've steadily lost trees from our farmed landscapes.

However, times and attitudes are changing and the Soil Association is among those calling for more farmers to embrace agroforestry and the many benefits it can bring to productivity, biodiversity, animals and the environment.

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE

Growing two crops from the same land – rows of fruit trees in cereal crops, for example – can boost the yield and increase farm productivity and profitability. Increasing productivity in this way could also release land for woodland, rewilding or less intensive farming.

Agroforestry could be a big asset in our fight against climate change. The Soil Association is calling on the government to insist that farming plays its part in reducing the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, and supports the move to zero net emissions after 2050 in line with our Paris commitments. Increasing the area of agroforestry is key: not only would more trees increase carbon storage above and below ground, but agroforestry can help to make farming more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate.

AGROFORESTRY'S BENEFITS

Trees improve soil fertility and reduce erosion; they increase the capacity of soils to absorb and store water, protecting against flooding and drought. Agroforestry can also provide farm animal welfare benefits by providing shelter, shade and food to livestock – and it would diversify our farming industry, which is crucial for a secure and resilient food supply.

Research has found that agroforestry systems can significantly increase farm biodiversity. This is because trees provide habitats for birds, insects and mammals which might otherwise not be found in agricultural landscapes, while the understory (the ground below trees) can be home to a number of more diverse plant species.

Given all these benefits, why is agroforestry such a niche practice in the UK? Part of the problem is the lack of financial incentive for farmers, particularly in England. Short-term farm tenancies can discourage farmers from making long-term investments, and there's no joined-up government policy to support agroforestry. Another obstacle is a lack of practical, on-the-ground support and a scarcity of understanding, among farmers and landowners, of the benefits agroforestry can bring – and how to get started.

THE FUTURE OF FARMING

Luckily, there are clear solutions to these problems. Agroforestry pioneers, NGOs and researchers are working to take agroforestry out of the margins and into the mainstream.

The Soil Association is asking politicians, farmers and the public to embrace agroforestry as a transformative approach to the future of UK farming. Looking ahead to the many challenges we face – from Brexit to climate change – it's abundantly clear that agroforestry must be at the centre of a new, sustainable, innovative and resilient British food and farming system.

FIND OUT MORE

- More on the Soil Association is at soilassociation.org
- Join the good food revolution at soilassociation.org/support-us
- More on post-Brexit farming is at mygreenpod.com/articles/farming-after-brexit



An agroforestry project at Eastbrook Farm, Wiltshire



Green' commitments can be used to brush up a company's image and help to boost sales, but to live and breathe sustainability takes serious perseverance, meticulous planning and a lot of heart. One man with firsthand experience of all those things is Richard Clothier, managing director at Wyke Farms in Somerset.

SPOTTING THE OPPORTUNITY

Farming – and therefore food production – is among the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and water use. On top of that, a growing global population and increasing demand for western diets mean the world will need to produce more food over the next 50 years than it has in the last 10,000 years combined.

While the truth may be daunting – particularly to anyone in the food and farming industry – Richard sees it as an opportunity to revolutionise the entire sector. 'With 85% of the UK's total land footprint associated with meat and dairy production, farmers are perfectly positioned to be environmental stewards and pioneers of sustainable business', he tells us. 'Not just in the UK, worldwide.'

BE THE CHANGE

Richard's overarching goal is to lead by example and make his 150-year-old family business as environmentally friendly as possible. One of the biggest successes of his 'practical environmentalism' is that the entire working farm is now powered by solar and biogas generated from otherwise useless farm and dairy waste.

Richard's commitment to Wyke Farms' '100% Green' project initially ploughed the company into £17m of debt, but his faith in the project has been rewarded: Wyke Farms is the first dairy business to achieve triple certification to the Carbon Trust Standard for reducing carbon, waste and water.

Wyke Farms' biogas plant has saved over 5m kilos of CO₂ and £2m in energy costs, and the solar panels produce 80,000kWh of energy per year, saving over 42 tonnes of CO₂.

A DIFFERENT WAY TO OPERATE

Alongside the energy savings, the biogas plant makes use of the 75,000 tonnes of waste that would otherwise be carried



How one man from Somerset plans to change the world

FIND OUT MORE

- More on Wyke Farms' sustainability policy is at wykefarms.com/green
- Find out why Wyke Farms Cheddar is a MyGreenPod. com Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes
- Buy the award-winning cheeses from wykefarms.com/shop

'farmers are perfectly positioned to be environmental stewards and pioneers of sustainable business'

away each year, and by using the digestate from Wyke Farms' biogas plant, local farmers save 1.5m kilos of CO₂ annually.

Wyke Farms is also helping to transform the industry from the inside out by offering a premium of 00.25p per litre to milk suppliers who adopt greener working practices on their own farms, whether they choose to install small anaerobic digesters, solar arrays or water recovery systems.

'We believe that food and dairy farming is lagging behind other sectors in terms of environmental commitment', Richard acknowledges. 'We want to show that there is a different way to operate that will also save cost and drive efficiencies.'

BRITAIN'S FINEST EXPORT?

Richard's journey has become a source of inspiration for others – from customers and the wider farming community to businesses around the globe.

Wyke Farms exports to over 163 countries, and has new distribution deals in place in the US, Hong Kong, India, China and Africa. Its current annual export turnover of £12.5m is expected to double in the next three years.

Richard sees all new and established international partnerships as opportunities to share Wyke Farms' sustainability mission outside of the UK, and to inspire others with his success story. Like his grandparents, Richard truly believes that if you look after Nature, then Nature will look after you – and he wants to tell the world.

JOIN THE DEBATE

Richard is asking the public to challenge food suppliers to be more environmentally responsible. To be part of the change, ask the brands you regularly buy from whether they have a sustainability policy in place and what it is. Tweet your findings to [@wykefarms](https://twitter.com/wykefarms).



Jarvis Smith: will this model go down in history as the electric car that changed the game?

TESLA X

If you believe electric cars are only good for nipping round cities, and you think you have to stop for an overnight charge before you've got anywhere remotely close to 'away' for the weekend, think again.

The Tesla X is the holy grail of SUVs – and just happens to be fully electric. Its off-road stealth is frankly astonishing and its incredible range means you can get out into the wilderness and enjoy a silent drive through remote landscapes without dropping a gram of carbon behind you. So we did just that.

UP NORTH

We collected the Tesla X from Edinburgh and drove straight up to the Findhorn Foundation, the pioneering eco and spiritual centre (which, of course, has an electric car charger) in Forres, not far from Inverness. The route skirted round the edge of the Cairngorms National Park before taking us through Aviemore and up to the coast. It was just over 150 miles through some of the UK's most beautiful and rugged land, but there was no need for range anxiety in this machine.

The Tesla X has a minimum range of 250 miles; the car gave us no reason to stop, but the charging station in a car park in Aviemore gave us an opportunity to stretch our legs, order a bag of Scottish chips and enjoy the novelty of eating them outside in one of the UK's best ski destinations.

Likewise the return trip could have been uninterrupted, but we decided to stay at the beautiful Fonab Castle, a stunning five-star hotel and spa in Pitlochrie, to try out its Tesla Destination Charger.

Our room was so peaceful and the food was so good (the vegetarian haggis was the best I've ever had!) that by the next morning, after a deep and rejuvenating rest, I was ready for an adventure. We decided to take the scenic route back to Edinburgh, and found ourselves testing the Model X's off-road capabilities in the middle of Tay Forest Park.

I have to admit I was a little nervous at this point; we were in the middle of nowhere, it was raining and the already risky tracks were getting more perilous by the minute. Check out the X's 4x4 prowess out for yourself: you can see a video of our off-road adventure at mygreenpod.com/tv.

FAMILY FUN

This car really does put a stop to any nonsense about range anxiety; if you're the sort of person who would want to drive for over 250 miles without stopping for a break, then you clearly don't have kids – in which case this seven-seater



would be wasted on you anyway. We were travelling with our 15-month-old daughter and were keen to test the Model X out as a family car as well as a luxury SUV.

There are up to seven seats; the two in the third row fold down to provide extra boot space if you have a smaller family (though there's also bags of room under the bonnet – another bonus of not having an engine!). The falcon wings lift up like, well, a falcon, providing unbelievably easy access to any child car seats you need to put in the second or third rows.

CHANGING THE GAME

Prices start at around £75,000 for the 75D and the top model (P100D) costs about £135,000. There's no getting round the fact that these are eye-watering price tags, but business incentives are the best on offer: the Tesla X brings major benefits to your bottom line as well as to people and planet.

This car completely changes the game – here's why. It's a fully electric vehicle that you can charge up at any Tesla Super Charger (which will charge you up in 30 minutes – just time for a pit stop and a coffee) and Destination Charger (longer charge times, but perfect if you're parking up for a while at a hotel, restaurant or shopping centre, where these chargers are typically located).

The HEPA air filter system means medical-grade air can fill the cabin, no matter what's going on outside. There's even a bioweapon defence mode, which creates positive pressure inside the cabin to protect occupants. I hope we don't need it, but these days – well, all I'll say is that it's there just in case!

The huge, uninterrupted windscreen meant we could all enjoy breathtaking panoramic views as we travelled across this stunning part of the world and drove in pure luxury into the heart of its enchanting glens – even if, at times, I'd have preferred to have closed my eyes!

ABOVE

Tay Forest Park was no challenge for the Tesla Model X – and gave us an opportunity to test its 4x4 capabilities

FIND OUT MORE

- More on the Model X is at tesla.com/en_GB/modelx
- Have fun designing your own! tesla.com/en_GB/modelx/design
- Check out Fonab Castle Hotel at fonabcastlehotel.com

THE BRAND NEW RX9



#RXPLORING

The all new gravel bike from Orange and now packed with new details, this do-it-all Orange is a seamless blend of mountain bike and road bike. Tough, responsive and capable, from your daily city commute to those epic bikepacking adventures of a lifetime, the new RX9 is unique among it's rivals. The Orange RX9 is ready for anything, are you?

Unique road/trail geometry — unflappable handling on the tarmac or the rough stuff

Strong and compliant carbon fibre fork for precision tracking and comfort

Versatile bike set-up — easily run slick road tyres all the way up to 42mm knobbles

Available now in two models starting at £1250

     [ORANGEBIKES.CO.UK/RX9](https://www.orangebikes.co.uk/rx9)



Natural HIGH

Lake Garda's Lefay Resort and Spa is raising the bar for sustainable wellbeing



LEFT
Lefay's infinity pool blends seamlessly into the lake

ABOVE
Treatments can be enjoyed outside in summer

RIGHT
The indoor saltwater pool

BELOW
The resort faces south to make the most of views over the lake



It was a risk to perch an eco-spa 6km away from Lake Garda's main strip; resort competition is high on the lakeside and one of the main reasons tourists visit this paradise in the north of Italy is to be close to *that view*. But Lefay – meaning 'the fairy' – is a magical resort in a fairytale spot.

In the heart of the enchanting Riviera dei Limoni on the western banks of Lake Garda, Lefay is the lake's first five-star luxury resort. It sprawls over 11 hectares of natural park in Gargnano, surrounded by rolling hills, woods and olive groves that supply the nourishing oils used in the resort's spa and restaurants.

However risky the location may have been from a business point of view, the 6km drive actually works to guests' advantage: by the time you've twisted up the winding road to Lefay's hilltop gates you'll have dropped into harmonious bliss with the surrounding area – from its melodic birdsong to the scent of its sun-drenched olive trees. It's as though the drive itself is part of the treatment: an initiation into the resort's bespoke Lefay Spa Method.



REDEFINING LUXURY

The resort's owners – Alcide and Liliana Leali – decided to create a luxury wellness brand back in 2006, and Lefay – which opened in 2008 – was the first resort on the map. It reflects a new understanding of luxury that values space, Nature, time to yourself and discrete service – all with fantastic attention to detail.

With a background in architecture and an acute awareness that the wellbeing of the individual is dependent on the health of the whole, Liliana's beliefs helped carve a physical structure to contain the couple's vision of a sustainable and holistic approach to wellness.

Local materials – from olive wood to Italian marble – feature in abundance and the building itself, inspired by the local lemon groves, is landscaped so sensitively that it's barely visible from the road. It backs into the hillside, facing south to make the most of the view and to save energy on heating.

Behind the resort is a high-tech biomass-fuelled plant, and solar panels have been fitted to the roof of Lefay's main restaurant. As a result 85% of

the resort's heating – and 100% of its cooling and air conditioning – comes from renewable energy. All electricity is from renewables – 60% of which is generated on site.

AWARD-WINNING WELLBEING

A sustainable approach that puts the local environment first has been central to the vision for the spa, and it's paid off. The awards are rolling in thick and fast: each year brings another string of accolades, awarded by everyone from industry experts to travel gurus and members of the public. Among a list too long to include here, Tripadvisor's Travellers' Choice Awards have ranked Lefay among the Top 25 Hotels, Top 25 Luxury Hotels and Top 25 Romantic Hotels.

Lefay is the first wellness resort in southern Europe to obtain the prestigious environmental certification of Green Globe, the first worldwide certification programme to develop international reference standards for the wellness industry. It's also the first spa in Italy to receive Ecocert's prestigious new certificate, Being – Organic and Ecological SPA, Level: Excellence.

A TEMPLE OF WELLNESS

The 3,800 square metre spa is described as a 'temple of wellness' where 'mind and body are regenerated through the discovery of genuine emotions and a sense of inner harmony'. It's divided into three areas: The World of Water and Fire includes all areas connected to the swimming pools, saunas, grottos and small lakes – including the indoor and outdoor saltwater pool, indoor thalassotherapy pool and six different types of sauna.

The Nature and Fitness area boasts a large gym fitted with all the latest equipment for training, plus a fitness studio for courses and fitness activities. Finally, The Park – In Silence Among the Stars: Trilogy in the Air is made up of all the outdoor areas for sports and trails dedicated to wellness and relaxation. The resort's large park has a running circuit and a fitness trail with eight stations for improving muscle elasticity, plus a therapeutic energy garden with five stations linked to ancient symbols for wellbeing.

THE LEFAY SPA METHOD

The spa has its own treatment philosophy – the Lefay Spa Method – created by the Lefay Spa Scientific Committee. The approach, which fuses classical Chinese medicine with western scientific research, was devised to address mental and physical wellness, with treatments customised according to individual needs – from stress relief and weight loss to combating insomnia and signs of ageing.

The signature treatments include energy massages and special treatments using perfumes and essences from the local area. Non-invasive aesthetic medicine, which uses acupuncture for aesthetic purposes, is also available, as well as therapies in the fields of natural medicine, osteopathy and physiotherapy. Rituals dedicated to couples are held in the exclusive Private Spa – inspired by Greek mythology to offer a sensual trip for two into the Lefay Spa world.

VITAL GOURMET

As you might expect from a resort with a holistic approach to wellbeing, food is seen as vital to good health. Lefay Vital Gourmet is a style of cuisine underwritten by principles that champion an authentic, seasonal Mediterranean diet, packed with Italian spirit, good ethics and local character. Seasonal ingredients, extra virgin olive oil, citrus fruits from the lake and locally grown herbs all combine to create a quintessential and light cuisine that's bursting with health and surprisingly filling.

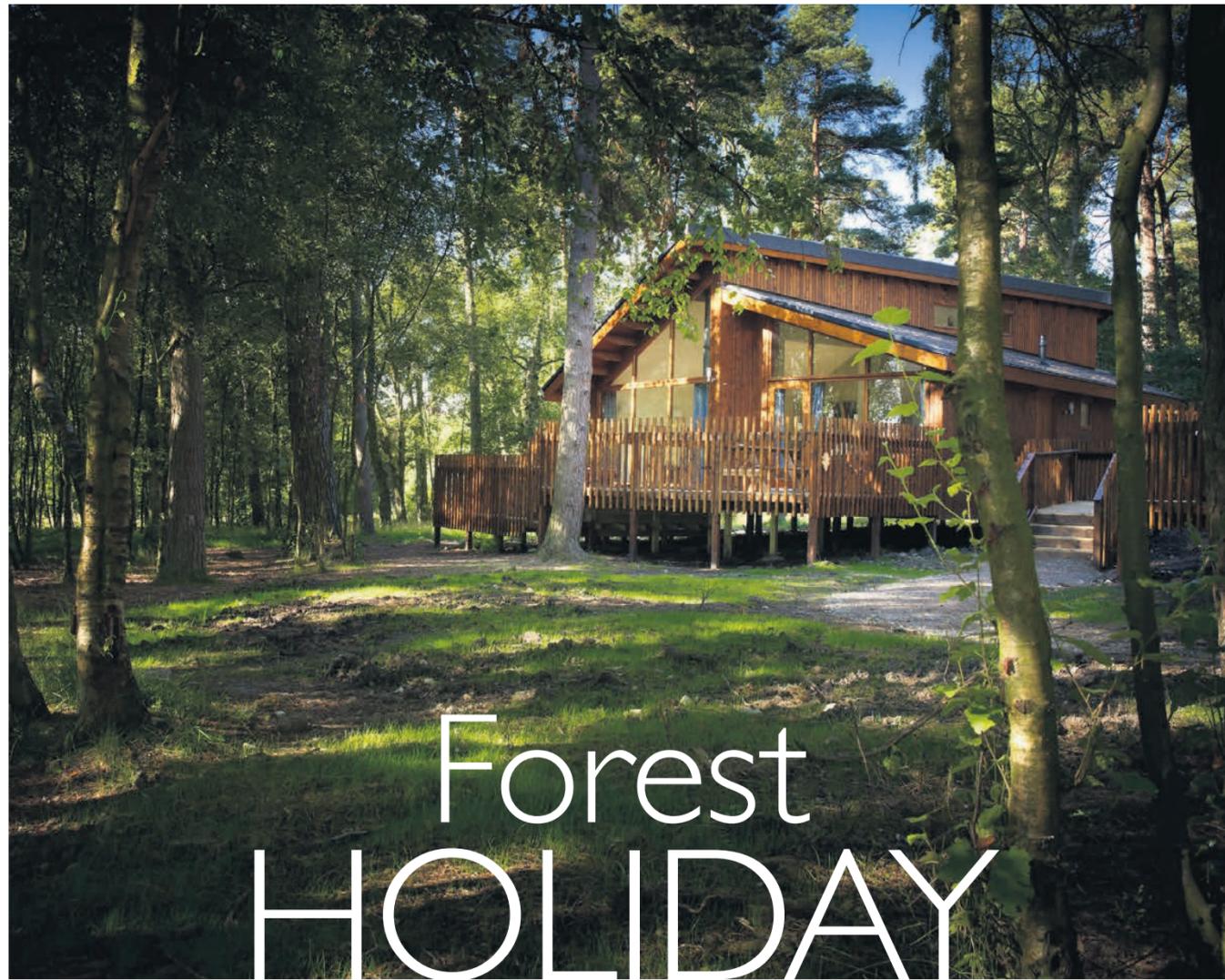
Lefay Vital Gourmet is just one of the options in the main restaurant, La Grande Limonaia, where meals are food for the soul. The Trattoria La Vigna is a more relaxed eating area that balances the simplicity and warmth of Italian cuisine.

While some wellbeing resorts also double up as drying out clinics, this is Italy. Prosecco is on tap for breakfast (alongside just about every other Italian delicacy you could wish for) and a long list of wines is presented with a proud flourish at lunch and dinner. The bar mixes a particularly good martini, so there's something for every occasion. The light live music sets help cement this resort's place among the world's most romantic getaways, and the staff are incredibly thoughtful and attentive with children, setting high chairs with silver cutlery and pressed linen.

The next Lefay resort, expected to open in 2018, is being built in the Madonna di Campiglio ski area. One of the most famous skiing destinations in the Alps, it's surrounded by the Dolomites, mountains with UNESCO World Heritage status. We expect it'll be another belter of a resort that bags even more awards for Lefay.

FIND OUT MORE

- To book, visit le fayresorts.com/eng
- More on Lefay Spa treatments is at lagodigarda.le fayresorts.com/eng/spa
- More on Ecocert's certification process is at ecocert.com/en/certification



Forest HOLIDAY

‘Now, who can tell me where *north* is?’ The adults looked at their watches, then at the sun, then back down at their watches – each shift a little less confident than the last. The kids, who pointed in random directions, ended up being closer.

As the performance played out, Robin the ranger waited patiently. ‘I know what you’re doing’, he smiled, his northern twang inflecting an edge of mischief. ‘You think the sun rises in the east, sets in the west and is directly above you at midday!’ The adults looked aghast: yes, that’s exactly what they thought! Was this man mad? Was he about to tell us the Earth was flat? Was Robin a *witch*? You can imagine how we felt later when he said his friend had made fire out of a snowball, but more on that later.

The other possibility was that Robin knew exactly what he was talking about, and that he was the odd one out in a bunch of adults who had lost much of their connection to Nature’s cycles and outdoor life – despite the pigeon-chested confidence drawn from an acorn of knowledge planted at school (which, it turned out, had never actually germinated).

ESCAPE TO THE FOREST

The surge in survival shows and bushcraft courses – spurred on by the likes of Bear Grylls – are reigniting our interest in outdoor living, but the only true way to get back to Nature and understand its lessons, cycles and rhythms is by getting outside and being in it.

An authentic forest getaway is an unbeatable break – whether you’re a young child or a big kid

ABOVE AND RIGHT, TOP
Cabins are built to work in harmony with the surrounding forest

RIGHT, BOTTOM
Facilities include a fully equipped kitchen, plus some surprises...

FAR RIGHT
The view from the café at Forest Holidays, Cropton

We’d taken a Forest Holidays break for just that: to escape and kick back in a beautiful spot, spend time outside and get the kids away from the TV. There were three generations of us – each with different tastes and personalities – but one thing that united us, from the one-year-old right up to the 71-year-old, was a love of the outdoors.

There are nine Forest Holiday locations scattered across the UK (see box, opposite page); they’re set in exclusive Forestry Commission-owned woodland so each spot has its own distinct personality that’s expressed through the magic of the seasons. At Ardgartan the pine-clad mountains sweep down to meet the shore of Loch Long at the edge of the Argyll Forest Park, while the more famous Sherwood Pines Forest Park boasts 3,300 acres of thick Nottinghamshire forest, steeped in the legend of Robin Hood.

Each location is leased from the Forestry Commission, the organisation responsible for managing and protecting Britain’s forests and a partner and shareholder in Forest Holidays. This partnership allows each party to support the other in the management and protection of the woodlands and forests. It also means that guests contribute towards the cost of the work the Forestry Commission carries out.

We’d chosen to visit Cropton – a woodland meadow on the edge of the North York Moors National Park. It’s a couple of hours north of where we’d grown up, and a short drive from Filey and Whitby, seaside towns we’d visited regularly as kids.

A LUXURY SANCTUARY

All Forest Holidays cabins are designed to BREEAM specifications by award-winning architects Holder Matthias. They benefit from the latest eco-sensitive thinking and boast features like foundations and roofing that allow rainwater to flow straight back into the forest floor.

Inside, the cabins are true sanctuaries in the forest, offering a huge shot of luxury in the otherwise wild and simple surroundings. Underfloor heating, soaring windows with dramatic woodland views and your own private outdoor hot tub are just some of the things to look forward to after a day hiking across unforgiving moorland, ambling through the woods or cycling along winding forest trails.

Golden Oak cabins sleep up to eight people and are perfect for families; alongside a fully equipped kitchen, living space (with TV and wifi), bedrooms and bathrooms you’ll find fluffy robes in the en-suite, an outdoor hot tub and a log-burning stove – all perfect for helping you kick back in the evening.

From 17 July 2017, all Golden Oak cabins will also have a professional gas barbecue on the decking, so you’ll be able to cook outdoors while taking in the stunning forest views.

A Silver Birch cabin, which sleeps up to six, is another great choice for your forest break, while the great value Copper Beech cabins are perfect if you want the same space but without a hot tub.



If you’re looking for a more romantic break, the Golden Oak Hideaway is designed with romance in mind; it has a hot tub, a wood-burning stove, a hammock on the decking and – in a touch of sheer decadence – a large, sunken bath, big enough for two, with a panoramic view of the forest.

BACK TO THAT SNOWBALL...

There wasn’t much time for romance with the family in tow, but the sun was beating down through the canopy and we were keen to explore the forest with Robin, the ranger on-hand for guests who want to go out and learn about the forest, its secrets and how to find their way home if they ever got lost. Which brings us back to where north is.

‘No one ever gets this right’, Robin offered, kindly. ‘The thing to remember is that during the day, the sun is always to the south, because of our latitude and because the Earth’s tilted on its axis. It never actually passes directly overhead.’ Robin paused to make sure it was sinking in. ‘That’s why you always want a south-facing garden’, he added, and got enough ‘ahhhs’ to be confident the penny had dropped.

Encouraged by the evidence-based approach Robin had taken, we decided to probe him about this friend who’d conjured flames from ice. ‘You wouldn’t believe it’, he said, eyes wide, ‘but it’s true! He compressed a snowball so tightly it became a thin layer of ice, which he used as a lens to magnify the sun and create enough heat to make fire!’

You’re not likely to see this at a Forest Holidays site near you, but there are enough wonders out there to keep you entertained and amazed – whatever your age.

FIND OUT MORE

- Details of Forest Holidays locations and activities are at forestholidays.co.uk
- Cabin details are at forestholidays.co.uk/choose-a-cabin
- More on the Forestry Commission is at forestry.gov.uk

FOREST HOLIDAYS LOCATIONS

Ardgartan Argyll,
Scotland

Strathyre,
Scotland

Cropton,
North Yorkshire

Keldy,
North Yorkshire

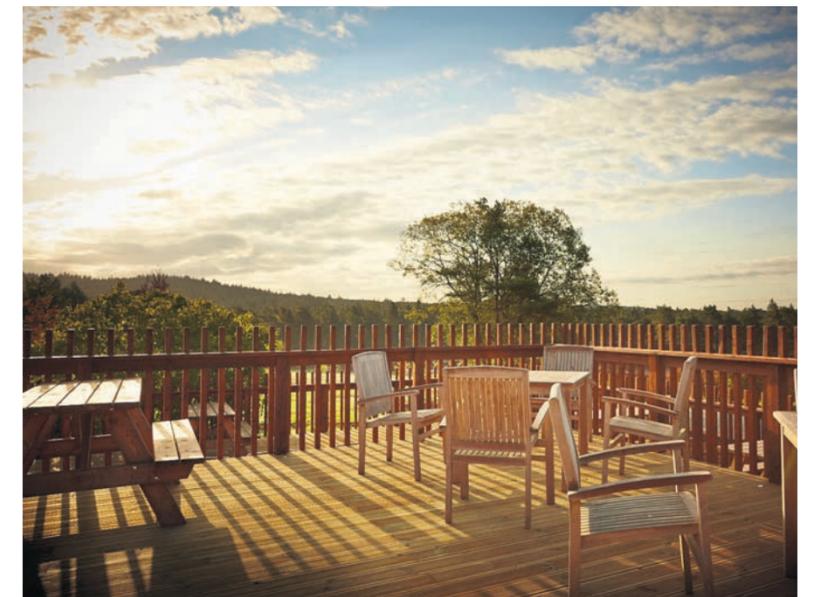
Sherwood Forest,
Nottinghamshire

Thorpe Forest,
Norfolk

Forest of Dean,
Gloucestershire

Blackwood Forest,
Hampshire

Deerpark,
Cornwall



CHANGE THE ENERGY

WE'RE BRINGING TOGETHER A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE STRIVING FOR

How many times have you been baffled by global political decisions made over the last two years?

Brexit.

Trump.

Most of Trump's decisions – like pulling the US out of the Paris Agreement.

The UK's snap election.

Then there's the constant stream of headlines exposing unjust decisions made by the 1%, that make the 99%'s lives harder.

How is it possible that, according to a Competition and Markets Authority report,

we're paying a total of £1.4bn more than we should be to keep our homes lit and warm?

Anyway, we're not trying to pull you into a black hole of political despair.

We're reaching out to tell you **we've had enough of feeling out of control.**

We've had enough of reading headlines about a major energy company CEO getting a **72% pay rise**, then turning the page to learn we're paying over the odds for our energy.

We've had enough of watching our planet – and the people on it – fall apart as a result of climate change, then hearing politicians renege on commitments to environmental issues.

So we're doing something about it.

**We're using our had-enoughs as a vehicle for change:
My Green Collective.**

CHANGE, AND OUR FIRST MISSION IS TO CHANGE THE ENERGY.

Our first mission: ditch mick-taking energy suppliers and support the good guys, Octopus Energy, instead.

Octopus is the UK's largest investor in solar farms, and it's offering everyone in the My Green Collective a deal that **will slash over £200 off a medium household bill** (compared with the average Big Six Standard Variable Tariff).

The more of us who switch, the greater the positive impact – and our savings – will be.

Enough is enough. **Say no to Big Six energy companies** that tease us with irresistible deals, only to squeeze us when we're tied in and under their thumbs.

LET'S CHANGE THE ENERGY. JOIN MY GREEN COLLECTIVE

There are 4 easy steps

-  Register your interest
-  octopus energy makes you an offer
-  Accept or decline the offer
-  octopus energy does the rest

#MyGreenCollective
www.mygreencollective.com
@mygreencollective

Competitions

We've got our hands on a bunch of prizes from fantastic companies that are choosing to do 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 – from a spa retreat and a forest getaway to a showcase selection of organic drinks – to help you squeeze every last drop of fun out of summer.

No catch. No pressure. Just enjoy!

You can enter all our competitions and view more prize details – plus any terms and conditions – by visiting mygreenpod.com/competitions.

Share them with friends, spread the word and update us with your experiences if you're one of our winners.

Good luck!

To enter visit mygreenpod.com



WIN
AN INCOGNITO FAMILY COMBO!
 Keep bugs at bay the natural way with this bundle of anti-insect toiletries from incognito. The prize contains five bottles of incognito insect repellent spray, a luxury loofah, a luxury citronella soap, two incense sticks, two room refreshers, a Zap-Ease, a moisturiser and a hair and body wash. The full bundle is ideal if you're going on a long trip, or if you and the family (of up to four) are heading to a tropical destination for a couple of weeks.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
A REIKI MAYA REIKI COURSE (COMBINED LEVELS 1 & 2)!
 Become a professional Reiki practitioner and use your skills to heal yourself and others with this Reiki course from Reiki Maya. Students will find out how to sense the difference between the chakras and then learn how to balance them to keep themselves and others in peak physical and emotional health. They'll also be taught to look at life in a more harmonious and peaceful way.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
THE ULTIMATE SKIN FOOD FAN BAG FROM WELEDA!
 Weleda Skin Food has a solid celeb following, and now's your chance to join the fan club! We've got five Ultimate Skin Food Fan Bags to give away, each packed with five tubes of the natural wonder balm (1x75ml, 1x30ml and 3x10ml). The smaller Skin Food tubes are perfect for travel, when you'll probably need them most! There's also a Skin Food tin, T-shirt, pencil, notebook and postcards.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
A £75 VOUCHER TO SPEND ON RE-WRAPPED'S ETHICAL GIFT WRAP!
 That brown kraft paper might be recycled, but it's not the jolliest way to wrap a birthday present. Re-wrapped's beautiful, eco-friendly gift wrap's made from unbleached post-consumer waste pulp, printed with environmentally friendly vegetable inks. One winner will receive a £75 Re-wrapped voucher, and runners-up will receive £50 (x3 prizes), £25 (x5) and £10 (x20) vouchers.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
A FORAGING COURSE FOR TWO AT RIVER COTTAGE!
 Discover Britain's hidden food secrets as you join River Cottage's 'captain forager', John Wright, on one of his wild adventures. Your day will finish with a Forager's Feast back at Park Farm, TV's most famous farmhouse! The prize includes accommodation for two at Old Park Hall (pictured), a glorious country pile near River Cottage HQ on the Devon-Dorset border.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
£260 OF ORGANIC WINES AND DRINKS FROM VINTAGE ROOTS!
 Sit back and enjoy the delights of these organic tipples with a clear conscience! Vintage Roots' showcase selection includes biodynamic champagne, English sparkling, a selection of red, white and rosé wines, sauternes, finest reserve port, amaretto from Italy and award-winning Trophy Gin from Juniper Green. Drink responsibly – drink organic!

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
£500 OF ETHICAL SHOES FROM PO-ZU'S STAR WARS OR MAIN LINE!
 Have you always wanted to step into Rey's shoes, or wondered how it would feel to be Chewie for the day? You could be about to find out! One lucky winner will receive shoes for all the family (worth £500) from Po-Zu's main line or the new Star Wars-Po-Zu range, under license with Lucasfilm/Disney. Three runners-up will win £100 to spend on ethical footwear from Po-Zu!

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
A HOME SOLAR AND BATTERY PACKAGE (WORTH £5K)!
 Think battery-powered homes are the stuff of science fiction? Think again! Smart batteries harness the sun's energy and then store the power until you need it. They work in tandem with solar panels to help slash your electricity bill and carbon footprint. This package from Moixa combines a 2kWh Moixa Smart Battery and a 2kWh solar PV system for your house.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
A WEEKEND ESCAPE (FOR UP TO 4) WITH FOREST HOLIDAYS!
 One lucky winner will get to whisk up to three guests off for a weekend break in a luxury cabin set in breathtaking British woodland on Forestry Commission land. Accommodation will be in a fully equipped, two-bedroom Golden Oak cabin, which will serve as your personal sanctuary in the forest. The winner will be able to choose from nine locations (subject to availability).

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17



WIN
WIN A TITANIC SPA TRIP WITH TREATMENTS (TOTAL VALUE £458)!
 Indulge yourself in some pampering with this great overnight package, which includes two 55-minute treatments (facial and massage) at Titanic Spa, located in a beautifully restored textiles mill in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. Overnight accommodation is included along with a continental breakfast, light lunch and two-course evening meal.

Deadline for entries: 01.10.17

VALLEY FEST
4-6 AUG, CHEW VALLEY LAKE

MESSAGE FROM THE FARMER

**GET ON
MY LAND**

DRESS UP THEM

**SAWDUST
& GLITTER**

JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ

DJ YODA [AV SET]  THIS IS THE KIT

MANU DELAGO & PETE JOSEF

LAU ♥ AFRIQUOI ♥ THE BREATH ♥ THE PHOENIX ROSE

AND MANY MORE INCREDIBLE LIVE BANDS AND DJ SETS

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VALLEYFEST.CO.UK