

Eco Champions Newsletter - December

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December 2022



MK Eco Champions Newsletter



MK Milton Keynes
City Council

Wishing you a green Christmas!

Over the Christmas period MK bin crews collect substantially more rubbish during the festive season. Each year in the UK on average we throw away:

- 17.2 million sprouts
- 263,000 turkeys
- 7.1 million pigs in blankets
- 7.5 million mince pies

- 11.3 million potatoes
- 30,000 tonnes of Christmas cards
- 13,350 tonnes of glass bottles

Christmas waste practicalities



Find out your [Christmas bin collection day](#) changes.

How do I recycle my Christmas tree?

Remove all decorations and place your tree alongside the green bin on collection day.

Willen Hospice also [recycles Christmas trees for a donation](#).

What wrapping paper can't be recycled?

Wrapping paper that is covered in glitter or made of foil is not recyclable. If you're not sure if your wrapping paper is made of paper, scrunch it into a ball. If it springs back, it's probably made of foil and not recyclable. Check out this [Recycle Now video to see the scrunch test](#).

Wrapping paper ideas that can be recycled

- stick to wrapping paper that does not have any glitter or foil content

- buy large rolls of brown paper for Christmas wrapping, tying it with coloured string or ribbon
- shoe or hat boxes covered with fabric as gift boxes
- wrap small presents in fabric scraps

- reuse last year's cards as gift tags/ cut up to stick on homemade cards
- reuse old paper/packaging

Can I recycle Christmas crackers?

On Christmas Day, about 40 million Christmas crackers are anticipated to be thrown away. Unless homemade, these are difficult to recycle as they are a mixed material product, so into the black bin bag.

Free Christmas waste resources to share

Use our free activity sheets at home, at work, on social media or in newsletters. Visit our [Eco Champions resources](#) page for more, plus 'Naughty and Nice' waste lists and collection day information graphics.

[Christmas craft ideas](#)

[Christmas recycling quiz](#)

[Christmas recycling wordsearch](#)

As an Eco Champion how can I help?



Tackling Christmas food waste helps the environment and saves you money too:

- plan meals and make a shopping list
- make a note of best before and use by dates of items in the fridge

- look up recipes for leftovers on-line, tub up and freeze leftovers
- give away unused, in date food to family and friends
- place all food waste that can't be reheated or frozen in your green bin

Order your [free kitchen caddy](#) to collect your food waste to empty into the green bin

Greener Christmas gift ideas



Some great ideas from fellow Eco Champions and MKCC Environment and Waste staff, including some gifts that don't need wrapping:

- online magazine subscriptions, downloadable music, films or books
- make a charity donation to the recipient's charity of choice
- agree not to swap gifts and spend time together instead.
- have a family get together/meal and spend money on time together. Tickets to the theatre / comedy night / festival
- sports/ gym club membership voucher or sessions
- gift your time/skills instead of things
- plant something

- reusable water bottles, flasks and straws
- energy saving products – shower timers, washing balls, solar chargers
- homemade gifts such as beeswax candles with wood wicks, jams, hedgerow gins. Get baking: homemade yule log, Christmas cake, biscuits or chutney
- buy recycled products or second-hand gifts (such as Lego) or participate in a swap shop.
- shop local, shop products with minimum packaging

This month's good news stories

[Central MK Library](#) Eco Champions have been making great changes to try to improve their recycling on-site, from changing the signage on the bins, recycling tea bags in the kitchen and separately collecting crisp packets to be recycled at the local supermarket. By working with library and cleaning staff they hope to make a big difference on-site – well done!

[Emberton Country Park](#) has an environmentally friendly duck-feeding machine. The Feed Ducks Initiatives [The Feed Ducks Initiative | Overview](#) aims to help educate the public and explain how bread feeding is bad for wildfowl and the wetland ecosystem. There is a contactless payment system for dispensing duck feed in appropriate quantities as overfeeding is also an issue.

The unit itself is made from recycled plastic, equivalent to 20,000 plastic bottles. It is also solar powered and has a QR code with a link to a webpage with info on the park and local wildlife.



[Read more Eco Champions good news stories.](#)

Contact us

- Tell us your good news stories of things you have done at home and at work to help the environment. The best ones will be included in the next e-newsletter.

- Do you have a question you would like to ask the MKCC Environment and Waste team or the MK Eco Champion community?
- Let us know if you have a particular eco topic you would like covered in future newsletters.

Email wasteeducation@milton-keynes.gov.uk

More information

Christmas trees – [Real vs Fake Christmas Trees | Updated for 2022 | Soil Association](#)

Christmas food waste - [How to reduce Christmas food waste 2020 - All Things Christmas - Christmas.co.uk](#)

Leftover recipes - <https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/foods-and-recipes?f%5B0%5D=type%3Arecipe>

Lots of interesting Christmas waste facts and figures - [Christmas waste facts - It's not very Jolly \(businesswaste.co.uk\)](#)

Lots of Christmas recycling advice from Recycle Now - [Christmas Recycling - YouTube](#)

Recycling A to Z – [A to Z of recycling in Milton Keynes | Milton Keynes City Council \(milton-keynes.gov.uk\)](#)