

**Waste Watch's education newsletter** 

spring 2006 issue 10

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www.wastewatch.org.uk www.recyclezone.org.uk wasted is published by Waste Watch, a leading environmental organisation promoting sustainable resource use in the UK by campaigning for all areas of society to reduce resource consumption, maximise resource reuse, and increase the percentage of waste recycled.

## editorial

Welcome to the spring 2006 edition of Wasted!

In this edition, we continue our tour of the waste 3 Rs reduce, reuse and recycle. This time the focus is on reuse - using things again (and sometimes again and again) before they are thrown away or recycled. Reuse used to be an everyday part of life and it's now something that we are relearning for the 21st century. Inside this issue you'll find facts about reuse and see what schools working with Waste Watch and our partners are doing about it, as well as ideas for exploring reuse in your own

Cover image shows pairs of Worn Again training shoes. Worn Again shoes are made from old clothes, car seat scrap leather, old towels and blankets and recycled rubber. To find out more go to www.wornagain.co.uk

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# mewsupdate Reusing in Rotherham

Pupils working with the Taking Home Action on Waste project have been learning how everyday waste materials can be reused. Primary pupils collected margarine tubs, yogurt pots, boxes and other rubbish from home in order to make musical instruments which they played at an assembly to share with their parents what they have been learning. Older classes have been reusing old clothes to make holders in which to keep carrier bags for reuse at home. Turn to page 6 to find out more about plastic bags and how to make your own carrier bag holders.

In addition, the children have been challenged to find new ways of reusing items at home, such as jam jars, CDs, newspaper and yogurt pots.



Children at Todwick Junior and Infant School making music with their recycled instruments.

# **Cheshire students** have the bottle

Year 9 geography students at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School have been working with Schools Waste Action Cheshire to get to grips with their school's rubbish. A waste audit showed that, as well as large amounts of potentially recyclable paper, the school was also throwing away lots of plastic drinks bottles. As a result the students have devised a 'slim your bin' campaign, a major focus of which is to encourage pupils to buy reusable plastic sports bottles.

"This project should significantly decrease the amount of waste the school produces", commented Jen Sterry, SWAC education officer. "Later in the term we will be visiting a land-fill site to fully bring home the results of throwing rubbish in the bin instead of recycling."

# Nott's kids turn green

Junior schools working with Nottinghamshire Schools Waste Action Club have held special 'Green Days' designed to help children think about how they can reduce their impact on the environment.

The events, held at West Bridgford and Manvers Junior Schools both started with special assemblies. At Manvers School, balloons were used to send amazing rubbish facts flying around the hall! Pupils were then given the opportunity to make recycled paper and reuse rubbish to make art and musical instruments as well as playing the giant Rubbish Challenge game.

To fit in with the theme of the day, pupils were asked to either dress in the colour green or reuse their rubbish to make an outfit they could wear. Those with the best outfits were awarded prizes of recycled stationery.

# SWAC successes in North Yorkshire

Repeat waste audits at four schools have demonstrated the impact of the North Yorkshire Schools Waste Action Club and the hard work done by the schools.

Arkengarthdale Primary School cut its waste by a massive 82%, thanks to the introduction of paper recycling and cutting food waste through a combination of increased awareness, menu changes and the introduction of mixed aged seating arrangements. Similar methods were also successfully applied to cutting food waste at Ingleton Primary School.

Holy Trinity Junior School in Ripon and Ingleby Arncliffe Primary both cut their waste by more than half. The latter now has three compost bins for it's fruit waste, the resulting compost being used to grow fruit,



vegetables and sunflowers in the school garden. The school has also become the village recycling centre, with paper, metal and glass recycling banks installed in the school grounds.

SWAC work at Arkengarthdale Primary School has helped cut waste by 82%





## Cycler makes a million

After a decade's hard work the Cycler project passed a major landmark in the autumn term. The robots and their accompanying education officers have now rapped out the waste message to more than one million children across the UK.

Wendy Jenkinson, Cycler co-ordinator was elated, "Over the past ten years, the Cycler robots have been to well over 5,000 schools. Reaching the millionth child represents a major achievement for the robots, the education officers, the project funders and all the partners who have supported the programme over the years."

## and still going strong.

Thanks to financial support from the Laing Charitable Trust, Cycler has continued to rap around the country during the spring term. Laing's funding for the project has enabled visits to schools in Wales, Manchester, Lewisham, Walsall and Stockport.

In Walsall, Cycler had a magnificent reception from enthusiastic students at Castle Special School. The school's Eco Committee joined in by singing their own eco rap at the end of the show!

Head teacher Kathleen Yates said: "I'm proud our school has been chosen for a visit from Cycler. Children have a vital part to play in encouraging families to recycle and reduce waste. By using innovative tools such as Cycler, we can lay the foundations that will ensure Walsall's future is clean and green. We'd like to thank Waste Watch for their support in getting our eco-message over to the borough's youngsters".

If your school would like a visit from Cycler go to www.wastewatch.org.uk and complete the booking form.







## **National projects**

### Cycler

Wendy Jenkinson - 01743 236 951 wendy@wastewatch.org.uk





### **Waste Education Support Programme**

Alison Pagan - 01328 711 369 alison@wastewatch.org.uk





## **Local projects**

Cheshire Schools Waste Action Club Jen Sterry - 01244 603237 jens@wastewatch.org.uk



### North Yorkshire Schools Waste Action Club

Irene Wise - 01609 761 818 irene@wastewatch.org.uk





### **Nottinghamshire Schools Waste Action Club**

Edwina Woodland - 0115 977 2467 edwina@wastewatch.org.uk







Ashfield DC, Bassetlaw DC, Broxtowe BC, Gedling BC, Mansfield DC, Newark & Sherwood DC, Rushcliffe BC

## **Recycle Western Riverside**

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Taking Home Action On Waste (Rotherham) Kay Whitfield - 01709 559910

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London Boroughs of Wandsworth, Lambeth, Hammersmith & Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.









# recycle western riverside

# Education officer brings a touch of drama

Waste Watch's Recycle Western Riverside project has a new education officer to replace Melanie Chew who has returned to teaching.

Damien Morris joined the project in January having previously worked as a secondary school teacher in Australia, with experience of theatre and TV work during his time at university. Damien is looking forward to putting his dramatic talents to good use in schools. "I like the element of performance involved in working with schools and I've joined the Recycle Western Riverside project to communicate my passion for the environment to children and their parents."

Damien is already hard at work delivering assemblies, conducting waste audits and developing action plans with St Mary's RC Primary School in Chelsea and Sunnyhill Primary School in Lambeth. If you are in the Recycle Western Riverside area, look out for Damien coming to a school near you.

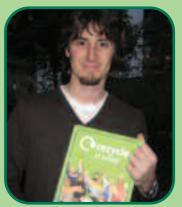
## Giving schools the tools for the job

Recycle Western Riverside's teachers' toolkit is hot off the press and packed full of information and practical classroom activities for primary and secondary teachers in Wandsworth, Lambeth, Hammersmith & Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Beginning with an introduction to waste issues and how they can be linked to the National Curriculum, the toolkit then shows schools how to carry out a waste audit as a basis for a waste action plan and to inform their environmental policy. There are tips on purchasing recycled products and how to deal with three of the most common types of school waste: paper, food and the packaging from lunches and snacks. Four case studies show how schools in the Recycle Western Riverside area have taken action on waste.

The toolkit, developed by the Recycle Western Riverside project and Waste Watch's education team, is designed to build on the good work carried out over the past four years by the project's team of education officers.

In his introduction to the toolkit, Councillor Timothy Coleridge, Chairman of the



Damien Morris with the new schools toolkit

Western Riverside Waste Authority shares his enthusiasm for the resource. "The toolkit is full of projects that will enable pupils to contribute towards sustainable development and good citizenship. It will also help schools to save costs on materials and waste disposal."

The toolkit is available to all primary and secondary schools in the Recycle Western Riverside area who are interested in following the programme.

If your school does not already have a copy, contact Damien Morris on 020 7549 0335 or damien@wastewatch.org.uk.

# **SWAC**Support Programme

The SWAC Support Programme provides teaching resources, training and advice to organisations who have taken over the management of the Schools Waste Action Club project in their area. Currently SWACs in Bexley, Essex and Norfolk are participating in the scheme. Contact details can be found on the opposite page.

### Be prepared to fight waste

Essex Cubs and Brownies have been offered the chance to trial a series of reduce, reuse and recycle activities devised by Essex County Council. Fifteen groups participated in the four-week pilot scheme and their feedback will help to develop the programme before it is launched county-wide.

### Bexley pupils get the sack

A Bexley primary school is pioneering the use of biodegradable sacks made from starch to help compost its waste. In conjunction with other measures, the system should help to divert up to 90% of the school's waste from landfill and it is hoped that it can be made available to other Bexley schools over the summer.

"The bags, which break down within a month, go to our composting plant where the



Biodegradable bags being used to collect dinner waste at Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School in Bexley

food waste is turned into compost", commented education officer, Andrea Cornwell. "It will then be used in local gardens, schools and parks."

Pupils are looking forward to a repeat waste audit to find out how much they have cut the waste they produce.

### Norfolk mobile amnesty

Norfolk County Council's Schools Waste

Action Club has teamed up with Norfolk's district councils to launch a 'Mobile Phone Recycling Amnesty'. For each phone donated, schools will receive £5, to be spent on equipment or donated to charity.

The amnesty was trialled in schools in the Broadland district before Christmas, and raised more than £5,000 in just two months. Phones are repaired by a Norfolk company and reused in developing countries. Any phones not suitable for reuse are taken apart and the components recycled.



Waste Watch's Waste Education Support Programme (WESP) provides training, resources and the opportunity to share best practise across a network of waste education practitioners.

# **Devon composting trials**

The Devon Community Composting Network is running pilot composting projects in thirteen specially selected schools across the county. These will trial different types of compost bins for a year during which time they will be offered support by composting expert, Nicky Scott.



Nicky explained, "With schools providing fruit at break time and healthier eating being promoted, there is an increasing amount of waste which could be composted ending up in school bins. Our aim is to have at least one trial project in each district, city,

and unitary authority in Devon. We can give up to £500 per school for the necessary composting equipment."

So far, the most popular composter is the 'Rolypig' a fully enclosed unit which makes an unusual addition to a school's grounds.

For more information, visit www.rolypig.com.

# **Newtons School takes up** the recycling challenge

Tracey Grant, Shanks' education officer, spent two days working with pupils at Rainham's Newtons School, together with the borough's environmental education co-ordinator, Deborah Belverstone. The class teacher, Michael Wheeler said that the lessons fitted well with the National Curriculum and had given a flying start to the school's own paper recycling scheme, "The children really enjoyed the lessons as they bring alive so many of the topics that we cover as part of the National Curriculum. Recycling is particularly relevant to our pupils because so much of the local area is involved in the waste industry. It's helpful for our students to understand the relevance of what they're doing and that they can make a difference."

Shanks East London provides free recycling lessons to school children in Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham and Redbridge, and during 2005/6 worked in more than 50 schools.



Children from Newtons School with Deborah Belverstone (back left) and Tracey Grant, learning how to recycle their household rubbish

# **WESP** goes west

Waste Watch is working with the South West Community Recycling Network to develop a regional network for waste educators in the South West. A seminar, held in September for all groups involved in the delivery of waste education in the region, attracted more than 50 people from at least 35 different organisations. Support for the establishment of a regional network was strong. DEFRA has provided funding to develop the network over the next few months. A questionnaire has been sent out to all waste educators and the information gathered is being used to decide what services will be offered to members. Priorities will be to encourage the involvement of as many organisations as possible and to offer training and networking events to members.

## North of the border

Scottish waste educators will soon be able to benefit from their own tailor made WESP programme. Waste Watch is working with the Lothian and Edinburgh Environmental Partnership (LEEP) to develop and deliver WESP training and resources in Scotland. The project is supported by the Scotlish Executive and education resources have been developed to link with the Scottish curriculum. The first training to be offered as part of the Scottish Waste Education Support Programme (SWESP) will be a two day event in April.

### The following are already members of the WESP Network and can be approached by schools wishing to undertake waste education work.

Biffe	Liz Fenion	01494 521 221
London Borough of Bromley	Arry Bevins	020 8313 4989
Northamptonshire County Council	Sarah Lewis	01604 237 633
	Jo Hackney	01604 237 332
Devon County Council	Lindsay Coyle	01392 382 920
South Molton Council	Cathy Kamiewicz	01271 345 806
South Cambridgeshire	Paul Quigley	01954 713 134
District Council		
Essex County Council	Cat Auckland	01245 437 169
Isle of Man	Stephanie Gray	01624 686 540
Norfolk County Council	Martina Glason	01603 223 835
	Jenny Craven	01603 223 829
	Mark Henderson	01603 223 347
Shropshire County Council	Sue Jelleyman	01743 235 036
Melton Borough Council	Paul Coates	07717 684 707
Statfordshire Moorlands Council	Nicola Kemp	01538 483 662
Buckinghamshire County Council	Jenny Hiscock	01296 387 195
Wycombe District Council	Bedgy Lockwood	01494 421 440
Chiltem District Council	Rebecca Newbutt	01494 732 281
Bexley Council	Sarah Evans	01322 356 901
	Andrea Cornwell	in volume out
Shanks	Tracey Grant.	01708 634 553
London Borough of Redbridge	Siri Mittet	0208 708 5518
Gateshead Council	Heather Tarvit	0191 433 7418
Islington Council	Melissa Painter	020 7527 5996
Derbyshire Dales Council	Georgina Cass	01629 761318
Oldham Council	Joanne Stanley	0161 911 4448
Bryson House, Belfast	Trevor Whight	0289 034 7742
Lewisham Council	Georgina Wady	020 8314 2295
Haringey Council	lda Olsen	020 8489 3261
Midlothian Council	Sam Worsley	0131 561 5399
	Lauren Colins	
Torfaen Council	Teresa Harris	01495 766 794

For information on how you can benefit from membership of the WESP Network, email alison@wastewatch.org.uk



# TEACHERS' RESOUR

# **REUSE CUTS WASTE**

### The plastic bag problem

Plastic bags are a problem for the environment. Plastic is made from oil which is an increasingly scarce resource and when discarded plastic bags end up in landfill sites they can take centuries to break down.

In some countries, including Ireland, a tax has been introduced on carrier bags so that shoppers have to pay for them. This has been very effective in cutting the number of bags being thrown away. One



way to avoid using so many carrier bags is to buy a 'bag for life'.

Available at supermarkets and other shops for as little as 10p each, these strong plastic bags can be reused again and again. When they eventually wear out, they can be taken back to the shop for recycling. Or you could avoid plastic bags altogether and use a cloth shopping bag.

Another solution is to reuse old plastic bags to carry your shopping. It is easy to make a handy holder for storing your plastic bags from old clothes.



### **Scrap Challenge**

This is an ideal starter before the activity below or can be used independently. It takes approximately 20 minutes. Divide the class into teams and give each team a piece of scrap paper. One at a time, show the class the following items:-

margarine tub	cardboard box	CD
jam jar	newspaper	yoghurt pot

The teams should write down as many different ways to reuse each item as they can. They should then share their answers, getting one point for every practical way of reusing that they have thought of.

### Making a carrier bag holder

### You will need (for a class of 30)

- 15 pairs of old trousers / long sleeved tops / jumpers.
- Strong scissors for use by teacher and other scissors for children
- Needles tapestry needles are fine and not sharp
- 30cm of elastic per child
- Sticky Velcro (optional)
- Cotton a number of the smallest reels available
- Hole punch
- · Glue and staplers for fixing decorations to bag holder
- Commercial examples of carrier bag holders (optional)

### Step one - preparation

- Unstitch or cut the arms and legs off the clothes. Keep scraps of material, wool and buttons for decoration. Recycle the rest.
- Put together 5 sewing kits. For a class of 30, each should contain 2 small reels of cotton, 6 x 30cm strips of elastic, 6 x 1.5 cm strips of sticky Velcro and a pack of 6 tapestry needles.

### Step two - introduction to design

Ask what makes a good carrier bag holder?

- You need to be able to take bags out of it without the others spilling out
- It needs to be able to hang up
- It needs to look attractive.

### If available, show some examples of carrier bag holders.

- How have these been made?
- Has a piece of clothing been used?
- How has it been put together?
- How can you hang it up?
- . Why don't the bags fall out?
- How has it been decorated?



Pupils at Rotherham's Anston Park Junior School demonstrate the plastic bag problem

### Step three - making the bag holders

- Divide the children into groups of six with one sewing kit per group.
- Provide each child with one of the sleeves or legs. One end of the sleeve or leg will have been cut, the other should be intact.

### If the material is woolly e.g. jumper or pullover:

- Fold the bottom end over like an envelope and sew a hem/cuff wide enough to accommodate the elastic that will go inside.
- Make a hole with a pencil on the inside of the hem/cuff so that the elastic can be threaded through. Do not cut a hole as the knitting will unravel!

### If the material is a tight weave e.g. jeans, cotton tops and shirts:

- The hem can be sewn (as above) or stuck down with self adhesive Velcro. The hem needs to be wide enough to thread the elastic inside.
- . Make a hole for the elastic on the inside of the hem using a hole punch or scissors.

### Then, for both types of material:

- Thread the elastic through the hole, keeping hold of one end. When the elastic has gone right round, tie the two ends into a firm knot.
- Add a loop of fabric to the top of the bag holder for hanging.
- Add decorations made from scrap material, buttons and bits of wool.

Once the holders are finished, ask the children to take them home and explain to their parents how and why to use them.

# TEACHERS' RESOURCE

## Reuse around the world

#### What is reuse?

Reuse means using a product or material again without reprocessing it. It might be used for its original purpose or a different one. For example, a glass milk bottle may be reused for its original purpose to hold milk more than 10 times. Or an old car tyre might be reused in a completely different way as a swing in a school playground.

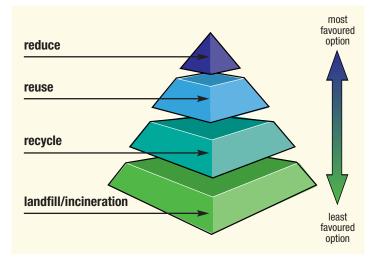
The benefits of reuse are that it:

- sends less waste to landfill and so reduces waste disposal costs and damage to the environment
- saves energy and raw materials as new products are not being manufactured
- helps those that need reused items
- can generate income for charities and create opportunities for jobs and

Reuse is different from recycling. Recycling involves goods or materials being re-processed into something else. There can be confusion though sometimes things that are described as recycled are in fact reused.

### The waste hierarchy

The waste hierarchy tells us which options for dealing with waste are the most desirable. On the waste hierarchy diagram below, reuse is higher than recycling because it does not use the amount of energy required to recycle materials and is therefore even better for the environment.



The waste hierarchy

### **Get involved!**

Why not set up a scheme or even a business for reusing at school? You could follow the example of students at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School (page 2) and design a campaign to encourage people to

buy reusable plastic sports bottles. Why not purchase sports bottles from a local supplier (be sure to ask them for a discount in return for free advertising) and sell them at school for pupils to reuse? Profits could fund improvements to your school grounds or sports facilities.

Alternatively, use your school library as the base for a scheme to swap second-hand books, magazines, games, CDs and DVDs. You will be able to keep up with the latest fashion and gossip whilst saving both money and the environment.

For those planning to go into big business, what better way to start reuse than by trading your unwanted items over the Internet? Everyone knows about e-Bay but there are other similar websites listed on page 8.

### **Activity - reuse in the UK and Africa**

Research one example of reuse in the UK and one in Africa using the websites below as a starting point.

### UK

- Textile Recycling for Aid and International Development (TRAID) www.traid.org.uk - reuses materials to make new highly fashionable garments.
- The Bike Station www.thebikestation.org.uk one of a number of organisations that reconditions old bikes for reuse in the UK.
- Children's Scrapstore www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk one of many scrapstores around the UK which supply waste products to be reused for art, craft and play activities.
- Worn Again www.wornagain.co.uk Worn Again shoes (as shown on the cover) are made from old clothes, towels, blankets, car seat scrap leather and recycled rubber.
- Furniture Reuse Network www.frn.org.uk - the national co-ordinating body for 300 furniture and appliance reuse and recycling organisations in the UK.



- Original T-Bag Designs www.originaltbagdesigns.com African organisation which reuses tea bags in their art and giftware.
- Re~Cycle www.re-cycle.org collects and ships second hand bicycles to local partners in parts of Africa.
- Vision Aid Overseas www.vao.org.uk collects spectacles for reuse in developing countries and trains local people in eyecare
- Digital Links International www.digital-links.org charity that provides affordable access to technology for people in developing countries.



• Tools for Self Reliance www.tfsr.org - works in four African countries providing craft workers with tools and the skills to use them.

Picture: Tools for Self Reliance

Use your research to produce two case studies about reuse in these parts of the world. The case studies should include the following:

- · Where the project is based
- Which material / product is being reused and how
- What the product or material is being reused for
- . The benefits of reuse for that community
- The environmental benefits
- Any disadvantages that might be associated with the reuse. For example, could exporting items to Africa for reuse hinder the setting up of local businesses to make these items? Is the technology appropriate for the area to which it is being sent?



# TEACHERS' RESOURCE

# A whirlwind tour of issues relating to reuse

- Each UK household produces more than 1 tonne of rubbish annually, amounting to more than 30 million tonnes each year.
- Up to 80% of household waste can be reused, recycled, or composted. The percentage being recycled is increasing year on year (currently at around 23%). However it is much harder to put a figure on the amount of material being reused.
- · Glass milk bottles are reused an average of 13 times before being recycled. Other bottles are usually used only once before being recycled or thrown away.
- Plastic carrier bags are easily reused, but despite this we use 150 million in the UK every week.
- If every household reused just two feet of gift wrapping ribbon each year, the resulting 38,000 miles of ribbon could tie a bow around the earth!

# The issues

- We are more aware about recycling than ever. thanks to campaigns such as Recycle Now and the increasing availability of recycling collections. However, reuse has a much lower profile. As recycling becomes an established part of everyday life, the next challenge is to encourage reuse and other forms of waste minimisation.
- Reuse is better for the environment than recycling, resulting in even less energy use and pollution.
  - Reuse is not a new idea. During the Second World War, people were encouraged to 'make do and mend' rather than buying new items.



 New methods of reuse have appeared in recent vears, including schemes for the reconditioning and reuse of old computers and mobile phones, and reusable nappy schemes for those with young children. The internet has opened up exciting new opportunities for reuse through websites such as www.ebay.co.uk, www.freecycle.org and www.rag-and-bone.co.uk.

# The politics

- In May 2005 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) dropped plans for councils to report the amount of household waste sent for reuse. However councils must still report the tonnages sent for recycling, composting, energy recovery and landfill.
- One reason why these plans were dropped was because much of this waste is collected by charities and other small organisations and it was considered unreasonable to require these to weigh the items they collect.
  - The ODPM was also concerned that the complexities of monitoring reuse would be out of proportion to "what is in reality a very small element of the waste stream."

# **Reuse at school**

- Use both sides of paper before you recycle it or throw it away.
- Collect in photocopied worksheets and store them so they can be used again next year. This will save teachers work too!
- Encourage pupils to bring drinks in reusable 'sports bottles'.
- Organise a special day to emphasise the value of reuse. Advertise it using posters made from scrap paper, textiles and other old materials.



Sort out your unwanted toys for someone else to reuse

Run different reuse activities throughout the day. including:

- Create art, costumes and musical instruments from rubbish
- Make a plastic carrier bag holder (see page 6)
- Brainstorm ways in which the school could reuse items and incorporate these into a school waste action plan or environmental policy
- Hold a bring-and-buy sale or toy and book swap to which parents are invited

# Reuse at home

- Keep containers and other items of packaging you could use again.
- Speak to your local council recycling officer about local reuse schemes for unwanted furniture, computers, mobiles phones and other items.
  - Reuse envelopes by sticking a label over the old address.
  - Swap magazines and newspapers when you have finished reading them.
    - Buy milk in reusable glass bottles.
- Use a 'bag for life' instead of getting a new plastic bag each time you go shopping.
- Refill printer cartridges and use rechargeable batteries. You will protect the environment AND save a fortune.
  - Give old clothes, toys and books to jumble sales or charity shops.
    - Buy second-hand goods whenever possible.

Remember ... one person's trash is another person's treasure!