

Waste Minimisation Christmas

Most would agree that Christmas should be about spending time with people they love, giving presents and showing their appreciation for each other. What better way could there be to do this than to put extra love and attention into making the perfect present. Here are some suggestions for alternatives:

- 🎁 Home baking (mince pies, biscuits, chocolates)
- 🎁 Flavouring alcohol (cherry brandy, sloe gin etc)
- 🎁 Socks, gloves, hats, scarves
- 🎁 Time vouchers (babysitting, day trips, movie nights)
- 🎁 Experiences (tickets to shows, train tickets)
- 🎁 Homemade giftsets (buy the individual components and present in a reusable box or basket)

Taking the additional time and making the additional effort will not only be more appreciated by loved ones, but it can also be more enjoyable to do, getting you in the Christmas spirit. Why not put on some Christmas music and dance along while baking? Spending the additional time will also make it more memorable, share your experience when handing over the present, laughing over any mishaps or explaining why the Father Christmas on your biscuits looks a bit different this year!

In addition to making the present more individual and one of a kind, think about the presentation. There are many ways to make this more individual too:

- 🎁 Use reusable wrapping – cloth and ribbon, newspaper and string
- 🎁 Invest in some nice cake tins, or pass along those that have been stuck in the back of your cupboard for years, tied with a nice reusable ribbon.
- 🎁 Upcycle some paper shopping bags, get the kids to redecorate over any shop logos.

And it would not be Christmas without Christmas dinner and all the trimmings! Most of us know that we go overboard at Christmas, and are still eating some of the Christmas food way into January, by which time we are often sick of it and looking forward to that New Year detox. So why not be a bit mindful, and plan ahead? Think about how many will be around to feed, and if you are visiting others, you will need a little less at home. If you are taking food to others, check ahead if they want to you bring anything and if so what.

It goes without saying that most of us will produce more waste across the seasonal period, and so it is even more important to make sure that we are disposing of any waste correctly. Here are some tips to help you do just that:

- 🌲 Think about the waste hierarchy in planning – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

🎄 If you know that come Christmas day you put everything in a black bag, plan ahead. Make sure you have some clear sacks ready for the recyclable packaging. Have a tub on the side for any food waste to go into (an old Tupperware pot will do, and can be washed after it has been emptied).

🎄 Make sure all food waste is added to your green bin to be composted. No amount is too small.

🎄 Plastic ribbon and bows must go in the general waste, use these sparingly, or switch to reusables.

🎄 Shiny wrapping paper and ones with glitter cannot be recycled. Do the scrunch test. If it springs back it is plastic and is rubbish, if it stays in a ball it is paper and can be recycled.

🎄 Flat pack any boxes, even small ones, and this will save extra room in your recycling bins.

🎄 Larger boxes, can be left flat packed along side your recycling bin on collection day.

🎄 If your recycling bin is full, remember you can place out additional recycling in clear sacks.

🎄 Ensure you know when your waste collections day are. There are four weeks of disruptions this year due to how Christmas falls. View your dates via www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins.

And finally, have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year!

Let's rethink the way we do Christmas!