

For the latest news and more information, please see our website

Last chance to make apple juice from your own apples!

Our last session of 2018 will be at Blewbury Manor stable on **Sunday 4 November, 11am to 1pm**



(please note times). **This session will only go ahead if there is some demand**, so if you still have apples to juice please contact us at 07935 232 296 or info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk. We will decide by Wednesday 31 October and put a note on our [website home page](#).

Please bring washed apples (cores are ok but remove all bad bits) and clean glass (screw-top) wine or drink bottles. Cost: £1 per pressing (large basket of apples), pasteurising 30p per bottle.

If you wish to **pasteurise** your juice (so it will last for up to a year) it takes quite a while, so please **arrive early in the session**.

Too many apples for our session, or can't do 4 November? You can **hire** our equipment: £10 in Blewbury and Upton, £15 elsewhere (for 24 hours). Contact us at info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk.

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Time to try hedge laying?

We had a display showing hedges that we have laid around the village in the past few years at SB's 25th anniversary bash on 30th September, together with some of our tools and examples of regional hedge-laying styles. We wanted to recruit more members, and it worked: seven more villagers are joining us this winter to learn the skills. We'll start in November and will contact the team before then. There are more pictures of what we do at bit.ly/2Jk83UM. If you have not yet signed up and would like to do so, please contact jogden@blewbury.net.



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Sustainable Blewbury 25th anniversary celebration



Our 25th anniversary celebration, on 30 September at Blewbury Primary School, was a real success. Twenty-five years sounds like a long time for a sustainability group to have existed, but we started off in 1993 as the Blewbury Village Society Environment Group with a much narrower remit, focusing more on the environment of the village and its heritage. Awareness of climate change and sustainability came later. The exhibition interested our guests – we have done a lot in 25 years. The

autumn theme for the school was sustainability, and their exhibition of work done by the children covered everything from the air miles of imported fruit to what wood should be used for rather than burning it. And our celebration cake was magnificent: the icing included models of our apple press, and a thermal imaging camera with houses the colour of their infrared images!

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Young couples 'trapped in car dependency'

This article, by BBC environment analyst Roger Harrabin, appeared on the BBC News website on 23 October. It summarises a report by a new organisation called Transport for New Homes, which visits large-scale new housing to 'not only look for modern, frequent public transport connections but also the extent to which places are car-dominated, whether they are walkable in terms of local provision of services, leisure and employment, and whether the public realm is attractive to pedestrians'.

The article and report was of particular interest to those living close to Didcot because Great Western Park, the huge new estate to the west of the town, was given as an example: 'at Great Western Park ..., residents climb over a fence to get where they need to go because footpaths to neighbouring areas are so poor.' The BBC article is at bbc.in/2O1yvDm and the full report is at www.transportfornewhomes.org.uk.



This is also of particular interest to us in Blewbury because we have just lost all our commuter buses at very short notice (see below) and so we can picture the headline *Village residents 'trapped in car dependency'* eventually applying to us. And based on the examples quoted in this article, we can picture it extending to the big estates near the Harwell campus, in the Oxford green belt, and then all the housing that will be associated with the Oxford–Cambridge expressway!

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Blewbury's commuter buses cancelled at short notice

Thames Travel announced on its website – with only two weeks' notice – that there would be a service change to our bus service (route 94) starting on 21 October. The first two and last two buses each day were to be withdrawn.

Without the 06.55 and 07.15 buses from Blewbury, the first bus is now the busy 'school bus' at 07.49, and the last bus from Didcot train station is the 17.02 as the 18.20 and 19.20 services no longer run. The reason given was low usage.

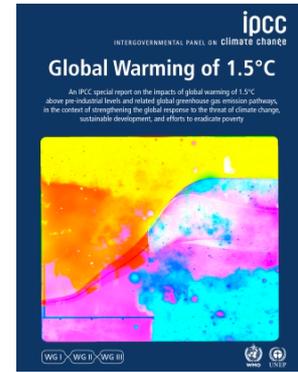
We are fortunate that the group of villages served by the predecessor to the 94 bus got together when Oxfordshire County Council removed all bus subsidies in early 2016, to form the Downland Villages Transport Group (DVTG). Thames Travel has worked with the DVTG to keep the buses going for 2 ½ years, but this time three of our four commuter buses were definitely being cut. We hoped for a while it might be possible to keep the 06.55 bus on an interim basis, because this bus was important to many people without access to a car who relied on it to get to work and college, but it was not to be.

Thames Travel *do* care about our communities, and they recognise how important it is for people to be able to get to work and school. We in turn, recognise their need for enough people to use the service for it to be viable. The DVTG is still trying to find an alternative that would help the people who relied on the early bus, and if you want to be part of the conversation please email dvtgbus@gmail.com

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IPCC special report on 'Global Warming of 1.5°C'

The main article in our last newsletter was a detailed look at climate change, but we cannot ignore the publication on 6 October of the IPCC's new special report on 'Global Warming of 1.5°C.', the result of IPCC Working Groups presented at the 48th Session of the IPCC at Incheon, Republic of Korea. The report focuses on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This is the aspirational, but very challenging, target of the Paris Agreement, and the report shows how even a 2°C rise would be far more damaging. We will have more about climate change and the significance of this report in future newsletters.



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Plastics – what can we do?

By Jo Lakeland

After David Attenborough's Blue Planet II alerted us all to the dangers of the unthinking disposal of plastics into the environment, we have been bombarded by every method of communication about the horrific effects of man's disregard for the environment and it is easy to feel overwhelmed by it all. How can we personally do anything significant to reduce our plastic footprint?



Mixed food packaging

The stimulus for this article was a feature in Which? Magazine last August, titled 'Up to 29% of supermarket packaging is not recyclable, Which? finds'. Even if you are not a Which? member you can read most of the article at bit.ly/2LwFEe9, so I am not going to repeat it all here, but I will comment on some of it.

A Which? survey discovered that although most people do want reduce the amount of plastic waste we create, it is not always easy or clear as to how we can do it. There are huge inconsistencies in the type of packaging used by different supermarkets and in the labelling they use.

Plastics packaging labels: know what you are trying to recycle

Labels appearing on plastic items can be split into two categories: can it be recycled, and other information.

Can I recycle it?

The labels under this heading do give information about whether or not an object can be recycled.

 <p>Widely Recycled</p> <p>Collected by more than 75% of local authorities</p>	 <p>Check Locally</p> <p>Not collected by all local authorities</p>	 <p>Not Yet Recycled</p> <p>Collected by less than 20% of local authorities</p>	 <p>Capable of being recycled, but may not be accepted in all recycling systems</p>
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This means (industrial) compostable, and is interesting when applied to plastics:
'Products certified to be industrially compostable according to the European standard EN 13432/14955 may bear the seedling logo... Never place compostable plastic into the recycling with other plastics; as it is designed to break down it cannot be recycled and contaminates recyclable plastics. Plastics that carry this symbol can be recycled with your garden waste through your local authority.'

We have to hope that we see a lot of this symbol in the future, when it is hoped that **all** the plastics we use will either be reusable or decompose in a sufficiently short time into harmless constituents, so that they can be composted at a high temperature with the contents of your garden waste bin.



And this last symbol is home composting, which means that it is suitable to be composted in your own compost bin.

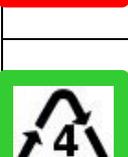
Other information

Contrary to what might be expected, from their appearance, the two symbols below give **no** information about whether items can be recycled:

 <p>Green Dot does not necessarily mean that the packaging is recyclable. <i>'It is used in some European countries to signify that the producer has made a financial contribution towards the recovery and recycling of packaging in Europe.'</i></p>	 <p>Tidyman (from keep Britain Tidy) asks you not to litter! <i>'It doesn't relate to recycling but is a reminder to be a good citizen, disposing of the item in the most appropriate manner.'</i></p>
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Information about commonly used plastics

The Which? information is solely about recycling – it does not include any information about whether we should be using or avoiding certain types of plastic In this table I also mention other concerns about some plastics, but see the caution on the note below it.

Plastics labels	Plastic type	Use	Life after recycling	Ease of recycling	Other concerns*
	PET Polyethylene terephthalate	Water and soft drinks bottles, food packaging including punnets, microwave and oven meal containers	Heated and moulded into more PET products	Easy	See below
	HDPE High-density polyethylene	Milk cartons, cleaning products, yoghurt pots, soap dispensers, toys, carrier bags, food wrapping material	Garden furniture, pipes and more milk cartons	Easy	None known
	PVC Polyvinyl chloride	Cling film, window frames, flooring, credit cards, packaging, fashion, footwear, gas and water pipes, electric cable insulation	More PVC products	Difficult	Avoid PVC – can contain phalates, see below
	LDPE Low-density polyethylene	Juice and milk cartons, food bags, carrier bags, magazine wrappers, squeeze bottles, toys, heavy-duty sacks	Bin liners, plastic furniture, floor tiles	Possible – take to recycling centres and many super-markets	None known

	PP Polypropylene	Yoghurt, margarine, butter and oil spread containers, microwave meal trays, plastic cups and baby bottles	Clothing and other fibres, food containers	Easy	See below
	PS Polystyrene	Takeaway boxes, cutlery, foam for insulation and protective packaging	More packaging	Difficult – usually goes to landfill	See below
 OR 	Other types of plastics	Other forms of plastics, polycarbonates (PC), composite (layered) packaging such as salad bags and crisp packets	Goes to landfill	No	Too many types to comment

Colour key to plastic labels in table above:

	Easy to recycle, no other concerns		Some concerns OR must be taken to recycling centres or large supermarkets		Very difficult or impossible to recycle, OR other serious concerns
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* **Other concerns** – *do not rely entirely on the information below* – there are many different opinions about the dangers of various plastics. Check elsewhere if you want to know more about them.

- PET: *Single-use only*. Do not leave PET water bottles in a hot car. Cleaning materials and high temperatures can cause chemicals to leach out of PET. Buy a metal water bottle for long term use.
- PVC: Phalates are used to make PCV more flexible, e.g. for PVC cling film. There are an enormous number of different phalates, and there are numerous papers about the possible dangers of various phalates, so it seems sensible to avoid putting them in contact with food. PVC produces hydrochloric acid in the smoke of a fire.
- PP: Microwave/dishwasher-safe only means that PP does not warp when heated. Better practice to heat food in glass containers.
- PS: Polystyrene contains styrene, which on limited evidence is '*reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen*'. See bit.ly/2Jjd4No. So turn your takeaway out onto a plate, and use your own cutlery. PS foam (styrofoam) is a big part of the plastic problem in our oceans. Being 95% air, it floats down waterways to the oceans where it gets broken down into smaller pieces and ingested by marine life.



To summarise:

- *Plastic products types 2, 4 and 5 are multiuse, the easiest to recycle and safer in use.*
- *Regardless of what plastic you use, avoid exposing your plastics to high temperatures (microwave, dishwasher) and use mild detergents for cleaning.*

Reducing your plastic footprint

Which? recommends:

- Avoid recycling black plastic (e.g. flower pots) and turn mail-order bags to black-side-in when recycling, because the sorting sensors do not detect black plastics.
- Replace tops on bottles and push straws into cartons – too small to be detected.

- Squash plastic bottles – saves space and stops them rolling off the belt.
- Give up chewing gum – yes, it is plastic. The British chew an average of 130 sticks each year.
- Recycle at the supermarket – take soft plastics back to large supermarkets for recycling.
- Empty and rinse food containers – food can contaminate porous recyclable materials, making an entire recycling bag unrecyclable.
- Buy loose fruit and veg – if you have to weigh them stick the price label straight onto an apple or an aubergine – and load them straight into a bag-for-life.
- And best of all: store food in glass containers, carry a metal water bottle (I've been using the same one every day for 10 years!). Reuse if safe (**not** single-use PET), but don't throw away perfectly good, lidded ice-cream cartons. And carry a reusable coffee cup or flask – **seven million** are thrown away every day and less than 1% can be recycled, leaving the rest in landfill for up to 50 years!

There are more tips about careful recycling in the Which? report 'How to recycle in the UK' by Vicki Crowe, which you can read at bit.ly/2Jf2ImU

A final, worrying note

At present the UK does not have sufficient facilities to recycle all of our plastic waste. Until recently much of it used to go to China, but China has become much more selective in what they will accept to recycle. There are reports that our exported plastic waste for recycling isn't always being recycled, and what happens to it is not being properly monitored. Two provocative articles to read are: bit.ly/2ypCvZ7 (Guardian) and bit.ly/2CwhsXL (Greenpeace).

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Plasticphobia

And something completely different: the 23 October edition of BBC Radio 4's Costing the Earth was called Plasticphobia, and it is now available as a podcast. In it Tom Heap asks '*Could the war on plastic have unintended consequences for the environment?*'



The answer is yes. That is not exactly surprising but some of the reasons might be. You can listen to it by downloading the podcast from bbc.in/2xcOxXF.

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The Sustainable Blewbury newsletter is edited by Jo Lakeland and Eric Eisenhandler

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We have a substantial programme of activities in and around the village. Getting involved is fun and can make a very positive contribution to village life and local environment. If you'd like to get involved in what we do, or to receive our free Newsletter, email us at info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk or phone Eric Eisenhandler at 01235 850558.